

Exposition of  
2 Samuel 5

Sermon Series:  
Spiritual Lessons from OT Kings

Sermon Title:  
Seeking God's Direction  
Lesson from King David

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## INTRODUCTION

Last week we began a new series of messages focusing on several of the OT Kings that are intended to accomplish two things: FIRST - introduce and familiarize us to the Jewish monarchy and some various aspects of history surrounding this time in Scripture and SECOND - observe and apply to ourselves the various lessons we learn from the lives of several the OT kings.

Last Lord's day we considered the COST of DISOBEDEINCE in the life of Saul, who very early on in his reign as king began to develop an attitude within his heart that 50% obedience was enough, despite the clear commands and directions he was given by God. Saul in his rebellion and blindness reasoned with himself that he could modify, invent and apply the directions of the Lord to fit his personal liking.

The result of Saul refusing to give God his complete obedience was that God would reject him as king and replace him with another. From that point forward, Saul's life basically spirals downward until he meets his ultimate death as recorded in 1 Sam. 31vv1-10 in which he commits suicide in the midst of a losing battle where his three oldest sons also lost their lives in the combat leaving only his youngest son Ish-bos-heth.

Now, to catch us up to where we find ourselves in today's text, we must know that the very same prophet who confronted Saul's disobedience also was divinely directed to anoint a young Shephard boy named David, to someday replace Saul as the next king.

Prior to King Saul's death, David after he was anointed by Samuel would mature and grow mighty in wisdom and military skills, so much in fact that after Saul's death, David in Chp.2 of 2Samuel did not take the throne by force, rather he sought the Lord

and waited upon God and was made king by the men of Judah without any bloodshed.

However a problem would arise, one that would last for seven years...and the problem had a name...Abner. He was related to Saul and Abner did not want to recognize the obvious appointment of the Lord upon David as king, and so Abner took Saul's only remaining son Ish-bo-sheth and set him up as king over the northern tribes of the kingdom (Israel), however Ish-bo-sheth was only a puppet king and Abner was truly the one in control and secretly desiring to rule all the affairs of the kingdom from behind the scenes.

Pro 16:25 There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof [are] the ways of death.

And this was certainly true in the case of Abner. Abner was eventually murdered, and shortly following that so was Saul's last surviving son which then brings the entire kingdom under the rule and reign of David. Which is where we find ourselves here in Chapter 5 and whereas last week we learned what to avoid from the life of Saul, today in the life of David what begins to unfold for us is a lesson of the importance of both waiting on God's timing and seeking His direction in our lives.

## **BODY**

### **vv.1-3 WAITING UPON THE LORD**

At this point, all of Saul's heirs have been brutally massacred, and David could have easily with force taken control of the northern territory known as Israel, but yet David made no effort to take control until the Lord directed it. He demonstrated what has (at least up until this point in his life) become a character trait of David's - a patience and faith in the Lord's timing.

The timing and result of the Lord is seen in v.3: “and king David made a league with them” literally meaning he “cut a covenant” with them, made an agreement.

And so we notice here how the Lord united David’s former opponents in a unanimous declaration of allegiance to his Kingship...all without one drop of blood having to be shed.

I do not know about you....but perhaps if I were filling the sandals of David, I would not have wasted anytime upon hearing that Ish-bo-sheth had been murdered to mount up the army and with force make all the tribes who were my opponents and loyal to my former enemy to recognize and bow to my kingship.

**But what we learn here is that David waits. David watches. David in wisdom first must receive directions from God before he will act. And, notice that it was for the better of the entire kingdom.**

- During the infighting for seven or so years between David and the remnant of the house of Saul, David’s seat of power was operating from the capital of Judah in Hebron v.5, however now that the kingdom again is united there is a new direction with regard to where the new capital was to be. He knew that Hebron in Judah and Saul’s old capital of Gilbeah in Benjamin were too tribal and inevitability there would be an offense made toward one side or the other. The choice of where David’s royal seat was to be was Jerusalem. However there was a problem...from Israel’s hall of fame of the great men of war ranging from Joshua to Saul none had ever succeeded in completely running out the remnant of Canaanites known as Jebusties who now fiercely held possession of this fortified and almost impregnable city.

