

2 Samuel 8 - Thursday, January 15th, 2015

- Last week we left David settling in and enjoying a time of rest the Lord had given to him, so as to prepare him for what's prepared for him.
- Namely, the battles that lie ahead particularly as it relates to their archenemy the Philistines, which is what we'll see beginning in verse one.
- While this is a relatively short chapter it's certainly not short on numerous life lessons by way of the practical application that we'll see in it.

1 After this it came to pass that David attacked the Philistines and subdued them. And David took Metheg Ammah from the hand of the Philistines.

- Just here in verse one we already have two of the aforementioned life lessons, the first of which is that of how David attacks the Philistines.
- He takes an offensive posture and goes to the Philistines as opposed to a defensive posture when the Philistines attacked the Israelites.
- The lesson here is that often times, it may be deemed necessary to be on the offensive when it comes to spiritual warfare with our enemy.

Alan Redpath of this said, "The thing that fascinates me about this complete victory is the utter contempt with which David treated the great power of his adversaries."

- The second lesson that's here in verse one has to do with how familiar David was with land of the Philistines having lived there in Ziklag.
- I suppose you could say this was David's old stomping ground, as it were, by virtue of how he got to know the area during those 1 ½ years.
- Herein lies the life lesson woven into the fabric of this verse; God works even out our seasons of backsliding for our good and for His glory.

2 Then he defeated Moab. Forcing them down to the ground, he measured them off with a line. With two lines he measured off those to be put to death, and with one full line those to be kept alive. So the Moabites became David's servants, and brought tribute.

- At first read, one can come away from verse two with the impression that David is mercilessly and arbitrarily deciding who lives or who dies.
- However, when you take a closer look you realize that what David is doing here is actually very wise such that he's exercising discernment.
- By that I mean, David is discerning between who could be a threat to his kingdom, and those who could become a servant in the kingdom.

- The reason I point this out is because, like with David we too should possess this same discernment when it comes to the kingdom of God.
- Let me explain, some people have already made up their minds and hardened their hearts, and as such, they've in effect, sealed their fate.
- Conversely, there's others who haven't hardened their hearts towards the things of God and may become servants in the kingdom of God.

Matthew 7:15–20 (NIV) — 15 "Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. 16 By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? 17 Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. 18 A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. 19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.

- Before we move on to verse three, there's something else here that I would like to mention, as it relates to these being the Moabite people.
- One commentator has suggested that something must have gone terribly wrong between David and the Moabites for this defeat to happen.
- This because, back in 1 Samuel 22:3-4, David had entrusted the Moabites with the care of his mother and father while he was fleeing Saul.

- Moreover, David's great grandmother was herself a Moabite by the name of Ruth, which means that his parents were in the care of family.
- However, here in verse two were told that he defeated the Moabites, which begs the question of why? What happened to David's parents?
- One commentator suggests that they may have been mistreated and or killed, and if that's the case, then David is justified in what he does.

3 David also defeated Hadadezer the son of Rehob, king of Zobah, as he went to recover his territory at the River Euphrates. 4 David took from him one thousand chariots, seven hundred horsemen, and twenty thousand foot soldiers. Also David hamstringed all the chariot horses, except that he spared enough of them for one hundred chariots.

- Here again we have yet another verse that would arguably be misunderstood at first read where we're told that David disabled their horses.
- The thought here is he's acting out of obedience to Deuteronomy 17 where God says that kings were not to multiply for themselves horses.
- The problem here is that this also included God's command that kings were not to multiply for themselves wives as well, which David did.

- Here's where I'm going with this David is demonstrating a textbook case of partial obedience, in the sense that he only partially obeys God.
- David's partial obedience is really full on disobedience. Lest we come down too hard on David, we would do well to take heed of ourselves.
- Truth be made known, we're all prone to selectively obey God in some areas of our lives, while at the same time disobeying God in others.

I like how one commentator said it, "This is like us. We specialize in certain things. Tithing? God it down. Witnessing? You bet. Gossiping? Ouch. All of us are specialists in certain areas, and we tend to talk about those areas. The real issues, however, is not what we talk about, but what we're silent about. Oftentimes, our silence indicates where the correction needs to be.

- Be that as it may, while some believe David was demonstrating partial obedience, others suggest that David was showing military vigilance.
- This because he couldn't possibly facilitate the care of so many horses while on a military offensive let alone leave them all with the enemy.
- It's important to keep in mind David has a green light from the Lord, so-to-speak, such that God had called and commanded him to do this.

- The reason being is that in verse three we're told that David also defeated Hadadezer, the king of Zobah in order to recover all his territory.
- In other words, God had given this all territory to Israel, and it was to extend from the river Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.
- It's interesting to note, as we'll see next in verse five, that Damascus Syria of all places, was territory belonging to Israelites not the Syrians.

Alan Redpath had this to say, "Then there was Syria, the great heathen nation to the north, divided into two groups with capitals at Zobah and Damascus. They united together for protection but found themselves helpless against the might of David."

