

2 Samuel 8 — The Conquests Of The Kingdom

May 7, 2023

Good morning CrossWinds! If you are new, it is great to have you. At CrossWinds, our mission is “Reaching People with Jesus.” I want to begin by telling you one of the ways our mission is taking place through ordinary people like you and me. On the Spencer Campus, last summer, they held an off-site worship service under a tent in a park. As a church, when you change the location or the time of Sunday services, no matter how many times you tell people about the change, there are always people who either won’t hear it or remember it. This is one of those stories.

On the Sunday that the Spencer Campus worshipped off-site, two people forgot about the change. They showed up to an empty church building at the same time. One was an older lady who drove a car. The other was an Iowa Lakes College student from Brazil who rode his bicycle. Talking to one another, they both realized what happened. The older lady knew there was no way for the college student to make it to the worship service across town on time, so she offered to give him a ride. That was the beginning of something fun. Since then, that elderly woman has sort of adopted the college student. She gave him rides to church in the winter so he didn’t have to walk in the snow. She gives him rides to Walmart. She bakes him cookies and loaves of bread, which she drops off at his dorm.

In the dorms, this produced a fair amount of jealousy. Other college students are asking how they can get an American grandma. They want fresh-

baked cookies too. This student simply says, come with me to church on Sunday. Maybe you will find one.

The best part of this is that the new location of the Spencer Campus is across the parking lot from the college dormitories!

Reaching people with Jesus isn't about doing something spectacular. It can be as simple as seeing a need in someone's life, then caring enough to meet it. It can be as simple as offering someone a ride to church. It can be as simple as offering someone a ride to Walmart. It might be as simple as sharing fresh-baked cookies with a hungry young adult. That is all it takes.

At CrossWinds, we often say, "Good works create goodwill, which opens the door to people hearing the good news." That story is this principle in action.

This morning, we are back to our studies in 2 Samuel. We are in 2 Samuel 8. Earlier in 2 Samuel, David became king over all of Israel. He drove the Philistines out of the land. He conquered Jerusalem and set it up as his capital city. He brought the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem and returned the worship of God to the center of the nation's life.

For the last two weeks, we looked at 2 Samuel 7. In that chapter, David was grateful to God for all he had done for him. David wanted to build God a house, a temple for the ark. God put a stop to those plans. Instead of David building God a house, God planned to build David a house. Not a house made with bricks and wood, a house which was the dynasty of David, sometimes called the house of David. God promised David that one of his descendants would always sit on the throne of Israel.

In 2 Samuel 7, God also promised to send one unique descendent. This person would be biologically descended from David, but they would also have God as their father. They would be known as the Son of God. God would set up his kingdom, and his kingdom would last forever. This is one of the clearest prophecies about Jesus in the Old Testament. Multiple times the New Testament claims the fulfillment of this promise to David took place in Jesus.

2 Samuel 8 begins three chapters where we see David at his best. In this chapter, he will crush his enemies and bring further peace and prosperity to Israel. He will show himself to be a good administrator. In 2 Samuel 9, David is seen as a man of integrity and compassion. After this, at the peak of his life, in 2 Samuel 11, David suffers a disastrous moral failure with a woman named Bathsheba. He tries to cover his sin by murdering her husband. This is a reminder of Proverbs 16:18, which tells us that pride comes before a fall.

This is a great period in David's life followed by a sudden crash.

Background

Essential background for understanding this chapter is to know that God promised Abraham, Moses, and Joshua that he would give his people the Promised Land. He even gave them the dimensions of the Promised Land. Up to this point in Israel's history, the nation only possessed a portion of it. In 2 Samuel 5, David pushed the Philistines out of the land of Israel, but the land God gave Israel was much larger than they currently possessed. Under David, for the first time, Israel will conquer the full extent of the Promised Land that God promised to them many years before.

Look what God promised Abraham in Genesis.

On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, “To your offspring I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates,...” Genesis 15:18 (ESV)

At this point, they haven’t possessed the area north to the Euphrates River and the area south to the Nile River.



