

## David Comes to the Throne

*The Life of David*

By Chris Hand

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**Crich Baptist Church**  
Market Place, Crich  
Derbyshire. DE4 5DD (UK)

**Website:** [www.crichbaptist.org](http://www.crichbaptist.org)  
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Well, this evening as we continue our study in the life of David, we come to his coronation, or should I say coronations, plural? The title, then, is this "David Comes to the Throne," although the actual outworking of that, the detail of that is a little bit more complex in a way than it suggests, and as our reading in 2 Samuel 5 which is the basis of this sermon this evening details for us.

Well, we know that a lot has happened in bringing us to this point, lots of action, a lot of narrative throughout 1 Samuel, the ins and the outs, the persecution of David. He's having to hide, take refuge. Saul and his murderous intents. The Psalms that were the fruit of this, the spiritual outworking of this. But now we have come to this moment where David is fulfilling what is, in the end, his destiny, given of God, and has now been recognized by the people as king. And it's not straightforward, it's not as if he's come to that time when everything is peaceful, that it's just nice gentle transition, and there he is. No disputes about his place there, no arguments, everything settled and sorted. No, it's far from it. It's not a peaceful occasion at all.

Let's think of it a little further whether it's the first stage to his coronation and that is what happens here in Hebron as described in 2 Samuel 5. Hebron made famous by being the place that Caleb of old had conquered, he who had seen the giants in the land and thought them nothing, reasoned, and rightly, that God could upend those giants and they could surely take the land. And Hebron had its giants and it was Caleb though with 10 other spies except another being Joshua, perished before they could actually see the fulfillment of what Caleb knew would happen. So there's Hebron, famous for some of its associations and there at the beginning, the first stage of David's being recognized as king, and we can see that more properly there in 2 Samuel and there in chapter 2 and in verse 4, "Then the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah. And they told David," and they had things to tell him then about the men of Jabesh Gilead. So he was recognized by his own tribe, the people of Judah as being king over them, though, of course, we saw from 2 Samuel 5 the true destiny was for him to be king over all of Israel, not only of Judah.

That's as I suggested, this is not a peaceful accession to the throne. David has not arrived at the throne and could sort of heave a sigh of relief, "Ah, mission accomplished. The job

is done. The promise has been fulfilled. Here I am in fulfillment of God's word." Why, no, the reason he is now on the throne is that Saul and his elder sons, Jonathan, of course, most famously included, have been killed in battle. The Philistines are rampant; they have invaded, ceased significant parts of Judah, in fact, as well as other parts of Israel. So David is not becoming king where everything is settled and peace and all his enemies are at rest, as it were, and repelled and the borders are safe, he's become king when the Philistines, the chief enemy at that time, were actually there within the borders of Judah and so there was a lot upon his mind. He didn't enjoy sort of a honeymoon period as being king. There was a lot that needed his attention immediately.

Then he had his own personal grief, didn't he? He had his own personal grief and we're having to skim quickly over the narrative, there are plenty of other things that we could stop and look at and details that go with this and a lot of movement and ins and outs, but the news has reached his ears that Saul is dead, killed in battle. An Amalekite brought the news and thought he'd be rewarded for it and found not quite, that was not David's intention there to gloat over the death of a man who had made himself an enemy. Far from it, grieved, this was the Lord's anointed and had declined in the way that he had, and this was a sad ending and moreover his friend Jonathan, closest friend, friends in whom they were in covenant commitment and love. We thought about that, didn't we, a few weeks ago? But he was dead as well. He lay slain on Mount Gilboa.

