

Kingdom Established: Promises Kept
2 Samuel 5

*“And David knew that **the LORD** had **established him** king over Israel, and that he had **exalted his kingdom** for the sake of his people Israel.”*

Introduction: It’s political season once again, which means advertising and messaging is coming in at a breakneck pace, attempting to sway voters’ minds through the power of the **promise**. Politicians prove to be the same at every age, with starry eyed high school students running for Student Body office, promising longer lunches and slurpee machines, and adult candidates promising approximately the same vain carrots. Those running for president merely replace the inconsequential with issues of life and death. We hear bloated promises like: *money available to buy houses, paying off student debt, and starting a new business*, without any regard where that money comes from. At election time, promises are all hype, little substance, and every generation has faced it:

Who can forget **Woodrow Wilson’s** 1916 campaign promise, “*He kept us out of war*”, only to turn around and enter WWI a year later. **LBJ** did the same dance in 1964, stating ‘*we are not about to send American boys 10,000 miles away from home*’, only to send them into Vietnam within his term. **Nixon** promised a secret plan to end the war in 1968, but the war continued to 1973. **Carter** promised to end the energy crisis but could not get solar panels on the roof of the White House or get support for the gas tax, and the crisis only worsened. **Regan** promised school prayer as a constitutional amendment in 1982, and dad **Bush** said, “*Read my lips: no new taxes*”, only to raise them a year into his term. **Clinton** promised Healthcare reform known as “*Hillarycare*”, but it fell short, and **Bush II** tried to privatize Social Security and cut spending, but no dice. And **Obama** was checked by Politifact, which found out of 533 promises, 48% were kept, 24% broken (with the rest counted by those who couldn’t add to 100).

Why is this significant? Because mankind can make all the promises he wants, but does NOT have ultimate power to keep them. We have an improper view of our own ability to make and keep guarantees, even though every generation falls into the same trap. This was **Peter’s problem** as he boasted in arrogance that He would not fail as Christ approached the cross, only to set himself up for utter failure:

*Peter answered him, “Though **they all fall away** because of you, **I will never fall away.**” 34 Jesus said to him, “Truly, I tell you, this very night, before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times.” 35 Peter said to him, “**Even if I must die with you, I will not deny you!**”*

We know how the story unfolded, as Peter denied Christ three times publically, moving from prideful boast to isolation, believing he had disqualified himself from future usefulness. Only Jesus’ three-fold restoration brought him out of the doldrums and into joyful service (see John 21).

Still others may believe a promise but when they get into it, they realize that what they had idolized does not satisfy or live up to the hype in their mind. If marriage is put on an idolatrous pedestal and one thinks that IT will finally give meaning and happiness in life instead of an opportunity to serve, worship, and mature, marriage will be a letdown. If the local church is seen as a place without problems or to meet all of our felt needs, we will be deflated when we realize it is full of sinners and NOT structured

around US! If we put people on pedestals, their failure will shake our faith, instead of seeing the best men as men at best.

God always delivers on His promises because He is the only one in the universe with the power to fulfill everything He declares. *“For I know that the LORD is great, and that our Lord is above all gods. Whatever the LORD pleases, He does, in heaven and on earth, in the seas and all deeps.”* (Ps. 135:5-6) When He establishes what pleases Him, it is ultimately satisfying for us and brings Him glory. Or to say it another way, each of His promises live up to the hype!

Last week we considered David having to wait for over a decade to move from anointed king, to actual king, to total king, bringing Israel in the North and Judah in the South together. **2 Samuel 5** gives a collage of fulfillment, a picture of God establishing His people, with His King, in His city which will become an eternal focal point of redemptive history. We can trust that He will deliver, and what He delivers will be fulfilling.

Kingdom Established by the Surety of God’s Word (1-5)

*Then **all the tribes of Israel** came to David at Hebron and said, “**Behold, we are your bone and flesh.** 2 In times past, when Saul was king over us, it was you who led out and brought in Israel. **And the Lord said to you, ‘You shall be shepherd of my people Israel, and you shall be prince over Israel.’**” 3 So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, and King David **made a covenant** with them at Hebron before the Lord, and **they anointed David king over Israel.** 4 David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years. 5 At Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months, and at Jerusalem he reigned over all Israel and Judah thirty-three years.*

Civil war has a way of producing a lose-lose situation, since even ‘victory’ means you had to kill your own relatives and loved ones. God’s plan was always to have a unified Israel, strong in the land He promised with an opportunity to lift a corporate voice in worship. The sin of Saul’s followers meant that war went on for **seven years** more than it needed to, but the death of Ish-bosheth and Abner finally prompted a cessation of rebellion and a yielding to God’s Word. This is a scene where we are reminded once again that joy comes in repentance and humble confession, not in doubling down on our own stubbornness. Notice **three reasons** the leaders of the North gave for finally coming before David:

- **RELATIONSHIP** – The phrase “bone and flesh” is a common phrase that signifies a covenant within family relationship, as when Adam cried out “she is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh” in Genesis 2:23. This was a recognition that the warring factions were NOT mortal enemies but rather members of the same family, and that bond is not one that is easily broken.
- **LEADERSHIP** – They also recognized that even though Saul was their guy, David was the real leader and deliverer. This was equivalent to voting for the other party in a political election, recognizing that the candidate you have is not competent. This takes reasonableness and humility.
- **BIBLICAL PROMISE** – But the greatest and almost understated reason is the fact that they recognized that God had anointed David, and they were ready to yield to His Word. David would have the dual role of **shepherd/prince, or shepherd/king**, one who would rule with authority but also care, who would lead them into battle and unto worship. He was to feed, bind up the broken, seek the scattered and lost, strengthen the weak, and protect them (see Ezek. 34).

