

## **Introduction**

Melissa's dad is with us this week up from Georgia. We took him yesterday to the Oshkosh Airventure show. It was a first for us all. There is a lot to take in there—everything from how to build an airplane to how to fly one. Of course, the highlight was watching these planes in flight. We saw lots of old war birds as well as a couple eardrum-bursting examples of newer ones. One of things I really appreciate about the airshow is its celebration of the old as well as the new. We have to do the same as we enter the world of the Bible and seek to understand how God is working. There is so much that he is telling us about the future by what he has already done in the past. And it is indeed the case when we look at what he has done in and through the reign of King David.

[Read text and Pray]

It has been my endeavor as we have studied our way through the life of David to accomplish an important task. I want you to see the relevance of what happened in the life of David to our own lives and our own times. I have consistently sought to stress how David points us to Jesus. It is not just because I want you to see Jesus everywhere. It is because he IS everywhere in the scripture. And as we come to consider the reign of David, we are considering the kingdom of God whose ultimate king is Jesus. David is God's chosen king, the man after God's own heart. He is who he is by the grace and working of God for the glory of God. And when Jesus comes to sit at the right hand of God, it is the throne of his father David upon which he sits.

In order to demonstrate this point, I direct your attention to the first chapter of the book of Luke. In the 32<sup>nd</sup> verse we listen in to the announcement which came from the lips of the angel Gabriel to the ears and heart of Mary. Speaking of the son she would conceive and bear, he explained that "the Lord God [would] give to him the throne of his father David." Now, twice in the text we have just read, we came across the declaration that the success that David experienced took place because "the LORD gave victory to David wherever he went." We saw it in verse 6 and in verse 14. David's victory is the Lord's victory, and David's throne is the Lord's throne. So what we are seeing in this chapter is not merely a description of the successful aspects of David's reign but also aspects of the way it is whenever God's king is sitting on God's throne in God's kingdom. In other words the look back at David's reign projects us then forward to where we are today under the reign of Christ, and then it projects still further forward to the future reign of Christ in the new heaven and the new earth. So here is the reality of life in the kingdom of God—then, now, and future. The narrator highlights three key features of God's kingdom—enemies, wealth, and justice. Enemies are defeated. Wealth is accumulated and dedicated. Justice is administered. Let's look at each of these three.

The first feature of God's kingdom under God's king is . . .

### **I. Enemies Defeated (1-6; 13-14).**

The word that is translated "defeated" in the ESV is a milder form of the idea which is actually communicated in the Hebrew. I can use the word "defeat" in varying settings. I can DEFEAT others in a game of Apples to Apples—those who have played with me know that it is only in my dreams. But that's a vastly different sense of intensity than when the allies DEFEATED the Germans and the Japanese in WW2. The word used here carries a strong sense of defeat such as is expressed in the terms, "to strike down" or to "smite." When enemies are struck down, they are defeated, yes, but with a strong and decimating blow. They are brought down. They are no longer a threat. And that describes the victories of David over the surrounding enemies.

Here is a list of enemies to the nation of Israel which under David as king were struck down. The Philistines were positioned to the west. The Moabites were to the east. Hadadezer and the Syrians were to the north. And down in verses 13-14, we see mention of the Edomites who were positioned to the south. So you see from the east to the west and from the north to the south, the enemies of Israel that surrounded them in every direction were struck down. David smote them with severity. Many were killed and the rest became David's servants. But the line that is repeated is this: the LORD gave victory to David wherever he went.

The one exception to the list of people that were struck down is Toi. The Toi story is that he saw the defeat David brought upon the whole army of Hadadezer king of Zobah, and he did not want to be defeated in like manner. So he sent his son to greet David with gold, silver, and bronze. Rather than be struck down by David he chose to be subject to him. That's the choice everyone faces with respect to David's greater son Jesus. You either join with him in subjection to his rule or he will eventually come against you to strike you down. One way or another from the east to the west and the north to the south of the earth Jesus will reign and the nations will be a footstool for his feet. See the wisdom of Toi and do likewise. In the kindness of God, he offers peace to those who will turn from enmity with him and yield themselves as followers to the Lord Jesus Christ.

