

2 Samuel 5 — The Rise Of David

April 2, 2023

Good morning CrossWinds! My name is Kurt. I am one of the pastors. At CrossWinds, we are about “Reaching People With Jesus.” I want to give a quick shoutout to a great group of committed people helping us reach more people with Jesus. This past fall, we moved our Christian education time from between worship services to during the worship service. One of the reasons we did that was to reach more children with Jesus. The good news is that happened. The number of children participating in our Christian education programs on Sunday morning shot up. Another benefit of that change was for parents.

I love talking with families that are new at CrossWinds. Parents consistently tell me they love the kids’ education program during the worship service. They are thankful their children are not just getting babysat during the service, but they have a real live teacher who cares about them that is teaching them the Bible in an age-appropriate way. Parents also tell me they love having the free time to hear the Word of God taught in the worship service. They also love when their children return to service during the final song. They come in the door running, excited, and carrying a craft from their Bible lesson.

There is a great group of women who make the kids’ worship time happen. Some of these women cannot be in worship because they are so committed to working with our children to reach them with Jesus. They make a sacrifice.

After church, if you see one of these committed ladies from our Christian Education team, thank them for the sacrifice they make for the mission of reaching the children with Jesus. Thank them for investing in our children and

making CrossWinds a friendly and welcoming church where children hear the good news of Jesus in a way they can understand.

This morning is Palm Sunday. We are not breaking from our studies in 2 Samuel. We will be in 2 Samuel 5. Take out your outlines. Open your Bibles.

Background

If you were with us last week, in 2 Samuel 4, we studied the death of Ish-Bosheth. He was a rival king to David, who ruled over the northern 11 tribes of Israel, while David ruled over one tribe, the southern tribe of Judah. To give you an idea of where David ruled and where Ish-Bosheth ruled, I found a map. Ish-Bosheth ruled a much larger part of Israel than David did at this time in history. The important point is that when Ish-Bosheth was murdered, the last resistance to David becoming king over the entire nation crumbled.



If you have been with us, you know it was a long haul for David to become king. It was back in 1 Samuel 16 that God anointed David as king. At that time, he was an unknown shepherd boy. In 1 Samuel 17, while David was yet a boy, he faced a Philistine giant named Goliath. With one stone, God enabled David to lay him out. Immediately afterward, David became popular, and King Saul was jealous of David's success. That led to years of Saul chasing David and over a dozen attempts by Saul to kill David. Twice Saul threw his spear at David, trying to pin David against the wall, and was within inches of taking David's life. These years of living as a fugitive and constantly on the run led to David hiding with the Philistines. While they were stressful years that almost broke David, he

maintained his righteousness. While Saul was trying to kill him, he refused to kill Saul.

Finally, Saul died in battle against the Philistines. David returned to Israel, but only the southernmost tribe of Judah recognized him as king. For the next seven years, Abner — Saul's old army commander, and Ish-Bosheth — resisted David and even created a civil war against David. After Abner and Ish-Bosheth's deaths, Dave will finally become king.

You wonder why I am telling you all of this history. This is not just history. It is a lesson for you and me. God declared that his purpose for David's life was that David would be king and that David would save God's people. It was a long, weird, windy road to the throne for God to fulfill those purposes. I am sure that, at times, it felt hopeless. The road was filled with murder, lies, depression, discouragement, and close calls, but God kept his Word to David and fulfilled his purpose for David.

This is a great encouragement for us. As children of God, our God has a good purpose for our life too. He has a role for us to play in growing God's kingdom. I am sure God's purpose for our life is much more modest than David's. We are not going to be a king. Be encouraged. God will fulfill his good purpose for you as we trust and follow him. Just like David, there will undoubtedly be many obstacles along our path. There will be people who are against us, physical obstacles in front of us, or relational disasters littered around us, but none of those things will be able to destroy God's good purpose for your life and mine. Just like David, no matter what happens to us, as we faithfully walk with Jesus,

God the Father will fulfill his good purposes for us. This reminds me of words Paul said to the Philippians.

And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. Philippians 1:6 (ESV)

The good work God began in the Philippians' lives, of saving them and making them like Jesus, would be followed through on and completed by Jesus. Nothing would be able to derail God's good plans. That was true for David. That was true for the Philippians. Be encouraged. That is also true for us.

Let's turn to this chapter. This chapter breaks into four parts.