- There's one more thought here before we move on to verse five, and it has to do with how David kept only a small number of their horses.
- Here's what I'm thinking, while at the very least this was in part, David's obedience to God, it was also David putting his whole trust in God.
- Here's how I get there, David was purposely not taking the multitude of horses so his trust would not be in horses and chariots, but in God.

Psalms 20:7 (NKJV) — 7 Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; But we will remember the name of the LORD our God.

Psalms 33:16–22 (NKJV) — 16 No king is saved by the multitude of an army; A mighty man is not delivered by great strength. 17 A horse is a vain hope for safety; Neither shall it deliver any by its great strength. 18 Behold, the eye of the LORD is on those who fear Him, On those who hope in His mercy, 19 To deliver their soul from death, And to keep them alive in famine. 20 Our soul waits for the LORD; He is our help and our shield. 21 For our heart shall rejoice in Him, Because we have trusted in His holy name. 22 Let Your mercy, O LORD, be upon us, Just as we hope in You.

5 When the Syrians of Damascus came to help Hadadezer king of Zobah, David killed twenty-two thousand of the Syrians. 6 Then David put garrisons in Syria of Damascus; and the Syrians became David's servants, and brought tribute. So the LORD preserved David wherever he went.

- I find this interesting for a number of reasons not the least of which is that in spite of David's short comings and failings, God is still faithful.
- Not only are the nations around David bringing tribute, which is revenue, God in addition to this, is preserving David wherever he would go.
- I mention this because so too is this true for us, in spite of us, God will always remain faithful to us, as He preserves and provides for us.

7 And David took the shields of gold that had belonged to the servants of Hadadezer, and brought them to Jerusalem. 8 Also from Bethah and from Berothai, cities of Hadadezer, King David took a large amount of bronze. 9 When Toi king of Hamath heard that David had defeated all the army of Hadadezer, 10 then Toi sent Joram his son to King David, to greet him and bless him, because he had fought against Hadadezer and defeated him (for Hadadezer had been at war with Toi); and Joram brought with him articles of silver, articles of gold, and articles of bronze.

- We're told that David had eliminated Toi, who was an enemy of Hadadezer; so he thanks David by send articles of silver, gold and bronze.
- This reminds me of that saying that goes something like; "the enemy of my enemy is my friend." Such was the case here with Hadadezer.
- Actually, I see this more as a case of God being pleased with David, so much so, that he has the enemies around him at peace with him.

Proverbs 16:7 (NKJV) — 7 When a man's ways please the LORD, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him.

11 King David also dedicated these to the LORD, along with the silver and gold that he had dedicated from all the nations which he had subdued—12 from Syria, from Moab, from the people of Ammon, from the Philistines, from Amalek, and from the spoil of Hadadezer the son of Rehob, king of Zobah.

- Couple of thoughts here before we finish the chapter, the first of which has to do with David dedicating all of this silver and gold to the Lord.
- This speaks to what we saw last week when God told David he could not build the temple, not deterring him from preparing the materials.
- By way of a personal and practical application, just because God says no to singing on the worship team doesn't mean that I can't still sing.

- The second thought has to do with all the territory David took back being all the way from Syria, Moab, Ammon, the Philistines and Amalek.
- The point being is that David would ultimately occupy more of the Promised Land under his reign than at any other time in Israel's history.
- It's believed that under David's reign he possessed about 30,000 square miles, which was 10% of the original size of the Promised Land.

- To put it into perspective, the borders of the original Promised Land give to Israel for them to possess would total 300,000 square miles.
- The most land Israel would end up possessing was under King David's reign, in which they occupied about 10%, or 30,000 square miles.
- Today, Israel is only about 8,000 square miles, which begs the question of, do we only possess a small percentage of all God's promises.

13 And David made himself a name when he returned from killing eighteen thousand Syrians in the Valley of Salt. 14 He also put garrisons in Edom; throughout all Edom he put garrisons, and all the Edomites became David's servants. And the LORD preserved David wherever he went. 15 So David reigned over all Israel; and David administered judgment and justice to all his people. 16 Joab the son of Zeruiah was over the army; Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder; 17 Zadok the son of Ahitub and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar were the priests; Seraiah was the scribe; 18 Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over both the Cherethites and the Pelethites; and David's sons were chief ministers.

- This list, which is David's cabinet and administration is noticeably small and this for good reason, it's because they had the Law of Moses.
- One has noted how that the further a nation gets away from the Law of Moses in governing a society, the more big government is needed.
- Then, what comes as a result are more and more man made laws that replace God's laws, which will ultimately bring an end to that nation.

- Perhaps it goes without saying, but the handwriting would seem to be on the wall as it relates to the once most powerful nation on earth.
- It's really only a matter of time, as we've seen in our prophecy updates, before a nation will be crushed under the weight of its godlessness.
- One has cleverly quipped that instead of saying, "God bless America," we have to say that God can't bless America as a Godless America.

- So as to not end on such a sad and discouraging note, let me hasten to say that neither America nor this world is our hope or our home.
- And, as we talked about last Sunday in our prophecy update, it seems that God is loosening our grip on this nation and on this evil world.
- He's doing this to ready us and steady us for His soon return when that trumpet sounds and the dead in Christ rise first to meet in the air.