

II SAMUEL

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to II Samuel chapter 8 as we continue our study through the Word of God. If you remember last time we saw David bring the Ark of God back to Jerusalem, to the city of David and there was great celebration. This evening we are going to pick up with David and the children of Israel coming against their enemies and defeating them. The borders of Israel will grow larger and the nation will be wealthier under the leadership of David. Peace and prosperity will fill the land. With that as our background, let's pick up in II Samuel chapter 8, starting in verse 1 and see what the Lord has for us as we study His Word.

II SAMUEL 8

VERSE 1

1. Keep in mind that the Philistines were a thorn in the side of Israel and under the leadership of king Saul the nation of Israel lost territory. But now, under the leadership of David they are taken territory back from their enemy, the Philistines. Now don't be confused about this Philistine city called Metheg Ammah, it is just another name for the city of Gath located along the Mediterranean Sea. And according to I Chronicles 18:1, David not only took the city of Gath but it's surrounding cities from the Philistines.

VERSE 2

1. David now comes against the Moabites and defeats them soundly, killing many of them but leaving a few to be his servants and to pay tribute. Now David's actions here seem a little harsh because David's great grandmother, Ruth was a Moabite. Not only that, but back in I Samuel chapter 22 we saw David send his family to Moab to protect them from king Saul and the king of Moab watched over his family. So why did he react this way to the people of Moab? Why did he carry out these brutal killings? According to ancient Hebrew writings, not the Word of God, they tell us that once David was made king over Israel, that the king of Moab killed David's parents. Did that happen? It could have and that would explain why he treated them this way, but again, this is only tradition.

2. Why did he let some of them live? Keep in mind that Moab was on the east side of the Jordan River, outside the Promise Land and David is just following the instructions that God gave back in Deuteronomy chapter 20 before they even entered the land. We are told starting in verse 10, **“When you go near a city to fight against it, then proclaim an offer of peace to it. And it shall be that if they accept your offer of peace, and open to you, then all the people who are found in it shall be placed under tribute to you, and serve you. Now if the city will not make peace with you, but war against you, then you shall besiege it. And when the Lord your God delivers it into your hands, you shall strike every male in it with the edge of the sword. But the women, the little ones, the livestock, and all that is in the city, all its spoil, you shall plunder for yourself; and you shall eat the enemies' plunder which the Lord your God gives you.”**

Thus you shall do to all the cities which are very far from you, which are not of the cities of these nations. But of the cities of these peoples which the Lord your God gives you as an inheritance, you shall let nothing that breathes remain alive, but you shall utterly destroy them: the Hittite and the Amorite and the Canaanite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite, just as the Lord your God has commanded you, lest they teach you to do according to all their abominations which they have done for their gods, and you sin against the Lord your God.” Deuteronomy 20:10-18.

In other words, those cities that were outside the land of Israel, if they wanted to make peace with the children of Israel, then they would not be destroyed. But for those cities that were within the Promise Land, the land that God had given to them, they were to utterly wipe them out. Thus, Moab was outside the Promise Land and David did not completely wipe them out!

VERSES 3-8

1. As the king of Zobah, which was a Syrian kingdom, goes to recapture some territory by the Euphrates River, he runs into David and is defeated. Then the other major Syrian city, Damascus came to the aid of their brethren and David also defeats them. And the children of Israel, under the leadership of David, were now occupying the land that God had promised to Abraham.

2. We are also told that David “**hamstrung**” the horses or cut their tendons to make them useless for military use. Now in I Chronicles 18:4 the number of horsemen that are listed is 7,000 and here it is only 700, why? It is very possible that it is a copyist error here in II Samuel and the correct number should be 7,000. Now why did David only keep enough horses for 100 chariots? Because, I believe David remembered what the Lord said in Deuteronomy 17:15-16 about multiplying horses and David is obeying the Lord. His trust was in the Lord and not his own strength, his own might.

3. One more point here and that is what David did with the shields of gold that belonged to the servants of Hadadezer, he took them and brought them to Jerusalem. Why did he do that? Because they were trophies of what God has done and the evil they were used for was now over. Folks, that is what God does in our lives and the things of this world. He has taken our lives, you might say we were trophies of the Devil at one time and now God has made us His masterpiece. Think about things that the Devil holds as his trophies. Like the internet, but look at what God has done, He has allowed us to not only have a web page that contains all our written notes for the last 14 years, from Genesis through Revelation and more, but also many of the audio files. We have our radio station live streaming on the Internet as well as broadcasting here in town over the airwaves. What about movies? Look at the great Christian movies that are out there, for instance Fireproof! What about music? Look at the songs that God has given to His people to edify, to build up, and to worship Him by. And we can go on but you can see that God is still in the business of taking the trophies of the Devil and making them into trophies that demonstrate His power and His grace!