- 5:1-5 - The Coronation of the King
- 5:6-10 - The Capital for the King
- 5:11-16 - The Consolidation of the Kingdom
- 5:17-25 - The Conquests of the Kingdom

The Coronation Of The King

Then all the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and said, "Behold, we are your bone and flesh. In times past, when Saul was king over us, it was you who led out and brought in Israel. And the LORD said to you, 'You shall be shepherd of my people Israel, and you shall be prince over Israel.'" 2 Samuel 5:1-2 (ESV)

It says all the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron. Remember that Hebron was David's capital city in the southern tribe of Judah. This does not mean everyone literally came. It means the elders came. The leaders of the tribes came to David. This will become apparent when we get to verse 3.

The reason they asked David to be their king is that they finally came to their senses. They understood that any attempt to recognize a different leader for their life, such as Abner or Ish-Bosheth, instead of God's chosen king, would be foolishness from beginning to end. Giving their life to any king other than God's

chosen king would end in disaster. They should have known better than to try to live life by following a king of their own choosing instead of the king God had chosen for them.

Similarly, when we come to Jesus, who is God's king for us today, and we ask him to be the king of our life, in that moment we finally reject all the other kings we have set up in our own heart and all the other idols we have set up in our heart. When we ask Jesus to be our king, we are admitting that every other leader we have followed or hobby we have put in the center of our life instead of Jesus has only ended in disaster, just like it did for the northern kingdom of Israel. Just as the northern kingdom came to their senses and recognized David as God's chosen king for them, as Christians, when we come to Jesus, it involves us coming to our senses and recognizing Jesus, God's chosen king, is the only king for us. Every other king we followed in our life ended in disaster.

In this text, the elders were not just finally coming to their senses and realizing David was the only king that would work in their life. Still, they also gave three reasons why they wanted David. The reasons are ordered from the least significant to the most significant.

1. **A Relational Reason — We are your own flesh and blood.** Literally, we are your bone and flesh. The phrase represents a blood relationship. Going all the way back to Jacob and the patriarchs in the book of Genesis, the Israelites were one family. It made no sense for them to be at war with members of the family. Being at war with our family only destroys our family. In a family conflict, which every family has, somebody needs to come to their

senses. Somebody needs to say enough is enough. We will fight no more. The blood relationship that binds us together is bigger than the differences which seek to tear us apart.

There is a great parallel for us. As Christians, through Jesus, we are made into one family. We are brothers and sisters through Jesus. When brothers and sisters in Christ go to war with one another in the church, many times it is foolishness. In the church, the focus of the church should be unity around Jesus and the mission of reaching people with Christ, not bickering with our brothers and sisters in Christ over preferences and style.

Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. 1 Corinthians 12:27 (ESV)

As Christians, like the northern and southern kingdoms, we have acknowledged Jesus as our king. This means that in the church, we want to avoid a civil war within us. We want to be laser-focused on the mission of reaching people with Jesus who are outside of us.

- 2. An Experiential Reason — In the past, you led Israel on its military campaigns.** In the past, when Saul was king over them, who led the Israelite military out and in? It was David who led them to military success. David was not just family, but he was their savior. David saved them from Goliath, the Philistines, and many other battles. David had a long-standing reputation as the one who could save them from their enemies. It made sense to have David as their king because he demonstrated his ability to be their savior.

As Christians, in a similar way, when we come to Jesus, we are not just recognizing that Jesus took on flesh and became one of us. We are also

recognizing that Jesus is our savior. Jesus is the only one who can defeat our enemies, enemies that are far deadlier than the Philistines. They are the enemies of Satan, sin, and death. Jesus is the one that has conquered all thrones, rules, dominions, and authorities. Just as the northern tribes asked David to be their king because he could save them from the Philistines, as Christians, when we come to Jesus, and ask him to be the king in our life, we are recognizing he is the only one who can save us from the greatest enemies of all, Satan, sin, and death. Christians admit they have tried to save themselves from sin and death in their life, but they are powerless. Only Jesus can save us from sin and death.

3. **A Biblical Reason — You shall shepherd my people Israel.** As we had seen, a long time ago, back in 1 Samuel 16, God declared David would be king. At this point, the people in the northern tribes finally recognized God's word as true. David is the one God declared to be king. Instead of rebelling against God's Word and making their own king, they decided to obey God's Word and recognized David as their rightful god-given king. They are no longer rebelling against God's Word, but they are now going to believe God's word.

In a similar way, isn't this what happens to us when we become Christians? Instead of mocking the Bible as an old book, Christians actually believe God's words as true. The desire of our life is to obey the Word of God because we know it is true, rather than buck against it. This is what the

northern tribes were doing when they asked David to be their king. It is also what we do when we ask Jesus to be our king.

