

A King after God's Own Heart

This week we will be exploring the many attributes of God's character that are discernible through David's actions. These characteristics reveal that David's heart is deeply connected to and aligned with the Lord he loves and serves. David's love and obedience has permitted those attributes of the Lord's nature to permeate David's character. With obedience and rejoicing we will see David bring the Ark of the Covenant into the very heart of Israel. In humility and awe we will see David drop to his knees at the revelation of God's plan for Israel. David then deals with neighboring kingdoms with justice and righteousness. And in our last passage we will see David lift up one soul from desperation and fear to a position of honor and dignity.

We have several passages to study this week, five in fact. So plan your study time accordingly. I don't want you to miss out on a single bit of our homework this week. This week's lesson covers a high point in David's reign where we will see him something akin to Jesus the eternal King of Kings. Let each of our passages this week draw you closer to seeing Christ anew. God bless you in your studies this week!

Mourning into Dancing

In our last session we saw great tragedy come to David's kingdom despite David's desire to honor the Lord by returning the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem. The Lord's holiness and righteousness must be honored even in times of celebration and worship. Familiarity can lead one into unintended lack of respect or irreverence. This was a hard lesson for David and the people of Israel with which to come to terms, but we will see today that David's lesson will result in a deeper relationship with the Lord based on obedience and reverence. David, as King of Israel, is in a unique role to not only the nation of Israel, but to all surrounding nations. His actions are a reflection of his attitude towards the God of Israel. The Lord cares too much to allow David to descend the same slippery slope of arrogance and pride that Saul previously tumbled down headlong leading his nation into civil war and a devastating defeat at the hands of the Philistines. Those first few steps towards an attitude of arrogance before the Lord are paved with over-familiarity.

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In our last session we spent a lot of time studying the first part of 2 Samuel 6. Go back and reread it to remind yourself of the devastating events that led up to the Ark being left for 3 months at the home of Obed-Edom. In this portion of the homework we will focus on the rest of Chapter 6.



Read 2 Samuel 6:12-23 and answer the following questions.

Now King David was told, "The LORD has _____ the household of Obed-Edom and everything he has, because of the ark of God." So David went down and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-Edom to the City of David with rejoicing.

What did David learn that made him try again to bring back the Ark?

How was the Ark transported differently? Speculate also on a few of the details learned in the study discussion that are not mentioned in this passage. (See Exodus 25: 10-16, Numbers 4: 5, 15)

David, as the Lord's anointed was dressed as a priest in a linen ephod and participated accordingly. As founder of the Messianic Line he fulfilled the role not only as king, but priest and prophet as well. Solomon and other Davidic kings functioned as a priest on occasion making sacrifices and offerings. In Psalm 110:4 David and his descendants are associated with the priestly line of Melchizedek. Melchizedek was a Yawistic priest – a priest of the Most High God, Yahweh, from Salem (what would become Jerusalem) who blessed Abraham (Abram)¹. As a priest in the order of Melchizedek, David would have been limited in the performance of duties that were specifically reserved for the Aaronic Priesthood, but the fellowship and peace offerings, blessings upon Israel, worship, dance and music centered around bringing the Ark to Jerusalem would have been appropriate for David to lead². The offerings and gifts presented by David found precedence in Melchizedek's similar offerings to Abram.

♥ Verse 16 tells us that Michal is watching from a window. What emotion does scripture tell us she feels at the sight she sees?

¹ Genesis 14:18-20

² NAC

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- Why do you think she felt that way?

- Why do you think she was she at a window observing the festivities and not partaking in them?

17 They brought the ark of the LORD and set it in its _____ inside the tent that David had pitched for it...What else did they do upon placing the Ark in its tent?

David must have been at the highest pinnacle of rejoicing, joy in the Lord, success, a feeling of relief...you can probably think of other emotions as well. What was the reaction when he came home to Michal?

♥ What was David's response in verses 21-22?

- Do you think his response to Michal was too harsh?

David, returning home to speak a blessing over his house hold is met with the venomous accusation from Michal that he had been behaving like a vulgar lech undressing himself before slave girls rather than behaving as befits the King of Israel. In truth, the priestly undergarments worn beneath the ephod would have prevented any unintended embarrassment.³ She refused to acknowledge David's worship of the Lord for what it was, preferring to cast a pall of impropriety over the events. Michal, who placed her faith in idols, could not recognize joyous worship of the Lord.

