

The Hope of a Forever Kingdom

2 Samuel 7:8-17

Introduction

I believe the book of Judges is in the Bible to show us the consequences of what should be expected by one who lives a life without God. Israel was a religious people, but when you read the book of Judges, it seems that their religion did not include the God of Adam and Eve, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, or even Joshua. In fact, early in the book of Judges one reads of the generation that followed Moses and Joshua: **“There arose another generation after them who did not know the LORD or the work that he had done for Israel”** (Judges 2:10)

Because all of the other nations that surrounded Israel had their own king, the Hebrew people wanted one of their own. It was not Israel’s desire for a king that was wrong, for God had promised a time would come when He would establish a king over Israel. We have one of the earliest promises of a king in Israel way back in Genesis 49, **“The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until tribute comes to him; and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples”** (v. 10). In Deuteronomy 17:14-20, Israel was given instructions for the king concerning how he was to live his life. The desire for a king was not wrong; what was wrong had to do with the motivation behind wanting a king – Israel wanted to be more like the nations than She wanted to be like God.

The first king that was chosen for Israel was a guy named Saul... it didn’t go very well. Sure, he looked kingly; he was handsome, tall, and strong. There was only one problem – he didn’t have a heart for God. In fact, he was more concerned about his position as king than he was about what God thought about him. The last straw for God was when He told him to destroy the people group known as the Amalekites and left some alive along with the king. So, God spoke to Saul through Samuel:

***“Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices,
as in obeying the voice of the Lord?
Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice,
and to listen than the fat of rams.
For rebellion is as the sin of divination,
and presumption is as iniquity and idolatry.
Because you have rejected the word of the Lord,
he has also rejected you from being king.”***

When Samuel turned to walk away Saul cried out, ***“I have sinned, for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD and your words, because I feared the people and obeyed their voice.”*** Samuel responded, ***“The LORD has torn the kingdom of Israel from you this day and***

has given it to a neighbor of yours, who is better than you” (see 1 Sam. 15). That neighbor was a young Judean boy by the name of David – who did not fit the description of a king.

When Samuel went looking for the king of God’s choosing, he was looking for someone who fit the typical job description for kings: tall, strong, and impressive. When Samuel arrived at the home of Boaz and Ruth’s great-grandson Jesse, the first of his seven sons were presented to the prophet as potential kings for Israel, and none of them did God choose. After Samuel looked over Jesse’s oldest, God instructed him that, ***“Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him, for the LORD sees not as mans sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but eh LORD looks on the heart”*** (1 Sam. 16:7). After seven of Jesse’s sons passed by Samuel with God’s disapproval of each of them, he asked, ***“Are all your sons here?”*** There was one more that no one considered... including his own parents. The youngest of Jesse’s sons was a boy named David whom everyone discounted because of his age and size. After David was presented to Samuel, God spoke to the prophet: ***“Arise, anoint him, for this is he”*** (v. 12). After David was anointed with oil as the next man to reign and rule as king over Israel, we are told that, ***“the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon David from that day forward”*** (v. 13).

David Was God’s Man

The first time we are given the opportunity to peer into the heart of David and what set him apart from everyone else is in 1 Samuel 17 when he faced Goliath the giant in a battle. While Israel’s army was on the front lines facing the Philistines David was sent to his brothers to bring them some food. We learn from the Bible that the Philistines made Israel a proposition to have each of their champions fight in a battle to the death: Goliath verses one of Israel’s champions. No one wanted to step up and fight the champion of the Philistines, for the deal was that whosever champion won the battle, the army of the looser would serve the army of the victor.

Everyone from Israel was too scared to fight Goliath. After Goliath said, ***“I defy the ranks of Israel this day. Give me a man, that we may fight together.”*** Saul, along with all of Israel, were ***“dismayed and greatly afraid”*** (vv. 10-11). The taunting of Goliath took place every day for forty days. For forty days, young David traveled from feeding his father’s sheep to tending to his older brothers and I am sure to see the status of the escalating confrontation between the two armies. David had enough of the horrible things Goliath was saying about God and Israel, so he asked, ***“What shall be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God”*** (1 Sam. 17:26)?

When word of David’s question reached king Saul, he was brought before the king to which he replied, ***“Let no man’s heart fail because of him. Your servant will go and fight with the Philistine”*** (v. 32). David went against the giant Philistine armed with only a slingshot and five stones with a great confidence not in an army, but in Yahweh.

Without any armor and armed with only a staff, a slingshot, and five smooth stones... David served as Israel’s champion and volunteered to fight the giant. When we went out to meet Goliath in battle, we are told that the giant disdained him as if David was some sick, sarcastic joke: ***“Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?”*** and cursed David by his gods (v. 43).

Goliath then threatened David: **“Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and to the beasts of the field”** (v. 44). As David approached a taunting champion he said what he really believed in his heart:

You come to me with a sword and with a spear and with a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This day the LORD will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you down and cut off your head. And I will give the dead bodies of the host of the Philistines this day to the birds of the air and to the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, and that all this assembly may know that the LORD saves not with sword and spear. For the battle is the LORD's, and he will give you into our hand. (1 Sam. 17:45-47)

It is clear from David's response to Goliath that his confidence did not rest his own skill, but a God who has proven to be much bigger than any Goliath his people have or would ever face. David took one of his stones, slung it at the giant, struck him in the head, and killed the mighty warrior with just a sling and a stone.

