

2 Samuel 21-22

Good evening and thank you so much for joining us. Would you please turn in your bibles to 2 Samuel chapter 21 please? We're going to study both chapters 21 and 22, and we'll finish the book of 2nd Samuel next Wednesday.

As we near the end of this book there's more to come in the story of David... his succession and death. But that's the subject matter for 1 Kings.

Last week we saw David reclaim the throne after Absalom's death, yet a new uprising came from a rebel named Sheba that David had to deal with. Tonight we'll see how even though David is advancing in age, the battles don't get easier.

The title of tonight's message is Triumphs and Tribulations

Let's pray

1-2

1 Now there was a famine in the days of David for three years, year after year; and David inquired of the LORD. And the LORD answered, "It is because of Saul and his bloodthirsty house, because he killed the Gibeonites."

2 So the king called the Gibeonites and spoke to them. Now the Gibeonites were not of the children of Israel, but of the remnant of the Amorites; the children of Israel had sworn protection to them, but Saul had sought to kill them in his zeal for the children of Israel and Judah. More than 400 years before this, when Joshua led Israel into Canaan, he made a covenant with the Gibeonites in Joshua chapter 9 not to harm them.

But back when Saul was king, he ignored Joshua's covenant and tried to wipe them out. God takes promises seriously - and because Saul didn't - Israel was suffering a 3 year famine.

David's duty was to rectify Saul's mistake.

3 Therefore David said to the Gibeonites, "What shall I do for you? And with what shall I make atonement, that you may bless the inheritance of the LORD?" David says, hey what can I do to make things right. We want to eat!

It's interesting that David didn't dictate terms to them. He came to them as a servant, not as a king, again showing his humility.

4-6

4 And the Gibeonites said to him, "We will have no silver or gold from Saul or from his house, nor shall you kill any man in Israel for us."

So he said, "Whatever you say, I will do for you."

5 Then they answered the king, "As for the man who consumed us and plotted against us, that we should be destroyed from remaining in any of the territories of Israel, 6 let seven men of his descendants be delivered to us, and we will hang them before the LORD in Gibeah of Saul, whom the LORD chose."

And the king said, "I will give them." The Gibeonites request seemed reasonable. Instead of money or an "eye for an eye" they only asked for justice against Saul through his descendants, and David agrees to it.

The phrase "before the LORD" in verse 6 implies "with the Lord's approval." This was no random execution.

The Gibeonites ask to slay 7 of Saul's descendents.

Some commentators believe David knew it was right because David knew that Saul's descendants helped in or benefited directly from the massacre of the Gibeonites.

7 But the king spared Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, because of the LORD's oath that was between them, between David and Jonathan the son of Saul. " Mephibosheth was the most notable living descendant of Saul and it made the most sense to put him as the first of the seven to be delivered to the Gibeonites for execution. Yet earlier you'll recall that David David promised to be kind to Jonathan's sons. David thenb promised to protect and bless Mephibosheth, and David wasn't gonna violate one oath in order to fulfill another.

8 So the king took Armoni and Mephibosheth, the two sons of Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, (another Mephibosheth) whom she bore to Saul, and the five sons of Michal[fn] the daughter of Saul, whom she brought up for Adriel the son of Barzillai the Meholathite; The five sons of Michal were actually David's stepsons.

9 and he delivered them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they hanged them on the hill before the LORD. Again the phrase before the LORD; implies God approved of their execution.

...9 So they fell, all seven together, and were put to death in the days of harvest, in the first days, in the beginning of barley harvest. David chose seven male descendants of Saul to give over to the Gibeonites and they executed them by public hanging.

This method of death was important because it fulfilled the promise of Deuteronomy 21, that he who is hanged is accursed of God. These descendants of Saul bore the curse Saul deserved.

This promise from Deuteronomy 21:23 explains why Jesus died the way He did. **Galatians 3:13 Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree")**^[fn]

10 Now Rizpah the daughter of Aiah took sackcloth and spread it for herself on the rock, from the beginning of harvest until the late rains poured on them from heaven. And she did not allow the birds of the air to rest on them by day nor the beasts of the field by night. Rizpah was the mother of two of the seven delivered for execution. And she holds a vigil over their bodies until the late rains came. This means that the bodies of these men were deliberately left unburied. This was to emphasize the fact that these men were executed as an act of judgment.