So David has now become king over Judah and he's got that personal grief as well, and his lament is there in the early chapters of 2 Samuel, and very moving it is too, that this is not an easy accession to the throne. And in many ways it doesn't get easier from there because while he's king over Judah, the rest of Israel at that time was under the leadership of Abner, relative of Saul, very able General, very skilled military tactician, and he had established, as it were, an alternative rule and kingdom, and had installed in office a man called Ishbosheth, a younger son of Saul, he hadn't been out in battle, had been thought a weak man, and whom Abner could place there, after all he's an immediate descendant of Saul, "Look, here is the proper royal family. Here is the true royal family, a true descendant of Saul." But Abner was the power behind the throne, and it worked, and a number of the Israelites flocked to this. Of course, the tribe of Benjamin from which Saul had come were delighted to think that their influence and power would be perpetuated and Abner was a significant figure and his significance actually grew because we understand that it was he who was really at the forefront of driving the Philistines back. He scored some significant victories over the Philistines and therefore would have accrued a fair amount of kudos because of that fact. But this also led to civil war and the people followed Abner basically, and those who were loyal to David ended up in conflict, and we can read all about it in the narrative and lives were lost, and sadnesses, and grievances, and grudge matches which carried on into the future, and the spilling of much bad blood was to follow from this unhappy period of civil war.

Well, welcome, David, to the throne. Welcome to becoming king over Judah and this is what you have. You've had the Philistines in your land. You've had your own personal griefs to have to overcome. Oh, and then you have civil war. And so this has been an interesting introduction to being king for David. Well, Abner eventually understands that

David is waxing stronger. The people are pledging loyalty to him and David is actually getting the better of the civil war. And Abner realizes the writing is on the wall here and it's time for a change of policy. And Ishbosheth in the meantime has upset him and so Abner says, "Enough with you. I'm now going to look to make terms of peace with David and to pledge now the loyalty of myself and those who are looking to you, Ishbosheth, basically to me, now to David. The future lies with him." And he does that and shows perhaps better intentions in doing that. He's a scheming man. He's a man who saw the main chance there to use Ishbosheth and maneuver himself into power, but now he realizes, no, actually David and perhaps some spiritual thoughts have come into it, now actually David is the man and we need to now make terms of peace with him.

And he does that in good faith and he's met with David and he's on his journey back when he encounters Joab, who is actually the man who takes Jerusalem and who has become the Commander of the army or he subsequently does, and has already got a prominent position, but he's a bloodthirsty man and one of his brothers has died at the hands of Abner in the civil war. He's not going to let bygones be bygones, to allow the treaty that now is being made to be able to put all these wrongs to rest and he kills Abner. Well, that, of course, is going to spark, or could do, an absolute uproar amongst the followers of Abner. Ishbosheth as well, by now he's been murdered by some other people. A lot of intrigue, a lot happening and so that is now the context in which David becomes king over all Israel.

So Abner having pledged the loyalty of his people, that's most of Israel, now the whole, the people are united, not just king over Judah but seven years and six months have passed and now David is to be installed as king and we read how Jerusalem is to be the city of David when he conquers it. But once more, this is not a peaceful moment whereas Abner has been murdered and David has to actually lament the death of Abner to show that, "This was nothing in my planning, this was not me kind of bringing Abner along and then arranging for Joab, a relative of mine, to kill him. This is nothing to do with me. That man has not acted for me." And it's sufficient, at least at that point, it's sufficient to prevent the whole uniting of the kingdom breaking down right there, right then. But it's fragile.

So David has now become king over all of Israel but with these remaining questions, doubts. How serious is he really in terms of his being for us all? Is he not just for Judah perhaps and just for his own tribe? And all these suspicions and, well, Abner did die at the hands of Joab, what does that say? So David has inherited now this very dangerous, this potentially very volatile situation. So once again, David, welcome to the throne. Welcome to being king and king over all Israel. It has not become any bit easier than being king over Judah. Well, David and often that's the case, sows trouble for the future, that while he might have distanced himself from the actions of Joab, he didn't really discipline him or remove him from office and leaves himself with a problem that will emerge in later sermons, to come back to haunt him somewhat.

So it's very involved. David has now come to the throne but my first heading really says it all, doesn't it: it's been a long journey. It has been a long journey. In fact, from the

moment when David was anointed in Bethlehem to the moment we've now reached in his coronation in Hebron has been 25 years, in 25 years. 1 Samuel 16:13, an incident that we looked at, "Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him," David, "in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel arose and went to Ramah." 25 years that beforehand Samuel had anointed him, the Spirit of God had come upon him then in a powerful way, the Spirit of God had not been on David already preparing him really for this anointing. It might have been mysterious to those who were there what this meant but they knew that he was to become king. That was very much what we think.