There was no guarantee that David would win his fight against the giant, but he understood that God had promised Abraham that Israel would represent the God of all creation before the nations as their won nation on their own land. When David decided to face the giant when no one else would, he did so with full confidence in a God who spoke the galaxies into existence and that a king from the tribe of Judah would sit on Israel's throne of whom, **“The scepter shall not depart...”** and to whom, **“shall be the obedience of the peoples”** (Gen. 49:9-10).

Brave and an unflinching confidence in God was not David's only qualities as a young man, he was also an accomplished songwriter and musician. David's reputation as a musician spread and he even was enlisted into the service of the king to sooth him with his music. Eventually, much of David's songs about God and his devotion to Him would be sung, read, and appreciated as holy scripture.

David Was Israel's Flawed King

Under David's leadership, defeated and subjugated the Philistines who served as Israel's greatest threat during the time of the Judges and under Saul's tenure as Israel's king. In fact, while David served as one of king Saul's most successful military leaders, the women of sang a song in David's honor: **“Saul as struck down his thousands, and David his ten thousands”** (1 Sam. 18:7). Under David's leadership, the borders of Israel expanded and the hope of Abraham's promise became more and more of a reality while David served his people as a king from the tribe of Judah.

Some of the highlights of David's reign as king include the making of Jerusalem the capital of Israel, the bringing back of the ark of the covenant into Jerusalem as the symbol and tangible representation of the presence of God, setting things up for his son Solomon to build a new Temple, and the establishment of the city of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel as a nation. David wanted God to be the center of all that his nation did much to do with God's covenant with Israel on Mount Sinai where the people were to be identified as God's treasured possession, God's kingdom of priests, and God's holy nation (see Exod. 19).

One of the things David will always be known for is his affair with a married woman whom he got pregnant, and the murder of her husband in an attempt to cover up his sin. One of David's loyal soldiers was a man named Uriah, who loved his nation and his king. Uriah was married to a very beautiful woman by the name of Bathsheba. In 2 Samuel, verse 11, we are told that in the season David's army was in battle, he was at home when he should have been on the front lines with his men. Then David made a choice that changed his life forever:

It happened, late one afternoon, when David arose from his couch and was walking on the roof of the king's house, that he saw from the roof a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful. And David sent and inquired about the woman. And one said, "Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite? So David sent messengers and took her, and she came to him, and he lay with her (in other words... he had sex with her). (2 Sam. 11:2-4)

Not long after his affair with Uriah's wife, she sent word back to David that she was pregnant with his child. David never saw this coming. So, like any other hypocrite trying to cover up his sin, David developed an elaborate plan to make sure nobody ever found out about his act of adultery. He brought Uriah home from the battlefield and did everything he could to get Uriah to have sex with his wife so that everybody would think the child belonged to Uriah, but nothing he did could convince him to sleep with his wife while his fellow soldiers risked their lives on the battlefield.

Finally David felt as though he had no other choice, so he wrote a letter and gave it to Uriah to deliver to Joab, the captain of his army. The letter read: "Set Uriah in the forefront of the hardest fighting, and then draw back from him, that he may be struck down, and die" (2 Sam. 11:14-15). David asked Uriah to hand deliver the letter that ordered his death written by David's own pen to cover up his adulterous affair with Bathsheba. He succeeded... for a time. After Uriah was killed, I am sure David felt a great sense of relief that his sin would never go public. We are not told how long David was able to hide from his sin, but it was no longer than 9 months because we are told that the child he fathered died soon after birth. David hid from his sin, but he forgot that there was One who saw David's actions firsthand. God saw David's sin and exposed it through His prophet, Nathan. God sent Nathan to confront the king concerning his sin; David's response was simple: "I have sinned against the Lord."

Although he will forever be known as a great king, he will also be known for some major screw-ups in his life. But, even still, he is known throughout the Bible as, "*a man after God's own heart*" (Acts. 13:22).

We Need a King Greater than David

In 2 Samuel 7:12-16 God promised that through David the promise of Adam and Eve, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob would be one of his descendants:

When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son. When he commits iniquity, I will discipline him with the rod of men, with the stripes of the

sons of men, but my steadfast love will not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you. And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever.

In other words, a King would one day come and rule and reign over Israel and the nations forever. Somehow it would be through a King that every tribe and every tongue on planet earth would experience the blessing of Abraham.

Eventually, through Bathsheba, God would fulfill His promise to David. Bathsheba, the woman whose husband David killed to cover up his sin of forced adultery that resulted in her pregnancy, God blessed with four children. Solomon would become the ancestor to Joseph and Nathan would become the ancestor to Mary the mother of Jesus. Jesus is the “David” of Ezekiel 37 who appeals to all who would hear: **“Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light”** (Matt. 11:29-30).