VERSES 9-10

1. Hamath was located about 100 miles north of Damascus, in the land of Syria and when they heard what David and the children of Israel did to Hadadezer, they rejoiced because he was bothering them also and they join forces with David, going under the authority of David and they pay tribute to him. Toi, the king of Hamath sends his son Joram to make these arrangements and again, since this was not in the land of Israel, David makes a peace treaty with them. They felt it was better to side with a winner than with a loser who was attacking them anyway!

VERSES 11-12

1. All the tribute money, all the things they gathered from their victory, David dedicated to the Lord. Remember from our last study, God told David through the prophet Nathan that he could not build him a house so David does the next best thing. He is gathering the materials that will be needed to build this temple in which the Ark of God will rest in!

VERSES 13-14

1. The borders of Israel have expanded tremendously under king David. Up to Lebanon and the Euphrates River in the north, down to the River of Egypt and the Gulf of Aqaba (Red Sea) in the south. On the west they went up to the Mediterranean Sea, and to the east, on the other side of the Jordan River, from the Gulf of Aqaba northward to the Euphrates River. David is in control but the enemy remains in the land. And this land that David occupied was almost all the land that God had promised them in Genesis 15:18 and Joshua 1:3-4.

VERSE 15

1. David was not only a great military leader, but also a great king whose leadership guided the nation in the right direction. You see, one of the duties of a government is to establish judgment and justice or you will have anarchy on your hands. Now we will see in the next few verses the key people in David's government.

VERSES 16-18

1. Why do we see this kind of leadership in David's government and we didn't see it in Saul's? It is possible that Saul was afraid of having people that close to him, people that were good at what they did because he did not want them to overthrow his kingdom and remove him from power. On the other hand, David knew that the Lord had placed him in this position and he could not do it alone and he got the best of the best to serve with him and that made him even stronger! God is a God of order and organization and I am thankful that God has given to me men and women who can assist in the work of the ministry, that are gifted because I can't do it on my own, nor does God want me to!

2. Now, according to Baldwin, these Cherethites and Pelethites were hired soldiers from Crete. He explains, "By employing foreign guards to ensure the safety of the king, David would minimize the possibility of becoming the victim of inter-tribal rivalries; these men from Crete could give whole-hearted allegiance to him."

3. God has established David firmly as the king of Israel and God has expanded the kingdom tremendously!

II SAMUEL 9

VERSE 1

1. Notice the focus of David. Back in II Samuel chapter 7 the focus was God, “What can I do for God?” and the idea here was that David wanted to build God a temple. Now, here in II Samuel chapter 9 the focus is, “What can I do for others?” You see, that is what we are to be about, focusing on the Lord and then the needs of others! Paul, in Philippians 2:3-4 tells us, **“Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.”** That is what we are to be about!

2. Back in I Samuel 20:14-15 we see Jonathan, the son of Saul, make a covenant with David and we are told, **“And you shall not only show me the kindness of the Lord while I still live, that I may not die; but you shall not cut off your kindness from my house forever, no, not when the Lord has cut off every one of the enemies of David from the face of the earth.”** You see, Jonathan knew that David would be the next king and he wants David to not only treat him kindly when he ascends to the throne but to treat his descendants kindly also. Why was this important? Because when a king came to the throne, he would remove the descendants of the previous king to remove any threat to his kingdom, but David will not do that. He wants to know if there are any descendants from the house of Saul still alive. David made a promise to Jonathan and now he was going to keep it.

VERSES 2-4

1. Why did David have to ask around to see if there were any descendants of Saul still around? Because if there was, they were in hiding and that is exactly what Ziba, Saul's servant, tells David. There is only one descendant left and that is Mephibosheth and Ziba tells David that Mephibosheth is in Lo Debar, which was located on the east side of the Jordan River, about 10 miles south of the Sea of Galilee. It was just north of the Brook Jabbok and not far from Mahanaim, where Ishbosheth was ruling from until he was murdered. Thus, Lo Debar was a place of refuge for those who were fleeing, as was the case when the Philistines killed Saul and Jonathan in battle. It was kind of a safe haven in the area of the 1/2 tribe of Manasseh.