Every place on which the sole of your foot treads shall be yours. Your territory shall be from the wilderness to the Lebanon and from the River, the river Euphrates, to the western sea. Deuteronomy 11:24 (ESV)

Here we see another reference to the Euphrates River, which was north of Israel’s current territory. We also see a reference to the Western Sea. That was the area controlled by the Philistines. That was also given to the Israelites to be part of the Promised Land. We see God speaking of giving the same area to his people again later in history when God speaks to Joshua.

From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun shall be your territory. Joshua 1:4 (ESV)

The sun rises in the east and sets in the west. That is another way of referencing the territory of the Philistines by the sea. It is actually Israel’s territory and part of the full amount of the Promised Land.

Now that God’s king is on the throne and God’s king was setting up God’s kingdom, the enemies of God’s king and kingdom must be dealt with. The battles in this chapter are far more than land disputes. David is the new Joshua who returns to the unfinished task of conquering the Promised Land.

Almost all of the nations David will defeat in this chapter have set themselves up as enemies of God and enemies of God's people. David was not just conquering the Promised Land. He was eliminating the enemies of God who set themselves up against God and his people.

The other thing we should notice before we begin our study is that there is a parallel between David's victories and the freedom David won for God's people in the Old Testament as God's anointed king and the victories of Jesus in the New Testament. Jesus destroyed the enemies of God and his people. Jesus brought peace to a world opposed to the enemies of God. Jesus blessed his people.

David conquered the nations around Israel.

The Philistines

After this David defeated the Philistines and subdued them,.... 2 Samuel 8:1 (ESV)

Who were the Philistines? They occupied much of the coastal plain to the west of Israel's heartland. They were ethnically distant from the Israelites but closely related to the Egyptians. They sailed to this area, planted a colony, and grew to prominence on the coast in the days of the judges. We first hear about them in the book of Judges, chapter 3. By the time of Samson, in Judges 13 to 16, they were a persistent enemy of Israel. In the days of Samuel, they defeated Israel and captured the Ark of the Covenant. God subsequently humbled them



and their God by inflicting a plague of tumors and mice on them until they gave the Ark back. Constant attacks from the Philistines were a big part of what led Israel to ask for a king. They wanted a king to lead them into battle against the Philistines. The king they demanded was Saul. His job was to deliver the nation from the Philistine threat. He never accomplished that. At the end of 1 Samuel, he died in battle against the Philistines, leaving the Philistines occupying much of Israel's northern and central territory.

The next king was David. David was God's chosen king. He distinguished himself in a battle against the Philistines by always beating them. David's first battle with a Philistine was against the biggest and baddest Philistine out there named Goliath. Even though David was only a teenager, God enabled David to take him down with only a sling and one well-placed rock to the head that went into his brain. Since then, God consistently gave David victory against the Philistines. In 2 Samuel 5, David defeated the Philistines twice, pushing them out of Israel's territory.

In this chapter, David took the battle to the Philistine homeland to eliminate the Philistine threat once and for all.

It says David subdued them. The Hebrew word for subdued is a strong word. It means complete humiliation. David completely defeated the Philistine nation, crippling them for good.

...and [David took Metheg-ammah out of the hand of the Philistines. 2 Samuel 8:1 \(ESV\)](#)

What is the city Metheg-ammah? If it is a Philistine city, it is an unknown city. Why would this city be singled out and mentioned in the text? I am about to

disagree with the translators of the ESV, which I do cautiously and humbly. I don't think this is the name of a city. In Hebrew, it means "the bridle of the mother city." A parallel account of David's victories, which is found in 1 Chronicles 18, tells us that the mother city of the Philistines was Gath. The mother city is another way of saying the capital city.