Jos 15:63 As for the Jebusites the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah could not drive them out: but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem unto this day.

You may well know that during Joshua's conquest over 450-500 yrs. earlier Jerusalem's king was slain and how that Benjamin was given this city when the tribes were given their geographical allotments of the land of Canaan to go and possess.

However since Joshua and the tribe of Benjamin failed to run out the Jebusites they went on to out-multiply the Benjaminites and only in a manner of time the Jebusites took full control of Jerusalem.

And this is who David now is going to deal with by the grace of God, to once and for all rid their land of the idolatry which the Jebusites practiced.

### **vv.6-9 A NEW CAPITAL FOR THE KING**

Verse 6 describes the threat and challenge posed by the inhabitants of the city, the Jebusites. David was challenged by their taunting and pride. The city was on a mountain and was a great fortress of that time and all though now they were completely surrounded by the nation of Israel to the north and the south, the Jebusites had maintained their staunch independence for many centuries.

Notice how the taunting of the Jebusites is captured in their response to David. They said, "Except thou take away the blind and the lame, thou shalt not come in hither." (v. 6).

#### **EXPLAIN THE DIFFERENT VIEWS.**

Potential discouragement by the mocking and taunting of the Enemy, but David trusting God takes the City (v.8)

Likewise, we have to learn a lesson here from David, to not be discouraged by the accusations and mocking of the Enemy, but rather trust that God will direct and lead us to victory, according to his plan and purposes unto the glory of His name.

**As in David's case, victory will not be seen if we are too caught up in focusing on the accusations of our Enemies...it**

**can only come when we, as enabled by God's grace, trust and respond to the direction and commands of God.**

David was able to find a means of victory over these Jebusites only because God was with him, David was on God's side, and this is a lesson for us, that the key to any victory we hope to accomplish over the enemies of Christ are only achieved by first seeking God and asking Him to rescue us, to defend us and be certain that we are on the side of God.

**v.10 GOD'S BLESSING UPON DAVID**

This verse is regarded by many scholars as the summarization of David's rise to power. The story began when God called him as a shepherd boy and climaxed with this capture of Jerusalem. The elements contained in this verse apply to the events that occurred in his life up to this time, but they also indicate the manner in which he continued as he reigned on the throne.

The first phrase, **"went on, " was an indication that David's reign would continue.** As he had prospered in the past, so would he continue in the future. David would continue to be blessed of the Lord.

The second phrase, **"grew great," comes from a Hebrew concept emphasizing the strength with which David would continue.** He would become more and more powerful. He had been strong in the past, and as he continued to reign, God would add to his strength.

We all know of the tragedies which had and would continue to beset David's life and at times confession and repentance were required. Nevertheless, Scripture records his constant return to find God's direction. The ability to continue (he "went on ") and the blessing of increasing in strength (he "grew great") were made possible because he continually sought God's direction.

Evidence that he sought God's direction is confirmed in the latter portion of verse 10: **'The Lord God of hosts was with him.' The presence of God was apparent in David's life because he had Sought for and learned to foster it.**

Church...all the blessings and greatness that came to David were not the result of his own ability, no, they were first and foremost the result of God's grace and favor upon David. We are nothing apart from the grace and mercy of our loving God.

- Verses 11-16 further describe some of the ways in which David's life became great and was blessed by God. King Hiram honored him by providing materials and workmen to build David's palace.

This recognition and action by King Hiram upon God's anointed king reminds us of a prophecy which occurs much later in the Bible, which speaks of the fact that Christ's church will be blessed by the assistance of non-Christians governments:

“And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee: for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favor have I had mercy on thee.” ISA.60:10

## **v.12 GOD'S ABILITY & GLORY - NOT OUR OWN**

Verse 12 records that David perceived that the source of these blessings was not his own ability. He knew that God was the One who had exalted and enabled him.

Recognition of God as the source of blessings creates an attitude of gratefulness and humility within us as believers.

