



## PART 11 - David Anointed King (2 Sam. 5:1-16)

June 28, 2023 - Chris Altrock

Reading: 2 Sam. 5:1-16 (NRSVue)

As the text is read aloud, highlight, underline, note what grabs your attention:

*1 Then all the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and said, "Look, we are your bone and flesh. 2 For some time, while Saul was king over us, it was you who led out Israel and brought it in. The Lord said to you, 'It is you who shall be shepherd of my people Israel, you who shall be ruler over Israel.' " 3 So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, and King David made a covenant with them at Hebron before the Lord, and they anointed David king over Israel. 4 David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years. 5 At Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months, and at Jerusalem he reigned over all Israel and Judah thirty-three years.*

*6 The king and his men marched to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, who said to David, "You will not come in here; even the blind and the lame will turn you back," thinking, "David cannot come in here." 7 Nevertheless, David took the stronghold of Zion, which is now the city of David. 8 David had said on that day, "Whoever would strike down the Jebusites, let him get up the water shaft to attack the lame and the blind, those whom David hates." Therefore it is said, "The blind and the lame shall not come into the house." 9 David occupied the stronghold and named it the city of David. David built the city all around from the Millo inward. 10 And David became greater and greater, for the Lord of hosts was with him.*

*11 King Hiram of Tyre sent messengers to David, along with cedar trees and carpenters and masons who built David a house. 12 David then perceived that the Lord had established him king over Israel and that he had exalted his kingdom for the sake of his people Israel.*

*13 In Jerusalem, after he came from Hebron, David took more concubines and wives, and more sons and daughters were born to David. 14 These are the names of those who were born to him in Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon, 15 Ibhar, Elishua, Nepheg, Japhia, 16 Elishama, Eliada, and Eliphelet.*

Notices

### 1. What do you notice? What stands out to you? What questions do you have?

(Notice these points of tension)

2. V. 2. Saul has the royal position as king yet it is David who has actually led the people.
3. V. 6- 7 the high confidence of the Jebusites that David could not take Jerusalem and the swiftness (apparently) with which David did just that.
4. V. 6-8, the disdain for “the lame and the blind.”
5. V. 13 “David took more concubines and wives.”

(Other noticings)

6. V. 5 “we are your bone and flesh” = Gen. 2:23 “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh.”

### Commentary/ Application

#### 1. Verses 1-5

- a. Robert Bergen, *1, 2 Samuel* New American Commentary (B & H, 1996): 2 Sam. 5:6-10:19 *presents the apex of David’s career. Here David conquers Jerusalem, the crown jewel of the Promised Land. Here also David establishes an effective administrative system and leads Israel to victory over all their enemies. David’s virtue is also showcased as he fulfills his commitment to Jonathan by caring for his fallen comrade’s only son, Mephibosheth. Most significantly, in a passage that has major implications for the Christian community, the Lord establishes an eternal covenant with David’s family line.* (319).
- b. Robert Bergen, *1, 2 Samuel* New American Commentary (B & H, 1996): *Credible opposition to David’s claim to kingship over all Israel died with Abner and Ish-Bosheth. Making David Israel’s next monarch thus became Israel’s only rational alternative.* (318).
- c. Walter Brueggemann, *First and Second Samuel*, Interpretation (John Knox, 1990): *The formula of “flesh and bone” is probably not a statement about biological kinship, but it recognizes that the two parties have long stood together in strength (bone) and in weakness (flesh).* (237).
- d. Walter Brueggemann, *First and Second Samuel*, Interpretation (John Knox, 1990): *While Saul was king, it was “you” (v. 2). The Hebrew is emphatic. “You, it was you” who in fact did the thing a king is supposed to do.* (237)
- e. **Has there been a time when you were the one doing the actual work in an organization while someone else wore the title/ had the position? How have you seen this in others in your life?**
- f. Robert Bergen, *1, 2 Samuel* New American Commentary (B & H, 1996): *Israel’s elders were aware of a word from the Lord revealing that David would “shepherd my people Israel” (v. 2). The text of the prophecy avoided calling David Israel’s king; instead it termed him a “ruler” (Hb. nagid), a term previously used to refer to Saul in his role as Israel’s divinely appointed leader (cf. 1 Sam 9:16) ... The Lord’s words must have been reassuring to the elders of Israel. First of all, the oracle affirmed that Israel was the Lord’s possession -- literally, “my people”; no early king could own them. Second, it stated that David’s assigned role was that*

of “shepherd,” that is, one appointed to defend, lead, and tend to the needs of those for whom he was responsible. The king-as-shepherd image has paternalistic overtones; shepherds are responsible for sheep, not sheep for the shepherd.”