From a practical standpoint, this section of the text highlights for us the fact that facing enemies and experiencing conflict are a fact of life in this sin cursed world. It was true for God's king, David. They opposed him on every side. The nations were not lining up to yield allegiance to David. With one exception he had to come against them and strike them down in order to insure the peace of Israel. Being a man after God's own heart did not exempt him from the fight; it brought him right into the heart of the battle.

Likewise, the fact that Jesus is the son of God did not spare him from conflict either. He was hated in his hometown. He was opposed throughout Galilee. And of course he was nailed to a cross in Jerusalem. People lined up to be healed by Jesus, but when the truth of the kingdom was proclaimed, the crowds scattered. There were a precious few who subjected themselves to Christ. He warned them they would be mistreated too. But though Jesus experienced conflict, the Lord gave him victory wherever he went. He outsmarted his opponents. He put their ignorance of the scriptures they studied on clear display. He demonstrated true righteousness in contrast to their outward show. Even though he died on the cross, he was not defeated by it. He rose from the dead, victorious over the grave.

Enemies and conflict are a fact of life right now in the present circumstances in which we follow Christ today. Like Jesus, we too face the hostilities of the world. As Paul said to Timothy, "All who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted." There is a conflict involving truth, and those who despise God's truth are relentless in their hostility. But as Paul said to the Corinthians, we are involved in warfare even if it is not fleshly in nature. And the weapons of our warfare have divine power to destroy strongholds, arguments, and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God.

Another enemy is the devil. He opposes the followers of Christ at every turn. But even when it comes to him, we have the victory through Christ. He prowls around like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour, but through Christ we can resist him, firm in the faith, and after suffering for a little while, the God of all grace will himself confirm, strengthen, and establish his people.

And then there is the flesh. It is a relentless enemy to our sanctification. You can't grow in holiness without any effort. It is a battle—not because we do not have strength because in Christ we are victors. But victory does not happen apart from the battle. Temptations are common to man, but God is faithful. He does not allow us to be tempted beyond our ability. With each temptation he provides a way of escape that we may be able to endure it.

Some expect that following Christ means an absence of conflict, challenge, and hardship, but, no, it means the battle has just begun. And yet we can face the battles with confidence because through Christ, our king, we are more than conquerors.

David's victories point us ahead to the ultimate, complete, and final victory of Jesus. Think how Paul speaks of this in 1 Corinthians 15. Christ, after his future coming, will deliver the kingdom to God the Father after destroying EVERY rule and EVERY authority and EVERY power. He must reign until he has put ALL his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death itself. As Revelation 19 depicts, the King of kings and Lord of lords comes with a sharp sword from his mouth with which to strike down the nations; he will rule them with a rod of iron. No army could withstand David and no forces will withstand the Lord Jesus when he returns to fulfill the purposes of God to plant his people in the new heavens and earth. This is the proclamation of the angels in Revelation 11:15 that "the kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever." But before conquest comes conflict.

So do not be discouraged. Do not think that being in a battle is a bad thing. It is a necessary thing. Conquest comes through conflict. Be encouraged that a day is coming where there will no longer be any conflict and all Christ's enemies will be struck down. But until then, keep fighting the good fight of the faith.

## **II. Wealth Dedicated (7-12).**

Along with the victories over enemies and the impressions made on those who did not want to be defeated by David, there came tribute and the spoils of war. David's defeat of Hadadezer king of Zobah yielded shields of gold and very much bronze. Toi sent articles of silver, gold, and bronze in appreciation to David for defeating a common enemy. Verse 11 is key. It tells us that what he received from Toi "he dedicated to the LORD together with the silver and the gold he dedicated from all the nations he subdued."

David received all this wealth and he dedicated it to the Lord. As a forerunner and one who foreshadows Christ, David received the wealth of the nations around him. Likewise, certain texts indicate to us that the wealth of the nations will come to the Lord. Isaiah 60 speaks of the future glory of Israel, testifying this: "The wealth of the nations shall come to you; a multitude of camels shall cover you ... they shall bring gold and frankincense."