The coming of rain showed that the famine was over, that justice was satisfied, and that Israel was delivered.

11 And David was told what Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, the concubine of Saul, had done. News of this mom's determination had spread. And David started thinking that he too should show Saul the respect a king of Israel deserved

12 Then David went and took the bones of Saul, and the bones of Jonathan his son, from the men of Jabesh Gilead who had stolen them from the street of Beth Shan,^[fn] where the Philistines had

hung them up, after the Philistines had struck down Saul in Gilboa. Saul and Jonathan's bones never had a decent burial. David digs them up and takes them to the family burial site in Benjamin.

13 So he brought up the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son from there; and they gathered the bones of those who had been hanged. 14 They buried the bones of Saul and Jonathan his son in the country of Benjamin in Zelah, in the tomb of Kish his father. So they performed all that the king commanded. And after that God heeded the prayer for the land. God blessed David and Israel for tying up these loose ends.

These 14 verses remind us that there are many reasons for unanswered prayer. When we see that our prayers are not answered we should seek God to see if there's a problem that needs to be addressed.

15 When the Philistines were at war again with Israel, David and his servants with him went down and fought against the Philistines; and David grew faint. Even a great man of God grows old. As the years went on, David became unable to fight as he once did. Always a difficult place to be when our physical capabilities diminish.

16 Then Ishbi-Benob, who was one of the sons of the giant, the weight of whose bronze spear was three hundred shekels, who was bearing a new sword, thought he could kill David. 17 But Abishai the son of Zeruiah came to his aid, and struck the Philistine and killed him. Then the men of David swore to him,

saying, “You shall go out no more with us to battle, lest you quench the lamp of Israel.”

Certainly David isn't the last spiritual leader who became dizzy and weak. Everyone has their moments. That's why we all need people who will speak truth into our lives, even if it's hard to hear.

After this near miss, David's men insisted that he no longer go to battle. They didn't want to lose him as their leader.

Think about how hard this would be to a battle hardened soldier like David!

18 Now it happened afterward that there was again a battle with the Philistines at Gob. Then Sibbechai the Hushathite killed Saph,^[fn] who was one of the sons of the giant. 19 Again there was war at Gob with the Philistines, where Elhanan the son of Jaare-Oregim^[fn] the Bethlehemite killed the brother of Goliath the Gittite, the shaft of whose spear was like a weaver's beam. Note Goliath had a brother. Evidently, all four of the giants in verses 15-22 were related to Goliath of Gath.

20 Yet again there was war at Gath, where there was a man of great stature, who had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot, twenty-four in number; and he also was born to the giant. 21 So when he defied Israel, Jonathan the son of Shimea,^[fn] David's brother, killed him.

22 These four were born to the giant in Gath, and fell by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants.” 1 Samuel 17 records the famous story of David's battle with Goliath. When Goliath taunted the armies of God there wasn't a man in Israel willing to take him on. Everyone was afraid, until a little shepherd boy with

a heart of faith showed his fellow Israelis how it was done. David's example of faith lit a fire in Israel.

It's interesting that now this chapter is full of other giant fighters besides David... Abishai, Shibbechai, Elhanan, Jonathan were also giant killers. It's been said, "Courage is contagious." And so is faith.

Even towards the end of his life, there were still giants to face and battles to fight. Make no mistake, the Christian walk does not necessarily get easier as we grow older. Chuck Swindoll mentioned when he was 85 that that was the hardest year of ministry for him. There are giants all the way to the end.

As Chapter 22 begins, you know that not all the psalms are in the book of Psalms. In fact, Chapter 22 is a song of David that is almost word for word as Psalm 18 - with just a few variations. Why is this Psalm repeated in two places?

Well there are many different theories, the one that perhaps fits best is that the first time is used for the purpose of history, the other for the purpose of prophecy. The 2 Samuel rendering recounts the history of king David. The Psalm 18 rendering speaks of the life and work of our Greater than David, Jesus Christ.

