

# God will Conquer You

The Rise of David Pt.6  
2 Samuel 5:1-25 7-26-2009

Summary: God established David by unifying the whole nation under him (they came willingly) and exalted his kingdom, giving him Jerusalem, expanding his house, making Israel great among the nations, and giving deliverance from the Philistines. God conquered everyone – either by crushing them or, in the case of His people, by winning their hearts by removing every other option. And He did it for the sake of the people.

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**2 Samuel 5:1 All the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and said, "We are your own flesh and blood. 2 In the past, while Saul was king over us, you were the one who led Israel on their military campaigns. And the LORD said to you, 'You will shepherd my people Israel, and you will become their ruler.'" 3 When all the elders of Israel had come to King David at Hebron, the king made a compact with them at Hebron before the LORD, and they anointed David king over Israel. 4 David was thirty years old when he became king, and he reigned forty years. 5 In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months, and in Jerusalem he reigned over all Israel and Judah thirty-three years. 6 The king and his men marched to Jerusalem to attack the Jebusites, who lived there. The Jebusites said to David, "You will not get in here; even the blind and the lame can ward you off." They thought, "David cannot get in here." 7 Nevertheless, David captured the fortress of Zion, the City of David. 8 On that day, David said, "Anyone who conquers the Jebusites will have to use the water shaft to reach those 'lame and blind' who are David's enemies." That is why they say, "The 'blind and lame' will not enter the palace." 9 David then took up residence in the fortress and called it the City of David. He built up the area around it, from the supporting terraces inward. 10 And he became more and more powerful, because the LORD God Almighty was with him. 11 Now Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, along with cedar logs and carpenters and stonemasons, and they built a palace for David. 12 And David knew that the LORD had established him as king over Israel and had exalted his kingdom for the sake of his people Israel. 13 After he left Hebron, David took more concubines and wives in Jerusalem, and more sons and daughters were born to him. 14 These are the names of the children born to him there: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon, 15 Ibhaz, Elishua, Nepheg, Japhia, 16 Elishama, Eliada and Eliphelet. 17 When the Philistines heard that David had been anointed king over Israel, they went up in full force to search for him, but David heard about it and went down to the stronghold. 18 Now the Philistines had come and spread out in the Valley of Rephaim; 19 so David inquired of the LORD, "Shall I go and attack the Philistines? Will you hand them over to me?" The LORD answered him, "Go, for I will surely hand the Philistines over to you." 20 So David went to Baal Perazim, and there he defeated them. He said, "As waters break out, the LORD has broken out against my enemies before me." So that place was called Baal Perazim. 21 The Philistines abandoned their idols there, and David and his men carried them off. 22 Once more the Philistines came up and spread out in the Valley of**

**Rephaim; 23 so David inquired of the LORD, and he answered, "Do not go straight up, but circle around behind them and attack them in front of the balsam trees. 24 As soon as you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees, move quickly, because that will mean the LORD has gone out in front of you to strike the Philistine army." 25 So David did as the LORD commanded him, and he struck down the Philistines all the way from Gibeon to Gezer.**

## **Introduction**

Samuel anointed David in 1 Samuel 16. Twenty-one chapters later he becomes king of all Israel. The two-state solution did not work out, and now the kingdom is united under one king. In 2 Samuel 5 we get the account of David being anointed by all the people of Israel. But that is not all we get in this chapter. It also talks about the summary of the years of David's reign and it also talks about his wives and children. And it talks about the wars with the Philistines. And it talks about David moving his capital to Jerusalem. At first glance this chapter seems like kind of a hodgepodge of different topics.

But when you study it a little closer it becomes clear that there is a very unified message in this chapter. If you want a summary of what this chapter is all about just look at the halfway point – verse 12, and the writer himself will give us the summary.

### **12 the LORD established [David] as king over Israel and had exalted his kingdom**

In this chapter we are going to see God do two things – establish David as king and exalt David's kingdom. That is an outline we probably could have figured out even without verse 6 because the first half of the chapter is all about David being established as king and the second half is all about his kingdom being exalted. But the mere fact that God did that is not really all that interesting – nor is that the point of this chapter. The point of this chapter is how God did it and why God did it. And understanding those two things will be extremely helpful in your daily walk with the Lord. So let's look first at God's establishment of David's kingdom in verses 1-5.