David's focus remained on God. He did not give attention to the blessings of God before he gave full honor to the God who had provided the blessings. **As believers we must not forget that any blessing we may receive must never be appreciated for its own value alone, but rather, it must be appreciated first of all because it has been provided by God.**

## **v.13-16 SIGN OF INDIFFERENCE TO GOD'S LAW**

We come now to an observation in vv.13-16 where we see signs of indifference to God's Law. Now, some bible commentators describe the listing of David's children here in vv.13-16 as a continued description of blessings within the chapter's overall context, and while we yes do count children as a blessing and here we read that David is granted several of them, the text also illustrates for us a sad reminder that David was a polygamist which was in open contradiction to God Law as described in Deut.17:14-17. There is an application and lesson for us as men of God today and to fail to miss it and simply move right on to the following verses would be sad to say the least.

What God would have us to learn here begins with Law itself as outlined in **Deuteronomy 17:17 where it says "Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away..."** which practically applied means that the uncontended heart of any man who is seeking self-satisfaction outside the covenant of marriage (as established by God during creation in the garden of Eden) between one man and one woman is actively turning his own heart away from God!

Men, you can count on the fact that Satan knows this verse all too well. This is why he seeks to place every stumbling block imaginable before your path. But we must never think Satan has the power to turn our hearts away from our God, oh no brethren...Rom 8:13 "For if **ye** live after the flesh, **ye** shall die: but if **ye** through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, **ye** shall live.

And so we are forced to consider in this observation of David's weakness the reality of God as the Sovereign Superintendent which under His omnipotent providence exercised over all creation allows David to commit this sin.



Furthermore, we see here that God also continues to bless and exalt David, the very one who is breaking God's Law which was given to govern the duty and life of the monarchy and so it could be possible for someone to almost reason and conclude that God at times overlooks our sin and I submit to you that such a conclusion of course would have damaging effects upon our own sanctified responsibility to obey the Word of God.

So then, what do we make of all this? Was God simply turning a blind eye to the sin of David? No, God wasn't turning away His omnipresent eye from the sins of David...it is God's redemptive plan, His advancing forward a nation, a people, a tribe, a family to bring forth through this royal line of David to the climax in the birth of the Messiah – that is, Jesus Christ which serves as the larger backdrop which we must consider in our finite and limited attempt to understand the apparent lack of God's discipline upon David's sin.

**Just because God's correction upon David is delayed, it in no way diminishes God's displeasure toward David and His plans in dealing with David.**

Just as a loving earthly father corrects his children in times of disobedience, so God corrects those whom he loves:

**Hbr 12:6 "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."**

**Job 36:10 "He (God) openeth also their ear to discipline..."**

This is exactly how we're to understand God's sovereign governing of David here, in accordance with his eternal decree which is the first cause of all things, God does permit David to make some really sinful choices (just as Joseph's brothers were permitted to sell him into slavery), however, later on in David's life by the operation of Holy Spirit, David is brought to repentance

over his polygamy along with many other sins and thus restored back unto God.

This, I believe, offers to us a good illustration into the two rationalistic extremes which are represented in Scripture and articulated in the historic Reformed confessions as concerning God's Sovereignty and Human Responsibility and furthermore it's a wonderful testimony of how the love and mercy of God, in a very particular and powerful way was, and is frequently poured out upon God's elect.

So prior to moving on, we see in David's life an attitude of indifference to the Law of God, which David will suffer greatly for later on in his life, therefore I trust his mistake will serve as a lesson for us today.

- Verses 17-25, describe the threat and challenge of the Philistines against King David. The Jebusites had challenged his power, but now the Philistines were directly challenging both his power as well as his authority as king.

### **vv.17-25 SEEKING GOD & OBEYING HIS COMMANDS**

vv.17-18 Cause us to make the following observation: that coronation of David as king, the fulfillment of God's promise to him, was for David both a time of blessing and of trial.

On one hand he had the unanimous support from the nation and on the other hand his most powerful military threats would come against him – the Philistines! We see in v.17 the Philistines were stirred to come against and seek David because he had been anointed king.

“Seek” in this context conveys the concept of seeking with diligence and aggression toward David which reminds us that in our lives as believer's the enemies of Christ's crown and cross

will taunt the integrity and strength of Christ and us as his followers, just as the Jebusites earlier troubled David.

