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A JOURNEY THROUGH THE BIBLE

Reading: 2 Samuel 5:1-5

11. THE BOOK OF 2 SAMUEL

The year 1809 was a very good year. Of course no one knew it at the time because every eye was on Napoleon, as he swept across Austria like a frenzied flame in a parched wheat field. Little seemed significant; the Dictator of France was the talk of all Europe. That same year while war was being waged and history was being made babies were being born in England and America. But who cared about babies and bottles, and cribs and cradles when Austria was falling ? Someone should have. For in 1809 a great host of thinkers and statesmen drew their first breaths. William Gladstone was born in Liverpool. Alfred Tennyson began his life in Lincolnshire and in Hodgenville, Kentucky in a rugged log cabin owned by an illiterate labourer, and his wife, were heard the screams of their new-born son, Abraham Lincoln. All this and more happened in 1809.

But nobody noticed. The destiny of the world was being shaped by Napoleon over in Austria. Or was it ? The “*nobodies*,” nobody noticed were in fact the genesis of a new era. It was their lives, brains, writings that would dent the destiny of the entire world. The year 1000 B.C. was also a very good year. But not because of Saul, the Napoleon of that day. Saul, Israel’s elected king had

begun to crack under the weight of his role. Rashness, compromise, and flagrant disobedience to God were the traits in Saul’s life. Until finally, Samuel confronted him informing him that God had rejected him as Israel’s king. (15:23,26) That year, was special because while everyone was watching Saul’s reign sink, in a secluded field in Bethlehem God was raising up a youth named David, a nobody nobody noticed, someone who would change Israel’s course forever. “*The Lord hath sought him out a man after his own heart.*” (13:14) God had sought out a man, only a man, but what a man he was.

David was after all Israel’s greatest king. More is written about David and by David than any other person except the Lord Jesus. He appears constantly in the historical books, he wrote half the book of Psalms, he is mentioned by name in both the first and last chapters of the New Testament. Isn’t it fitting therefore that we have a whole book devoted to him ? Now as we have noted the two books of Samuel are one book in the Hebrew Bible. The Hebrew scholars who centuries before the birth of Christ translated the old Hebrew Bible into Greek decided to divide Samuel into two books. That translation became what is known as the Septuagint version of the Bible. It wasn’t a bad idea, for in that way we have a book entirely devoted to David.

Now 2 Samuel begins with a poem and ends with a plague, it begins with deception and ends with devotion, it begins with war and ends with worship. David came to a kingdom divided by civil war and with its affairs in total confusion both at home and abroad. Israel’s ancient

enemies triumphed all along the frontiers while tribal jealousies kept the Hebrews at loggerheads among themselves. So David subdued the foreign foes of Israel, united the tribes, cleared Jerusalem of the Jebusites and made it Israel's capital. He planned for the temple, led a great revival in religious affairs, and founded a deathless dynasty. No wonder there is so much about him in the Bible. Now I want us to consider this book this in the following way.

(1) THE FIRST YEARS OF DAVID'S REIGN CH'S 1-9

The keyword, being **Triumphs**. You see, upon the death of Saul, David is crowned King by the tribe of Judah. Saul's son, Ish-bosheth, clung to the remnants of his father's tattered kingdom. Thus, for 7 years there existed a civil war between Judah and Israel. Eventually, David was crowned over all Israel. So in this first section of the book we see how, despite some initial opposition, David comes to be recognized as king by all the tribes of Israel. First of all we see David,

(a) As King Over Judah in Hebron: Ch's 1-4

Look at (2:4) Maybe we should backtrack for a moment and notice,

1. David's Sorrow:

I mean how would you react if your greatest enemy was killed ? A lesser saint would have rejoiced but then David

was a man after God's heart, a man who had a heart for God, someone whose heart was God's completely. And David felt keenly the tragedy of Saul's sin. Of course, David's dear friend Jonathan was also dead, the sin of a disobedient father had brought judgment upon innocent people. My by all natural codes of conduct David should have flung his hat in the air on there on the Judean hills but he didn't. Do you see how he speaks about Saul ? Look at (1:23-24) What a thing for David to say about a man who for years had used half his army to hunt him down in order to hang him up on some tree, and all without a cause. My is this not the love that covers a multitude of sins ? The love that suffers long and is kind ? The love that many waters cannot quench ? Is this not the love of God shed abroad in the human heart ? Do we know anything about it ?

Isn't it interesting to notice that an Amalekite brought the news and claimed to be the one who finally took Saul's life ? I mean had Saul obeyed the Lord in (1 Sam Ch 15) and slain all of the Amalekites, this would not have happened. Mark it down. The sin we fail to slay is the one that slays us. (Deut. 25:17-19) 1.