## **God Establishes David - 1-5**

### **Unification of Israel - 1-3**

#### **1 All the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron**

That does not mean the whole population came down – the various tribes sent their leaders and representatives. But the word "all" is significant. In fact, it is repeated a couple more times.

#### **1 All the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron**

#### **3 When all the elders of Israel had come to King David at Hebron, the king made a compact with them**

#### **5 [David] reigned over all Israel and Judah thirty-three years.**

We tend to think of the monarchy in Israel as starting out with a united kingdom under Saul, David, and Solomon and then splitting into a divided kingdom after that. But actually Israel was divided long before Saul's time. There are many indications in the text that Judah and the northern tribes were at odds with each other and there were tensions between the north and the south even back in the time of the Judges. They were united under Saul, but there was still some division. So the emphasis here is on the uniting of the nation under David. For once the entire nation is unified as one.

And when all the leaders arrived down in Hebron they make a case for why David should agree to be their king. They give him three reasons.

#### **1 All the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and said, "We are your own flesh and blood.**

That is reason #1 – they are brothers. Under Abner and Joab brothers were fighting brothers – treating the others as though they were not brothers. They knew they were fellow Israelites but they did not care. So this statement signals the end of that attitude.

## **2 In the past, while Saul was king over us, you were the one who led Israel on their military campaigns.**

That is reason #2. Even while Saul was king it was David who was always delivering them from their enemies. He has been doing a great job as king all these years – he might as well go ahead and be the king. Those who have been faithful with little should be entrusted with more. And then reason #3:

## **2 ... And the LORD said to you, 'You will shepherd my people Israel, and you will become their ruler.'"**

Not only are you our brother, and not only have you been doing a great job all these years, but on top of all that God said you were supposed to be king.

So they marshal this argument to try to persuade David to be their king. What they are hoping for is a covenant, and that is exactly what they get.

## **3 When all the elders of Israel had come to King David at Hebron, the king made a covenant with them at Hebron before the LORD**

The fact that they did this “before the LORD” means it was a spiritual action. This is just as much a religious thing as it is a political thing. They are returning to God and embracing His way, and so this is a very solemn action before God.

## **3 ...and they anointed David king over Israel.**

That is the third time David has been anointed. The first time was by Samuel many, many years ago. The second time was just seven years ago when he was anointed by the people as king of Judah. And now ALL the people anointed him as king over the entire nation. And the third time turns out to be a charm – now he is king over all Israel.

## **Summary of reign - 4-5**

And the next two verses give us a summary of David’s whole reign.

## **4 David was thirty years old when he became king, and he reigned forty years. 5 In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months, and in Jerusalem he reigned over all Israel and Judah thirty-three years.**

So – David is established as king. And now that he is established, God is going to exalt his kingdom.

## **God Exalts David’s Kingdom - 6-25**

### **The City of David - 6-11**

After becoming king of all Israel David decided to move his capital. Hebron was great for ruling the south, but it is probably not a good idea for him to set up the capital for the entire nation down in the far south in his own home tribe. Tensions between the north and south are strained enough as it is. So David has his eye on another spot – the perfect place for the nation’s capital. It is right near the border between the north and the south, it is a beautiful place, plenty of resources, and very defensible. It is the city of Jerusalem.

It actually sounds like David had had his eye on this city for a long time. Way back when David killed Goliath – remember what he did with Goliath’s head?

## **1 Samuel 17:54 David took the Philistine's head and brought it to Jerusalem**

Now, back then, and still at this time, Jerusalem was not controlled by Israel. It was right in the middle of the Promised Land, but the Israelites just never did manage to gain control of it. The original name of the place was Jebus, and so the people who lived there were called the Jebusites.

The city was such an easily defended place that Israel never managed to take it – even when Saul was at the height of his military strength.

## **Joshua 15:63 Judah could not dislodge the Jebusites, who were living in Jerusalem; to this day the Jebusites live there with the people of Judah.**

Taking Jerusalem seemed like a military impossibility. They had tried in the past and failed.<sup>1</sup>  
But God had commanded that Israel drive the Jebusites out.

