

## **Introduction**

Sometimes old songs just burst into my mind. As I was thinking through this text this week, one of those old hymns rang out. "We're marching to Zion, beautiful, beautiful Zion. We're marching upward to Zion the beautiful city of God." That chorus carries a delighted expression of hope that keeps us going in everyday life in this world. We anticipate the day when we will gather together around the throne of Jesus in Zion. The first mention in the Bible of a place called Zion occurs in our text this morning—2 Samuel 5:7. It is a reference to Jerusalem as a fortress called Zion. Isaiah 24:23 looks forward to the day when "the LORD of hosts reigns on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem and his glory will be before his elders." That future reign is foreshadowed in 2 Samuel 5 as David is anointed king of Israel and proceeds to capture Zion's stronghold.

[Read text and Pray]

This morning we reach a high point in our study of the life of King David because in this text David has finally gone from anointed by God TO BECOME the King of Israel to being recognized and anointed by the tribes of Israel AS their king.

I want you to see how . . .

### **I. The Tribes of Israel Come to Their Senses.**

"THEN" is a pivotal word situated right at the beginning of chapter 5. THEN. At that point in time. Here the forward movement of time leads from what has taken place in the past to subsequent events which flow out of the incidents and circumstances which lead to this point. What had happened was there was a power vacuum in Israel. Attempts had been made to sustain the house of Saul, but they were futile. As we saw in chapter 4, the house of Saul had imploded. Even the champion who tried to prop it up had determined to switch sides and he was now dead himself. All Israel was like sheep without a shepherd. So what happened THEN? What happened next was that the elders of Israel came to David at Hebron and anointed him king over Israel. They now did what the men of Judah had done years prior. They acknowledged what God had already directed. They bowed to the kingship of David. They submitted themselves to him.

What they did was they finally stopped resisting God. It took a long time. It took years. And the efforts the people made in resisting God were costly. It cost time. It cost lives. It cost resources. In the end it dawned on the people that there was no other choice. So, at last, they embraced God's will.

Human beings are stubborn like that; aren't we? Not a few who share their testimony of faith tell of years of resisting God. As they look back at the path of their resistance, it is strewn with waste, wasted time, wasted resources, wasted relationships, wasted lives. But, at last, their hard hearts were finally brought to a point of no other option. THEN they bowed the knee to Jesus and trusted in him. Then he saved them. And then their only wish is that they had come to Christ sooner. That's the macro story of some, but we each have our own micro stories of resistance don't we? Even as followers of Christ, there are times when we resist the clear will of God for our lives. There is another path we like better; it makes more sense to us; it corresponds well to a pride we are unwilling to admit is what is really driving us. Or, we are just lazy and hesitant. We therefore resist humbling ourselves. We resist admitting our wrongs. We resist admitting the folly of our own

reasoning. But when we finally give up defying God's lead, one regret remains. We wish we would have stopped resisting sooner.

Are you in a position of resistance this morning? Perhaps you are resisting truly turning your life over to Christ. But even as a follower of Christ there may just be an area of disobedience where you are struggling against what you know the Lord wants you to do. May I encourage you this morning to just go ahead and give it up. The only regret you will have is that you did not stop resisting sooner.

Now, when the elders from the tribes of Israel came to David down in Hebron, they didn't say they simply had no other choice. They presented three solid reasons why it made all the sense in the world that they should submit to David as their king. The first of these is that they share an intimate relationship. They assert that they are family, yet they state it in a peculiar way. They say, "we are your bone and flesh." This statement takes us back to the words of Adam when the Lord brought to him the woman he had made. He had said, "This is now bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh." Adam was saying that he and Eve were the same in substance. They had a connection closer than with the rest of creation. Adam had considered all the animals. Now here is someone who is the same as he is. She became his wife and he was her leader and head. The language of the tribes of Israel places them in a submissive position to David. They say we are bone of your bone and flesh of your flesh. We belong to you. We have a connection and you are our head and leader.