So he's carried that promise and we've see him hounded by Saul, we've seen Saul actually admit that David is to be king. Jonathan has confessed as well, "David, you're the man. You're going to become king." We've seen David falter in that and go off to the Philistines and make all kinds of weird and unhelpful decisions but did he know on that day when called in from the fields where he had been looking after the flock there in Bethlehem and finding himself brought in and his brothers are there and there's Samuel the prophet who then goes forward and anoints him, did he know it's going to be 25 years and that 25 years is going to contain all kinds of incident? It has been a long long journey. It would involve exile. It would involve trials. It would involve losses. And the fact is this, that so David's root is a more spectacular one and the destination, at least here on earth, had been a king, it is a significant one. In fact, it's a lesson here to us all, we never know what the Lord will bring upon us by way of preparation for the future. We never know. In a way, we see all of this 25 years but what preparation it is, what difficulties, what hardships he's had to deal with so that now as he inherits the crown, there he is on the throne but with all these troubles, Philistines there at the beginning and then potential of civil war there that he's got to deal with and allay. But the preparation has been wonderful. The shape, the molding of the man, the character that it has built, that has been just what was needed for this very hour when he would come to the throne.

That is for each of us, I guess, the longer we go in our Christian pilgrimage, we look back and we see what the Lord has done, what he took away from us, what he laid upon us by way of trials, what experiences we had to go through. And then when we enter perhaps some sphere of ministry or called upon for some particular work, we think that that preparation was so helpful. It led me, and I could not have devised it myself, I could not have worked out what do I need were I to be in that future situation, what would be the best preparation. I wouldn't know. Dear friends, I offer you wouldn't know either. But God knew and just as he prepared David, he prepared you and me for whatever in the future we might be called upon to do.

So don't take it a dream, take it, don't look for that. No dream tickets here. No kind of easy trouble-free passage. No, that's not what the Bible teaches nor that will come to life and everything sorted and arrive at a place, you know, we'll get to that throne that seemed to be that's the big destination point for David to get to the throne and everything is sorted. Well, it really wasn't sorted at all, as we've just been reflecting upon, a time of national crisis, and yet that is where God would have David to be, a life of trial as a preparation for a life of trial. But those trials that he brings us to which may be deeper

trials, greater trials, that everything that's gone before has been the preparation. It's a long journey, 25 years here for David, and that journey was thought through, carefully prepared by God himself. He knew what he wanted to do with this man and how he wanted to do it, what he wanted to bring David through in order that he would be the man he needed to be when called upon for greater things.

So we take a few lessons away from this and we hear this, don't we there, we hear it and we have to agree with it but our human nature fights against it but God works in long time-spans. God works in long time-spans, long chunks of time that he works with hundreds of years, thousands of years, and that is nothing to him, that's just a watch in the night and it's gone. That's our life, that's what it amounts to. We're vapor, men of high degree they are as nothing, lighter than air when weighed on the scales. He works in long time-spans. He has a long-term view. And individuals within that wide a purpose and that wide a view have to accommodate themselves to the fact that our place within that is really quite small, may take a long time to get to that quite small place. But it's part of something bigger and just to be anywhere within the great plans, these long time-spans that God is working to, all those names you read, the genealogies, what did he do? We read it's just a name in a list but played his part, was there as needed, and called upon even if it was just a small thing, at that time, but part of a greater plan.

We are in a hurry, friends, are we not? We recognize and our brother Steven was helping us think about this a little this morning, wasn't he, that we try to fit it all in. There's life and we, well, somewhere perhaps we have an estimate as to how long we might live and we sort of fix that there, and what we might think we're going to be able to do at that age, my health might be there, and really going to set a goal somewhere working away within us, that kind of hidden agenda, if you like, which we may not even know ourselves. And gradually when the agenda gets torn up as we realize we haven't got the health we expected or hoped for, or something has happened and the ship's been tossed in that direction and our life has been led totally in another way. But we want it to happen now, we want to get sorted now, we want to be at maximum productivity now, and we have to realize God is not in a hurry and he won't be rushed. If we try to rush him, then he will put us to the side until we learn that, "It's in my time and it is my will that will be done, not yours." And we realize that the quicker and the sooner we learn that lesson, well, then the better prepared we might be then to be called upon for something in the future.