**Exodus 23:23 My angel will go ahead of you and bring you into the land of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hivites and Jebusites, ... You must demolish them and break their sacred stones to pieces.**

**Deuteronomy 7:1 When the LORD your God brings you into the land you are entering to possess and drives out before you many nations--the Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites ... you must destroy them totally. Make no treaty with them, and show them no mercy.**

**Deuteronomy 20:17 Completely destroy them--the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites**

Some nations the Lord gave Israel easy victories over, but some nations He left to test Israel.

**Judges 3:1 These are the nations the LORD left to test all those Israelites who had not experienced any of the wars in Canaan 2 (he did this only to teach warfare to the descendants of the Israelites who had not had previous battle experience)**

**4 They were left to test the Israelites to see whether they would obey the LORD's commands, which he had given their forefathers through Moses. 5 The Israelites lived among the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. 6 They took their daughters in marriage and gave their own daughters to their sons, and served their gods. 7 The Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD**

So God left the Jebusites there as a test for Israel, and they fail the test big time. The Jebusites were a terrible, contaminating influence on Israel – lodged right in the center of the land like a malignant growth.

And just as David could not stand it when Goliath was defying Yahweh and His people, I think it also stuck in David's craw that these Jebusites were inhabiting this prime city right in the middle of the Promised Land and were never driven out. It seems like that must have been the reason for bringing Goliath's head down there. He just tacks it up on their wall to give them notice of what happens to the Lord's enemies under David and then says, "I'll be back!" And now, 10 to 15 years later, here he comes.

**6 The king and his men marched to Jerusalem to attack the Jebusites, who lived there.**

When David arrives they start trash-talking him.

**6 ...The Jebusites said to David, "You will not get in here; even the blind and the lame can ward you off." They thought, "David cannot get in here."**

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<sup>1</sup> There was some kind of successful raid in Judges 1:8, but it did not result in Israel ousting the Jebusites or taking control of the city.

So they are trash talking David like Goliath did back in 1 Samuel 16. And back then David trash-talked right back – in fact in my opinion he out-trash talked Goliath right before killing him. But here there is no record that he gives any answer. I do not know if he is just older and more mature now, or he is just not in the mood, or whatever – but when they make their wisecracks in verse 6 David does not say anything. He just proceeds to take the city.

## **7 Nevertheless, David captured the fortress of Zion, the City of David.**

**1 Chronicles 11:6 David had said, "Whoever leads the attack on the Jebusites will become commander-in-chief." Joab son of Zeruiah went up first, and so he received the command.**

He already had a very high rank, but now he has the highest military rank in David's army.

But how did he do it? How did Joab manage to do what Israel has never been able to do before and take Jerusalem? It is hard to say for sure because the language of verse 8 is very obscure. We are just not sure what some of the words mean, but what we see in the NIV is probably about as good a guess as any.

**8 On that day, David said, "Anyone who conquers the Jebusites will have to use the water shaft to reach those 'lame and blind' who are David's enemies."**

That word translated “water shaft” is the biggest question mark, but if that translation is correct then it sounds like David probably cut off the water source to the city.

About 150 years ago some archeologists were digging around in that area and discovered what is now known as “Warren’s tunnel.” It is a narrow vertical shaft forty-nine feet long dug through rock going straight down from the city. It goes down, then over, then down, then over and ends up at the spring of Gihon. The spring was hidden, so when other nations would lay siege to Jerusalem the people in the city had access to water so they could hold on indefinitely. Maybe what happened is David figured that out and cut off their source of their water. Or maybe he even sent Abner up the shaft to enter the city – who knows?

Anyway, David uses their own trash talking now against them.

**8 On that day, David said, "Anyone who conquers the Jebusites will have to use the water shaft to reach those 'lame and blind' who are David's enemies."**

From now on instead of calling them Jebusites David calls them “the blind and lame.” They say, “Even the blind and lame could hold you off” and David says, “Oh, is that who I’m fighting? The blind and the lame? Fine.” Then he proceeds to defeat them, and then from then on he refers to the Jebusites as the blind and the lame. It would be like if some bully were threatening you and he said, “I could whip you with one arm tied behind my back” and you then proceeded to beat him up and then from then on you called him “the one-armed wonder.”