1 Then David spoke to the LORD the words of this song, on the day when the LORD had delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul. The first verse suggests that

David composed this psalm early in his reign perhaps when Saul died, and he first took the throne, as described in 2 Samuel 8. Look at all the titles David gives God in verses 2-3

2 And he said:[fn]

“The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer;

3 The God of my strength, in whom I will trust;

My shield and the horn of my salvation,

My stronghold and my refuge;

My Savior, You save me from violence. David could give God all these names not out of intellectual knowledge, no it was out of experiential knowledge. The only way for us to be able to prescribe these names to the Lord is to experience Him delivering us from difficulty as well.

4 I will call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised;

So shall I be saved from my enemies. There are many reasons to praise the Lord.... God promises to inhabit our praises. Peace and joy come to us when we worship. The praise of God builds up our faith... In numerous ways worship benefits and blesses the worshiper...

But the true motive of praise is God's worthiness to be worshiped! His character demands it. His conduct attracts it. God deserves to be praised!

5 “When the waves of death surrounded me,

The floods of ungodliness made me afraid. God didn't make him afraid! 2 Timothy 1:7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

6 The sorrows of Sheol surrounded me;
The snares of death confronted me.

7 In my distress I called upon the LORD,
And cried out to my God;

He heard my voice from His temple,

And my cry entered His ears. Aren't you so glad that God hears
our distress calls?

**Hebrews 4:16 Let us therefore come boldly to
the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to
help in time of need.**

And in only the way David can, look how he describes God
moving to meet his needs

8-13

8 "Then the earth shook and trembled;

The foundations of heaven^[fn] quaked and were shaken,
Because He was angry.

9 Smoke went up from His nostrils,
And devouring fire from His mouth;

Coals were kindled by it.

10 He bowed the heavens also, and came down
With darkness under His feet.

11 He rode upon a cherub, and flew;
And He was seen^[fn] upon the wings of the wind.

12 He made darkness canopies around Him,
Dark waters and thick clouds of the skies.

13 From the brightness before Him

Coals of fire were kindled. David pictured the LORD coming to
meet his need, coming with glory and speed.

14-20

14 "The LORD thundered from heaven,
And the Most High uttered His voice.

15 He sent out arrows and scattered them;
Lightning bolts, and He vanquished them.

16 Then the channels of the sea were seen,
The foundations of the world were uncovered,
At the rebuke of the LORD,
At the blast of the breath of His nostrils.

17 "He sent from above, He took me,
He drew me out of many waters.

18 He delivered me from my strong enemy,
From those who hated me;
For they were too strong for me.

19 They confronted me in the day of my calamity,
But the LORD was my support.

20 He also brought me out into a broad place;
He delivered me because He delighted in me. For years David
walked narrow ledges in the wilderness with little room for error.
But God brought him to a safe place.

And notice-God delighted in David. Isn't it amazing that God
delights in us?

Verses 21-25 are shocking

21 "The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness;
According to the cleanness of my hands He has recompensed
me.

22 For I have kept the ways of the LORD,
And have not wickedly departed from my God.

23 For all His judgments were before me;
And as for His statutes, I did not depart from them.

24 I was also blameless before Him,
And I kept myself from my iniquity.

25 Therefore the LORD has recompensed me according to my
righteousness,

According to my cleanness in His eyes.[fn] What? As we've read the life of David, we've seen lies, adultery, and murder. How could David say this of himself? In fact in Psalm 38 and Psalm 51, we hear David acknowledge what a wretch he is, how he has failed the Lord.

How could David say this in these verses?

David knew he was a forgiven man, and that the cleanness of his hands was because God cleansed them, not because they had never been dirtied.

When Jesus died on the Cross and said, "It is finished," it was finished indeed. The price for every sin you have ever committed or will commit has been paid.

Satan's favorite weapon is condemnation. Therefore, he will tell you that you can't be used, that you can't go on, but you can overcome him by the Word.

26 "With the merciful You will show Yourself merciful;
With a blameless man You will show Yourself blameless; David didn't only sing about this principle; he also lived it and benefited

from it. God showed David great mercy because he showed great mercy to others, like Saul.