(318)

- i. Walter Brueggemann, *First and Second Samuel*, Interpretation (John Knox, 1990): *The metaphor of shepherd and sheep introduces an entire theory of governance and power. That theory receives its most remarkable embodiment in the vocation of Jesus, who is the good shepherd whose death is interpreted as a complete sacrifice of the shepherd for the sheep ... In their appeal to David the elders use a second phrase, again allegedly quoting Yahweh: “You shall be prince over Israel” (v. 2). The precise meaning of the term “prince” (nagid) is much disputed. At the least, it is a word used to avoid the title “king” (melek) ... Two reasons for such an avoidance are likely. First, to call David “prince” leaves room for the kingship of Yahweh ... Second, the elders apparently do not want to over legitimate or excessively exalt David in office.” (238-239).*
  - ii. **What might we learn about leadership and power through the two terms used of David (shepherd and prince)?**
  - iii. **Who, in your life, would you use similar terms to describe?**
  - iv. **What does it look like today to be a shepherd or a prince rather than a king?**
- g. Robert Bergen, *1, 2 Samuel* New American Commentary (B & H, 1996): *For these reasons and perhaps more, “all the elders of Israel” journeyed to David’s capital city of Hebron to install him as their new king. There in the city of his royal residence David “made a compact” (lit., “cut a covenant”) with these official representatives of all the tribes,. The ceremony was carried out “before the LORD,” suggesting that the ceremony was as religious in nature as it was political.” (318).*
  - i. **What role did faith/ spirituality play in David’s appointment as king? What role should they play today when it comes to the appointing of leaders?**

## 2. Verses 6-10

- a. Jonathan Kirsch, *King David* (Ballantine, 2000): *David’s first act as king of Israel was to select a new royal capital for the united kingdom over which he now reigned. As a battle-tested military strategist, he wanted a place that was centrally located and easily defensible. As a savvy politician, he wanted a place that belonged to none of the twelve tribes. The capital was to be regarded as an island of national identity in a sea of tribal rivalries. (150)*
- b. Joyce G. Baldwin, *1 and 2 Samuel*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (IVP, 1988): *“The king and his men” suggests that David took the relatively small army which had supported him in his fugitive days; loyal and resourceful, they could be depended upon to vie with each other in achieving the impossible. (209).*

**i. When is smaller better?**

- c. Joyce G. Baldwin, *1 and 2 Samuel*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (IVP, 1988): *The “Jebusites” were one of the minority peoples of Canaan, frequently mentioned in connection with Jerusalem, which was also known as Jebus (Judg. 19:10). “The inhabitants of the land” would be better translated “of the area” (cf. “the Jebusites, who lived there”...) ... The Jebusite defenders of the city considered themselves impregnable, “you will not come in here.” The wedge-shaped site consisted of a ridge, rising towards the north, with a slope on the west towards the Tyropoeon valley, and an even steeper and longer slope down on the eastern side to the Kidron. A city wall of heavy stones protected the citadel, and from the top stones could easily be rained down on attackers, even by “the blind and the lame.” As we might say, it was child’s play. (210)*
- d. Joyce G. Baldwin, *1 and 2 Samuel*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (IVP, 1988): *“The city of David” ... is in use today in connection with the archaeological excavations on the south-eastern hill of Jerusalem, south of the Temple Mount. This was the area previously known as the stronghold of “Zion” (meaning uncertain, perhaps “eminence”), not to be confused with modern Mount Zion, which is further west. The Jebusite city was a fortified area encircling a citadel, whose water supply was the spring of Gihon, near the base of the eastern slope.” (210).*
- e. Joyce G. Baldwin, *1 and 2 Samuel*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (IVP, 1988): *Having entered the city by some surreptitious means, David’s men were to deal with his enemies, who are described in the terms used by the Jebusites of the defenders of their city; “who are hated by David’s soul” needs to be understood in context, and is better translated “to reach those ‘lame and blind’ who are David’s enemies” (211).*
- f. Walter Brueggemann, *First and Second Samuel*, Interpretation (John Knox, 1990): *The details of the conquest of Jerusalem ... are exceedingly obscure. First, the meaning of the term in verse 8 (which the RSV renders “water shaft”) is obscure. The “water shaft” reading follows a well-established tradition suggesting either that David’s men invaded the city through the water tunnel, which was the city’s only vulnerable point, or that they controlled the water supply and thus forced surrender. Second, the references to the “blind and lame” (vv. 6, 8) are problematic. The reference to blind and lame in verse 6 may suggest that Jerusalem is so easily defended that even the disabled can guard it. On that basis the end of verse 6 is a taunt against David. In verse 8a it is said David hates the blind and lame, perhaps because they taunted David. Finally, in verse 8b, these statements result in a programmatic expulsion of the blind and lame from the city, and perhaps later from the temple ... In much of the church, this odd text ... is included in the lectionary as a foil for the new Jerusalem evoked by the gospel. In the old Jerusalem of this text, the blind and lame are excluded and despised. In the new Jerusalem envisioned by the gospel, all are welcome, and the blind and lame are transformed into full, welcome participants. (240-241)*
- g. The phrase “the blind and lame” are used here either as a metaphor for those lowest in society or literally. Either way, the phrase carries negative connotations. What do you make of this? How do you see this happening**