After this David defeated the Philistines and subdued them, and he took Gath and its villages out of the hand of the Philistines. 1 Chronicles 18:1 (ESV)

The bridle of the city is a way of speaking about control of the city, just as the bridle controls a horse, David controlled this city. David conquered this city so completely that he took control of the Philistine nation. This would be like Russia or China taking control of Washington DC and New York City. That would devastate our country. David's conquest of the Philistines was so overwhelming that while they will occasionally reappear in Israel's history, in the future, they are so weak that they never posed a threat to Israel again.

The Moabites

And he defeated Moab... 2 Samuel 8:2 (ESV)

The Moabites held territory southeast of Jerusalem on the other side of the Dead Sea. They play a very different role from the Philistines in biblical history. They were descendants of Moab, a son of Abraham's nephew Lot. The



Moabites were relatively close kinsmen to the Israelites. While biologically

related, they were consistently hostile to the Israelites. In the days of Moses, when the Israelites were on their journey to the Promised Land, the Israelites requested passage through Moabite territory. The Moabites refused. Later in Israel's history, they sent Moabite women into the nation of Israel to seduce the men away from their wives and turn their hearts to worship foreign gods. That almost worked. There were a lot of dead men by the time that was over. Later King Barak of Moab hired a prophet named Balaam to curse the nation of Israel. We read about that in Numbers 22-24. Contrary to Balak's plan, Balaam found his very words altered by God, so he blessed the Israelites instead of cursing them. In part of that prophetic blessing from Balaam's mouth, we read these words.

...a star shall come out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel; it shall crush the forehead of Moab... Numbers 24:17 (ESV)

A star, a scepter, will rise from Israel and destroy the Moabite nation. In 2 Samuel 8, we meet that star, that scepter. It was David. He destroyed the Moabite nation.

In all of this Moabite negativity, there were some remarkable exceptions. A Moabite woman named Ruth turned from her false gods and accepted Israel's God as her savior. The book of Ruth in the Old Testament tells her story. She was King David's great-grandmother. This probably explains why David received help and a place to hide from the king of Moab in his days on the run from King Saul. We read about that in 1 Samuel 22.

When we last saw the Moabites in 1 Samuel, David left his parents with the king of Moab when he returned to the land of Israel to continue living on the

run from King Saul. I don't know if this is true. It is not found in the Bible, but ancient Jewish commentaries on this passage claim the Moabites killed David's parents. If that were true, it helps explain what happened next.

...and he measured them with a line, making them lie down on the ground. Two lines he measured to be put to death, and one full line to be spared... 2 Samuel 8:2b (ESV)

David killed two-thirds of all captured Moabites. Those who lived and died were determined by them lying on the ground and measuring them with a rope. This sounds incredibly harsh. Before we make moral judgments about this, we should note that in this chapter, David's actions are considered good. It seems that what David did was approved by God.

We must remember that the Moabites occupied a portion of the Promised Land. They resisted David's kingship. They didn't welcome him. In the days of Joshua, all of them would have died. David left enough Moabites alive so they could keep the land occupied and work the farms and bring tribute to David, the king of the land. He killed so many of them that they were never again a threat to the nation.

The same will be true with Jesus. One day, when Jesus returns, all the people that will not submit to Jesus' rule will be destroyed. Jesus is the rightful king not just of the Promised Land but of creation itself.

The outcome was that the surviving Moabites became David's subjects and brought tribute to the king.

...And the Moabites became servants to David and brought tribute. 2 Samuel 8:2c (ESV)

I wondered what tribute they brought. In the book of 2 Kings, we find some of the tributes they brought to Israel.

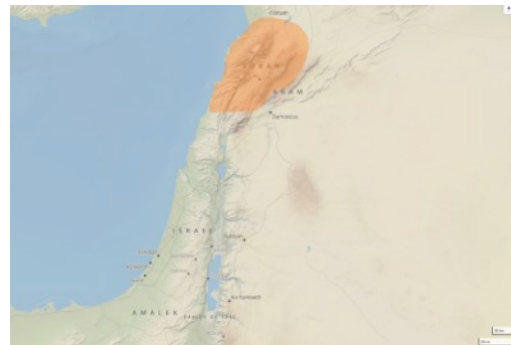
Now Mesha king of Moab was a sheep breeder, and he had to deliver to the king of Israel 100,000 lambs and the wool of 100,000 rams. 2 Kings 3:4 (ESV)

That is a lot of wool and plenty of lambs, which means the power of David and his kingdom was pretty strong.