2. David's Song:

David's lamentation called *the " Song of the Bow,"* (1:18 1 Sam 20:20) is touching. The book of Proverbs says, "*Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth.*" (Prov. 24:17) David's lament reveals his loyalty to his King and his love for his friend. "*How are the mighty fallen,*" is his theme.

In (1 Sam 10:23) Saul “ *stood higher,*” than any other man, but now he had fallen lower than the enemy. No wonder Paul says, “ *Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.* ” (1 Cor 10:12) 1, 2,

3. David’s Struggles:

You see, David’s march to the throne was a bloody one. (3:1) The tribe of Judah had proclaimed David king at once but the other tribes were not so sure. Who was this fellow David anyway ? Was he not a fugitive from justice ? Why should David be king ? Thus the kingdom was divided “ *the house of Saul,*” led by Ishbosheth, who was a helpless pawn in the hands of Abner “ *and the house of David.*” You see each faction was contending for the kingdom. Now this conflict typifies that which is going on between the “ *flesh and the Spirit.* ” (Gal 5:17) Indeed, Abner’s actions were a revelation of life “ *in the flesh.*”

He sought strength in himself: The Bible says “ *that Abner made himself strong for the house of Saul.* ” (3:6)

He fulfilled his own fleshly desires: for he had physical relationships with Saul’s concubine.

He demonstrated his pride by not admitting his sin:

He displayed an uncontrolled temperament: (3:8)

He acted out of wrong motivation: (3:9)

My is all this not simply a picture of life lived in the flesh ? Paul says, “ *For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other.* ” (Gal 5:17) Now, by the flesh, Paul

does not mean, “ *the body.* ” The human body is not sinful, it is neutral. If the Holy Spirit controls the body, then we walk in the Spirit, but if the flesh controls the body, then we walk in the lusts or desires of the flesh. You see, ***the flesh stands for that part of man's nature, wherein his natural desires have free rein.*** (Rom 7:18) My the Spirit and the flesh have different appetites and that’s what creates the conflict. Do you know anything about this conflict ? Oh, we love to hold up the tottering kingdom of self, if only we could keep this or that at any cost. And all the time this civil war goes on, the flesh wants the throne. This conflict lasted for seven and a half years but eventually Abner, now frustrated with Ishbosheth comes to the elders of Israel and says, “ *Ye sought for David in times past to be king over you now then do it.* ” (3:17) So now we see, David,

(b) As King Over Israel in Jerusalem: Ch’s 5-9

1. David is Crowned:

Look at (5:3) Have you ever put the crown where it belongs ? How many times have you been on the verge of making Christ King of your life ? Of acknowledging His Lordship in every area of your life ? But then you’ve put it off, “ *I’ll wait, I’ll allow self on the throne just a little longer.* ” Is the Lord saying to you this “ *do it now ?* ”

2. David is Conquering:

“ *David took the stronghold of Zion, the same is the city of David.* ” (5:7) My for hundreds of years this was a

stronghold of the Canaanites (Joshua 15:63 Judges 1:8) and so confident were the present occupants the Jebusites that even the blind and lame could defend the city from David's little ragtag army. " *Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion,* " (5:7) There's now a new capital, Jerusalem, " *the city of David.* " (5:7) 1, 2,

3. David is Challenged:

" *But when the Philistines heard that they had anointed David king over Israel all the Philistines came up,* " (5:17) Isn't that an interesting thing ? An old enemy comes on the scene again. My It's always that way. The moment you crown Christ Lord of your life, Get ready. The Devil is going to make an attack. He will attack initially and continually. (5:18, 22) I tell you, as long as we are prepared to co-exist with sin and self the Devil's happy, but you crown Christ as Lord and spiritual warfare erupts and spiritual weapons are needed. We need to enquire of God (5:19) and we need to wait on God. (5:23) 1, 2, 3,

4. David is Corrected:

You see, David decided to bring " *The Ark of the Covenant,* " to Jerusalem, he was eager to make Jerusalem the religious as well as the political centre of national life. His motive was good but his method was wrong. He was right in his intentions but wrong in his implementations. He had to learn that God's work must be done by God's people in God's way. You see the Word of God was very plain as to how the " *Ark,* " was to be moved. It was to be

carried by the Levites particularly the Kohathites (Num 4:15) who were the descendants of one of the three sons of Levi. (Num 3:17) The " *Ark,* " was to be covered, (Num 4:4) and borne on their shoulders, by two poles inserted through four rings, one on each corner of the " *Ark.* " (Num 7:9 18:3 Deut 10:8) And the " *Ark,* " was not to be touched. (Num 4:15) Nothing was said about placing the " *Ark,* " on a new cart, that was man's way, on the shoulders of the Levites, that was God's way. Do you see what David had to learn ? That God's work must be done by God's people in God's way. He had to learn the lesson that the Word of God must guide the work of God.