**8 ...That is why they say, "The 'blind and lame' will not enter the palace."**

I do not think that means disabled people could not enter. I think it means Jebusites could not enter. That is David's nickname for the Jebusites now. I don't think it refers to people who were actually blind or lame, because later on Mephibosheth (who was lame) was welcomed into the palace.

So David takes Jerusalem and the most famous city in history becomes known as the city of David. (It is arguably the most famous city in history – it is for sure the most famous city in eternity!)

**9 David then took up residence in the fortress and called it the City of David. He built up the area around it, from the supporting terraces inward. 10 And he became more and more powerful, because the LORD God Almighty was with him.**

This is not just a report about where David was located. It is about his kingdom being established and exalted. David's kingdom becomes greater and greater, until Israel becomes a major player among the nations.

**11 Now Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, along with cedar logs and carpenters and stonemasons, and they built a palace for David.**

That is a big deal. If Jerusalem is here where we are, Tyre is in Wyoming – like Laramie. So they would have had to cut all these trees down with no modern tools, then haul them to the coast and float them down about 100 miles along the Mediterranean Sea coastline, then haul them over 50 miles through Philistine territory and over the mountains and then up to Jerusalem. Those cedar logs were better than the lumber they had in Israel – much longer lasting. And he also sent carpenters and stonemasons, and they built the palace for him. That shows us how famous David was, and, more importantly, how important it was for surrounding kings to have his favor. They want to be on David's good side, which is smart.

## **The House of David - 13-16**

And not only did David's kingdom become powerful and famous and influential, but his own house grew.

**13 After he left Hebron, David took more concubines and wives in Jerusalem, and more sons and daughters were born to him. 14 These are the names of the children born to him there: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon, 15 Ithar, Elishua, Nepheg, Japhia, 16 Elishama, Eliada and Eliphelet.**

Out of all those sons the only one who becomes significant is Solomon, who was the tenth born.

## **The Victories of David - 17-25**

And in addition to all that, God gives David military victory.

**17 When the Philistines heard that David had been anointed king over Israel, they went up in full force to search for him**

No sooner does God establish His man than the powers of darkness attack in full force. *Instant* opposition every time something good happens for David. If God is working through you at all you can expect resistance. If you are not getting any opposition it probably means you are sitting out of the war because our enemy does not let any work of God go unopposed. And if you are the type who gets easily discouraged when someone opposes you, you need to toughen up. God promises victory, but He does not promise it will come easy. Jerusalem is a great example of that. God says, "Jerusalem is yours. I'm giving it to you. In fact I'm commanding you – take it." And they try and fail and try and fail and try again with a little success, but ultimately fail. God makes wonderful promises to us but often places them on a high shelf the requires some major effort and struggle and warfare and creativity and trying again and again as you learn more and more about how to trust Him.

So, the Philistines come after him immediately. He was fine when he was just king of Judah down in the south – but king over all Israel – that makes the Philistines nervous. And so they decide to nip this fledgling little kingdom in the bud before it turns into another Saul situation where Israel is unified under a powerful king for 40 years. They defeated Saul seven years earlier, and they figure they can do the same thing again now.

**17... and David heard about it and went down to the stronghold.**

What stronghold? We don't know, but it must have been a stronghold that was nearby where the Philistines were, because the parallel passage in 1 Chronicles says this:

**1 Chronicles 14:8 When the Philistines heard that David had been anointed king over all Israel, they went up in full force to search for him, but David heard about it and went out to meet them.**

So David did not run away to a stronghold; he went to a stronghold near where they were in order to confront them.

## **18 Now the Philistines had come and spread out in the Valley of Rephaim;**

That is right by Jerusalem – less than a mile away.

**19 so David inquired of the LORD, (as usual) "Shall I go and attack the Philistines? Will you hand them over to me?" The LORD answered him, "Go, for I will surely hand the Philistines over to you." 20 So David went to Baal Perazim, and there he defeated them. He said, "As waters break out, the LORD has broken out against my enemies before me." So that place was called Baal Perazim.**

This has nothing to do with the military prowess of David. It has everything to do with the power of God. The Philistines were a more advanced culture than Israel with regard to weaponry. Most significantly they had chariots, which Israel did not have. So by all rights the Philistines should have been able to make short work of the Israelites, but God broke out against them like water from a broken dam. God just lets loose on them – and on their gods.