2. Now just some background information on Mephibosheth. Back in II Samuel 4:4 we are told, **“Jonathan, Saul's son, had a son who was lame in his feet. He was five years old when the news about Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel; and his nurse took him up and fled. And it happened, as she made haste to flee, that he fell and became lame. His name was Mephibosheth.”** As this nurse tried to run with Mephibosheth in her arms as she heard that king Saul and Jonathan were killed in battle, he fell and most likely broke his legs and they didn't set right and it left him a cripple. But David is going to reach out to Mephibosheth, not knowing how he would respond to him because he was the next in line to be king, but David is going to reach out in kindness, in a deep love, a covenant love to him.

VERSES 5-6

1. Please understand where Mephibosheth is coming from. King David sends messengers to his home, has him brought before David and I am sure that what is going through his mind at this point is total fear. He can't defend himself, he is crippled and it looks like his life is over. David will kill him so that he will not be a threat to his kingdom. So he falls on his face before David acknowledging that he is a servant to the king, to David!

VERSES 7-8

1. Mephibosheth is afraid and David brings him words of comfort and tells him not to fear. Instead of destruction, David is going to restore him. Instead of living in poverty he would sit at the king's table and eat! And his feet being lame, well they could not be seen because as he sat at the king's table the tablecloth covered his legs. And Mephibosheth can't believe what he is hearing, he doesn't deserve, he is like a dead dog, and yet David freely gave all this to him! And folks, what David is doing here for Mephibosheth, our Lord has done for us. Let me explain.

You see, we should be fearful before a holy and righteous God because we deserve death! But the Lord comes to us with words of love to comfort us, to tell us not to be afraid. God has not come to destroy us, but to restore us back into a relationship with Him through His Son, Jesus Christ. Instead of living in poverty we have all the spiritual resources in the heavenly places in Christ and we will sit down with the King of kings and Lord of lords and dine with Him one day. In regards to our feet being lame, we are lame in sin but the righteousness of Christ has covered us so that we are seen as white as snow, we are no longer lame! And like Mephibosheth, I can't believe all that God has done for me, I don't deserve it, never have and never will but He has freely given to me the gift of life with Him through Jesus Christ and His finished work on the cross of Calvary, paying in full the penalty for my sins! All we must do, like Mephibosheth, is come forward by faith and receive this into our lives.

All of you know the story of Humpty Dumpty, he had a big problem and there was no solution to his problem. Humpty had this great fall from a wall, broke into pieces and no one could put him back together again! But the good news for us is there is a solution to our problem as we are told:

Jesus Christ came to our wall,
Jesus Christ died for our fall;
So that regardless of death and in spite of sin,
Through grace, He might put us together again.

It is as Paul said in II Corinthians 5:21, “**For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.**” And The Living Bible puts it like this, “**For God took the sinless Christ and poured into him our sins. Then, in exchange, he poured God's goodness into us!**” May we never forget that!

VERSES 9-13

1. And David instructs Ziba, Saul’s servant to care for Mephibosheth, to work the land with his servants and Mephibosheth will eat at the king’s table all the days of his life. And Ziba tells David that he will do what he asks and care for Mephibosheth. What a beautiful picture, as I have said, of what our Lord has done for us. No longer do we have to be fearful, in hiding, but we can come before God the Father through Jesus Christ and we can fellowship with Him, dine with Him in a sense.

II SAMUEL 10**VERSES 1-2**

1. The Ammonites were a nomadic people, descendants from Lot's youngest daughter. In fact it was Saul's defeat of the Ammonites that thrust him into being king in Israel. It was Nahash, king of the Ammonites that was directing an assault against Jabesh-Gilead. And he gave the people of Jabesh-Gilead a choice, they could fight against him or they could be his slaves, but in doing so they would have their right eye put out. When Saul heard what was happening, he was furious and rallied the troops of Israel together and defeated the Ammonites. And the people wanted a king to lead them in battle and they saw what Saul had done, and thus they made him king. Now, sometime after this, king Nahash sided with David. He showed kindness to David. And now that Nahash has died, David wants to repay that kindness by sending emissaries to Ammon, and to express their sorrow to Hanun, Nahash's son. So these emissaries of David come to the new king to comfort him in his loss and show kindness to him, and that has to be good, right? Let's read on and see what happens.