This language then takes us to Ephesians 5 where Christ and the church are depicted. Paul writes that Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. The church submits to and respects him and becomes the model of how wives are to relate to their husbands. So what we are seeing here in the far past that seems so distant actually speaks to us right here where we are this morning. Christ is the savior of the body which is bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. To come under his kingship is to be united with him as one. What theologians have come to call "union with Christ" is expressed in the New Testament through the language of being in Christ or in the Lord or with Christ. Think of these texts:

"If any one is IN CHRIST, he is a new creature." 2 Corinthians 5:17

Those who are "united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his." Romans 6:5

"There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are IN CHRIST JESUS." Romans 8:1

Paul's letter to the Ephesians brims with the theme of union with Christ.

"God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing IN CHRIST." (1:3)

He "chose us IN HIM." (1:4)

"IN HIM we have redemption." (1:7)

"IN HIM we have obtained an inheritance." (1:11)

"IN HIM [we] were sealed with the Holy Spirit." (1:13)

God "made us alive together WITH CHRIST... raised us up with him and seated us with him ... in Christ Jesus so that he might show the riches of his grace in kindness toward us IN CHRIST JESUS." (2:5-7)

"We are created IN CHRIST JESUS for good works." (2:10)

All our benefits from Christ come to us through being in union with him. We are in union with him as a work of God.

When you come to Christ, you come like these tribes came to David. You recognize a union without which there will be no salvation and no blessings. Praise God for uniting sinners with his Son so as to receive the benefits and blessings of what he has done for us!

So the first reason for their coming to David was that they were intimately united. Second, this group of Israelite representatives points out David's past leadership. During the reign of Saul, David led Israel in battle. They could recall those days. After the defeat of Goliath, the success of David on the battlefield was prolific. Israel and Judah LOVED David. He was the folks' hero because the Lord was with him and he had great success. David had more success than all the other servants of Saul. When there was war with the Philistines, David went out and came back victorious. These men had seen the opposite to be true when David was no longer leading them out. Saul had died in a battle that was a catastrophic loss for Israel.

It was noted back in chapter 3 that Abner had reminded the elders of Israel (2 Samuel 3:18) of a promise that God had made to save Israel from the Philistines and all their enemies by the hand of David. So the Israelite elders come to David, not only submitting to him in a close relationship but also with confidence that he is God's provision to deal with their enemies. He alone is capable of defeating whoever would do them harm.

Even on this point David wonderfully points ahead to his descendant, who is Jesus Christ the King. The book of Revelation powerfully presents Christ as coming on a white horse as a victorious ruler. But his return comes after his triumphant life on the earth. When Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey, it was as a triumphant king.

To come to Jesus as King is to come to the one who will deal the consummate death blow to our enemies. Followers of Jesus face enemies in the present life. There has always been hate and hostility for Christ and the ones who are faithful to him. That hate is manifest in overdrive during the month of June with rainbow flags everywhere you turn. When Christians experience the hostility, we mustn't respond by returning evil for evil. Rather we must persist in love, but we can be assured that ultimately those who hate and those who threaten will be defeated by the Lord Jesus Himself.

Psalm 2 says . . .

Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain?

2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against his Anointed, saying,

3 "Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us."

4 He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord holds them in derision.

5 Then he will speak to them in his wrath, and terrify them in his fury, saying, 6 "As for me, I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill."

7 I will tell of the decree:

The Lord said to me, "You are my Son; today I have begotten you.

8 Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession. 9 You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."

Jesus Christ is the victor for those who join with him. And our greatest enemy over which he is victorious is the combination of sin and death. When Jesus was put on the cross and then in the tomb, he triumphed over sin and death by rising from the dead. Paul writes the Corinthians that "The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Come to Christ because he is the victorious king who will destroy the enemies of his people.

If you are already in Christ, be filled with hope and optimism. It is a dark, dark day in which we live. And I could stand up here and talk about how corporate America is conniving to force acceptance and behavior modification upon you. I could cite case after case that could fill us with angst because of what is going on in our world. But what I really want for each one is to be ready to face whatever we may have to face in this world because we are assured that no matter what, Jesus wins. He is victorious. We just need to be faithful to him.