**21 The Philistines abandoned their idols there, and David and his men carried them off.**

**1 Chronicles 14:12 The Philistines had abandoned their gods there, and David gave orders to burn them in the fire.**

The Philistines' poor, helpless gods get left behind. Not only were those gods powerless to help the Philistines win, and powerless to help the Philistines escape, but they were powerless to even help themselves escape. If their worshippers do not carry them along they just get left with the rest of the baggage. Talk about a pathetic thing to worship.

### ***The Fierceness of God***

The God of Israel is a fierce warrior who, when He busts out against someone – *crushes* them – and their little gods. Many times people want to think of God only in terms of softness and tenderness and love – never violent or harsh and who would not hurt a flea. They think that would be the ideal God. But the problem with a god like that is it would leave us with the problem of evil forever. A god like that would never have the power or will to destroy and ultimately eliminate evil, nor would he have the stomach to ever bring about justice, and we would have to go through all eternity without ever experiencing the sensation of awe, which would be horrible. Dale Ralph Davis: "The text means to impress us with the fact that we do not have a namby-pamby godlet who is house-broken in line with our canon of conceivability. (People abandon gods like that, and they're carried off to the landfill)" (like in v.21).

Well, we don't know how much time passes between verses 21 and 22, but eventually the Philistines regroup and try again – in the exact same place.

**22 Once more the Philistines came up and spread out in the Valley of Rephaim; 23 so David inquired of the LORD**

If it had been me I may very well have skipped that step this time. God gives you an easy victory, and over time you start getting the feeling that you won because of your superior skill and ability and strength. And you do not really feel any sense of dependence on God, and you start just moving ahead without seeking God's guidance. But not David. He had no confusion about where the power came from and he is not about to engage the Philistines without seeking God's guidance first. And it is a good thing he did, because even though the circumstances are exactly the same, God gives David different instructions.

**23 so David inquired of the LORD, and he answered, "Do not go straight up, but circle around behind them and attack them in front of the balsam trees. 24 As soon as you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees, move quickly, because that will mean the LORD has gone out in front of you to strike the Philistine army."**

I don't know if God sent a wind, or if this was a supernatural sound or what, but we have seen this in the past where God does these "multi-media"-type attacks on the Philistines. He will throw in some thunder or an earthquake or sounds in the trees or whatever – just so they also know that they are being whipped not just by David but by God.

## **25 So David did as the LORD commanded him, and he struck down the Philistines all the way from Gibeon to Gezer.**

Gibeon to Gezer is like Thornton to Eldorado Springs – 20 miles straight west into Philistine territory. So now the Philistines are pushed all the way out of Israel.

And that is a great picture of what the Messiah would someday do. God established and exalted David's kingdom as a picture of what He would do with the Messiah's kingdom – the great Son of David.

## **Psalm 2:6 "I have installed my King on Zion, my holy hill.**

God installed David on Zion as a picture of the ultimate installation of the final King on Zion. The "I" is emphatic – "As opposed to those kings in verses 1-3 I Myself have installed my King..." It is God who installed Him as King and so while all the forces of evil rage and attack, no harm is done to Him because God's mighty hand is upholding Him. Every force that comes into contact with this King is shattered. Friedrich Nietzsche is famous for his statement "God is dead" in the late 1800's: "God is dead. God remains dead. And we have killed him. ... Is not the greatness of this deed too great for us? Must we ourselves not become gods simply to appear worthy of it?"<sup>2</sup> Nietzsche was considered one of the most powerful intellects of his day. And he used that intellect to attack God.

How did he fare? At age 45 Nietzsche began to lose his sanity. His mind deteriorated very quickly and he lived as a madman until he died 11 years later. In 1898, after having been insane for nine years, he suffered a stroke, and then another one the next year – leaving him partially paralyzed and unable to speak or walk. Then in 1900 he got pneumonia and then had another stroke and finally died. Someone once drew a cartoon that had two frames. The first one was dated 1885 and it showed some graffiti that said, "God is dead. Signed, Nietzsche." And then the next frame dated 1900: "Nietzsche is dead. Signed, God." Gather up all the power and strength and might in the created world and ram it against God's Anointed One and it will all shatter in a million pieces. David is invincible at this point because he is a prototype of the Messiah.