David's response that his activities, so loathsome to Michal, were pious rejoicing before the Lord. David celebrated and rejoiced that the symbolic focal point of Israel's faith, the Ark of the Covenant, was to be located in Jerusalem, the geographic center and capital

³ Exodus 28:42-43

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of Israel. It had been absent from Israel through all of Saul's reign, signifying that God was not with Saul and was not welcome in Saul's kingdom. David rejoiced that the Lord called *him* to bring the Ark to the focal center of Israel. It would become a central aspect of Israel's religious life and daily life. David's celebration reflected his unbridled joy in being selected by God to serve him in this capacity. What Michal viewed as an indignity, David said he would increase to his "humiliation" if necessary to honor the Lord. The word translated as "humiliated" in verse 22 derives from the Hebrew word *sapal* which is the virtue of humility before the Lord. David's rejoicing and celebrating before the Lord reflected a heart of unrestrained and authentic faith and humility before God.

The contempt with which she spoke to David was a reflection of the contempt for the God of Israel. Her bitter words were a rejection of God's sovereign decision in the anointing and preference of David over her father Saul. In this passage we see Michal's true nature is more like that of her father. The final scriptures tell us that she remained childless. In the Torah, a fruitful womb is associated with God's blessings⁴; a barren womb would have been interpreted as a curse upon a disobedient wife. Michal's lack of faith would bear out in the fact descendants of Saul would never be associated with the Royal House of Israel.

God's Promise to David

Our homework today covers a unique and brief period of peace in King David's reign where he has time to reflect over what the Lord has done for him. We will also encounter a prophet of the Lord, Nathan, whom the Lord has raised up to speak his words of counsel to David. Nathan will fulfill a role in David's adult life much the way Samuel did in his youth. Nathan will be a steady voice of God throughout the rest of David's reign. Nathan will prove to be a trustworthy advisor obedient to the Lord.

We will also look at a very special scripture passage containing what has become known as the *Davidic Covenant*. The Davidic Covenant builds upon both the Abrahamic Covenant (the Lord will build his nation through Abraham and his descendants) and the Mosaic Covenant (Israel is to be a special and unique nation unto the Lord). The Davidic Covenant promises that David's line or house will continue and the Lord's Messiah will be a descendant of David.



Read 2 Samuel 7:1-17 and answer the following questions.

⁴ Exodus 23:26; Deuteronomy 7:14; 28:11—NAC

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After the king was _____ in his palace and the LORD had given him _____ from all his enemies around him, he said to Nathan the prophet, "Here I am, living in a palace of cedar, while the ark of God remains in a tent."

David finally had time to sit down and reflect on all that the Lord had done for him. The scripture tells us he was settled and at rest. Suddenly it dawns on him that he is living in a palace and the ark is in a tent. What does Nathan tell David to do?

♥ That night the word of the Lord came to Nathan saying what? (see verses 5-7)

♥ Turn to 1 Chronicles 28: 3, what does David say is the reason he is *not* to build the temple?

The Lord surely knew that David's desire to honor him came with great sincerity from the depths of his heart. Perhaps bestowing the honor of building the temple on David's son was a way of lessening the sting of denying David this privilege. What a gentle way of telling David "this is not for you to do, but the son you love and whom I have chosen will have that privilege". It is possible that the Lord may not have wanted his Temple built in a reign much associated with war, but with a king associated with a time of great peace. That period of peace would come during the time of Solomon, David's son and anointed successor.

Verses 8 through 16 tell of the Lord's amazing promise to David, to Israel, and to David's offspring, and finally the Messiah. What are those promises?

David:

Israel:

David's offspring:

Messiah:

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Verse 11 begins what is called the Davidic Covenant. The promise of David's kingdom ruling forever and from which will come the ultimate King and Son of God. While the blessings and curses upon David's offspring are conditional – dependent upon the individual's choices and actions- God's covenant is not conditional, in fact it is completely *unconditional*. This promise rests on God's faithfulness to man, not on man's attempts to be faithful to God.

Aside from this wonderful promise and messianic prophecy, the Lord also used David's desire to build him a dwelling as an opportunity to teach both David and Nathan each a lesson. Reflect back on what God may have also been telling each man.

David:

Nathan:

Jesus made claims concerning his identity that go back to this passage in 2 Samuel. Look up the following verses, what are the claims he made?