The Zobahites

David also defeated Hadadezer the son of Rehob, king of Zobah, as he went to restore his power at the river Euphrates. 2 Samuel 8:3 (ESV)

Zobah was a powerful Arabian kingdom far to the north of Israel beyond Damascus. This is only the second time Zobah is mentioned in the Bible. Hadadezer was the king of Zobah. There is some biblical humor in the text. Hadadezer



means “Hadad is my help.” Hadad was an ancient pagan storm deity that the people of Zobah worshipped. Hadad means “the one who smashes.” This god claimed to be good at playing whack-a-mole with his enemies. The problem is that the smashing god didn’t do much smashing when he met the real God of the universe and his chosen king. He ended up getting crushed.

It says Hadadezer was on his way to restore his power at the Euphrates River. How did he lose that? In 2 Samuel 10, we will read about an earlier war between David and Hadadezer, where David soundly defeated the Zobahites. Hadadezer was on his way to the Euphrates River to restore the power he lost to David in an earlier battle. David defeated him again.

And David took from him 1,700 horsemen, and 20,000 foot soldiers. And David hamstringed all the chariot horses but left enough for 100 chariots. 2 Samuel 8:4 (ESV)

There is an interesting line about David hamstringing all the chariot horses except for 100. Why did he do that? How do you hamstring a horse?

Hamstringing a horse involves cutting a tendon in the hoof or knee to leave a horse slightly crippled. It was still fit for agricultural use but it could not be used as a weapon of war. In Deuteronomy 17, God gave Moses his law. He gave Moses some specific commands about Israel's kings. They were forbidden from acquiring many wives, but they were also forbidden from acquiring many horses. Why did God say that?

Many kings found their confidence in their horses and chariots. They were the tanks of the ancient world. A king with many horses and chariots was militarily powerful. Israel's kings were not to acquire many horses and chariots, so they wouldn't place their sense of security for the future in their military strength. They were to place their confidence in God. David writes about this in Psalm 20:7.

Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God. Psalm 20:7 (ESV)

Zobah had many horses and chariots, but they didn't do Hadadezer much good when fighting against God, his king, and his people. It was the same story in the Exodus. When the Israelites left Egypt, they were attacked by the Egyptian army with horses and chariots. It looked like the Israelites would be slaughtered. God intervened by making a way through the Red Sea for his people to pass across on dry ground. When the Egyptian horses and chariots tried to follow, God brought the walls of water crashing upon them. We see the same thing

happening in future battles the Israelites fought. In one battle, God sent a rainstorm against Israel's enemies, so the horses and chariots were stuck in the mud. That made them easy pickings for the Israelites. David had the opportunity to acquire many horses and chariots from the defeated Zobahites, but he hamstrung the horses and turned that opportunity down. He obeyed God's prohibition against many horses. God was the security for his future, not the strength of his military.

Later, Isaiah found fault with people trusting in the military strength of horses and chariots instead of their God.

Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help and rely on horses, who trust in chariots because they are many and in horsemen because they are very strong, but do not look to the Holy One of Israel or consult the LORD! Isaiah 31:1 (ESV)

God told his people that when they went to war against a nation with a large army of horses and chariots, they were not to fear. What mattered was not who had the horses and chariots but who had the God of the universe fighting on their side.

"When you go out to war against your enemies, and see horses and chariots and an army larger than your own, you shall not be afraid of them, for the LORD your God is with you, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt. Deuteronomy 20:1 (ESV)

David, being a righteous king, trusts in God for victory. He turned down the horses and chariots he acquired because he knew having God on his side was enough for victory. That is what matters.

Future kings in Israel will not obey the prohibition against acquiring many horses and chariots. As far as I can tell, Absalom, David's rebel son, was the first

to introduce horses and chariots in Israelite society. Later, Solomon took horses and chariots to an extreme.