In Haggai 2 the Lord speaks of the coming glory of the temple. He says, "I will shake all nations, so that the treasures of all nations shall come in, and I will fill this house with glory, says the LORD of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, declares the LORD of hosts. The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former, says the LORD of hosts." These verses become even more striking when we stop to realize that the gold and silver and bronze which David obtained he passed on to Solomon for the building of the first temple. So you see the Lord himself draws upon the shadows in David's reign to point ahead to the future.

Revelation 21 affirms that in the new earth the kings of the earth will bring their glory into the New Jerusalem; they will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations.

As a man of God and as a shadow of Christ, David teaches us an important lesson about wealth. It ALL belongs to God. The nations and the world hold tightly to their wealth. They love the creation and hold fast to it while rejecting the creator. They will not relinquish the precious treasures of this world to worship the Lord. But he will pry their hands off their stuff as he strikes them down and what belongs to him will come to him.

In a related practical consideration, remember this. David went forth in battle but it was the Lord who gave him victory wherever he went. The gold, silver, and bronze that he received he dedicated it all to the Lord. Rightly! It was not his! He did not earn it. It belonged to the Lord.

It is the same way with our wealth. We go to work. We get paid, but it is the Lord who gives us the strength to do what we do wherever we go. It is not our money; it is his. It should be dedicated to him and handled as such. The question for us is never what I am going to do with my money, but how am I going to manage God's money that he has entrusted to me? And we should be glad to relinquish hold on it for the purposes of the Lord! We should be gracious and generous givers to the cause of Christ in the world. It is not a physical temple now but the temple consisting of the people of the Lord. We should want our meeting place to reflect the glory of God. And we should want the endeavors of gospel promotion and Bible instruction to be adequately supported for the glory of God with the produce the Lord himself has entrusted to us for that very purpose.

So what are you doing with God's money? What are you doing with the talents and the days he has given you? Are you a faithful and generous giver? Have you dedicated to the Lord what belongs to him?

### **III. Justice Administrated (15-18).**

When we arrive at verses 15-18, we move from the external accomplishments of David's reign to what he was able to do within the nation itself. It is set forth in verse 15: "So David reigned over all Israel. And David administered justice and equity to all his people." What then follows is a list of the personnel that under the Lord were used to help make David's administration successful. So the focus is on David's reign, and three features stand out.

First, the narrator emphasizes the scope of David's reign. David reigned over ALL Israel. The scope is full, complete, lacking nothing. It includes the whole. Remember back when David was first anointed king? Who anointed David as king initially? Which of the tribes first crowned and submitted to David as king? It was the tribe of Judah. Seven years went by after Judah proclaimed David king before the remaining eleven tribes joined with Judah. There was a schism for some time. So the use of the word ALL stresses the unity of the tribes. David is gladly owned by each one as its own king. Israel is unified under the reign of David. The people of God have come together. They are one. They have been brought together by their king. Unity is a wonderful thing. Psalm 133 extols the blessing when God's people are united. "Behold how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity." It is like soothing oil. It is like the morning dew.

Unity is a mark of the kingdom of God when it is at its strongest. In the earliest days of the early church, the moving of the Spirit was strong and the people of the Lord were unified. They were all together and had all things in common. They were selling their possessions and sharing with whoever had a need. They were in each other's homes and vibrantly sharing life together. There was generosity among each other; they were praising God and he was saving people right and left. In those days God made it clear that he had brought down the dividing wall between Jews and Gentiles and made the two into one through Jesus Christ and his cross. Through him we both have

access in one Spirit to God the Father. In Christ we are reconciled to God as a single structure, a holy temple in the Lord. There is one body and one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of all. We are diverse, yes, in background and gifting and roles, but together in Christ we are one. And certainly that unity should characterize us as a body. Strife, envy, jealousy—these have no place among those who are redeemed by David's greater son.

And can you imagine what it will be like in terms of unity when Christ takes us home? No bickering over who is first, no disappointment that some might be overlooked. No separate causes. Nobody saying I am of Paul, I am of Apollos, I follow Peter. People from every tribe and tongue and nation—distinct in every sort of way but joined in heart and song and voice and objective to serve the king of kings. With that in view, let us by the Spirit pursue unity with each other—forgive, rejoice in who you are by God's grace, love, and serve one another. That's the scope of David's reign.