It's important here to remember that God's promise had been long in coming! Back in 1 Samuel 13:14 God told Saul he would take the kingdom from him and give it to a man after his own heart, which prompted the anointing of David (1 Sam. 16:1-13), which hung as a suspicion over a tormented Saul (1 Sam. 18:8). Saul even recognized the inevitability (1 Sam. 24:20-21; 26:25) and did David's friends (1 Sam. 23:16-17; 25:30-31) and his opponents (2 Sam. 3:9-10, 18). The text and author highlight this fact in the Northern tribes citing God's Word of promise, waving their arms saying, '*SEE! God's promise DID come to pass, just like He said!*' It came to pass through the venom of Saul, the foolish decisions of David, the rebellion of the North, and the self-seeking of David's friends (2 Sam. 1:1-6; 3:22-30; 4:1-12). This reminds us that **God's Word is certain, sure, and bankable, even if it does not come to pass in the timing of our desires.** The amount of faith in this truth is the difference between rebellion and misery vs. dependence and joy.

Kingdom Established by the Power of God's Might (6-12)

*And the king and his men went to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, who said to David, "You will not come in here, but the blind and the lame will ward you off"—thinking, "David cannot come in here." 7 Nevertheless, David took the stronghold of Zion, that is, the city of David. 8 And David said on that day, "Whoever would strike the Jebusites, let him get up the water shaft to attack 'the lame and the blind,' who are hated by David's soul." Therefore it is said, "The blind and the lame shall not come into the house." 9 And David lived in the stronghold and called it the city of David. And David built the city all around from the Millo inward. 10 **And David became greater and greater, for the Lord, the God of hosts, was with him.***

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

Not going to lie, this story is amazing, and we do not have time to show the greatness of it. You'll have to come to Israel with us to get that. The city of Jebus, which will become known as **Jerusalem** (city of peace), was first seen as a promise to **Abraham** in Genesis 15:18-21, and was on the mind of **David** from the time he was young. In fact, there is a note in **1 Samuel 17:54** that says David took the head of Goliath and brought it to Jerusalem. **Why?!** Growing up in Bethlehem, David would have known the promise to Abraham but also visually see the impenetrable fortress that the Jebusites inhabited. If we look at a map of this walled city, we'll see why it was said that it could be defended by the **blind and lame**.

*Was there a weak point in the city? Water was always the issue in the land of Israel, and natural springs were the lifeblood of cities and kingdoms. Cut off a water supply, cripple a city. Jerusalem is fed by **Gihon springs**, the source of which would have been found OUTSIDE of city walls. However, excavations have shown that the Canaanites had created an ingenious way of protecting the source by carving out a series of shafts to get to the water underground and in safety. In **1867, a British officer named Charles Warren** discovered a vertical shaft and climbed the 45 feet up to discover its opening. The Hebrew text uses the term "tsinnor", which is NOT easily interpreted but has a range meaning "water pipe". Whether David's men used this exact shaft or not, it is clear that his men found a way into the impenetrable city that they were not expecting, and overtook it.*

Once Jerusalem was secure, David went about **expanding and beautifying it**. He built the Millo, which was a series of stone set into the hill to expand the surface area in order to build the Temple mount and palace. Even the king of Tyre named **Hiram** aided David with materials. Since Tyre was outside of the Promised Land, David was free to make a treaty with him and accept these gifts.

The key to all of this: ***David became greater and greater, for the LORD, the God of hosts, was with him.*** God is not opposed to doing great things in and through us, but He is first and foremost committed to His own glory. We cannot handle success very well as fallen humanity, and when God begins to bless we often turn from Him and pursue the gifts He has given rather than Him being the goal. When God was with David, God was for David. When any leader of Israel began to rebel, God would not only leave them but be set against. The same is true today, as we do not seek greatness as a goal but seek to walk with Christ alone, and let Him create whatever greatness He wants.

The other key text is verse 12: *“And David knew that the LORD had established him king over Israel, and that He had **exalted His kingdom** for the sake of his people.”* Jerusalem was intended to be a place of peace, a beacon of truth, a gathering where worshippers of YHWH could come together and lift the name of God in praise.