So there is a great similarity between the northern tribes finally declaring David to be their king and us asking Jesus to be our king.

So 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. 2 Samuel 5:3 (ESV)

If you are following, this is the third time David is anointed king. First, it was by God through the prophet Samuel in 1 Samuel 16. Then it was by the one southern tribe of Judah in 2 Samuel 2. Now it is by all the tribes in 2 Samuel 5.

In my study, as I thought about this moment in David's life, when he was on his knees with the elders pouring the anointing oil over his head, this was an overwhelming moment. It was a time when David was overwhelmed by the realization that God kept his word. In the past, there were many times when becoming king felt hopeless, but in spite of all the obstacles and difficulties, God ordered David's life so God's promises were kept in David's life.

This precious truth wasn't just true for David, but it is true for each one of us. The good promises God makes to us in his Word, he will be faithful to keep for us, no matter how strange the twists and turns in our life become.

For example, look what the Bible tells us about the forgiveness of our sins.

Let it be known to you therefore, brothers, that through this man (Jesus) forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, Acts 13:38 (ESV)

My friends, no matter how far you have fallen, no matter how wicked you have become, no matter how much guilt and shame ride on your shoulders this morning, you need to know that when you turn to Jesus, he will forgive all of your

sins. He will separate your sins from you as far as the east is from the west. This promise seems too good to believe, yet it is true. When we turn to Jesus, God forgives all of the sin of our past, our present, and even our future. God is so good to us.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. 2 Corinthians 5:17 (ESV)

When we turn to Jesus with a life full of sin, Jesus does not just forgive our sin, but he makes us into new people. He cuts off the sin and the shame of our past. He changes the desires of our heart. He changes the longings in our life. The sin we once loved, we now hate. The Bible we once avoided we now love because God's Holy Spirit speaks to us through God's living words.

This nugget of truth seems too good to be true, but God keeps his word. It is true! We are born again when we come to Jesus. We are literally made into a different person who has been born through Jesus. These promises of God seem too good to be true, but they are true! Let's get back to our story.

David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years. At Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months, and at Jerusalem he reigned over all Israel and Judah thirty-three years. 2 Samuel 5:4–5 (ESV)

This gives us a nice breakdown. David was 30 when he began to reign in Hebron. He reigned until age 70 in Jerusalem.

A Capital For The King.

Having become king, David needed a capital suitable for the king of this reunited nation. Hebron, where David reigned in Judah, was too far south and would have favored the southern kingdom of Judah. Gibeah, where Saul previously reigned in the north, would have favored the northern tribes. David

needed to find a new territory, a neutral territory between the northern and southern kingdoms.

The answer lay in the one remaining independent Canaanite city in the Promised Land, known as the city of the Jebusites. We call it Jerusalem. It was situated on a mountain called Zion, right between the southern tribe of Judah and the northern tribe of Benjamin.



This Jebusite fortress was a national disgrace. It symbolized Israel's failure to complete the conquest of the Promised Land. God promised to give Israel the seven Canaanite nations in the Promised Land. Israel was to devote them to destruction and not allow them to spread idolatry and wickedness among God's people. At one time, most of the land was conquered, but since the time of Joshua, the city of the Jebusites remained unconquered. It was an island of paganism and idolatry in the Promised Land.

If we flip back and look at earlier biblical history, we see the Israelites tried to conquer this city multiple times, but each time they failed.

But the people of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites who lived in Jerusalem, so the Jebusites have lived with the people of Benjamin in Jerusalem to this day. Judges 1:21 (ESV)

Remember that Benjamin was a tribe part of the northern kingdom just to the north of Jerusalem. They failed to conquer this city.

But the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the people of Judah could not drive out, so the Jebusites dwell with the people of Judah at Jerusalem to this day. Joshua 15:63 (ESV)

The Israelites from the tribe of Judah also failed to conquer this city. Judah was part of the southern kingdom and they bordered this city on the south side. Jerusalem was populated by Jebusites. They were called, “the inhabitants of the land.” This means the native people. The inhabitants of the land were the people Israel was commanded to drive out of the Promised Land. This phrase repeatedly appears earlier in Israel’s history. They were the people that were to be driven from the land because of their sinfulness. God did not want that sinfulness among his people and rubbing off on his people.