**today? What role did David play in all of this/ should he have played in all of this?**

- h. Joyce G. Baldwin, *1 and 2 Samuel*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (IVP, 1988): *“The Millo” is a transliteration of the Hebrew word, the meaning of which is probably “supporting terraces” (NIV). The Jebusite city walls were built on the slopes of the hill, which was particularly steep on the west side, hence the need to have secure buttresses resting on terraces, which would not slide (even imperceptibly) downwards towards the valley. Even within the city there was more leveling in order to make building possible. David evidently turned his attention to this substructure early in his occupation of Jerusalem. (211-212)*
- i. **What significance, if any, do you give to the fact that David attended to these “internal” matters like wall security as one of his first acts after taking Jerusalem? What might we learn from this?**
- j. Joyce G. Baldwin, *1 and 2 Samuel*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (IVP, 1988): *Ultimately David’s continuing progress was to be attributed, not to his undoubted gifts, but to his spiritual resources: “the Lord, the God of hosts, was with him.”(212). How do you balance a sense that David succeeded because he made wise and strategic decisions here with the declaration that he succeeded because of God? What does this teach us about our own successes?*

### 3. Verses 11-16

- a. Joyce G. Baldwin, *1 and 2 Samuel*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (IVP, 1988): *Two pointers are included to ways in which David would consolidate his hold on his new capital. One concerned foreign relations and the other sons and heirs. (212).*
  - i. *“Hiram” king of Tyre”: Tyre, an important port which already at the time of David had for centuries been trading in the eastern Mediterranean, made friendly overtures to David, who was beginning to win respect beyond Israel’s borders. The hinterland of Tyre was noted for its cedars, and the port boasted skilled workers in wood and stone, some of whom were loaned to David. They took a gift of cedar wood and constructed the palace in Jerusalem. (212).*
  - ii. *If David knew Deuteronomy 17:17, [14 “When you have come into the land that the Lord your God is giving you and have taken possession of it and settled in it, and you say, ‘I will set a king over me, like all the nations that are around me,’ 15 you may indeed set over you a king whom the Lord your God will choose ... 17 And he must not acquire many wives for himself or else his heart will turn away; also silver and gold he must not acquire in great quantity for himself] he interpreted it in a way that permitted him to keep a harem, in the manner of oriental monarchs ... Of the eleven mentioned here, only two reappear. Surprisingly ... Solomon succeeded as king, while his brother, Nathan, is named in the genealogy of Joseph (Lk. 3:31). Both were sons of Bathsheba (1 Chr. 3:5). (213)*
  - iii. **Why might the author have included this story about Hiram here?**

- iv. What significance do you find to the fact that Nathan and Solomon are sons of Bathsheeba?**
  
- 4. Look back over the text. In what ways does the theme “people are complicated” stand out to you?**