## **How God did it – drawing and crushing**

OK, so there is a quick rundown on what takes place in this chapter. It is a collage of pictures showing us God's establishment and exaltation of David's kingdom. But I told you at the beginning that the important thing is not just that David was established and exalted. The important thing is *how* and *why* he was established and exalted. First let's look at how God did it.

## **Drawing His people to His king**

Let's go back to the beginning of the chapter. Remember they had three reasons why they wanted David to be their king?

**1 All the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and said: "We are your own flesh and blood. 2 In the past, while Saul was king over us, you were the one who led Israel on their military campaigns. And the LORD said to you, 'You will shepherd my people Israel, and you will become their ruler.'"**

So they want David as their king because he is their brother, he has been doing a great job up to now, and he was God's choice. What happened that brought all this about? Ish-Bosheth died. How is it that they suddenly understand all this just because Ish-Bosheth died? They already knew all this before. In fact, not only did they know it, but they had wanted to go over to David for a long time. Back in chapter 3, when Abner was still alive, he met with them and said this:

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<sup>2</sup> From *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*



**2 Samuel 3:17 "For some time you have wanted to make David your king. 18 Now do it! For the LORD promised David, 'By my servant David I will rescue my people Israel from the hand of the Philistines and from the hand of all their enemies.'"**

So they had been wanting to do it, but had not done it. Why not? Evidently because they were influenced by Abner. But now Abner urges them, "Go ahead and do it," and it sounds like they were convinced at the time, but then did not do it. Why not? They want to stick with Ish-Bosheth. And so they do not do it until Ish-Bosheth finally dies. Now they are finally doing it. They have no other choice. God has taken away all their other options.

They have known for a long time this was what they should do, but they just could not bring themselves to do it while they seemed to have other options. They were drawn toward God's way, but they were drawn more toward the world's way. And God overcame that by tearing away all their other options. Once those other influences were removed their hearts were won over by what their heads already knew.

So how did God manage to bring all Israel to unite under David? How did He overcome their resistance? How did He put down their rebellion? He did not do it with the sword (the civil war did not go anywhere or accomplish anything). The way He put down their rebellion and overcame their resistance was by winning over their hearts. And He did that by removing their other options. God brought His people to bow before His king by winning their hearts.

### ***Only King - How someone comes to Christ – no other option***

And that is a model for how the Lord brings His people to the great Son of David, the Lord Jesus Christ. He does not force you. He wins your heart by opening your eyes to the fact that there simply are no other options.

Our idolatrous hearts want to cling to every other possible king. We are just like Israel. The Israelites followed Saul until He died. Then they followed Abner. And when Abner died they clung to Ish-Bosheth. And so God finally took Ish-Bosheth away from them so they had no other option. And we tend to be the same way. A person thinks something or someone in this world can provide for him or protect him or make him happy and so he clings to that thing. And even when it proves to be totally worthless and utterly incapable of supplying what he needs, still he clings to it. But when God starts drawing that person to Christ you can just watch God remove every crutch – every rival king from their life one by one until it is obvious to them that they have no choice but to follow Christ. And it is not always that the rival king dies or is literally taken away. Very often it is just that God opens their eyes to see how utterly worthless that thing is as a source of satisfaction of the soul.

The people in the Agape 101 class were all sharing their testimonies the last couple weeks and one of the people described her conversion like that. She said, "At that moment there was no more deliberation in my heart than there is when a red light turns green. You don't debate about it – you just put your foot on the gas and go." When your eyes are opened to see things as they really are the decision about following Christ is a no-brainer. Even if it means hardship and suffering and pain and the loss of your family and friends and everything else – still, it is just obvious to you that there is no other rational option. You will be like Peter when so many disciples left, and Jesus said to the 12, "Are you also going to leave Me?" and Peter said, "Where would we go? You alone have the words of eternal life." That is what happens when a person becomes a Christian. All their other sources of security or well-being or joy or satisfaction are suddenly exposed as bankrupt. And the light toward Jesus just turns green and he has no other thought than just hit the gas and go. I don't think many people come to Christ because they see Him as the best of several options. When a person truly comes to Christ they see Him as the only option. They are like Matthew when Jesus said, "Follow me." He did not hesitate and calculate all the money he was leaving at the tax booth and his future job prospects with Rome; he did not gripe and moan about what all he was going to have to give up; when the lights turned on he could not unload that old life fast enough.