And I will set your border from the Red Sea to the Sea of the Philistines, and from the wilderness to the Euphrates, for I will give the inhabitants of the land into your hand, and you shall drive them out before you. Exodus 23:31 (ESV)

This city of the Jebusites was a city the Israelites were to conquer, but they failed to conquer. How wicked were the Jebusites? They practiced child sacrifice, witchcraft, and sexual perversions of all kinds. These are not the kind of people God wanted to influence his people in the Promised Land.

Interestingly, we have one earlier reference to Jerusalem in the books of 1 and 2 Samuel. You may remember it. It was after David killed Goliath, when he was a boy. We read this.

And David took the head of the Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem,... 1 Samuel 17:54 (ESV)

Why did David take Goliath’s huge head and drop it off in Jerusalem? What was that about? This is an exciting part of the story.

God promised to help his people conquer the Promised Land. He would give his people victory over the powerful inhabitants of the land if they would step forward in faith and fight them. It didn’t matter how great the opposition was

against God's people; when they acted in faith and trusted God's promise of victory, God would provide victory despite overwhelming odds.

When the spies first went into the Promised Land, you will remember that ten of the spies were overcome with fear and believed they couldn't conquer the land. Two of the spies, Caleb and Joshua, let their faith overcome their fear. In spite of the overwhelming odds against them, they believed God would keep his word. God would give his people victory in the Promised Land. You know how the story ended. The nation followed the lead of the ten unbelieving spies instead of the faith of Caleb and Joshua. As a result, the nation wandered for 40 years until they were dead and another generation replaced them. Amazingly God sustained Caleb and Joshua. They led the new generation in the conquest of the Promised Land. God kept his word and in spite of the odds against them, God gave them victory. At that time, Joshua never finished the conquest of the Promised Land.

Fast forward to David. In 1 Samuel 17, he came upon Goliath and the Philistines. The Philistines were inhabitants of the land, a people God promised to assist his people in wiping out. Goliath looked unbeatable. David had faith and believed God would keep his word. Just as God was faithful in the past to Joshua and Caleb when they were old to give them victory over the inhabitants of the Promised Land that God commanded them to wipe out, God would be faithful to David when he was very young and give him victory over Goliath, the unconquerable giant. David stepped forward in faith that God would keep his word and give him victory against Goliath and the Philistines who were inhabitants of the land, and God kept his word.

After killing Goliath, David dropped off Goliath's massive head in Jerusalem, this Canaanite stronghold. It was a way of saying, God keeps his word. He enabled me to conquer an unconquerable giant who was an inhabitant of the land to be destroyed. In the future, I will be back and I will conquer an unconquerable city that is filled with the inhabitants of the land who are to be destroyed. God is alive. He is still keeping his promises. He keeps his word. Now that David is king, the man who conquered the unconquerable giant took on the last Canaanite outpost in the unconquerable city.

And the king and his men went to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, who said to David, "You will not come in here, but the blind and the lame will ward you off"—thinking, "David cannot come in here." 2 Samuel 5:6 (ESV)

The text emphasizes that the people of this city are inhabitants of the land. They were Canaanites who were to be conquered. David sets out to finish the job Joshua started, in faith and trust that God will keep his promises, David prepared to attack Jerusalem, the undefeated city.

When the Jebusites saw David coming, they laughed. Nobody had conquered the city for hundreds of years. They claimed all they needed was blind and lame people to defend the city. You can guess what happens next. David made them eat their words.

Nevertheless, David took the stronghold of Zion, that is, the city of David. 2 Samuel 5:7 (ESV)

The next verse tells us a little about how he did it.

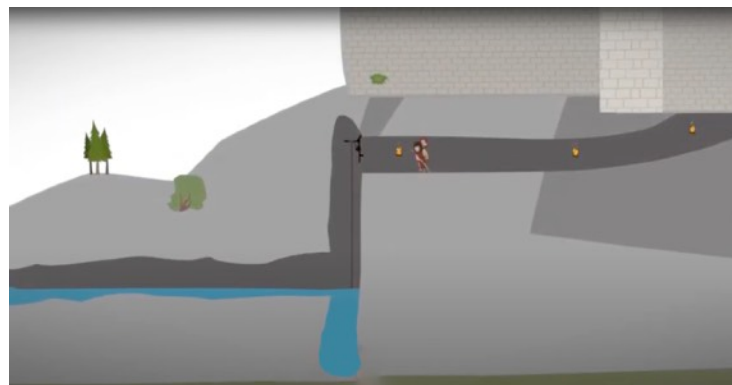
And David said on that day, "Whoever would strike the Jebusites, let him get up the water shaft to attack 'the lame and the blind,' who are hated by David's soul." Therefore it is said, "The blind and the lame shall not come into the house." 2 Samuel 5:8 (ESV)