Jesus said in **Matthew 5:7 Blessed are the merciful, For they shall obtain mercy.**

27 With the pure You will show Yourself pure;
And with the devious You will show Yourself shrewd.

28 You will save the humble people;
But Your eyes are on the haughty, that You may bring them down. We're told of this principle in **James 4:6 But He gives more grace. Therefore He says:**

**"God resists the proud,
But gives grace to the humble."**[fn]

29 "For You are my lamp, O LORD;
The LORD shall enlighten my darkness. God opens our eyes to see that which we couldn't see before!

30 For by You I can run against a troop;
By my God I can leap over a wall. 1 man can't fight a troop or leap over a wall. But the Lord can! **Ephesians 6:10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.**

31 As for God, His way is perfect;
The word of the LORD is proven;
He is a shield to all who trust in Him. We don't need the opinions or guesswork of the political pundits or even the prophecy experts who love to try to assign a prophecy to every fired missile. All we need to do is pick up our Bible's and follow a proven path.

32 “For who is God, except the LORD?

And who is a rock, except our God? I’ve had the great privilege of meeting some of my ‘heroes in the faith’. But as I spent time with them, there were some things they did that bristled me. It was shocking-my hero’s had flaws?

Only God is the unfailing and everlasting rock.

33 God is my strength and power,[fn]

And He makes my[fn] way perfect.

34 He makes my[fn] feet like the feet of deer,

And sets me on my high places. God stabilizes our lives doesn’t He?

35 He teaches my hands to make war,

So that my arms can bend a bow of bronze. God is no pacifist.

There are times when His will is to fight.

36 “You have also given me the shield of Your salvation;

Your gentleness has made me great. You’ll never see a bullwhip in God’s hand. He doesn’t drive His sheep, He draws them and leads them. His yoke is easy!

It was FB Meyer who said “We might brave the lion; we are vanquished by the Lamb. We could withstand the scathing look of scorn; but when the gentle Lord casts on us the look of overwhelming tenderness, we go out to weep bitterly.”

I get so convicted when I think about how gentle God has been and is with me and how I’m not that way with so many people.

37 You enlarged my path under me;
So my feet did not slip. God isn't setting up our circumstances to watch us fail. No on the contrary God is there helping us to succeed. But of course His definition of success through a trial is different than ours isn't it?

38-46

38 "I have pursued my enemies and destroyed them;
Neither did I turn back again till they were destroyed.

39 And I have destroyed them and wounded them,
So that they could not rise;
They have fallen under my feet.

40 For You have armed me with strength for the battle;
You have subdued under me those who rose against me.

41 You have also given me the necks of my enemies,
So that I destroyed those who hated me.

42 They looked, but there was none to save;
Even to the LORD, but He did not answer them.

43 Then I beat them as fine as the dust of the earth;
I trod them like dirt in the streets,
And I spread them out.

44 "You have also delivered me from the strivings of my people;
You have kept me as the head of the nations.
A people I have not known shall serve me.

45 The foreigners submit to me;
As soon as they hear, they obey me.

46 The foreigners fade away,

And come frightened[fn] from their hideouts. David recognized his victories and success as king weren't a result of his skill or ingenuity, it was because of the Lord.

47 "The LORD lives!

Blessed be my Rock!

Let God be exalted,

The Rock of my salvation! David thought of the great victory of God on his behalf and could only worship.

48 It is God who avenges me,

And subdues the peoples under me;

49 He delivers me from my enemies.

You also lift me up above those who rise against me;

You have delivered me from the violent man. Notice in this psalm that David constantly moved back and forth from speaking about God and His attributes (He delivers me) to speaking directly to God (You also lift me up).

David didn't seem to have a problem moving between the two aspects, indicating that there is place for both in praise.

50 Therefore I will give thanks to You, O LORD, among the Gentiles,

And sing praises to Your name. Paul quotes this verse in Romans 15.

51 He is the tower of salvation to His king,

And shows mercy to His anointed,

To David and his descendants forevermore." This last line of the psalm is a reference to the covenant God made with David, what

we call the Davidic Covenant. God promised David an heir who would reign forever over Israel and establish an eternal kingdom.

Of course Matthew 1 and Luke 3 identify that heir as Jesus Christ.