Solomon also had 40,000 stalls of horses for his chariots, and 12,000 horsemen. 1 Kings 4:26 (ESV)

After Solomon, horses and chariots were a regular part of warfare for Israel and Judah. Later, when Josiah led the nation in national repentance, part of his reforms involved burning chariots and getting rid of horses. He placed his trust for the future in God's hands. In general terms, at that time, trust in horses and chariots was an unwillingness to trust in the Lord and his ability to defend his people.

There is some great application for us in this. Where do we place our trust as a nation? In the size of our military? As individuals, where do we find security for our future? Is it in the size of our bank account? The only true security we have from our enemies on this earth is our God and savior, Jesus Christ.

The Syrians

To reach Zobah, David had to pass through territory controlled by the Syrians of Damascus.

Damascus was a city 25 miles south of Zobah. This kingdom was a powerful ally of Hadadezer.



And when the Syrians [Hebrew, Aram] of Damascus came to help Hadadezer king of Zobah, David struck down 22,000 men of the Syrians [Hebrews, Aram]. 2 Samuel 8:5 (ESV)

The great irony is that Hadadezer's name means "the god who smashes is my help!" The god who smashes wasn't much help. Hadadezer needed help from the Syrians of Damascus in his fight with David. They didn't prove to be much help. David slaughtered 22,000 of them too.

Then David put garrisons in Aram of Damascus, and the Syrians became servants to David and brought tribute... 2 Samuel 8:6a (ESV)

Garrisons are military outposts. David didn't have enough people to occupy the territory, so he took what was left of the people and put them under his rule. Their job was to bring tribute to Israel. They were to enrich the Israelite nation since David ruled them. Notice that David was conquering the nations around him. He was killing enough of these people that they are not a threat, then leaving some of them to bring tribute to Israel.

Remember, David was defeating powerful nations, nations with chariots and horses, and he chose not to possess those but instead trusted in God to give him victory. This is a repeat of David and Goliath, where a weak David slays a powerful enemy with God's strength. Now we have a weak Israel slaying powerful nations around them that possessed the latest in military technology. The text pauses to remind us that David's amazing victories against powerful adversaries were not coming from his strength but from God's strength.

...And the LORD gave victory to David wherever he went. 2 Samuel 8:6b (ESV)

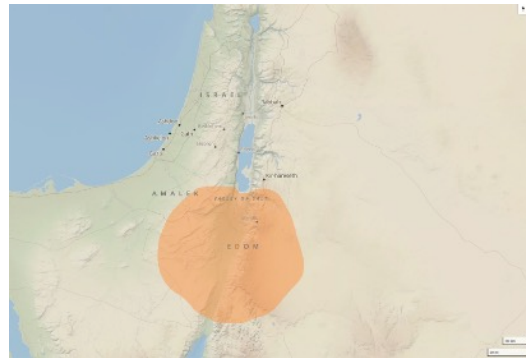
David was very aware of how outgunned he was in these battles. He knew that unless God came to the rescue, he was toast. David wrote about this in Psalm 3. Look at his desperate cry to God for help.

Arise, O LORD! Save me, O my God! For you strike all my enemies on the cheek; you break the teeth of the wicked. Psalm 3:7 (ESV)

I love this. It is a man's prayer. God, punch them in the mouth. Punch them so hard you break the teeth right out of their face. If you want to pray a manly prayer, that is a good one.

The Edomites

Let's jump a few verses forward to look at another kingdom David conquered, the Edomites.



And David made a name for himself when he returned from striking down 18,000 Edomites in the Valley of Salt. Then he put garrisons in Edom; throughout all Edom he put garrisons, and all the Edomites became David's servants... 2 Samuel 8:13–14 (ESV)

The Edomites were relatives of the Israelites. Jacob was the father of the Israelites. His half-brother Esau was the father of the Edomites. At first, David left them alone, but they didn't leave him alone. When David was fighting in the north, they attacked Israel in the south. Psalm 60 was a Psalm David wrote about that battle. Let's read the heading of this Psalm in our Bibles.

