

“THE CONQUERING KING”

2 Samuel 8:1-18

To get a firm grasp on this great chapter we must go back to chapter 7 and get some facts about the Davidic Covenant firmly intrenched in our minds and hearts.

2 Samuel 7:10–16... *“I will also appoint a place for My people Israel and will plant them, that they may live in their own place and not be disturbed again, nor will the wicked afflict any more as formerly, **11** even from the day that I commanded judges to be over My people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. The Lord also declares to you that the Lord will make a house for you. **12** When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. **13** “He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. **14** “I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me; when he commits iniquity, I will correct him with the rod of men and the strokes of the sons of men, **15** but My lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. **16** “Your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever.””*

God promised that He would establish Israel as a nation that would last forever. In addition, He promised to give them the land of Palestine. The immediate beneficiary of this promise would be Solomon, the son of David. But the ultimate Ruler who will sit on David’s throne and fulfill the Davidic Covenant points to Jesus the Messiah. This truth must be factored into our study of chapter 8.

God had promised as part of His covenant with David that He would give Israel rest from all her enemies (7:11). He now began to do that very thing.¹

¹ Eugene H. Merrill, [“2 Samuel,”](#) in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 465.

The chapter we're examining tonight is a summary, not a chronological account.

1. DAVID DEFEATING THE ENEMIES

David conquers regions in the north, south, east, and west and expands the Israelite territory significantly. It is no wonder that **2 Samuel 7:1** says that in the reign of David Israel experienced “rest” from all other enemy nations. David is amazing!²

2 Samuel 8:1... Now after this it came about that David defeated the Philistines and subdued them; and David took control of the chief city from the hand of the Philistines.

The Philistines had troubled Israel for centuries, and they often dominated the Jewish people. Despite this, King David boldly set out to fight them and to defeat them. The Philistines were taking territory from God's people. Under David's leadership, God's people began to take territory from the enemy. He even took control of their chief city (Gath).

It seems that this statement is a summary of the battle David fought against the Philistines as recorded in **2 Samuel 5:17-25**.

2 Samuel 8:2... He defeated Moab, and measured them with the line, making them lie down on the ground; and he measured two lines to put to death and one full line to keep alive. And the Moabites became servants to David, bringing tribute.

David's war against Moab and his harsh treatment of their army seemed out of place considering that David's great-grandmother was Ruth, a Moabitess and that David entrusted his mother and father into the care of the Moabites

² J. D. Greear and Heath A. Thomas, [*Exalting Jesus in 1 & 2 Samuel*](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2016), 207.

(1 Samuel 22:3-4) when he was fighting for his life against Saul and his army. Look at this prophecy in the Torah . . .

Numbers 24:17... “I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near; A star shall come forth from Jacob, A scepter shall rise from Israel, And shall crush through the forehead of Moab, And tear down all the sons of Sheth.

People often recoil when the Bible reveals this kind of savage retribution. How do we handle this?

- We’ve got to realize that these were enemies of God. They were blasphemous idolators.
- Realize that God takes no joy in the death of people (Ezekiel 18:23,32).
- This fierce judgment pictures the final judgment of God (Acts 17:30-31).

Alistair Begg said . . .

When we come to difficult matters in the Bible, as we do, it is ours to submit to the Scriptures, not to have the Scriptures submit to our feeble minds.

“Brought tribute”— God did not want Israel to *destroy* every neighbor nation. Generally, God wanted Israel to be so blessed and strong that other nations were “taxed” by Israel, thus recognizing their strength and dominance.

2 Samuel 8:3–8... Then *David defeated Hadadezer, the son of Rehob king of Zobah, as he went to restore his rule at the River.* **4** David captured from him 1,700 horsemen and 20,000 foot soldiers; and David hamstringed the chariot horses, but reserved *enough* of them for 100 chariots. **5** When the Arameans of Damascus came to help Hadadezer, king of Zobah, David killed 22,000 Arameans. **6** Then David put garrisons among the Arameans of Damascus, and the Arameans became servants to David, bringing tribute. **And the LORD helped David wherever he went.** **7** David took the

shields of gold which were carried by the servants of Hadadezer and brought them to Jerusalem. 8 From Betah and from Berothai, cities of Hadadezer, King David took a very large amount of bronze.

David's dominance extended all the way to the Euphrates River. *Hadadezer's* name means "*god will help me.*" This, of course, is a reference to his pagan god—a *lifeless and powerless idol*. Obviously, his god did not help him! THERE IS ONLY ONE GOD.

David hamstringed all the chariot horses except 100 of them. This was military necessity. David could not care for so many horses while on a military campaign and he could not give them back to the enemy. In fact, David was seeking to obey a biblical principle God established in **Deuteronomy 17:15-16** and **Psalms 20:7**.

David took the shields of gold which were highly prized by the enemy and transformed them into trophies of the power and goodness of God. Those *shields of gold* were set in the temple and testified to God's work in and through David. God loves to take people and things that are "trophies" for the devil and turn them into trophies to His power and grace.