First, let's deal with David's hatred of the lame and the blind. Some people think David hated people with handicaps. That is not the right way to read this. The Jebusites claimed that all they needed to defend the city was a group of handicapped people. David said, "If all you have defending the city are handicapped people, those are the people I hate. They are the people I am going after." As proof that David had nothing against blind and lame people, remember Mephibosheth. We met him last week. He was King Saul's only grandson. He was lame. In upcoming chapters, David will have him as a permanent guest at his dinner table because he loves him, even though he was lame.

This verse gives us an idea how David conquered the unconquerable city. It was the water shaft. Jerusalem was built on top of a hill with steep slopes on three sides around the city plus high walls on the edge of the city. The problem was that the water for the city came from a spring know as the Gihon spring, but it was found outside the city. The city had a portion of it that was expanded to go around the spring to protect the spring. In the past, the people of the city tunneled through the stone under the city and built a way for the water to flow from the spring in the valley along a deep underground shaft bringing water under the rock into the city. They also tunneled from the inside of the city, through the rock down to right

above the water shaft.

There they made a 45-foot-long tunnel straight down to connect the two tunnels



together. This 45-foot tall tunnel is known as Warren's shaft after the name of the archeologist that discovered it. It served as security for the city because it was impossible for anyone to climb up this shaft to make it into the upper tunnel that led to the city. Since David grew up in this area, he knew about this secret water tunnel and the straight climb that

connected the upper and lower tunnels.

That tunnel was their way into the city.

The details in 2 Samuel end, but there is a parallel passage in 1 Chronicles that tells us more about the conquering of the city.



David said, "Whoever strikes the Jebusites first shall be chief and commander." And Joab the son of Zeruiah went up first, so he became chief. 1 Chronicles 11:6 (ESV)

David put out a challenge. Whoever could make it through the water vein and climb 45 feet up the sheer rock face wall without getting detected so they could open the city gates would become chief. Joab, his army commander, volunteered for the task and completed the work. If you have seen the television show American Ninja Warrior, Joab made those guys look like weaklings by climbing straight up that rock wall without being detected.

While this is history, and it looks backward, it also looks forward. The Bible tells us that while David was God's chosen king for his people and that David was the one chosen by God to save God's people, David was not a perfect king. Jerusalem will not be a perfect kingdom. Today, we have a better king and a better kingdom. Our king is known as the Son of David. His name is Jesus. The

blind and the lame are not excluded from his kingdom. They are healed in his kingdom.

And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he healed them. Matthew 21:14 (ESV)

Jesus reigns not over the old Jerusalem but the new Jerusalem, which is a perfect city, kept in heaven by God. One day Jesus will reign over us on the new heaven and earth. At that time, the new Jerusalem will be Jesus' capital city. Look how much better the new Jerusalem will be that Jesus will lead, that you and me are a part of, compared to the old Jerusalem that David conquered and called his home.

And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." Revelation 21:2–4 (ESV)

A city with no more mourning, crying, pain, tears, or death because Jesus is in charge. It is a city where the blind and the lame are not excluded from David's house, but they have been healed in Jesus' house.

Let's return to the story and see what happened in Jerusalem after David conquered Jerusalem and made it his home.

And David lived in the stronghold and called it the city of David. And David built the city all around from the Millo inward. 2 Samuel 5:9 (ESV)

David built up the city from the Millo inward. I don't have a good photo for you. The Millo was a stone-stepped outer wall of the city. David expanded the city from that direction inward.

A thought that came to mind when I was studying is that this was not just the physical reconfiguration of Jerusalem that took place when David took over the city but there was a complete spiritual transformation of the city. The Jebusites were fierce, bloodthirsty people who practiced child sacrifice, extreme sexual immorality, and witchcraft. David spiritually transformed the city. He renamed it Jerusalem, which means city of peace. The city that was famous for its wickedness became famous as a place where knowledge of God could be found. It became the location of the temple where God's presence dwelled.

This is not just a picture of the kind of spiritual transformation God can make in a city, but it is also a picture of the kind of transformation God can do to hard hearts, just like yours and mine. We started out far from God. We were people in love with wickedness, godlessness, sexual immorality, and sin. Jesus, the son of David, made a way into our hard and impenetrable hearts. Jesus became king of our life. Jesus transformed our hearts into a place where God's very presence dwells.