Next let's look to the third fact to which the Israelites pointed as they came to submit to David. They pointed to their relationship, to his victorious leadership, and finally to the promise of God. God had promised that David would be Shepherd of his people and Prince over Israel. We actually have two things going on here. We have the fact that God had promised David would be king over Israel but also what kind of a king he would be. In David they were looking for a king who would be unlike the other kings of the world. He would not be a selfish power-hungry uncaring tyrant. No, he would be shepherd and prince of the people of God. He would see his role as a steward of power for the benefit of God's people. In his majesty, he would shepherd the people of God.

The history of the world is strewn with the destruction left in the wake of ruthless tyrants. Quite to the contrast, God's king bore the responsibility to guard and protect his people, to lead them along so their needs are supplied, so their souls are restored, and so that they feast peacefully in the presence of their enemies. This is who God promised David would be.

And again David points us to the greatest of all shepherds. Jesus saw the crowds in his day and had compassion for them because they were like sheep without a shepherd. Jesus also instructed those crowds that he is THE GOOD SHEPHERD. The good shepherd insures that the sheep have abundant life. He lays down his life for the sheep. He restores their souls. Even though they walk through the valley of the shadow of death they need fear no evil because he is with them. His rod and staff comfort them. He will bring them to his house forevermore.

The reasons the Israelite elders came to David to be their king back in that day are the very same reasons every human being should come to Jesus to submit to him as king of their lives. First Peter 2:22-25 says, "He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls."

So David made a covenant with the elders of Israel to be their king and they anointed him king over Israel. God's promise and purpose has come to pass while David waited on the Lord.

And so we see how the tribes of Israel came to their senses. Now, let's observe how . . .

## **II. The King of Israel Conquers the Stronghold.**

After stating that the elders of Israel anointed David king over them, the narrator summarizes the years of David's reign—7 years and six months in Hebron he reigned over Judah, and 33 years in Jerusalem he reigned over the whole of Israel. The point we are at is the transition between Hebron and Jerusalem.

In the United States whenever a new President is inaugurated, the big question on everyone's mind is the first hundred days. What is this new President going to do first? What is paramount on his agenda? And when we think of David being newly anointed King over Israel, the question emerges: what is this new king going to do first? The answer is supplied by the narrator in verse 6, "And the king and his men went to Jerusalem against the Jebusites."

Why did David go up against the Jebusites in Jerusalem? Well, what we read about them indicates that they were taunting David. The inhabitants of Jerusalem were provoking him through mockery. The city was a fortress, a stronghold. The Jebusites were convinced the stronghold was impregnable. In their arrogant security they provoked David saying that he would be beaten off by the blind and lame of the city. That's how strong they saw themselves and how weak they saw David. Now, one might think that David went up to Jerusalem to teach these rascals a lesson. And

while they indeed would learn a lesson, I do not think this is the main reason David went up against Jerusalem.

I agree with a number of commentators that the reason David went up to Jerusalem was it was the final remaining unfulfilled element of God's promise and purpose in the land. The Jebusites were among the Canaanite peoples that Israel was promised to dispossess when they came into the Promised land. Consider what God promised Abraham. This goes back to Genesis 15 where God covenanted with Abraham to assure him that he would give his descendants possession of the land. The Lord God said, "To your offspring I give this land from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates, the land of the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites AND ... the JEBUSITES" (Genesis 15:18-21).

Fast forward some five hundred years. When the Lord called Moses, he declared that He had come down to deliver his people from Egypt to bring them up to "the place of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, AND THE JEBUSITES" (Exodus 3:8). The Lord told Moses to gather the Israelites and give them this very same promise (Exodus 3:17). The promise occurs again and again in Exodus Deuteronomy and Joshua. I would draw specific attention to Exodus 33:2. Here the Lord is commanding the people to depart from Sinai and to go to the land of which he swore to give to the offspring of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He reminds of the nature of his promise. He had said, "I will DRIVE OUT the Canaanites, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, AND THE JEBUSITES." As the people crossed Jordan into the promised land, Joshua told them (Joshua 3:10) that the parting of the waters of the Jordan was how they should KNOW the living God among them would WITHOUT FAIL DRIVE OUT from before them (and here it is again) the Canaanites, Hivites, Perizzites, Girgashites, Amorites, and the JEBUSITES. In all these lists who appears last? The Jebusites!