To the choirmaster: according to Shushan Eduth. A Miktam of David; for instruction; when he strove with Aram-naharaim (the Syrians) and with Aram-zobah (the Zobahites), and when Joab on his return struck down twelve thousand of Edom in the Valley of Salt. Psalm 60 Preface

David wrote this Psalm as a prayer for God's help in these battles. David was forced to fight two kings in the north, then to also fight the Edomites in the south. Talk about stress, this is one of those moments. As you will see, these victories were not easy. At times, it looked like David would lose and Israel would be destroyed.

O God, you have rejected us, broken our defenses; you have been angry; oh, restore us. You have made the land to quake; you have torn it open; repair its breaches, for it totters... Who will bring me to the fortified city? Who will lead me to Edom? Have you not rejected us, O God? You do not go forth, O God, with our armies. Oh, grant us help against the foe, for vain is the salvation of man! With God we shall do valiantly; it is he who will tread down our foes. Psalm 60:1-2, 9–12 (ESV)

David felt like he was going to lose. He was battling in the north, the Edomites were destroying Israel in the south. David needed to fight on two fronts, and he knew the only way they could win while fighting both north and south without horses and chariots is if God intervened. Joab, the commander of David's army fighting Zobah and the Syrians in the north, sent his brother Abishai to fight the Edomites in the south.

And Abishai, the son of Zeruiah, killed 18,000 Edomites in the Valley of Salt. 1 Chronicles 18:12 (ESV)

After defeating Hadadezer in the north, Joab went south and helped his brother Abishai. According to the heading of Psalm 60, Joab then killed another 12,000 Edomites in the Valley of Salt.

David brought the wealth of the nations to Jerusalem.

The wealth of Hadadezer was forcibly brought to Jerusalem.

And David took the shields of gold that were carried by the servants of Hadadezer and brought them to Jerusalem. And from Betah and from Berothai, cities of Hadadezer, King David took very much bronze. 2 Samuel 8:7–8 (ESV)

These shields were probably not used in battle. They would have been heavy. They were most likely for military parades. The important part is that they were immensely valuable. David so greatly subjected Hadadezer that when he saw these shields, he freely took them and brought them to Jerusalem. David

also took from Betah and Berothai, which were two more cities of Hadadezer, a great quantity of bronze.

One of the descriptions of God's king and kingdom is that the nations of the earth will bring tribute to God's king and his kingdom. We see that happening with David and the kingdom he conquered around him. We also see the same thing happening in the Book of Revelation. When Jesus is installed as the new king over the new creation, the kings of the earth will bring tribute to Jesus in the New Jerusalem.

By its light will the nations walk, and [the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, Revelation 21:24 \(ESV\)](#)

The tribute the kings brought to David on earth was a miniature example of what will happen when King Jesus rules the new heavens and new earth from the new Jerusalem.

[The wealth of Hamath was willingly brought to Jerusalem.](#)

We are now introduced to another king whose reaction to David was different. The Philistines, the Edomites, the Moabites, and other kings in the Promised Land chose to go to war against David. As a result, they were destroyed. This guy didn't war against David. He chose to welcome and bless David.

When [Toi king of Hamath heard that David had defeated the whole army of Hadadezer, Toi sent his son Joram to King David, to ask about his health and to bless him because he had fought against Hadadezer and defeated him, for Hadadezer had often been at war with Toi. And Joram brought with him articles of silver, of gold, and of bronze. 2 Samuel 8:9–10 \(ESV\)](#)

Hamath was a city near Hadadezer's kingdom. Toi, the king of Hamath, was often at war with his neighbor Hadadezer. When he heard that David

destroyed this aggressor, rather than going to war against David, he welcomed David and pursued good relations with David, even to the point of sending his own son to David to congratulate David with a large gift.