Indeed, it's quite humbling, isn't it, to look back and the pandemic has allowed us just to step back a little and take a few deep breaths and have a more unhurried consideration. Well, we use the word "unhurried" there, isn't it, because it did that. Perhaps looking back as things are happening more there and perhaps we're going to be quickening the pace soon, but we look back and, ah, we sigh. So much that in the end didn't amount to very much and it seemed so much at the time but in the final analysis it's pretty small.

And we have to humble ourselves that the part we play in the eyes of God is but a small part in this bigger thing that God is working to, this bigger prospectus, and we find that actually this is always the way. There is Moses 40 years in Midian, a shepherd serving his father-in-law before God then did call him and sent him as the deliverer, go back to

Egypt now prepared, now the man who would have the temperament. He had learned the things he needs to learn in order now to lead the people. When we read all the ins and outs of Numbers and you realize he's had to carry a lot and the burden there, but those years of preparation made him the man that was capable of bearing that load. The Apostle Paul, Saul of Tarsus, there were years of obscurity for him. There wasn't the finished apostle. He wasn't the straight there, although he was preaching early into his conversion but the things that he learned which then formed the body of these wonderful epistles we have, were not learned overnight and there was work that God would do in him before he allowed this man then to do the things that he had in view for him.

And we should be encouraged that because very often those small things, isn't it there, but we may think nothing's happening, that nothing's happening, treading water, marking time, but the fact is, no. And even if the progress is slender and small, almost imperceptible but it's not. It's contributing something of God's economy, God's plan, that may in the final analysis working to the long time-span when you and I are no longer here, amount to something a bit more. We may be surprised to know what present labors might be contributing towards in the future. We simply do not know and we live by faith, faith in this God who works very much big chunks of time, and accommodate ourselves that if we serve God, his purposes in our own generation looking to him, that these small steps we take, small but it's a progress we record, may be adding up to something beyond anything that we could really imagine. Will it not be just as God does and does exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think? And even if we may not be quite the people living right there, right now to see it, we want to see it happening when it's squeezed into our timeframe, God may have bigger plans, longer term plans and we're actually part of it.

David, it was a long journey, a long time in the making but it was worth it and, dear friends, we look to him in that and we have to say nothing is wasted. Mistakes in God's economy not wasted. They come to be for us there a standing rebuke or whatever else, a warning like a great barrier, "Do not go that way," and we say to others, "Do not go that way or believe that thing because that was a disaster there." Even the mistakes in God's working get sort of brought together to give wisdom and to enable us to live in that wisdom but that wisdom as he may give us opportunity. And more, it's preparation for stewardship, for greater things that God may entrust to you and to me. There are younger people, many that may be listening on the internet there for marriage perhaps and other responsibilities, relationships, work, occupations and callings that God may be preparing us for in the here and the now. It's a long journey and we have to bear with that as David had to wait 25 years before he ascended to the throne.

My second heading is this: a good king brings joy. A good king brings joy and here we have parallel accounts, don't we, except they don't always have the exact same perspective. So 1 Chronicles details many of the same events, same kinds of happenings, but will provide us details that 2 Samuel doesn't have and vice versa. And it's interesting in 1 Chronicles in chapter 12 which actually shows us that all along the way people have been coming and joining themselves with David, that there had been this sort of trickle of people that were kind of now lining themselves with him, not with Saul. Not just people

from Judah but other tribes too were gradually recognizing, "That's the man where the Spirit of God is working."

So when these things come to their fruition now and David is no longer just king in Hebron but we've moved on, his years of reign there, his seven years, six months, have now been succeeded by his reign in Jerusalem over all Israel. At the end of 1 Chronicles 12, it tells us of all the people in their eating and drinking and feasting, that there was joy in Israel, right at the end. David coming to the throne brought joy in Israel. People saw how he was and realized, "This is God's anointed and in a way beyond what we could see in Saul." So even previous Saul loyalists were now thinking, "No, David's got something more. There's something special." And it's interesting to read in 1 Chronicles 12 and see that there were people who came to him in the stronghold, the cave Adullam and in the other places where he was hiding, in Ziklag where he was parked out there under that King Achish, the second of them there, when he gave him this town and people came to him there. King Achish didn't realize all that was going on. They came to him at Hebron.