2. DAVID DEDICATING THE SPOIL

2 Samuel 8:9–14... Now when Toi king of Hamath heard that David had defeated all the army of Hadadezer, 10 Toi sent Joram his son to King David to greet him and bless him, because he had fought against Hadadezer and defeated him; for Hadadezer had been at war with Toi. And Joram brought with him articles of silver, of gold and of bronze. 11 King David also dedicated these to the LORD, with the silver and gold that he had dedicated from all the nations which he had subdued: 12 from Aram and Moab and the sons of Ammon and the Philistines and Amalek, and from the spoil of Hadadezer, son of Rehob, king of Zobah.

David recognized the Lord as the true source of his success. His decision to dedicate all of these riches to God for use in the temple marked him as a true

man of God! According to 1 Chronicles 22:14, the cumulative amount of these acquisitions of gold and silver was staggering . . .

- **one hundred thousand talents of gold (approx. 7.5 million pounds)**
- **one million talents of silver (approx. seventy-five million pounds).**

David's decision to give the silver and gold to the Lord rather than keep it for himself marked him as a true man of God!

David's successful military exploits against both Zobah and Damascus intimidated leaders of the other Aramean city-states, causing them to take steps to appease David and establish nonaggression pacts with him.³ Toi, the king of Hamath, received word of the string of victories that David had won. Instead of becoming his next victim, He sent his son to David to greet him and to bless him.

2 Samuel 8:13-14... So David made a name *for himself* when he returned from killing 18,000 Arameans in the Valley of Salt. 14 He put garrisons in Edom. In all Edom he put garrisons, and all the Edomites became servants to David. And the LORD helped David wherever he went.

(11-12) King David also dedicated these to the LORD—David knew that the praise and glory belonged to God, not himself. David could handle success as well as apparent failure. That's a characteristic of a true leader!

What a picture of the Lord's favor on king David and the partial fulfillment of the promise made to Abraham! Israel possessed more of the land God promised to Abraham under David's reign than at any other time.

Genesis 15:18–21... On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your descendants I have given this land, From the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates: **19** the Kenite and the Kenizzite and the Kadmonite **20** and the Hittite and the Perizzite and the

³ Robert D. Bergen, [*1, 2 Samuel*](#), vol. 7, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 349.

Rephaim **21** and the Amorite and the Canaanite and the Gergashite and the Jebusite.”

(6, 14) The LORD helped David wherever he went— This is the summary of this whole chapter. Why does the narrative say this twice? The reason is simple but profound. We are supposed to understand that Yahweh is the only reason David is where he is and is doing what he is doing. In short, the text highlights the true hero of the story: Yahweh the King! The divine King grants His human king victory. In short, God blesses David.⁴ Every victory and every enemy subdued was a testimony to the LORD’s preserving power in the life and reign of David. Here’s an important principle . . .

GOD BLESSES US TO BE A BLESSING!

3. DAVID REIGNING OVER ISRAEL

God blessed David so that the blessing would flow to him and through him to the Jewish people. God’s victory and blessing to David is a picture of what God would do through Jesus.

1 Corinthians 15:20–26... But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep. **21** For since by a man *came* death, by a man also *came* the resurrection of the dead. **22** For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. **23** But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ’s at His coming, **24** then *comes* the end, when He hands over the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power. **25** For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. **26** The last enemy that will be abolished is death.

God gave Jesus victory wherever He went. He put all enemies, including Satan, sin, and death under the feet of Jesus. And He did this so we might be

⁴ J. D. Greear and Heath A. Thomas, [*Exalting Jesus in 1 & 2 Samuel*](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2016), 207.

forgiven and brought into God's kingdom. But those who are blessed like we are must share the blessing with others!

2 Samuel 8:15–18... So David reigned over all Israel; and David administered justice and righteousness for all his people. 16 Joab the son of Zeruiah was over the army, and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder. 17 Zadok the son of Ahitub and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar were priests, and Seraiah was secretary. 18 Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and the Pelethites; and David's sons were chief ministers.

This chapter of victory, blessing, and prosperity describes the national life of Israel during the reign of David. David demonstrated his competency in administering justice and righteousness by appointing competent leaders who would enforce the Lord's judgments.⁵ This is one reason why he is generally regarded as the greatest king or ruler Israel ever had. David fulfilled what is the fundamental duty of government—to *administer judgment and justice* (**Romans 13:1-7**). Fast forward to the day the Lord returns . . .

Revelation 11:15–19... Then the seventh angel sounded; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become *the kingdom* of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever." **16** And the twenty-four elders, who sit on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God, **17** saying, "We give You thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, who are and who were, because You have taken Your great power and have begun to reign. **18** "And the nations were enraged, and Your wrath came, and the time *came* for the dead to be judged, and *the time* to reward Your bond-servants the prophets and the saints and those who fear Your name, the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth." **19** And the temple of God which is in heaven was opened; and the ark of His covenant appeared in His temple, and there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder and an earthquake and a great hailstorm.

⁵ Robert D. Bergen, [1, 2 Samuel](#), vol. 7, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 351.