It doesn't matter how far from God you have run or what a wicked and godless place your heart has become. Jesus can conquer a hard heart. Jesus can transform a heart. Just as David transformed the city of the Jebusites from an outpost of sin and idolatry into the very place where God's presence dwelled, Jesus can do the same thing for your heart today.

The Consolidation Of David's Kingdom

[And David became greater and greater, for the LORD, the God of hosts, was with him. 2 Samuel 5:10 \(ESV\)](#)

This is the key to everything. David knew his success was not due to David. It was due to God. Every bit of success he had in his life, he gave God credit for it. What a lesson for us. Whenever we have success in our lives, how should we respond? Like David, we must give God credit.

If you were watching the NCAA wrestling championships, you know there are some great Christian wrestlers out there. After they win and the media puts a microphone in their face, the first thing out of their mouth is giving God the credit for any success they had on the mat. What a great life-lesson we can learn from David. Whenever we have success, especially if we are given the opportunity to talk about our success, that is our chance to point our finger to Jesus who has given us our success.

And Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar trees, also carpenters and masons who built David a house. 2 Samuel 5:11 (ESV)

The point is that God didn't just exalt David in Jerusalem and in the land of Israel, but God also exalted David in the eyes of his neighbors. Neighbors like Hiram, king of Tyre. Tyre was a Phoenician city about 100 miles north of Jerusalem. It was not a Canaanite city. It was not a city God's people were to conquer. It was a wealthy city that took notice of David's success and respected David and his success. They even brought gifts to him to win his favor.

And David knew that the LORD had established him king over Israel, and that he had exalted his kingdom for the sake of his people Israel. 2 Samuel 5:12 (ESV)

David realized his kingdom was not for his glory but for the glory of God and his people. David realized his kingship and his success was not an end in itself. It was given to David to bring benefit to God's people. This is refreshing. David realized the power God gave him as king was not for his benefit but to

serve God's people. This is what good leadership is about. It is about serving the people, not using the people.

When we look at our government, this is always the challenge that comes with anyone in a position of power. It is so easy for that position and that power to go to somebody's head. It is so easy for people to think they are something special. It is so easy to think power and government is there for them to serve themselves. That is wrong. A position of power is to better serve the people. It is refreshing to read that David got this right.

For anyone in a leadership position over others, this is a great application for us to follow. Are we using our authority to better serve ourselves or to better serve the people God has put us in authority over?

There is a third blessing of David's reign,... but it is coupled with a sign of trouble. Earlier, we learned David had six sons born by six different wives when he ruled in Hebron. David was a serial polygamist. That was not the way the Bible told him to live. It was not how most people in that day lived, but it was culturally acceptable for people in positions of power to take multiple wives.

The same David, who refused to draw glory to himself with his high position and authority, did not restrain himself from sexual pleasures that were forbidden in God's Word. David had a problem. He had a wandering eye. David knew God's law, which specifically told God's king to not have multiple wives, but he violated it anyway.

And he (the king) shall not acquire many wives for himself, lest his heart turn away, nor shall he acquire for himself excessive silver and gold. Deuteronomy 17:17 (ESV)

Look what we read about next in the story of David's rise to power.

And David took more concubines and wives from Jerusalem, after he came from Hebron, and more sons and daughters were born to David. And these are the names of those who were born to him in Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon, Ibhah, Elishua, Nepheg, Japhia, Elishama, Eliada, and Eliphelet. 2 Samuel 5:13–16 (ESV)

This was a sign of a serious problem. David has 11 more children. Notice where some of these wives came from. They came from Jerusalem. While we cannot be sure about this, it is possible to see this as David marrying some of the Jebusite women in the city of Jerusalem after he conquered the city. If so, David would be unequally yoked. He would be marrying these women for lust and looks, rather than godliness and character. David has already done this once. In Hebron, he married Maacah, daughter of Talmi, king of Geshur. She was not part of the people of God, and the son born to her was Absalom, who was David's most problematic child, the one who tried to overthrow his throne.

The other thing that is unusual here is very subtle, but it is worth noting. In Hebrew, you always list what is most important or highest ranking first in a list. We would expect it to read that David took more wives and concubines. It is backward. It reads that David took more concubines and wives, putting concubines first in the list, the position of importance.