And notice if you've got 1 Chronicles 12 right there in verse 18 that here's a man that has come, some of the sons of Benjamin we read. Interesting there the Saul loyalists but now they've come over to David and there in verse 18, "the Spirit came upon Amasai, chief of the captains, and he said: 'We are yours, O David; We are on your side, O son of Jesse! Peace, peace to you, And peace to your helpers! For your God helps you.'" Prophesied, the Spirit of God came upon him and he prophesied. He prophesied that, "You're the man and we now have seen it, God's moved us. We're now pledged to you. You know who we're going to finish with when we see we're on your side, O son of Jesse. Peace, peace to you. Peace to your helpers. For your God helps you." Well, that is quite a prophesy indeed.

And throughout this chapter running alongside 2 Samuel and the narrative and civil wars, here is this steady flow of people seeing it like Amaziah sees it here, and though he was given to prophesy it, what he was prophesying was what quite a few other people were thinking and feeling. And littered throughout this chapter of just various indications that people have suddenly seen something in David that is special, they recognize now, "God is with you. He is helping you. The Spirit of God is upon you." All culminate in the extra joy when he becomes the king.

We read of the men of Isaachar. There is that verse that we often quote there in verse 32 of 1 Chronicles and chapter 12, what do we hear of them? They "had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do, their chiefs were two hundred." These are times David is to be the king. He is the one to follow. Whatever allegiances we've felt previously to Saul, including one of those previously we received from Saul, these matter as nothing. This is the man. This is whom God is with. This is what Israel ought to do, we ought to be with him, as the words of Amaziah say there, "We are on your side, O son of Jesse."

We read others who came and some of the qualities of them in verse 38 that they were loyal, "these men of war, who could keep ranks," come to that in a minute, "came to

Hebron with a loyal heart." They were pledged to him. They had seen something here which had drawn them and there's no going back, that this was a Rubicon moment. They crossed over there to David and they were very much now with him.

I mentioned keeping ranks. Well, you'll see that mentioned at least four times I've got here, verse 33, verse 35, verse 36, verse 38. They had a discipline as they came, that they came to David not to sort of coast along, not to be kind of casual followers. No, there's a war, there's a battle on, and we are here, we bring with us discipline, that military prowess, we can keep ranks. And of course, that was going to be extremely valuable to David who would need a literal army because there were some literal battles to be fought and these were exactly the kind of people he needed.

Verse 38 again, they were of one mind. One mind. They were seeing David and recognizing, "This is where the Spirit of God is. This man is meant to be the king and we now pledge our loyalty to you. Whatever allegiances we had, we're now your people, David." It culminates then when David is crowned, eating fellowship and joy.

In 2 Samuel 5:3 it is elaborated on greatly there in the narrative but David makes a covenant with the people and they with him as they pledge their loyalty to him. And David offering to be a good king, to be one who will serve them all. Not just in it for Judah, "I'm here for you all in that way. All of Israel, I will pledge to serve you, to protect you, to guard you, to go out and fight your battles." That's what they recognized that, "You are the one. It wasn't Saul so much. You slay the ten thousands there. You went out with our armies and came back in again with them." Now they are finding David promising to them that he would continue to serve in that capacity as their king.

Well, dear friends, a good king brings joy but David's successor, his descendant, some years still in the coming but coming nevertheless, does this too, doesn't he? Our Lord Jesus Christ, he draws people to himself, doesn't he? Whatever allegiances that were previously, we cut them, we are done with that. It's him now. "We are on Your side. We are Yours. Peace, peace to You. Peace to Your helpers." For your God helps you, the Son of God. God is with you and any that come and join themselves to you will find that very truth fulfilled again and again.

We read in John 1 the calling of Nathanael, how his friend Philip goes to him and apparently there is Nathanael under a fig tree and he's reflecting, he is pondering, he is actually wrestling with his own longings. We had longings this morning, didn't we? His own longings for the Savior to come, for the Messiah to come. There he is, that's what he's thinking about. And well, the way in which he then is drawn to come to this new figure, this new leader, new rabbi that has appeared. There was John the Baptist and John, Andrew, Peter, previously been following John the Baptist, now their allegiance has changed. John the Baptist significantly more spiritual than Saul but allegiance is now changed. And John the Baptist, he takes it well because he knows this is what was destined to happen. He was the friend of the bridegroom, not the bridegroom. He rejoices now when the bridegroom is here because now people like Philip, Andrew, John, Peter,



are going to move their loyalties now to be pledged to this new figure, our Lord Jesus Christ.