- Mark 1:1; John 20:31; Acts 9:20; Hebrews 1:5 _____
- Matthew 26:61; 27:40; Mark 14:58; 15:29; John 2:19-22. _____
- Matthew 19:28-29 _____
- Luke 22:29-30; John 18:36. _____

♥ Lastly, let's consider some of David's character traits that most reflect a man after God's own heart. It is these character traits illustrated in David that allow the Lord to show us a glimpse into the nature of his own son, Jesus. This passage illustrates 2 such traits. Consider each one and write what you think most illustrates these traits from this passage:

1. Humility

2. Accountability

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David's Prayer

*"Who am I, O Sovereign LORD, and what is my family,
that you have brought me this far?" (2 Samuel 7:18)*



Read David's response to the promise he just received from the Lord in 2 Samuel 7:18-29. Verse 17 tells us that Nathan reported this revelation to David. What does verse 18 tell us that David did upon hearing this revelation from Nathan?

Is this your _____ of dealing with man, O Sovereign LORD ?

"Usual way" is the NIV translation from Hebrew of *towrah*, which means "custom, manner, mode, law (of man)". David is exclaiming "Is this the custom or law by which you deal with man?" "Is this what you usually do, O Lord?" David is trying to wrap his mind around the fact that the Lord had just promised to make *his line* the ruling house of Israel for ever and to be a father to David's offspring. It is an honor David can barely even comprehend.

♥ For what purpose does David claim that the Lord makes this promise? (v. 21)

What does David exclaim in verse 22?

♥ What is David's response to this promise? How does he answer the Lord? (v25-26)

♥ David reveals a worshipful heart in this passage. Describe how his manner reflects this character trait.

David may not fully comprehend the Lord's promises in their entirety, but he knows enough of the Lord to be awed and humbled by those promises. In his sovereignty God did not have to reveal his plans for Israel to David. This was not a gift earned by obedience, or

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a privilege bestowed by rank, it was God's pure pleasure to elevate David and reveal his plan to him. The gift of this revelation gives David even greater reason to contemplate with awe God's gracious activities toward Israel.

David says in verse 21 "*For the sake of your word and according to your will, you have done this great thing and made it known to your servant.*" While we cannot know specifically what David means by "[for] *the sake of your word*", I think with confidence we can understand him to mean for the sake of the fulfillment of the Torah promises that God has made to the people of Israel over time; and, specifically to a promise that the royal line will descend from the house of Judah (Gen. 49:10). David marvels over the Lord, praising, "*There is no one like you, and there is no God but you*" Only the God of Israel who delivered Israel out of Egypt with mighty displays of his power and sovereignty could fulfill all that has just been promised to David and the people of Israel. All the activities the Lord worked out on behalf of the people of Israel in redeeming them from Egypt and then settling and establishing them in the land of Israel was for the two-fold purpose of establishing a name for himself in the world of men and to reveal his glory for the world to see. David pleads that the Lord will accomplish all he has promised David to further that same cause of glorifying God in the world by establishing an eternal kingdom of which David will be the first and a descendant of David will be the son of God and heir to the eternal throne. The blessings poured out upon the house of David will manifest God's faithfulness, trustworthiness and goodness for not only Israel but the world to see.

David Conquers the Surrounding Nations

It isn't long before David and his kingdom are again returning to the battle field. Just as the Lord had promised, he would not permit wicked people (i.e. the surrounding pagan nations) to oppress Israel any longer. David and his army fought for that hard earned security that the Lord promised would be theirs. Fulfillment of that prophesy was at hand.



Read 2 Samuel 8:1-18 and answer the following questions.

List all of the nations / peoples David and his army defeat.

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Go back to 2 Samuel 7:8-11. What does the Lord promise he will do?

Turn back again to 2 Samuel 8:2. What does David do to the defeated Moabite?

♥ Why do you think he left the Moabites alive?

What did David do with the gold, silver and bronze he acquired from the subdued nations?

What does verse 15 say about David at this point in his reign?

Jeremiah 9:24 tells us that the Lord delights in those who extend kindness, justice and righteousness. These are the same attributes that the Lord delights in extending towards his children. When he sees his children modeling those same characteristics, he is delighted that they put a priority on extending those attributes which define *his* character. The evidence of these characteristics reveals a heart that is in tune with the character of the Lord.

