

2 SAMUEL

IN SEARCH OF A KING PART II



Week commencing 29 July 2018

Notes for next Sunday's sermon on 2 Samuel 5, "King at Last"

DAY 1: Read 2 Samuel 1

Our usual preaching pattern each year is to study a gospel in Term 1, an epistle (or Acts or Revelation) in Term 2, an Old Testament book in Term 3 and something doctrinal or topical in Term 4. So now we head back into the Old Testament. Over the last 5-6 years, we have introduced Genesis, Exodus, Joshua, Judges and 1 Samuel. We are by this means, exploring the story line of the Old Testament. As we've studied each book we've tried to demonstrate how the message points us forward to and prepares us for the coming and mission of the Lord Jesus. Our 2 Samuel studies will be no different.

Let me remind you where we are up to in the story line of the Old Testament. When we started Joshua three years ago, God's people Israel were poised to enter the promised land and were called on to trust God to cross the Jordan and drive out the occupants of that land to make it their own. The book of Joshua finished with the distribution of the Promised Land among the tribes and Joshua's clear challenge to the people to choose whom they will serve: their Lord God who had rescued them, or the gods of the nations around them. Although they definitively answered that they would serve the Lord, their resolve was somewhat short lived. At the beginning of the book of Judges, Joshua is dead, and we immediately saw Israel's failure to continue to drive the people out of the land, with the result that, as predicted, those other nations and their gods became a snare to Israel (Ju. 2:3). As Israel found themselves challenged by their enemies, they cried out to God. God appointed leaders (called Judges) who rescued them. For a time, they would serve God wholeheartedly and exclusively once more. However, they *again* followed the gods of the nations and the whole cycle would begin again. The damning verse at the end of Judges was "In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as they saw fit". (Judges 21:25)

As 1 Samuel began, God was about to do a new work among his people. Through the prophet Samuel, God gave in to the people's insulting request "that they might be like all the other nations" by having a king. We saw that they got what they wanted, but they lost what they had! Saul was their first King. But he was deeply flawed and failed to trust God, often taking matters into his own hands. David was anointed in his place, setting up an intense rivalry with Saul. Eventually Saul was killed in battle, but at the beginning of 2 Samuel, David has yet to take his place publicly as King over Israel. In this book, we will see the rise of David, but also his very great fall. We realise that our hope lies still in another King, in the line of David, whose kingdom will be everlasting - King Jesus!

DAY 2: Read 2 Samuel 5:1-10

As we begin our work on this book, we need to have clear in our minds, that this book is not about David per se. Rather, it is about a covenant God, who makes covenant promises to a covenant king through whom he will preserve his covenant people. That must be our perspective. According to commentator Dale Ralph Davis the major divisions of 2 Samuel are:

1. A man after God's heart chs 1-8
2. A servant under God's Rod chs 9-20
3. A kingdom in God's hands chs 21-24

Now, you may have noticed, that we have skipped over chs 1-4. Feel free to read these chapters at your leisure, but I want you to note that the message is that God's Kingdom will come to David (from the deceased Saul), in God's timing and in God's way. Chapter 2 teaches us that no power can overcome the kingdom; chapter 3, that no folly can thwart the kingdom and chapter 4, that no injustice can establish the kingdom. God rules and everything unfolds in accord with this purpose and plan. His justice will prevail, but in his way!

Chapter 5 is a collage of material. The various sections, do not follow a strict chronological order. For example, the palace (v11) was built relatively late in David's reign; the report of concubines, wives and children (vv13-16), obviously summarizes years of David's reign in Jerusalem, and yet v17 pulls us back to the time immediately after David's anointing in vv1-3. Biblical writers are not chained to chronological order. So, 2 Samuel 5 is a collection of fragments intending to give us a proper overview of the Kingdom. I wonder if today, you acknowledge the Lord's total control in everything? – and trust that his Kingdom and his Kingdom plans, will unfold perfectly?