And so there is now Nathanael and," Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, 'Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!'" Read the man, "This is like a man of Issachar. He knows the times. He's got a loyal heart. This is somebody who's been waiting for Me. Now I'm here. I'm going to fulfill. Now I'm going to more than fulfill his hopes and expectations."

So Nathanael comes and, well, he's shocked in this way, that this is saying something about him, about his desires, about his search for the Messiah, that he's read this. "So who is this? How do you know me," he says. "Jesus answered and said to him, 'Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.'" When you were there trying to work it out, trying to find that Messiah, wishing, "Oh, that I were alive to see Him, that it would be in my day." It was like Simeon in that way. He'd been told that something's happening. He was wrestling with that and on edge over that, and the Lord is saying, "I knew what you were looking for. I know you. I know what you are about."

Then from that, that just opens Nathanael up, doesn't it? "Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" The Samaritan woman later when she is told, "You have had five husbands and the man you're now with is not your husband." "You are a prophet." It's that sort of moment where Nathanael realizes that this new person that he's met is reading into the depths of his soul, knows his burdens and his longings or mistakes, whatever it might be, and the woman at the well, that would be the case there.

And this now is for him his declaration and if he thought that what he's found out about the Lord Jesus already has amazed him and brought this confession, "This is who I was waiting for, the Son of God, the King of Israel." The Lord tells him, "Because I said to you, 'I saw you under the fig tree,' do you believe? You will see greater things than these." You're going to be seeing all kinds of things.

He goes on, heaven will be open hereafter, "and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man." You're going to see heaven worked through me. You're going to see divine power. You're going to be amazed. You're going to see the dead raised. You are going to be present when I still the storm. You're going to see demons cast out. You're going to see lepers cleansed, the blind will see, the deaf will hear. And what you begin with if that's that I know you and know your heart, if that has amazed you, you'll be amazed by more yet.

So he is drawn to the Lord Jesus, recognizes in him something, sees in him something that he's longed to see, the Savior, the one who has the words of eternal life. But he doesn't just say things but there's just something about him, who he is, his bearing, his attitude, how he is relating to Nathanael, that he really does know me and he's not casting me away, that I can see a life opening up in fellowship with him and I'm beginning to see heaven open and I believe it's going to happen. And that's our Lord Jesus Christ to us, isn't it, that we see in him leadership, authority, power, ability to tell us what we need to

know, to speak with all the authority of heaven, to do all that we need in order for us to go to heaven. That's that cross upon which he is going to die. That draws us, doesn't it? "I am lifted up. I will draw all men to Myself," signifying by what kind of death he is going to die. That's what we found, didn't we, we're drawn to him and it was that Savior dying on a cross because we knew we needed that, we needed somebody to answer for our sin, we needed not just anybody but it had to be him, the Son of God, the King of Israel coming down, being willing to go to that cold tomb, prepared to suffer in the way that he did upon the cross absorbing all the wrath of God for all the people that he'd come to save.

Imagine it. That's what we need and whereas the people were drawn to David, the prospects of this military ruler, the golden crown that he might wear and the throne he would have and Jerusalem and we read there about Hiram coming to build him a house, a house of cedar and that's going to become significant a little later on too. Wonderful, the trappings of power. Well, not there do we find the King that we're drawn to but it is the cross, isn't it? It's the crown of thorns. It's not kingly rule and pomp, a location, but it is a sad lonely place, a place for outcasts, a place for malefactors, for evildoers of the worst kind. It's there and only there. It has to be there because only that kind of suffering, only that kind of experience can bring the atonement we need for our sin.