Concubines were roughly equivalent to mistresses. They were a woman to have a sexual relationship with but did not have all the responsibilities of a wife. This is a subtle hint that David is taking women, not for wives, but to satisfy his lusts. He just wanted them. David was in bondage to his lusts. Having more and more women did not satisfy him sexually. All it did was inflame him with lust for more. Lust is like eating chips and salsa in a Mexican restaurant. You tell yourself you need just one chip, but all that does is give you an appetite for more chips

and salsa. Before you realize it, you pig out on chips and salsa and are full before your meal reaches the table. That was David with his lusts.

We see great godliness in David's life, but in the area of his lusts, he did not have them under control. David sees a woman and cannot restrain himself from having that woman. By the time we get to 2 Samuel 16, that will lead him to see Bathsheba, who is another man's wife, but he won't restrain himself from having her. It didn't matter that she was the wife of one of his greatest and most loyal soldiers. After David impregnates her, he kills her husband to cover his sin and be sure he has her. At that point, God puts his foot down, and the amazing kingdom of David begins to crumble for the rest of the book.

Friends, this is a very practical admonition about the danger of allowing ourselves to lust. Your life may look amazingly good on the outside, just like David's, but if we are engaged in lust in our hearts, we can hide it for a while, but unless we call it sin, then repent of it, it will be like cancer. It will spread through our life and destroy our life and marriage, just like it did to David.

We have all seen celebrity pastors or Christian leaders who, like David, are gifted by God and used by God in amazing ways, but at the peak of all the good things God is doing in their life, we hear of one or more affairs that ruin them. The affair did not start just before they fell. The affair started in their hearts years before when they allowed themselves to begin engaging in unrestrained lust, just like David did.

If you are struggling with lust today, my words to you are first to call lust sin. Our culture calls lust normal. It calls lust healthy. It calls lust fun. The Bible

says something different. It tells us to take every thought captive and bring our thoughts in obedience to Christ. Second, after identifying lust as sin, we need to confess our lust to Jesus as sin and repent of our lust. We need to ask Jesus to forgive our sins and to help us love Jesus more than we love our sins. Third, we need to learn to bounce our eyes. We cannot help the first look when someone attractive or something seductive is put before us. We can do something about the second look. Sin doesn't begin with the first look. It begins when we choose to take that second look. It is after the first look that we need to learn to bounce our eyes and look someplace else. Fourth, we need to learn to run from things that can trip us up. Paul tells Timothy to flee from youthful desires. When Potiphar's wife was attempting to seduce Joseph, he ran. When faced with sexual sin, we are to run from it, not negotiate with it. If we negotiate, we lose every time.

The conquest of David's enemies.

If you have been with us since we started 1 Samuel, you will remember the Philistines. These people were located on the coast and always working their way inland, trying to conquer Israel. They were a constant problem for the Israelites. We first met them at the beginning of 1 Samuel 2. They conquered portions of Israel and were repulsed by Israel many times. The last time we heard from them was when they defeated the northern kingdom of Israel and killed King Saul at the end of 1 Samuel. Since then, they held a large section of land in the northern kingdom of Israel. For the last seven years, Abner tried to kick them out but was unsuccessful. Ish-Bosheth also tried to kick them out of the Promised Land but was unsuccessful.

When David took leadership over all the tribes of Israel that was different. David's leadership was a concern for the Philistines. In the past, when King Saul was in charge, David was the one who consistently defeated them. The Philistines remembered that when he was only a boy, David killed Goliath. When the Philistines heard that David has become king, that was a threat. They wanted to get rid of him in a hurry.

When the Philistines heard that David had been anointed king over Israel, all the Philistines went up to search for David... 2 Samuel 5:17a (ESV)

We don't know the precise chronology of how the Philistine aggression links up with the timeline of David's conquering of Jerusalem, but this is somewhat concurrent.

...But David heard of it and went down to the stronghold. 2 Samuel 5:17b (ESV)

There is a stronghold in Jerusalem. David may have gone there. In the past, when David ran from King Saul, he hid in the caves of Adullam, which were near Jerusalem. That may have been the location of the stronghold where he hid.

Now the Philistines had come and spread out in the Valley of Rephaim. 2 Samuel 5:18 (ESV)

The Valley of Rephaim means the valley of the giants. That was a bad memory. This is a large valley, and the Philistines filled it. They plan to attack the area of Jerusalem. This was a strategic attack. If they were successful, they



would slice through the northern and southern kingdoms in half, returning the divide between the northern and southern kingdoms crippling the strength of Israel and undermining David as king. David and his forces were outnumbered

and overwhelmed. He took the wisest course of action. He turned to God for answers.