Additionally, the time of victory can also be a time of great testing, as we see here with the Philistine's threat against David.

In either case, **be it only the taunting of the Church's enemies, or an outright immediate threat, what is vital is that we must always seek and enquire the will of our covenant keeping God. The reason is, of course, is that the key to victory is not in human ability or human possibilities but in the hands of God and that is exactly what David understood and then practiced.**

**vv.19-21** Notice that before David responded to the Philistine threat, he first sought the direction of the Lord. The word "enquired" here in the Hebrew does not simply mean that David was merely seeking advice, but rather, he was asking with the intention of obeying whatever it was the Lord would command of him. What a contrast here between Saul of last week and David's whole hearted commitment to God's will in this matter.

This is evident, I hope you would agree by his obedient response in v.20

We would be grossly mistaken if we assumed that David's inquiry was to test the opinion of God so that he could make a better decision, or modify and improve the command of God...David (by the power of the Holy Spirit operating within his life) had already determined to follow the command of the Lord before he even enquired of God what he ought to do!

**v.21** - This region had a reputation which added to the natural threat of the Philistine forces. It was reputed to be the place of a local deity and/or of giants and from the perspective of pagan worshipers such as the Philistines the region was under the control of some idol god. Therefore, when God granted David the victory in this region with an outburst of His own power and glory, it was

not only simply a victory, but one which demonstrated God's power over their idols which they trusted in, whom we know they brought into the battle with them and no doubt this outburst of power from the one true living God is perhaps the reason their idols were left behind on the battle field and destroyed by David's army according to God's law and not used or sold for gain.

**vv.22-25** It is obvious that the initial victory of David did not deter the enemy but rather only must have aroused their hatred against God's people and so the Philistine forces rally and come against David yet again.

The application is a clear one – the enemies of the crown and cross of Christ never weary, no matter momentary setbacks, no matter various defeats, they press and endeavor to remove any visible and significant presence of Christ dominion from standing over them, and so Church you and I likewise, are henceforth from the moment of our calling, the moment of our divine draft in the Lord's army, summoned by the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords to go on and run the race as to win it, to consecrate our life, our time and our talents to wage war against his foes, to fight the good fight, to lay hold of and trust in the promises which he has promised unto us and press forward unto Zion, daily picking up our cross and following him and may we be certain to realize what we just saw in the previous verses, the key to David's victory and the key to our victory begins with God and so we must seek the Lord.

**CH Spurgeon once said “May we trust as all depends on the Lord, and may we work as though all depends on us.”**

And this was David's understanding as he once again seeks God's direction for what to do. The direction of God is a bit out of the way from ordinary battle tactics. He tells David in v.23 to fetch a compass behind them, meaning simply an attack from behind and what is interesting is what the Lord directs David to

watch and listen for ‘the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry (balsam) trees)’ We are not told in what way that the Lord was going to move upon the Philistines, but none the less, it would be such a frightening way that would cause their entire forces to set out on the move, and such a commotion of marching, chariots, horses with armor, etc. would cause the delicate leaves of the balsam trees to move and create a noise and then upon that initial act of God, David was to commanded to ‘bestir thyself’ and smite the enemy.

v.25 Records the grand scale of the victory. In fact the geographical area described resulted in almost an entire removal of them from the kingdom.

## CLOSING

In closing the lesson we learn from this portion of David’s life is that David recognized both in the initial victory and in this second conquest the Lord had to be sought.

**We too, like David are to go the Lord for guidance in our own lives. We do this in various ways as taught by the Puritans, chiefly of course we seek direction in His Word, also in much prayer, the wise counsel of other Christians as guided by Scripture, and observing the obvious Providential workings of God regarding any particular circumstance we may find ourselves in.**

It is extremely important that as Christians, we seek the direction of the Lord for every area of our lives. Only God knows the full extent of the forces of the Enemy and the manner in which the Enemy can be defeated. Like David, we too stand at a pivotal moment in the course of redemptive history and in similar fashion, we too may be required to frequently face critical moments of testing even among victories and apparent blessings and it is during these times, we must seek and obey the commands of our God.