And whereas David had made good all the victories that he'd secured for us while gaining amongst the people, winning, slaying the tens of thousands, well, our Lord has secured the victory, hasn't he, over the greatest enemies, sin and the devil. He has slain death as we were thinking last week, and now we can see that victory secured and assured, the troubled hearts, that those concerned are able to be right with God, can any come to God, can any of us be in a position where God will receive us to himself. Like Nathanael, we find, yes, that we are drawn to him because there's something beautiful about him, lovely about him, there is something so gentle about him, wooing us, winning us, coming to meet us in our doubts, in our questions, and bidding them subside and showing to us the promises and how his wounds and how his death and then his resurrection should answer all the doubts that we have, and we can truly truly crown him Lord of all. "We are Yours," we say as Amaziah prophesied, "We are Yours, O son of Jesse. We are Yours, O Son of David. We are Your people. We should not be anybody else's. You have shown us so so much. You unlocked our souls. You've come down to the very point of our deepest need and shown us that You can heal and You can bring remedy. To whom else can we go? You have the balm, You have the cure, You have our remedy, You have that which can heal us. We dare not look anywhere else. We are on Your side, O Lord."

And there is joy in this. There is joy, joy in heaven to come and there is feasting, friends, is there not? There is everything there, the marriage supper of the Lamb and the bride is making herself ready. We're getting ready for these small bits of the journey, all this long haul. We're actually getting ready for a very big event. One day, one day, oh, there will be joy then. There surely will. [unintelligible] Does not something of all of this catch us now? Does not something of heaven reach to us here? The heavens are opened, the angels ascending, descending upon the Son of Man. Yes, we see it now. We see its prospect. We

believe it. We see it from afar indeed but we're assured of it as we were hearing this morning and about Abraham and all of the saints who went before us.

There he is as our defender and protector. As David made his covenant with the people, well, our Lord Jesus makes a more significant covenant with us to be our Lord, be our Master, be our sanctifier. He'll be the one by whose blood and obedience we are justified. He will defend us and be that way, security through to heaven. He has overcome death and will overcome death for each and every one of us.

And to us is dignity given. We think about that on Good Friday. To us dignity is given to be his ambassadors, to be his representatives, to take something of this joy of our communion with him, of our togetherness with him, and indeed our togetherness with each other. Ephesians there and won't quote it now but chapter 2, verses 17 and 18, and Ephesians 4, verse 16, the body he has brought together, the God-spirit inhabiting us. Why, we go with that joy that we all have and of that joy, the overflow of it is our testimony, is our witness, it is hopefully in our preaching at its best, open air preaching at its best.

That is what we carry, that joy, whereas David's rule is a more earthly rule. It's going to be killing giants and Philistines. It's going to be literal eating and feasts. Well, we have a feast, truth. We feast on what we have at the communion table. We commune in that. We share together in it. That gives us great great joy there given to us with honor, being his ambassadors, going forth with this word of life, working together, serving together, loving together, all of those things that we do together. All this under this great King, "Yours we are, O King of Israel." Nathanael, "The Son of God, You are the King of Israel." Amen. Nathanael saw it and the people saw in David just that glimpse, those flickerings, "This is God's anointed. We're with you, David." Well, how much the more we say to our Lord Jesus Christ, "We are with You. Take us. Take us at our word. Use us. Move us on from here. We want to be all that we can be in You however long it takes, whatever the journey involves. We want it all because we want to be serving You at maximum capacity when we're called home, that we are honoring Him even with our latest breath preaching Christ to all."

# DAVID COMES TO THE THRONE

## (Sermon Summary)

**Reading: 2 Samuel 5: 1 – 16.**

It has not been a straightforward matter for David to reach the point he now has, and to become king, not just over Judah, but over all Israel.

His arrival at this moment has come in two stages.

Firstly, as recorded in 2 Samuel 2:4, he became king of over Judah, reigning in Hebron. This period of more limited monarchy lasted seven years. It had not happened at a time of peace. He became king because of the death of Saul, and his older sons, including Jonathan, at the hands of the Philistines. The Philistines were therefore enjoying a time of dominance and David became king over Judah at a time of national crisis. Besides all these circumstances, David had his own personal grief at the death of his friend, Jonathan, to cope with.