My its not sufficient to have a worthy cause and a proper spirit. *God's work must be done in God's way, that is according to God's Word.* Today we often hear the cliché, " *we'll surely the end justifies the means.* " So in order to increase the crowd in the pew and the cash in the purse, many churches will do anything. My there are gimmicks galore. Churches that feature weight lifters, sword specialists, daffodil teas, sponsored this or that, anything to bring in the crowds or cash. My anything we introduce into our worship, work, or witness for which we have no, " *thus saith the Lord,* " (Col 2:23) must be abandoned by us. So David is corrected. Something else,

5. David is Consecrated:

Can you picture this scene ? The kingdom had been united. Jerusalem had been taken. The Philistines had been defeated. David sat in a beautiful new palace that

was built for him by Hiram King of Tyre (5:11)
 He considered the goodness of God in giving him rest from his enemies (7:1) He recalled the joy he and his kingdom had just enjoyed as the ark was brought to its new home in Jerusalem (6:17) Then the thought struck him, “ *Here I sit in a luxurious home while the ark rests in that drab tent, God deserves better.*” My the plan begins to formulate. David proposed to build a House for God. This was his holy resolve. You see here is young man 30 odd years of age whose heart is full to overflowing with love to the Lord. (5:5) When David thinks of all that God has done for him he pours out his heart in adoring gratitude to the Lord. Later on in this passage we find him sitting in the Lord's presence saying, “ *Who am I, O Lord God ? and what is my house that Thou hast brought me hitherto ?*” (7:18)

My do you ever sit in the presence of the Lord and ponder His blessings to you ? Can you not testify that God's love has surrounded you, God's grace has sustained you, God's hand has strengthened you and in the light of that are you prepared to say, “ *Here am I Lord I gave myself unreservedly to you.*” Is it not the “ *mercies of God,*” that Paul uses as a basis for his appeal to the saints at Rome ? He says, “ *I beseech you mercies of God.*” (Rom 12:1) Was it not C.T. Studd who said, “ *If Jesus Christ be God and died for me, then no sacrifice can be too great for me to make for Him.*” My what have you “ *rendered unto the Lord for all His benefits toward you ?*” (Ps 116:12) Now the Lord appreciated David's desire but a man of war could not build a house of peace. (1 Chron 28:6) Rather than David building a house for

God, the Lord promised to build a house for David. **Prophetically**, this is known as the Davidic Covenant and its important to notice that 5 promises were made to David and Israel.

(1) **A Promise of Residency:** “ *May dwell,*” (7:10)

(2) **A Promise of Security:** “ *Neither,*” (7:10)

(3) **A Promise of Posterity:** “ *I seed,*” (7:11-12)

This clearly has reference to David's physical descendants for David's line would always be the royal line.

(4) **A Promise of Authority:** “ *I throne.*” (7:13)

David's throne was to be established forever.

(5) **A Promise of Perpetuity:** “ *And house* ” (7:16)

The ultimate fulfilment of these promises is in Jesus Christ. (Lk 3:31) Do you recall the message of the angel to Mary ? “ *And the Lord God shall gave unto Him (Christ) the throne of His father David.*” (Lk 1:32) And it is our conviction that Christ will fulfil this Davidic Covenant when He sits on David's throne and rules during the Millennial Kingdom. *Prophetically, here is God's future programme for Israel but Practically is this now what God does for us ?* “ He does exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.” (Eph 3:20) Do you know something ? Its impossible to outgive God. (1)

(2) THE FURTHER YEARS OF DAVID'S REIGN Ch's 10-19

The keyword being **Troubles.** Now this marks a dreadful turning point in the life of David. His early life chequered as it was, is characterized by triumphs, but his remaining

years will be marked by troubles. Now what was it that brought about this turning point in David's life ? Why was there,

(a) TROUBLES IN THE FAMILY:

Well David sinned. Did you ever think about,

1. The Cause of David's Sin:

David was now about fifty years old. He had been on the throne approximately twenty years. It was the springtime of the year, March or April. Joab was on the battlefield, David was in the city. Someone has said, "*While Joab laid siege against Rabbah Satan laid siege against David.*" Can you see him as he rises from his bed ? He is proud, prosperous and the most powerful potentate in that part of the world. I mean David can have anything he wants. Then he sees beautiful Bathsheba. The Hebrew conveys the idea that she was a knockout, physically attractive beyond description. Now David didn't fall suddenly, some chinks had already begun to form in his spiritual armour. Go back to (5:13) Now what do you call that but indulgence ? He increased the number of his wives and concubines.