This is a reminder that there are two reactions people could have to God's anointed king. They could resist him and be destroyed by him — That is what happened to most of the kingdoms around David — or they could bow their knee to David to welcome him and be blessed by him. The choice was theirs.

Psalm 2 is a Psalm of David that talks about the kings of the earth facing a choice to either resist David or welcome David as God's anointed king. If they resisted David, they would be destroyed. If they welcomed him, they would be blessed by him, as Toi, the king of Hamath experienced.

Now therefore, O kings, be wise; be warned, O rulers of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way, for his wrath is quickly kindled. Blessed are all who take refuge in him. Psalm 2:10–12 (ESV)

There is great application for us in this. The New Testament tells us that Psalm 2 is not just about David as God's anointed king. This Psalm ultimately points to Jesus, God's ultimate anointed king. The kings of this world will rebel against Jesus. They hate Jesus. This is why the religious leaders wanted to crucify Jesus. Today, we should expect the posture of the people of the earth to be hostile to Jesus and his rightful rule over their life. We can see this on the evening news every day.

Just as the resistance of the nations around Israel was futile because God was committed to the success of his king, resistance to the rule of Jesus is futile. God is committed to the success of Jesus, God's chosen king. Jesus won the

right to rule the earth through the cross and the empty tomb. One day, he will return to destroy his enemy. But Jesus doesn't come back to destroy everyone. He comes to bless all who, like Toi king of Hamath, chose to take refuge in him.

Where are you today? Are you resisting Jesus, God's chosen king? If you are, know that resistance is futile. Just as God was committed to David ruling, God is committed to Jesus ruling. Just as David destroyed God's enemies in the Promised Land. Jesus will destroy God's enemies on earth. Today, don't choose to be Jesus' enemy. Like Toi, king of Hamath, chose to be this king's friend. Welcome Jesus as the rightful ruler of your life and be blessed by him.

The wealth of the nations was dedicated to God.

These also King David dedicated to the LORD, together with the silver and gold that he dedicated from all the nations he subdued, from Edom, Moab, the Ammonites, the Philistines, Amalek, and from the spoil of Hadadezer the son of Rehob, king of Zobah. 2 Samuel 8:11–12 (ESV)

All the riches of David's defeated enemies he willingly dedicated to the Lord instead of putting them in his bank account. Much of this great wealth was used by Solomon to build the temple.

There is a lesson for us to learn. David recognized the amazing victories he experienced against the powerful nations around him, which were victories God gave to him. He didn't win those battles on his strength. David was very aware that the great success in his life came from God. Rather than hoard his wealth, he gave it back to God out of gratitude for how God blessed him.

This applies to us. We are not an anointed king of God. We are not battling nations around us, but like David, every bit of success in our lives comes as a gift of God, not by our own strength. God deserves the credit. When God

provides for our needs, when we are given a raise we didn't expect, what do we do with our wealth? Do we just keep it and hoard it, or do we worship God by giving him a portion of it?

Any success we have in our life is a gift of God. David knew that. Remember that he didn't have horses. He was outgunned, he was overwhelmed. At times, he fought on two fronts, both north and south. In spite of the overwhelming challenges, God gave him the victory. Out of gratitude, we should honor God with a portion of the blessings he has given us. Those who choose not to give God a portion of what he has given them may be subtly claiming that any success they have in their lives comes from themselves, not from God. They may subtly say they cannot trust God to provide for their needs.

If you have chosen not to give your wealth in worship to God, I challenge you today to take a step of faith and act out of a heart of gratitude and thankfulness to God. Regularly give back a portion of what He has given you.

David reigned with justice and righteousness.

So David reigned over all Israel. And David administered justice and equity to all his people. 2 Samuel 8:15 (ESV)

We have seen David conquer the nations hostile to God around him. We have seen him expand the nation of Israel to the borders God gave them under Abraham, Moses, and Joshua. We have seen David bringing the wealth of the nations into Jerusalem, which will later be used to build the temple. Now we see how David administered his kingdom. This will be shocking and refreshing.