Praise God for conquering our rebellious, idolatrous hearts! What seem like disastrous tragedies are often the greatest gifts God ever gives us. When you have a catastrophe or heartbreak that finally breaks you and makes you turn completely to God that is the greatest thing that could ever happen to you. We keep clinging to the house of Saul even as it is collapsing around us and only when it is demolished completely do we come to our senses and bow the knee to the Lord's Anointed.

## **The gift of willing followers**

Our willingness is a key aspect of what brings glory to the Lord Jesus Christ. If anyone had the right to force submission it would be God. But instead He condescends to woo us and draw us and charm us and win our hearts. Why? Because our willing, eager worship glorifies His Son.

The most often quoted chapter in the Old Testament is Psalm 110. It is a psalm about the Messiah. The Messiah would be a descendent of David, and yet David refers to him as “my Lord” – recognizing that the Messiah would be greater than David himself.

**Psalm 110:1 Yahweh says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet." 2 The LORD will extend your mighty scepter from Zion; you will rule in the midst of your enemies. 3 Your troops will be willing on your day of battle.**

The fact that the Messiah’s followers would all be willing was part of the gift the Father gives the Son. In fact, that word translated “willing” is actually the normal word for “free will offering.” The Messiah’s followers would be free will offerings. They will willingly, happily, eagerly give themselves to Him. They do not have to be forced, which is a testimony to His goodness.

So how did God establish David as king? There were two groups of people that had to be defeated – the Israelites and the Philistines – the people of God and the enemies of God. The Israelites God defeated by winning over their rebellious hearts so they were willing and eager to have David as their king. The Philistines’ God defeated by crushing them under the foot of His anointed one.

## **Why God did it - for Israel’s sake - 12**

The other important point the writer makes is why God established and exalted the kingdom of David. Look again at verse 12.

**12 And David knew that the LORD had established him as king over Israel and had exalted his kingdom for the sake of his people Israel.**

God did not establish and exalt David for David’s sake. He did it for Israel’s sake.

## **Rulers are for the people**

That teaches us something important about the purpose of leadership. Leaders are for the people, not the people for the leaders.

**Romans 13:4 [the one in authority] is God's servant to do you good.**

The Shepherd exists for the benefit of the sheep, not vice-versa. Leaders who use those under them to build themselves up are abusing their position. Pastors who want more people just so they can have a bigger, more prestigious church, or be viewed as a big-shot – that is an abuse of their calling. Using your role of authority to serve yourself at the expense of those under you is a wicked sin. And that goes for any authority – whether you are President of the United States or a husband in the home. Husbands who use their role as head of the home to get their wives to serve them are abusing their position. The pastors in Ezekiel’s time were like that. They were using the people for their own gain.

**Ezekiel 34:2 ...Woe to the shepherds of Israel who only take care of themselves! Should not shepherds take care of the flock? 3 You eat the curds, clothe yourselves with the wool and slaughter the choice animals, but you do not take care of the flock.**

You fleece them and milk them and eat them but you don’t take care of them.

**4 You have not strengthened the weak or healed the sick or bound up the injured. You have not brought back the strays or searched for the lost. You have ruled them harshly and brutally. 5 So they were scattered because there was no shepherd, and ... they became food for all the wild animals.**

**10... I am against the shepherds and will hold them accountable for my flock. I will remove them from tending the flock so that the shepherds can no longer feed themselves. I will rescue my flock from their mouths, and it will no longer be food for them.**

It is a sad thing with the Lord has to rescue His people from the jaws of the very pastors He has set in place to shepherd them.

**John 10:11 The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.**

## **Seek blessing for the sake of others**

But David did not do that sort of thing. Verse 12 says David knew that it was for the sake of the people that God was establishing and exalting his kingdom. God does not give us blessings so they can dead end with us. He establishes us and exalts us and blesses us and enriches us for the sake of His people.