Next, the narrator tells us about the character of David's reign. Verse 15 says, "he administered justice and equity to all his people." In our day equity has come to mean that there is an equal outcome for all. That is not just. In David's kingdom not all got the same. In the kingdom of God there are rewards and they differ from person to person. They correspond to our level of faithfulness with what God has entrusted to us. That is part of righteousness and justice. When there is righteousness and justice, there is no discrimination, no prejudice based upon the tribe from which you come or the wealth or stature which you possess. Evil is evil no matter who commits it and righteousness is right. In the kingdom of God righteousness is the rule. Righteousness and truth are the foundation of the throne. The strong are not allowed to oppress the weak. Nor are the weak given advantage over the strong.

Our nation is touted as a nation with "liberty and justice for all." It is an ideal pursuit, but it falls short of reality in America. It certainly falls short for the unborn whose lives are stolen by abortion. Every day it seems liberty and justice in the United States are under increasing attack. It should not be surprising; this is not a nation whose God is the Lord. That nation is the kingdom of God over which Jesus reigns. David's greater son alone will reign in perfect righteousness and justice. That day is future, but it is also eternal. That is a hope that can help us hold on while we live in a day of deteriorating righteousness and justice.

Finally, the narrator tells us about the executors of David's reign. He mentions Joab as being over the army, Jehoshaphat the recorder, Zadok and Ahimelech the priests, Seraiah the secretary. Benaiah's role with the Cherethites and Pelethites seems to have been a role of body guard. David's sons themselves had some priestly role though we should not understand it as serving in the temple. These names and their roles in David's administration stress the fact that a king surrounds himself with others who are under-shepherds to carry out his will. These are roles of honor and responsibility.

When Jesus came, he surrounded with himself with a group of insiders. The disciples were later referred to as Christ's apostles. They were entrusted with the responsibility to administrate the principles of the kingdom of heaven. Before ascending to heaven, He authorized these apostles along with other followers. "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, even to the end of the earth."

The church is the current appointee in the administration of King Jesus to exercise his reign on the earth through preaching and teaching, through evangelizing and discipling, through encouraging, admonishing, and exhorting, and through exemplifying his righteousness to the world.

Looking ahead to the new heavens and earth we know that even then we will be bearers of responsibility within the eternal kingdom. Think of the parable of the talents. The master entrusted his property to three servants and went away. He returned at a later time to settle accounts with them. Those who were faithful were approved by the master. And their reward was being entrusted with even greater responsibility. For all eternity, the kingdom of God will involve God's people as stewards. We will be executors of the will of God for the new heavens and the new earth. Now I do not know what all that involves, but I know this, God's people will never get bored and we will be valued as friends of the king entrusted with the task to carry out his will for his new creation. Again, this is our hope.

### **Conclusion**

When we look back at 2 Samuel 8, it may not feel like a drama on par say with David's encounter with Goliath. However, when we recognize that what we see here actually foreshadows Jesus Christ, it transforms our estimation of its importance.

Think of how we throw out the old whenever we get something new and improved. I still recall my little brother at the age of 4 or so sitting in our old baby blue Galaxy 500. We were trading it in for a new model. At the age of 10 or 11, I was all excited that the four door sedan was being replaced with an almost new station wagon, but Clint was overcome with grief the way children will be when they have to leave something behind. The older we get the easier it is to let go of the old and embrace the new. Old cars wind up in junk yards and are often never thought of again. But you know, as technology and advancement goes, we would never have today's improvements without yesterday's accomplishments; so we shouldn't just forget the old. At the Oshkosh air show yesterday, there was an entire field of all these old vintage aircraft as well as the more modern state-of-the-art machines. Seeing the old helps one appreciate the marvel of the new.

When we look back at David's reign, we could choose to dismiss it as irrelevant. But that would be a mistake. We can appreciate what God was doing through him then and have a deepened insight in to what he is doing in Jesus Christ. The highlights of God's kingdom then show us that God's purposes have never changed although his purpose include progress. Let us behold the wonder of the Lord in the past. Let us embrace that wonder in the present. And let us anticipate joyfully the wonder of what it will be when his purpose is fulfilled in the future. And meanwhile let us employ ourselves in the task of calling men, women, boys, and girls to come away from the world to be part of the kingdom which is here and is coming soon in full advancement.