And David inquired of the LORD, "Shall I go up against the Philistines? Will you give them into my hand?" ... 2 Samuel 5:19a (ESV)

This is something we see David doing, but King Saul neglected to do. David prayerfully asked God for directions. King Saul did what he wanted without stopping to see what God wanted. How David asked God this question is not as important as the fact that he stopped to ask God the question. Most likely, he used the Urim and Thummin that were part of Abiathar, the high priests' garment. That was a way you could ask God questions and discern God's will.

...And the LORD said to David, "Go up, for I will certainly give the Philistines into your hand." 2 Samuel 5:19b (ESV)

The important application for us to notice is that David turned to God in prayer. He didn't do just what he wanted to do. We don't have the Urim and Thummin and a high priest named Abiathar to ask God questions. What should we do? First, we read God's Word asking God to show us his will from his Word. We also pray, asking God to show us the right passages in the Bible that pertain to the questions we have. Third, we ask God to work through his providence opening and closing doors of opportunity, so we only go where God wants us to go.

And David came to Baal-perazim, and David defeated them there. And he said, "The LORD has broken through my enemies before me like a breaking flood." Therefore the name of that place is called Baal-perazim. 2 Samuel 5:20 (ESV)

David and his men slaughtered the much larger Philistine force. God was with them. They even renamed the place Baal-perazim. That means "the Lord has broken through like a flood." If you have seen what a flood does, like the

Tsunami that hit Japan, that is what it looked like when David and his army attacked the Philistines. When God was with them. They wiped them out.

And the Philistines left their idols there, and David and his men carried them away. 2 Samuel 5:21 (ESV)

The Philistines were so overwhelmed in the battle that they left behind the idols they worshiped, which they carried into battle. David and his men carried them away. I wondered, what did David and his men do with the idols? This battle is also recorded in the book of 1 Chronicles. There we find out what happened to the idols.

And they left their gods there, and David gave command, and they were burned. 1 Chronicles 14:12 (ESV)

As the Philistines watched, the Israelites used the Philistine idols to start a campfire that the Israelites used to cook their dinner and roasted some marshmallows. If you were a Philistine, and your idols were used as firewood for the Israelite's dinner, that had to hurt.

As you would expect, the Philistines were shocked at their defeat. With their large army, how could they lose? They regrouped and came back with an even bigger army to try again!

And the Philistines came up yet again and spread out in the Valley of Rephaim. 2 Samuel 5:22 (ESV)

Just like last time, David prayed to God, asking what he should do, which is what we should do, especially when overwhelmed.

And when David inquired of the LORD, he said, "You shall not go up; go around to their rear, and come against them opposite the balsam trees. And when you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees, then rouse yourself, for then the LORD has gone out before you to strike down the army of the Philistines." 2 Samuel 5:23–24 (ESV)

The question was the same, but God's answer was different. This time it would be an attack from a different angle. They were to wait until they heard the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees next to them. Then they were to attack. Then they were to fight. The sound in the trees was the sound of the armies of heaven going out before them to battle to give them victory.

And David did as the LORD commanded him, and struck down the Philistines from Geba to Gezer. 2 Samuel 5:25 (ESV)

This final verse gives us an idea of how badly defeated the Philistines were that day. Geba was six miles north of Jerusalem. Gezer was 20 miles west of Jerusalem. Even though the Philistines had a much larger army, David, with the army of God fighting on his side, kicked the Philistines off Israelite soil knocking them back by twenty miles. The Philistines have been a thorn in the side of Israel since 1 Samuel 4. Now, finally, they were decisively defeated.

I bet the Israelites wished they asked David to be their king earlier. It would have saved at least 7 years of heartache, pain, and civil war.

Application

This week, we prepare to remember Jesus' final week of life. We will remember Jesus dying on the cross for our sins. We will remember Jesus rising from the grave to new life, not just for himself but also for you and me.

While David's kingship was amazing as he saved his people and established Israel as a nation, what David accomplished is nothing compared to what Jesus, the Son of David, accomplished for you and me. Jesus is a better savior than David. Jesus gives us a new Jerusalem, that is better than David's old Jerusalem. Jesus defeated Satan, sin, and death, which is better than

David's defeat of the Philistines. Jesus is a perfect and flawless king, unlike David who was great but lived in addiction to his lusts.

If you were impressed by the rise of David as king, this week let us be more impressed by the death and resurrection of Jesus our king. He is far better, and achieved far more, than David ever did or ever could. For that, we are grateful.



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