Is it a good thing to seek blessings from God? Yes, but one of the driving motives for seeking those blessings should be because you love God's people so much, and you want to have the resources to spread God's blessings to them. You beg for wisdom from God – not just because you want to be able to figure out what to do in your life, but because you want to be able to help others who are facing hard decisions. You beseech God for money because you want to give to so many people. You cry out for skill and ability in your ministry because you want the people around you at church to thrive spiritually as a result of the grace they receive from God through you. If you have been crying out to God for some blessing – money or a relationship or a job or healing or whatever, consider the possibility that God will not grant that blessing until you are truly desiring it for the benefit of His people and for the sake of His glory. David sought blessing from God for the sake of the people of God and when God gave him that blessing he knew it was for them.

## **Seek the blessing of your leaders**

And David was not the only one who understood that. You know who else understood it? The people. That is obvious from the beginning of the chapter. David does not make any overtures toward them at all. It is all them seeking after Him. They are almost begging him to be their king – even offering him a list of arguments why it would be a good thing.

For many people in our culture that is absolutely inconceivable. We live in such an anti-authority culture that some people read about the Israelites actually requesting that David be a king over them and they just cannot fathom that. Why voluntarily submit to an authority? Why place someone over you? Isn't it better to just be your own boss so no one is telling you what you can and can't do all the time? No. Israel had gone down that road in the period of the Judges when each man did what was right in his own eyes and it was an absolute catastrophe. It was the lowest, darkest, most horrific period of Israel's history. It turns your stomach to even read the book of Judges it was so horrible. Having a king is much, much better than having no authority over you.

**Romans 13:4 [the one in authority] is God's servant to do you good.**

They say sheep are dumb animals. But the sheep who thinks he would be better off without a shepherd is even dumber than the average sheep. A shepherd is the sheep's only hope. When Jesus saw the crowds of people without any good shepherds over them it wrenched His stomach with feelings of compassion.

**Matthew 9:36 When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.**

That is a horrible condition to be in.

And if it is horrible to be a sheep without a shepherd, then it is wonderful to be a sheep with a shepherd. And the more the king gives resources and gifts to that shepherd the more wonderful it is for the sheep. So the loving shepherd seeks blessing for the benefit of the sheep, and the sheep rejoice when the shepherd is blessed because it benefits them.

## Conclusion

The people came down to David and tried to get him to agree to a covenant. They would offer their loyalty if he would offer them the benefits of his rule over them. And they get what they want. They walk away from Hebron thrilled at having gotten a great deal. It is like if you make some lowball offer on a house you really want, and the people accept. And you walk away thinking, "Wow, did I ever get a great deal!" That is how these elders are feeling walking out of Jerusalem. They just managed to gain the greatest advantage they could have possibly gained in the world – David, God's anointed as their shepherd. And before they even make it all the way back home the blessings from heaven start showering down through David to the people. Before they know it they go from being an ash heap to being a great and glorious kingdom.

God will establish and exalt His King. He will conquer everyone. And He will conquer you. If you are open to Him, He will conquer your rebellion by ripping away your options like tearing off layers of skin until you can see that following His Anointed One is the only rational option. If you are hard toward Him He will conquer you by giving you over to your sin and allowing you to ultimately be destroyed by His anointed One.

*Conquer us, Oh Lord. Conquer my heart. Track down every pocket of rebellion still resisting Your way, and make me a freewill offering to Your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Give us hearts faithful to Your gracious covenant, that we might enjoy the benefits of Your grace as Your Anointed One reigns over us. Teach us to delight in being reigned over by Him that we may honor the Lord Jesus Christ by enjoying being under such a King.*

**Benediction: Ez.34:23 I will place over them one shepherd, my servant David,**

(This was written hundreds of years after David's death – it is talking about the Messiah)

**and he will tend them; he will tend them and be their shepherd. 24 I the LORD will be their God, and my servant David will be prince among them. I the LORD have spoken. 25 ""I will make a covenant of peace with them and rid the land of wild beasts so that they may live in the desert and sleep in the forests in safety. 26 I will bless them ... 30 Then they will know that I, the LORD their God, am with them and that they ... are my people, declares the Sovereign LORD. 31 You my sheep, the sheep of my pasture, are people, and I am your God, declares the Sovereign LORD.""**