As the conquest of the land proceeded in the years of Joshua and the Judges, the Jebusites could not be dislodged from the stronghold of Jerusalem that lay on the Judah-Benjamin border. They successfully resisted the assaults of the tribes of Judah and of Benjamin. In the days of David, it was now several hundred years later, but at last the Jebusites could be crossed off the list of those peoples the Lord had promised would be driven out of power. So what was the first order of business for David as king of Israel? It was to accomplish what Judah and Benjamin had been unable to do before this time, and it was to be the tool by which the repeated promise of God was fulfilled to the very detail. And David made this city bordering the tribes of Benjamin and Judah his dwelling place and the city of his throne. And he built the city up. And David became greater and greater because the LORD, the God of hosts was with him.

One thing followers of Christ should take from David's conquest of Jerusalem is the absolute dependability of the promises of God down to the finest detail. God's promises cannot be thwarted by opposition. And they must not be doubted because they are not fulfilled on our timetable. God has his own schedule. We need to let him work accordingly. God does not forget and he is not slow, but he is methodical. Let God be God and keep trusting him no matter what. Have full and complete confidence in his word and in his promises and assurances.

Another point here is that the world may scoff and scorn in arrogance against the Lord's anointed, but they will not be able to withstand his fury. Here again we may refer to Psalm 2. Verse 2 says, "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us."

Verse 12 warns that rulers of the earth should be wise and "Kiss the Son lest he be angry and you perish in the way, for his wrath is quickly kindled." David was clearly aggravated by the taunts of these arrogant fools. In their defiance of God, David hated the "blind and the lame" of Jerusalem. The refusal to let them come into the house may be a reference to any Jebusite entering his court or the court of the Lord.

A third learning point for us has to do with Jerusalem itself. Before the Jebusites took it over, Jerusalem was the city where Melchizedek ruled. He was the king of Salem and a priest. To him Abraham paid tithes after his victories over the kings that had captured Lot. Looking ahead, Jerusalem, the city of David, the stronghold of Zion, points us to the New Jerusalem. David conquered Jerusalem in fulfillment of the purpose of God.

In like manner Jesus takes hold of the New Jerusalem through his battle with sin and death and the devil. Hebrews 2:14 tells us that "through death he destroyed the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil." The capital city of the New heavens and new earth is the New Jerusalem. Just as David took up residence in the old Jerusalem, Jesus resides and reigns in the New Jerusalem as King and as priest in the order of Melchizedek. There is no temple there because Jesus, the Lamb, is there. And just as David refused entrance to the blind and lame, the New Jerusalem will be off limits to some. Revelation 21:27 says, "And nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life." We find that a spring of water supplied what was vital to the old Jerusalem. The tunnels to the spring were used to overtake the city. There is water in the New Jerusalem as well, but it is a river that flows from the throne of God and of the Lamb.

Revelation 22 provides these additional details: "No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever."

Such is the hope of the true people of God. We who trust in Jesus can live in confident assurance no matter how bleak the future may seem in our day. God will not fail to keep his promise, but will surely deliver us from this captivity to our eternal home where not one of the smallest details of his promise will fail to be fulfilled. Nothing accursed. No wickedness. No sin. No need of light, but no more night, for the Lord will be our light and we will see his face! Hold fast to these assurances. We are going to need them.

## **Conclusion**

What can sustain you when the world threatens you and scoffs at you and tries to force you to deny the Lord? When the pressure is you might lose your job, go to jail, or be publicly shamed? What can sustain you to continue to lift high the name of Jesus when the world will consider you bigoted for doing so? The Lord will sustain you. And he has given us the hope of being in his presence in his city built with his own blood under the reign of the king who is a shepherd. It will be worth it all when we see Jesus. Hold on to that!