Jerusalem would be a place of beauty and joy for all the earth to behold:

Psalm 48:1 – *“Great is the LORD and greatly to be praised in the city of our God! His holy mountain, ² beautiful in elevation, is the joy of all the earth, Mount Zion, in the far north, the city of the great King.”*

Jerusalem would be the sight where the true Davidic king would ride into, only to be rejected and hung on a cross:

Zech. 9:9 (cf. Matt. 21:5) *“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.”*

Jerusalem will be the sight of Christ’s future reign... forever:

Revelation 3:12 – *“The one who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God. Never shall he go out of it, and I will write on him the name of my God, **and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem**, which comes down from my God out of heaven, and my own new name”*

Revelation 21:2-3 *“And I saw the holy city, **new Jerusalem**, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, **“Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God”***

Jerusalem was the place for Israel and His people forever where God established good for His people and where they can glorify and enjoy Him forever.

Kingdom Established in Spite of the Half-hearted Nature of God’s People (13-15)

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

It is as cautionary as it is notable that in the midst of greatness and blessing, David’s heart and life was revealed as divided. Starting in 2 Sam. 3, we begin to see David proliferate wives and here we see him add concubines – a woman who performed the functions of a wife without the covering of the marriage

covenant. Culturally, this may have been an acceptable way to build a dynasty or family, but Biblically this was never championed. In fact, it revealed David's besetting sin of pride, where he did things his own way according to his own desires.

If we fast forward in his life, we see his highly consequential sin with Bathsheba, where he committed adultery, deception, and mass murder (2 Sam. 11). This sin did not come out of thin air, but was a culmination of a lack of discerning his own heart and allowing sin to take residence in his life, rather than killing it. By allowing himself the justification of multiplying wives, he then allowed himself to NOT go to battle when he should have, allowing himself to walk on the rooftops to observe a woman bathing, and sending for her to commit sinful infidelity. Sin never stays boxed in, but grows and pervades. In any and all temptation to sin, there are off ramps we should recognize and take. This was the sin that continued with his son Solomon, who reached the pinnacle of power and wisdom in his kingdom, but his downfall was obvious:

1 Kings 11:1-3 *"Now King Solomon loved many foreign women, along with the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women, 2 from the nations concerning which the Lord had said to the people of Israel, "You shall not enter into marriage with them, neither shall they with you, for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods." Solomon clung to these in love. 3 He had 700 wives, who were princesses, and 300 concubines. **And his wives turned away his heart"***

Sin does not satisfy, and rebellion from God's design leads to destruction. There are two hopeful realities, however: **1)** David's divided heart did not disallow God from accomplishing His will – God will accomplish His purposes in spite of us. **2)** David walked through a process of confession and repentance in Psalm 51. At each stage along the path of sin, God offers forgiveness and restoration, so that we can move past a divided heart, *"Teach me your way, O LORD, that I may walk in your truth; UNITE MY HEART TO FEAR YOUR NAME."* (Ps. 86:11)

Kingdom Established by the Guidance of God's Will (16-25)

*When the Philistines heard that David had been anointed king over Israel, all the Philistines went up to search for David. But David heard of it and went down to the stronghold. 18 Now the Philistines had come and spread out in the **Valley of Rephaim**. 19 And David inquired of the Lord, "Shall I go up against the Philistines? Will you give them into my hand?" **And the Lord said to David, "Go up, for I will certainly give the Philistines into your hand."** 20 And David came to Baal-perazim, and David defeated them there. And he said, "The Lord has broken through my enemies before me like a breaking flood." Therefore the name of that place is called Baal-perazim. 21 And the Philistines left their idols there, and David and his men carried them away.*

*And the Philistines came up yet again and spread out in the **Valley of Rephaim**. 23 And when David inquired of the Lord, he said, "**You shall not go up; go around to their rear, and come against them opposite the balsam trees.** 24 And when you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees, then rouse yourself, **for then the Lord has gone out before you to strike down the army of the Philistines.**" 25 And David did as the Lord commanded him, and struck down the Philistines from Geba to Gezer.*

This section of establishing the kingdom ends with **two confrontations with the old foes, the Philistines**. For context, both happened in the Valley of Rephaim (see map), which would have split the middle between Hebron and Jerusalem, strategically trying to catch David without protection. The 'stronghold' was most likely his old hiding grounds of Adullam. In the first instance, the LORD gave David the 'green light' to attack, which led to victory, and the second God gave the command to flank the enemy. In both

instances, **God gave the victory, and did it according to His way, His timing, for His glory.** This secured peace at the borders and allowed Israel to grow in prominence in Jerusalem, being united together.

The key phrase in both of these instances was the fact that David “inquired of the Lord”, which Saul had failed to do on several occasions. David was at His strongest when he was the most yielded to God, His Word, and thus His will. Whenever David took matters into his own hands, consequences and sadness were sure to follow.

So what do we glean from all of this? Where do we buoy up our heart in waiting for the LORD? We believe and strengthen our own hearts to remember that God always delivers on His promise, and when He does, it actually lives up to our anticipation. While we are waiting politically or relationally, we seek God’s guidance, trust in His timing, rid ourselves of progressive sin, and wait joyfully for Him to accomplish His will. In an era of hero worship or putting pastors or leaders on pedestals, we remember there is only ONE who can live up to the promises made, and it is that ONE that we entrust our life and future to.