David administered justice and equity to ALL his people. David's kingdom was not run like the government today. It was just. It was fair. He refused to play

favorites. He didn't allow dirty politics. He did things the right way and the just way. This is so refreshing in a world of favoritism and political corruption.

David wrote Psalm 101 to describe the way he ran the nation.

A perverse heart shall be far from me; I will know nothing of evil. Whoever slanders his neighbor secretly I will destroy. Whoever has a haughty look and an arrogant heart I will not endure. I will look with favor on the faithful in the land, that they may dwell with me; he who walks in the way that is blameless shall minister to me. No one who practices deceit shall dwell in my house; no one who utters lies shall continue before my eyes. Morning by morning I will destroy all the wicked in the land, cutting off all the evildoers from the city of the Lord. Psalm 101:4–8 (ESV)

David had zero tolerance for corruption, for backbiting, for people who spoke about others behind their backs, and for people who slandered the name and reputation of others. David had no patience for those who were proud and arrogant. He had an incredibly high standard for government and leaders.

David surrounded himself with men of integrity.

Joab the son of Zeruiah was over the army, and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder, and Zadok the son of Ahitub and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar were priests, and Seraiah was secretary, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and the Pelethites, and David's sons were priests. 2 Samuel 8:16–18 (ESV)

David did not try to lead alone. He knew he needed a team around him. The team around him fit the qualifications of Psalm 101. They were men of incredible integrity and loyalty. As the chapter closes, we meet them.

Joab was a nephew? of David. He was David's sister's son. Joab was fiercely loyal to David, often risking his life for David. Unfortunately, he didn't end well after David's death. In the turmoil of who would be the next king, he backed the wrong side. On his deathbed, David instructed Solomon to execute him for his cold-blooded assassination of Abner earlier in his life.

Jehoshaphat was David's recorder. He was the guy who kept the books. He was amazingly faithful, and we still find him serving with integrity under Solomon in 1 Kings 4. He kept the books. He didn't cook the books.

Ahimelech was the son of Abiathar the priest. He was named after his grandfather Ahimelech. Zadok was another priest for David. Ahimelech and Zadok were descended from two different sons of Aaron. We will learn more about them in the future.

Seriah was the royal secretary. He was the king's secretary and in charge of all correspondence.

Benaiah was a warrior David set over his bodyguard, his secret service. They were known as the Cherethites and the Pelethites. They were of Cretan and Philistine origin. They were incredibly loyal to David

Lastly, we read of David's sons being priests. This is a bit confusing since only the sons of Levi could be priests. Why would David's sons be priests?

In Hebrew, the word translated as priests can also be translated as chief rulers. I think that is a better translation. If we look at the parallel passage in 1 Chronicles, we see chief officials used in that translation. I am not sure why the translators of the ESV chose to translate this verse in 2 Samuel 8 differently.

...Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and the Pelethites; and David's sons were the chief officials in the service of the king. 1 Chronicles 18:17 (ESV)

I want to be cautious and humble when I differ from the English text. In this case, I don't understand why the translators went the way they did in 2 Samuel 8:18.

Application

There were a number of small applications I pointed out along the way but there is one big application I don't want us to miss. The character of David's rule over the Promised Land is a preview of Jesus' rule over the new creation.

1. Just as David destroyed those who resisted God's kingdom but blessed those who welcomed it, when Jesus returns, he will destroy those who resist his kingdom but save those who welcome it.
2. Just as the wealth of the nations was brought to Jerusalem, the wealth of the new creation will be dedicated to Jesus in the new Jerusalem. Just as life in the Promised Land brought glory to David, God's chosen king, life in the new creation will be about glory to Jesus, God's chosen king.
3. Just as David reigned with righteousness and justice in a world of corruption, Jesus is the one who will reign with righteousness and justice in the new creation. Every night when you see all the corruption in our government on the evening news, let that set your hopes on eternity when Jesus will be in charge. We will love our government then because Jesus will rule with justice, integrity, fairness, and compassion.



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