Jeremiah 33:15 is a prophecy about the Messiah. Write out this prophecy and underline what characteristic of Messiah is modeled in David.

At this point in David's story we have reached the pinnacle of his success. He is at the highest point in fulfilling his calling to be a shepherd to Israel. For this season of time David is a reflection of what Jesus Christ is to be as the King of Kings. David is holding the keys to the kingdom handed him by the Lord who established him as King of Israel- with justice and righteousness.

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♥ This passage reflects the traits of justice, righteousness and effective administration.

How are the below attitudes reflected in David's actions?

1. Cooperation
2. Hope
3. Dedication to God
4. Justice and righteousness
5. Effective administration (v16-18)

David and Mephibosheth

*I am the LORD, who exercises kindness,
justice and righteousness on earth,
for in these I delight,"
declares the LORD.
(Jeremiah 9:24)*

In our last homework segment we spent quite a bit of time covering two of the three character traits the Lord delights to see in his children according to Jeremiah 9:24. We saw David ruling Israel with justice and righteousness. In today's homework we will see that third trait, kindness, on display.



Read 2 Samuel 9:1-13 and answer the following questions.

David asked, "Is there anyone still left of the house of Saul to whom I can show _____ for Jonathan's sake?" (v. 1)

What do you think David is thinking and feeling that would prompt him to ask this question?

In verse 3 who's kindness does it say that David wants to show?

What two kind acts does David show to Mephibosheth?

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♥ David's actions reflect a wonderful characters trait of our Lord. Exodus 34:5-7a is a beautiful description of one of the Lord's foremost character traits. It is through this trait that I think he prefers deal with us above any other character trait. Look up Exodus 34:5-7a, what is the over-riding character trait described here? _____

Because of his loving-kindness the Lord is the initiator in the relationship between himself and his people. Look at the following verses and write how they show the Lord seeking and loving us:

Luke 19:10

John 15:16

1 John 4:19

David, who models this loving kindness for us in this passage, initiated the contact with Mephibosheth. What was Mephibosheth's infirmity?

Being lame would have been a great source of shame in the time of David. Most men would have shunned Mephibosheth, and Mephibosheth would have been too ashamed to have presented himself to David unbidden. David completely overlooks the man's infirmity and accepts him for who he is.

How do David's actions tie in with Matthew 9:12?

When David's men came to knock on the door of Mephibosheth's home, Mephibosheth was likely over-come with fear. "Lo-Debar", literally translated means "no pasture" located in Gilead to the east of the Jordan River. It is a desolate place in the time of David, a place to hide in self-imposed exile, away from those who had taken Saul's throne. In this day and age the practice would have been to put to death all descendants of a king when his throne was taken by another so that there could be no uprising against the new ruler. Surely Mephibosheth lived in fear that one day he would have to face King David and a death sentence. Little could he imagine the type of man who had assumed Saul's throne.

David's aim in having Mephibosheth come to court was not to imprison or destroy Saul's only living heir, but to restore him to a life of freedom and dignity. David seems to have taken pleasure in doing good things for others. David restored Saul's inheritance to Mephibosheth. In a day when a king normally would have removed all traces of an

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opposing line to the throne, David did what he could to help his enemy's heir and to take away any social shame or stigma of being the heir to the previous king.

In restoring Saul's inheritance to him, what did David provide for Mephibosheth?

Complete the rest of verse 11: *So Mephibosheth ate at David's table like one of the king's*

This verse illustrates the beautiful fact that the Lord always has room for one more son or daughter at his table. Write 1 John 3:1 below.

It is interesting to note that the name Mephibosheth means "shame-destroyer"⁵. Literally it is the "destroyer of shame (ba'al)." The physical defects resulting from a terrible fall as a child would have been viewed by society as a curse from God. How appropriate for this man who lived with the stigma associated with his infirmities, but also the shame of being the son of a King forsaken by God. Mephibosheth will eventually reveal himself to be a true servant to David (not surprising since he is the son of Jonathan). But in our story today God shows us that through this name all who are willing, can be lifted out of shame and restored to a relationship with a God who has loved us from the first, no matter who we are, what we have done, or who our parents are. We serve a shame destroying God.

♥ What were the character traits David exhibited to us in this passage that reflect our Lord?

⁵ Holman Bible Dictionary