Following this event, the nation descended into civil war with Abner, having established Ishbosheth, a surviving son of Saul, as a puppet king over the rest of Israel. Abner was a skilled general and managed to push back the Philistines. But, as a relative of Saul, he was ambitious and wanted to hold on the power that his family, through Saul, had grown accustomed to. However, the Lord is with David and David begins to gain the ascendancy over Abner, and Abner drops his support for Ishbosheth, and looks for terms of peace with David.

Ishbosheth is then murdered, and Abner himself is murdered by Joab, the leader of David's forces. It is therefore a very dangerous time when David becomes king over all Israel. He could have been blamed for these deaths and civil war could have broken out again. David acts wisely and that threat is averted. So David becomes king over all Israel at a very tense time.

### **1. It has been a long journey.**

It is now some 25 years since Samuel anointed David in Bethlehem to be future king over Israel (1 Samuel 16: 13). David was perhaps aware that this was his destiny, but could he have imagined that it would take this long? Or that it would involve such personal losses, hardships, persecution, exile, and trials? We will all find, by way of experience, that the Lord will choose a route for us that we would not have chosen for ourselves. We would recoil from choosing hardship and trials for ourselves. We would

prefer to live during times of peace. The Lord might choose something totally different for us and have us serve in a time of national crisis. Very often, a life of trial is preparation for a life of trial!

There are some things to remember. The Lord works in long time spans. We are in a hurry. The Lord is not rushed. Our lives are short and we try to make everything happen in our life before we die. The Lord is not under such time constraints. In retrospect, we look back on our lives and realize that much that we did was of no great worth. We come to realize that there is a much bigger story and that it is the Lord, working to His agenda and timings, that counts. Moses had to experience 40 years in obscurity in Midian before the Lord used him. Jacob had to experience years of hard labour before coming to a greater understanding and usefulness.

At times, even when we think nothing is happening, it actually is. Just as David was being prepared over 25 years, so too the Lord might be preparing us for future work and responsibility. It is part of the Lord's wonderful wisdom, that He is able to put what looks like lost time, to good use in the future. Mistakes that we make can be sanctified and put to good use. We are made ready for new stewardships and responsibilities.

## **2. A good king brings joy.**

See what it says in 1 Chronicles 12:40. David becoming king was a reason for great joy throughout the nation. The people had been gradually recognizing that He was God's choice to be a king and they had already been defecting across to him. We see that Amasai prophesies about David's destiny and soon-to-be greatness (1 Chronicles 12:18). The men of Issachar knew the times and recognized that David was appointed by God (1 Chronicles 12:32). We read of the loyalty of people and of their being of one mind (v38). These were people who were stable and could keep ranks (v33, 35, 36 & 38). They find fulfillment, purpose, and hope in being servants of David, the Lord's anointed. David makes a covenant with the people, promising to rule them wisely and justly (2 Samuel 5:3). It is a time of happiness, eating and fellowship.

The greater King that David foreshadows, our Lord Jesus Christ, draws people to Himself. There are those like Nathaniel (John 1: 47-49). As the people of David's time recognized something special about him, so people like Nathaniel recognised something special about the Lord Jesus. The people were drawn to David's coronation. Our Lord's installation in office, where we behold His glory most clearly, is on the cross. We are drawn to Him there. We meet with Him, not as a military victor, triumphing over the Philistines, but triumphing over greater enemies like sin and death. We are like the men of Issachar who knew the times and knew that we ought to follow Him. We discern the Lord with a spiritual eye and recognize the glory of the cross on which He died. From it, we rightly deduce that we ought to repent and believe the gospel. Like Amasai of old, we declare that we are His, that we are on the Lord's side.

In this, we too experience the joy of belonging to Him. David made a covenant with his people. Our Lord makes a covenant with each of us, through His own blood, that He will save us from our sins and do everything necessary to make this happen. He covenants to be our Guide, our Friend, our Protector, our Defender, our Master, our Lord. In turn we have the joy of being His servants and ambassadors. We are to publish His decrees and make Him known to others.

From this, it also follows that we have a fellowship together, a body of people united under His headship. We come from lots of different places and backgrounds, but we grow together (Ephesians 2:17-18; Ephesians 4: 16). Our joy is, in part, due to the fact that we learn to love each other and to work together in the great cause of our Lord. We know that each of us have come to a great King and as we experience more of His reality and power together, that is a source of immense joy.