

David Becomes King

Text: Psalm 78:70-72

I. REIGNING MUST BEGIN AT HEBRON

II Samuel 2:1

Hebron means “communion.” For comparison notice the difference between II Samuel 2:1 and I Samuel 27:1. David is now acknowledging God in all his ways (Proverbs 3:5, 6). The ancient city of Hebron, today called Al-Khalil in Arabic, was located approximately 20 miles south of present-day Jerusalem in the Judean valley. Hebron is significant in the Bible for a few reasons. Hebron is first mentioned in Genesis 13:14-18. This is the place where God met with Abraham after the separation from carnal Lot--almost as if to say, “Abraham now that you’re done with the world, let’s have fellowship; let’s have communion.” In Genesis 37:14, we see Jacob sending Joseph from the vale of Hebron on a mission. Arthur W. Pink wrote, “On an errand of mercy to his brethren...a mission of grace unto His elect.” Here is a beautiful picture of a loving father saying through his beloved son to his other sons, from Hebron, the place of communion, “Talk to me, how goes it?” Sadly, the other sons reject the message of the father. Judges 1:20 reveals that Caleb is the only man of his era besides Joshua who was able to enter the promised land. Hebron, the place of communion, was given to Caleb as a gift. Hebron is not only a place where communion is granted with the Lord, but a place where giants are defeated. To use God’s own words, Numbers 14:24 reads, “But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it.” I love the way Pink explains the significance of David being guided by God to Hebron. “How fitting, then, that the restored David should be sent back to ‘Hebron’ – it is ever back unto communion the Lord calls His wandering child. O how thankful we should be when the Holy Spirit restores us to communion with God, even though it be at the cost of disappointment and sorrow (Ziklag) to the flesh.”

Romans 5:17: “For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.” This verse reminds us through Christ we have been granted the ability to live a royal life. Romans 6:12 reminds us that we must not let sin reign over us: “Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.” It is the intimacy with Christ in holy communion that will allow us to find our personal “Hebron,” as Romans 6:16 teaches: “Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness.”

II. WISDOM IN REIGNING

II Samuel 2:5-7

David was wise to commend the loyalty of the men of Jabesh-gilead, even when their loyalty was to Saul. There is a biographical portrait of President Abraham Lincoln and some of the men who served with him in his cabinet from 1861 to 1865 in the book, *Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln* by Doris Kearns Goodwin. Three of his Cabinet members had previously run against Lincoln in the 1860 election: Attorney General Edward Bates, Secretary of the Treasury, Salmon P. Chase and Secretary of State, William H. Seward. President Lincoln was wise to incorporate the help from his opposition to join him in a magnificent team effort to help keep a divided nation unified and which ultimately freed our nation from the curse of human bondage.

We must also appreciate David's wisdom in not challenging the illegitimate inauguration of Ishbosheth by Abner. It should be noted that Saul's son, Ishbosheth was not chosen to go into battle with Saul's other three sons. Abner, the general of Saul's army, decided to take the role of king-maker in a direct affront to David's reign by orchestrating this insurrection. David is behaving with a royal attribute of wisdom by keeping his word to an unworthy king (I Samuel 24:21, 22). Even when men tried to impress David by the murder of Ishbosheth, David's response is recorded in II Samuel 4:5-11 illustrating that it is never right to do wrong in order to get a chance to do right.

II Samuel 3:1 says, "Now there was long war between the house of Saul and the house of David: but David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker." It is better to take time and do right, by allowing God's timing to operate. Joab attempted to "speed things up," by killing the leader, Abner (II Samuel 3:6) of the remaining forces of Saul. David's response is remarkable as he commended the qualities of Abner and rebukes Joab and Abishai for taking matters in their own hands. And we see that David won the hearts of Israel for his magnanimous move (II Samuel 3:27-39).

With the end of the four-year long war now within the grasp of Union victory, President Lincoln gave his Second Inaugural Address (the greatest inauguration address ever given by an American president) on March 4, 1865. He proclaimed, "With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds." On the evening of April 9, 1865, a large crowd gathered in front of the White House to celebrate Lee's surrender at Appomattox. Among them there was a military band. The President appeared on the balcony and asked the musicians to play *Dixie*. President Lincoln said, "I have always thought 'Dixie' one of the best tunes I have ever heard. Our adversaries over the way attempted to appropriate it, but I insisted yesterday that we fairly captured it...I now request the band to favor me with its performance."

III. FOLLY IN REIGNING

II Samuel 2:2; II Samuel 3:2-5

Even though David was now living in Hebron, the place of sweet communion with God, he decided to act like the other worldly nations by accruing multiple wives. When it was all said and done, David had at least twenty sons and one daughter (II Samuel 3:2-5, 13-14; 13:1; I Chronicles 3:1-8; II Samuel 5:14-16; II Chronicles 11:18). David was living in Canaan with an Egyptian appetite. The world would say David was utilizing his authority by fulfilling his lustful desires and making political gain through polygamy.

Without getting too far ahead of our story, David's great loss in not restraining his own desires and pursuit of political gain led to no restraint in controlling the havoc created by children of these relationships. David's oldest son raped his half-sister Tamar. Absalom rebelled against his father and nearly brought an end to the dynasty chosen by God to lead Israel. I Kings 1:5-6 is a telling passage of Scripture that reveals one last *coup d'etat* in the dying days of David. Herein is the problem revealed in these words: "And his father (David) had not displeased him (Adonijah) at any time...." (I Kings 1:6a). Great harm is done when God's ideal, i.e., one man married to one woman is ignored or when our work takes precedence over the responsibility of the family.

-Pastor Pope-