This was in direct violation of God's commands. For in the Book of Deuteronomy (Ch 17) we read that God's king was not to multiply wives to himself. As David's harem grew so did his lust. For years David had been feeding his fleshly appetite, therefore paving the way for adultery with Bathsheba. You see, this king who took

another man's wife already had a harem full of women. *Do know one of the lies of the devil ?* If you satisfy you're physical drives, they will be abated. No. They will increase. My are you gratifying the flesh ? (2 Tim 2:22) Are you playing with sin in your thought life ? What about pornography on the television and the internet ? Do you know the chorus ? "*Oh be careful little eyes what you see,*" Do you know something ? David proceeds to brake five of the ten commandments? He covets his neighbour's wife, he bears false witness against her husband, he steals his wife, he commits adultery with her, and finally he arranges the murder of her husband. Bathsheba becomes pregnant David seeks to cover it, the baby dies and David takes Bathsheba into the palace as his wife. But David has no peace and a year later God sends Nathan to confront David with his sin, and there is

2. The Confession of David's Sin:

Look if you will at (12:13) Benjamin Franklin once stated " How few there are who have courage enough to own their faults and resolution enough to mend them." My what do you do when you fail ? Do you conceal your sin or do you confess your sin ? David says, "*Against thee, thee only have I sinned.*" (Ps 51:4) "*Not my brother or my sister but its me O Lord standing in the need of pardon, power and purity.*" There is one thing that God will not accept for sin and its an alibi. The Bible says "*If we confess our sins*" (1 Jn 1:9) Have you confessed your sin as a believer ? Do you keep short accounts with the Lord ? 1, 2, but don't miss,

3. The Consequence of David's Sin:

Years ago an old country preacher said, “ *Sin will take you further than you want to go, sin will keep you longer than you want to stay, sin will cost you more than you want to pay.* ” There’s a lot of wisdom in that and I believe David would say Amen to that. Sin from start to finish is a costly business and especially sexual sin. You see, forgiveness is no guarantee that we shall escape the consequences of sin. Do you know what David said when he heard the story of the little lamb ? “ *and he shall restore the lamb fourfold.* ” (11:6) Do you know something ? David paid fourfold for his sin.

(1) The little baby died: (12:15-23)

(2) Amnon one of David's sons violated or raped Tamar one of David's daughters: (13:14)

(3) Amnon was slain by Absalom: (13:23-26)

(4) Absalom was slain: (18:9-23)

David paid fourfold for his sin. Indeed the whole subsequent history of David is a record of the consequences resulting from his sin. You see, though God forgave him, David had trouble to the end of his life. Now this did not mean that David lived under a cloud, or that he had no more joy. He did pray, “ *Restore unto me salvation.* ” (51:12) And God answered his prayer. David wrote many songs after this incident and he went out and won many victories but how better it would have been if he never had yielded. Oh, there is family forgiveness, for God promises to forgive our sins. “ *He is faithful and just to forgive us.* ” (1 Jn 1:9) But God is also faithful and

just to reap what we sow. In his ***Grace*** He can forgive our sins, but in His ***Government*** He permits us to suffer the consequences. Trevor Knight puts it perfectly when he says, “ *When we have done with sin, sin has not done with us.* ” (a) But then there was.

(b) TROUBLES IN THE COUNTRY:

As David, continues to reap the sad harvest of his sins. There was,

1. The Rebellion of the Prince:

Absalom. David had committed adultery with Bathsheba, now rape invaded his own household. Absalom had a dual purpose in mind when he found out what Amnon had done, he wanted to revenge Tamar by killing Amnon, but at the same time he would be removing the obvious heir to the throne. (3:2) My David's life becomes chaotic. His son Ammon commits a dreadful sin against his half sister Tamar and David is simply “ *very angry.* ” (13:21) I wonder is the memory of his own sins checking him ? Absalom eventually took matters into his own hands murdered Amnon and fled from his father, his home and his country. (13:37 3:3) When after three years David permitted Absalom to returned from exile he refused to see his son for a further two years (14:24, 28, 33) Even when they were reconciled the difficulties between father and son were far from over. Absalom caused untold distress in Israel and led a civil war against his father.

Despite all these problems David persisted in his love for Absalom so that when his son fell in battle, King David mourned with inconsolable grief. “ *O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom would God I had died for thee, O Absalom my son my son.* ” (18:33) 1.

