

Finding our Place; Finding God's Place

Text: II Samuel 5:1-12

I am so very thankful for the Lord saving me as a child. Had it not been for the prevenient grace of God that led me into a true saving knowledge of Christ, I am certain I would not have been a recipient of God's protective grace. I can say with full sincerity, "But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me" (I Corinthians 15:10). I was reared in a Christ-centered home where worship of the Lord was not just a Sunday or Wednesday event; it was an everyday occurrence. It was not unusual to peek through my father's study and see him on his knees, or to find my mother's well-worn devotional book, often open with her musings written in the margins. Our house was filled with music and teaching from Moody Christian radio. When Mom and Dad were out of the house, I would turn the station to the top ten radio station. I was not singing the Lord's song; I had been captured temporarily by the world. Yes! Even while living in a strong Christian environment. At seventeen years of age I came to a realization that I was not in the place where I needed to be, because God was not in His rightful place in my heart and life. Soon after I came back to the Lord in a spirit of revival, this passage of Scripture loomed large in my life: Exodus 33:21, "And the LORD said, Behold, there is a place by Me, and thou shalt stand upon a Rock." I found my place, when I recognized God's rightful place. He was (and always shall be) the Rock on which we must stand if we find happiness, contentment and purpose in life.

In II Samuel 5, we observe there were two more battles David and his men must fight before he can secure the fortress of Zion (Jerusalem), which was to become known as the City of David. Then in II Samuel 6, we rejoice with David as the Ark of the Covenant is brought to Jerusalem, where it belonged. Many years later when God's people were carried away captive they prayed, "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning" (Psalm 137:5). This was said after the Babylonians requested the Israelites to sing one of the songs of Zion. The captives said, in essence, if I ever forget the reason for my song, may I lose the ability to sing at all. You see, in the Old Testament economy and once again in the future Kingdom of the millennial reign of Christ in Jerusalem, this is the place where God has chosen to be His throne. Jeremiah 3:17: "At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the LORD; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart." David found his place, not in Ziklag, or even in the lovely Hebron, where he once again established communion with the Lord. God's design was to make Jerusalem the epicenter of His worship. II Chronicles 6:5, 6: "Since the day that I brought forth My people out of the land of Egypt I chose no city among all the tribes of Israel to build an house in, that My name might be there; neither chose I any man to be a ruler over my people Israel: But I have chosen Jerusalem, that My name might be there; and have chosen David to be over My people Israel."

I pray that if anyone is in need of finding his or her place and God's place in life that today would be a pivotal point of decision. We believe in continual sanctification in

the Christian experience. Along with the growth in grace, there is always a point of decision that launches us into relationship, such as salvation on one hand and into a deeper personal dedication on the other hand. II Corinthians 6:2: "For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." Joshua 24:15: "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."

I. IT IS A PLACE OF AUTHORITY

II Samuel 5:24, 25a: "And let it be, when thou hearest the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees, that then thou shalt bestir thyself: for then shall the LORD go out before thee, to smite the host of the Philistines. And David do so, as the LORD had commanded him...." Jesus, quoting David in Luke 20:42-44, said, "And David himself saith in the book of Psalms, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand. Till I make thine enemies thy footstool. David therefore calleth him Lord, how is he then his son?" David found his place as king by recognizing his Lord as King of Kings.

It is only by walking in the Lordship of Jesus Christ that we find guidance and contentment: Luke 6:46: "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" After Christ said these words, He went on to metaphorically explain that the wise person will build upon the Rock, which is Christ (Luke 6:47-49). James 1:22: "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."

As we compare the harmony of Israel's history, we come to a complimentary scripture to II Samuel found in I Chronicles 12. Here we see that David is not alone in finding his place. We recognize that the men of Israel find their place with him as well.

2. IT IS A PLACE OF READINESS

I Chronicles 12:23a, 24b: "And these are the numbers of the bands that were ready armed to the war...The children of Judah that bare shield and spear were six thousand and eight hundred, ready armed to the war."

Paul said in Romans 1:15, "So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also." Paul said to Titus in Titus 3:1b, "...to be ready to every good work."

3. IT IS A PLACE OF VALOUR

I Chronicles 12:25: "Of the children of Simeon, mighty men of valour for the war, seven thousand and one hundred." I Chronicles 12:28: "And Zadol, a young man mighty of valour...." I Chronicles 12:30: "And of the children of Ephraim twenty thousand and eight hundred, mighty men of valour, famous throughout the house of their fathers."

4. IT IS A PLACE OF WISDOM

I Chronicles 12:32: "And of the children of Issachar, which were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do; the heads of them were two hundred; and all their brethren were at their commandment."

5. IT IS A PLACE OF DISCIPLINE

1 Chronicles 12:33: "Of Zebulun, such as went forth to battle, expert in war, with all instruments of war, fifty thousand, which could keep rank: they were not of double heart."

6. IT IS A PLACE OF VERSATILITY

1 Chronicles 12:37: "And on the other side of Jordan, of the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and of the half tribe of Manasseh, with all manner of instruments of war for the battle, an hundred and twenty thousand." It was also said of the men of Zebulun and Asher that they were "...expert in war..." (1 Chronicles 12:33b; 12:36b). These men had expertise in their varied field of service.

7. IT IS THE PLACE OF TOTAL SURRENDER

1 Chronicles 12:38a: "All these men of war, that could keep rank, came with a perfect heart to Hebron, to make David king over all Israel..." Romans 6:17: "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you."

8. IT IS A PLACE OF UNITY

1 Chronicles 12:38b: "...and all the rest also of Israel were of one heart to make David king." Before Jehu became king, he asked the question in II Kings 10:15b, "...Is thine heart right, as my heart is with thy heart? And Jehonadab answered, It is. If it be, give me thine hand. And he gave him his hand..." When we join hands in service together, marvelous things happen. Judges 20:11: "So all the men of Israel were gathered against the city, knit together as one man..." Judges 6:16: "And the LORD said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man." I Corinthians 12:23-27.

9. IT IS A PLACE OF STRENGTH

1 Chronicles 12:40: "Moreover they that were nigh them, even unto Issachar and Zebulun and Naphtali, brought bread on asses, and on camels, and on mules, and on oxen, and meat, meal, cakes of figs, and bunches of raisins, and wine, and oil, and oxen, and sheep abundantly: for there was joy in Israel." Nehemiah 8:10. Matthew 4:4: 'But He answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Napoleon said, "An army marches on its stomach."

Conclusion: Finding our place in God's place is the sure recipe for unlimited blessings. Deuteronomy 28:13: "And the LORD shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the LORD thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them."

-Pastor Pope-