DAY 3: Read again, 2 Samuel 5:1-10

David's kingship is at last made visible and public! The northern tribes state that they are David's bone and flesh (v1b); that David was the one during Saul's reign who was leading them in battle (v2a) and that God himself had promised that David would shepherd his people Israel and that David would be leader (v2b). By this means, it becomes very clear to us as readers, just how God's promises to David have been fulfilled. God's promises weathered the venom of Saul, (1 Sam 18-26); the follies of David (1 Sam 25, 27, 29), the rebellion of the north (2 Sam 2:8-32) and the self-seeking of 'friends' (2 Sam 1:1-16; 3:22-20; 4:1-12). God's promise has proved firm in the face of intense opposition and the lesson for us is that all God's promises are certain, no matter how much resistance they may meet!

Vv6-8 give the account of the Jerusalem takeover and just how it became the city of David. The Jebusites are mentioned way back in Genesis 15:18-21, as occupiers of the promised land. Although there was a victory recorded in Judges 1:8, 1:21 makes it clear that they did not drive out the Jebusites. But now, several hundred years later, David overruns the Jebusite stronghold and takes possession of Fortress Zion (2 Samuel 5:7). God's promise to Abraham (Genesis 15:18-21) has proven true. If vv1-5 teach us that God's promises are certain in spite of intense opposition, vv6-10 teach us that God's promises are certain in spite of time elapsed! 800 years from Abraham to David, does not erode the reliability of God's word. His promises do not come with an expiration date! We need to rest assured that we are even now, receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken (2 Peter 3 and Hebrews 12:28), because God's promises are firm, so firm that time cannot dissolve them, nor enemies sabotage them. God's promises may be old or opposed, but never false!

DAY 4: Read 2 Samuel 5:11-25

As already noted, Hiram's building operations did not occur until relatively late in David's reign; yet the notice of them is placed here, immediately after David's conquest of Jerusalem early in his reign. The writer is not writing a consecutive narrative but giving a collection of vignettes to stress the nature of the kingdom. The text underscores that David's new permanent residence is a sign of how God had established or confirmed his kingship over Israel. Note carefully the line in v12 – that God has exalted David's kingdom, not for David's sake, but for the sake of his people Israel. David's kingship was not for David's aggrandizement, but for Israel's welfare. Kingship was not an end in itself, but a means to an end – the benefit of God's people. David is *over* Israel, *for* Israel.

Vv13-16 on the one hand indicate David's strength, given the number of his sons; but on the other, reveals his folly, given the number of his wives and concubines – in direct violation of God's prescriptions for the covenant King (Deuteronomy 17:17). Here is both David's strength and his stupidity.

Vv17-25 – the last thing the Philistines want is Israel united under one King. The Philistines hear and go up (17a) and David hears and goes down (17b). In the reports of two victories over the Philistines, we see God's promise in 3:18 fulfilled – *that by the hand of David my servant I shall save my people Israel from the hand of the Philistines.*

These episodes not only depict God as the defender of his kingdom but show *how* he protects it. He protects it by his *guidance* (v19 and v23); he protects it by his *power* – the Lord himself had broken the Philistines. God is pictured as a warrior who plunges into battle and knocks off the Philistines. Today – we Christians need to note that we do not have a namby-pamby godlet who is contained by our preconceived ideas of what is possible. Rather, we have a God who is a smasher and a fighter, a God 'mighty in battle' (Psalm 24:8), who can therefore defend his sheep and restrain and conquer all his and our enemies. Hence in this chapter, we are reminded that just as God protects his kingdom under David, *we* need never fear, for this God is more than able to always lead us in triumph (see 2 Corinthians 2:14) and to bring in his kingdom at last in all its power and glory.

*Reference: Commentary on 2 Samuel by Dale Ralph Davis.
(Some parts of these notes use Davis' text word for word, or are a summary of his text.)*