2. The Reactions of the People:

(15:13-16:23) While David was reigning in power, his real enemies would not dare to oppose him, but Absalom’s revolt gave them what appeared to be a wonderful opportunity to resist the king and get away with it. It was a time of sifting the true from the false. Ittai was loyal to the king. The two priests, Zadok and Abiathar, also started to follow their king, but David sent them back to the city. Hushai was also sent back to the city to pose as an ally of Absalom, his counsel could change that of Ahithophel. Isn’t it a sad picture as David and his small army flee the city and cross the Kidron River ? Ziba lied to David about Mephibosheth (19:24-30) Shimei openly showed his hatred for David. And the “ *Judas,* ” in David’s situation was his former friend Ahithophel. (Ps. 55:12)

I mean what do you do when your world is falling apart ? I heard of a Doctor who called a patient one time and said “ *John I’ve some bad news and some worse news.* ” The man said, “ *what is the bad news ?* ” He said, “ *You have only twenty fours to live.* ” The man said, “ *Well, what is the worse news ?* ” The Doc said, “ *I tried to call you yesterday.* ” My the walls of David’s life were crumbling around him but David’s eye was upon his

God. He cries, “ *But thou O Lord, art a shield for me and the lifter up of mine head.* ” (Ps 3:3) He discovered that true security and true serenity is only found in God.

**Be not dismayed, what’er betide
God will take care of you
Beneath His wings of love abide
God will take care of you
No matter what may be the test
God will take care of you
Lean weary one upon His breast
God will take care of you**

3. The Reckoning of the Lord:

You see, this rebellion was part of the price that David paid for his sin, but God also overruled the events so as to purge David’s kingdom and separate the loyal from the disloyal. A day of reckoning finally arrived. Sometimes God’s judgments fall swiftly, while at other times He waits and acts slowly. Do you see here that

- 1. Ahithophel dies: (Ch 17)**
- 2. Absalom dies: (18:1-19:15)**
- 3. Shimei is pardoned: (19:16-23 1 Kings 2:36-46)**
- 4. Ziba and Mephibosheth are reconciled: (19:24-30)**
- 5. Barzillai is rewarded: (19:31-43)**

My this entire episode of David’s rejection and return certainly illustrates the attitudes people today have toward Christ. I mean there are the loyal few who stand by their absent King, and there are the selfish majority who prefer

to rebel. But what will happen when the King comes back ? And what are we, His followers, doing to hasten His return ? (2 Peter 3:12) (1) (2)

(3) THE FINAL YEARS OF DAVID'S REIGN Ch's 20-24

The keyword being **Testimonies**. I mean look at,

(a) THE WITNESS OF THE KING: Ch 22

For here David writes a song full of gratitude and hope unto the Lord. While David was not without problems in his latter days he was not without the Lord. (a)

(b) THE WITNESS TO THE KING: Ch 23

For here is recorded for us the names, deeds and exploits of David's mighty men. (a) (b)

(c) THE WITNESS AGAINST THE KING: Ch 24

For at the end of his life David is tempted by Satan to conduct a census of Israel's fighting men. (1 Chron 21) What lay behind David's desire for a national census ? Probably it was pride, he had won a number of great victories (1 Chron. 18-20) and perhaps wanted to bask in the glory of success. There is an interesting series of contrasts between this sin and his sin with Bathsheba.

(1) This was a sin of the spirit (pride) while the other

was a sin of the flesh.

(2) Here David acted with deliberate persistence, while his sin with Bathsheba came as the result of the sudden overwhelming desires of the flesh.

(3) This sin involved the nation, and 70,000 people died, his other sin was a family matter, probably with 4 people dying.

(4) Yet in both sins, God gave David time to repent, but he waited too long.

The terrible plague that decimated the nation was halted when David took the place of mediator and stood between the avenging angel and the suffering people. David's see's Araunah's threshing floor as an ideal place to build the temple of God. In a typical act of worship David buys the place lock, stock and barrel, and it was there that later Solomon built the temple. (2 Chron 3:1) ***You see, God was able to turn the curse into a blessing.*** It is interesting to note that Solomon was born to Bathsheba, who had been involved in David's adultery, and yet Solomon became the next king and actually built the temple on The piece of ground associated with David's greater sin of numbering the people.

Isn't God's providence amazing ? Certainly we ought not to “ *do evil that good may come from it,* ” (Rom. 3:8) but we can rest in the confidence that “ *all things work together for good to them that love God.* ” (Rom. 8:28) God can turn the curse into a blessing. God can forgive and bring blessing. Let us therefore like David put ourselves “ *into the hand of the Lord for His mercies are great.* ” (24:14)