VERSES 3-5

1. We are not sure why Hanun's advisers were suspicious of David, so much so that they thought he had ulterior motives and was looking for a way to attack the people of Ammon, and they got the king to believe what they were saying! And thus, Hanun responds by being suspicious regarding David's actions because of the wicked counsel he received from his men. And so they take David's men and shave off half of their beards and cut their garments, exposing their nakedness. This, obviously was a sign of disrespect. You see, for the Hebrew, their meticulously groomed beard was a sign of freedom. A slave had his face clean-shaven. And they were a proud people and to cut off a part of their garment and to expose their nakedness, was a sign of disrespect and shame.

We see this expressed to us by a few different writers. Keil and Delitzsch wrote, "With the value universally set upon the beard by the Hebrews and other Oriental nations, as being man's greatest ornament, the cutting off of one-half of it was the greatest insult that could have been offered to the ambassadors, and through them to David their king."

And Clarke wrote, "The *beard* is held in high respect in the East: the possessor considers it his greatest ornament; often swears by it; and, in matters of great importance, *pledges* it. Nothing can be more secure than a pledge of this kind; its owner will redeem it at the hazard of his life."

And to do this to these men, these ambassadors to the king meant that they were doing it to the king himself for they represented the king. This is a bold stance by this man and not a smart move, as we will see. David came in peace, to bring comfort and encouragement and the king disrespected him and Hanun will pay for his actions, as we will see.

2. And so, as these men came home, David tells them to go to Jericho, which was an oasis in the desert, and to rest there for a while. Their beards would grow back and they would change their clothes, and the humiliation will pass. He did not want these men to return home and be humiliated.

VERSE 6

1. Obviously the people as well as the king of Ammon did not think this through and now that David is mad at them, they know they are in trouble! And they probably realized that David was not against them in the first place, but now he was! And I am not really sure why they thought David would react any other way than he was. But now, since they were in trouble the only logical step so they could protect themselves is to hire mercenaries to assist them in this battle. And they hired not just a few men, but 33,000 soldiers, Syrians, and according to I Chronicles 19:6 they paid 1,000 talents of silver to the Syrians to protect them from David and the children of Israel. How will David respond to all of this? Let's read on and see.

VERSES 7-10

1. David is prepared for battle. If they want a fight he is more than willing to give them one and he sends his military commander, Joab to go with his troops and fight against the people of Ammon and the mercenaries that are fighting with the people of Ammon. And as Joab approaches Ammon he sees that he is surrounded. The Ammonites are before them and behind them were the Syrians. It did not look good but Joab was a military leader and he was not going to give up. He divides his troops up into two companies. He will lead one group and his brother Abishai will take the other. And listen to his pep talk before this battle to encourage him men to fight.

VERSES 11-12

1. Joab, being the commander of the army of David takes on the stronger group of soldiers, the Syrians and his brother Abishai will take on the soldiers of Ammon. And Joab reminds not only Abishai but all the soldiers, that we are in this together. If you are in trouble, let us know we will come to your aide. And if we are in trouble, if the enemy is winning, then we will let you know so you can come and help us. Now that is interesting because Joab is not preparing for defeat, but for victory. How do I know that? Because he is saying whoever needs help the other one will come to his aide and that means they are not losing the battle, but winning it, which allows one of the groups to come to the aide of the other. Morgan picks up on this and he wrote, "It is interesting to observe that in his arrangements he made no allowance for the possibility of ultimate defeat in his conflict with Ammon . . . it does not seem to have occurred to him that the combination might have been too much for both of them."

2. Now how in the world could they be that certain that they would win this battle?

Because it was the Lord who would do what is right and Joab believed that this victory is what the Lord wanted. He starts out by saying that we need to be strong, not go by feelings or what the situation looks like but look to the Lord who can supply all our needs and give us the victory. Paul said in Ephesians 6:10-13, **“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”**

You see, it is not our strength that we are fighting in but the Lord’s and He has given to us spiritual armor to fight against the schemes, the wiles of the Devil. And Paul tells us to take up the whole armor of God, not just part of it or that which you want, but the whole armor of God if you want to be victorious in this battle you are facing on a daily basis!

Not only were they to be strong in the Lord, but they needed to understand that a loss would mean a loss to the people living in those areas, the children of Israel and thus, they needed to fight because the battle was not about themselves, it was bigger than that, it was about the people of God!

And ultimately Joab left it up to the Lord, it is His battle and he was going to rest in that. That is a good lesson for us. God has a plan; He has a purpose and what He has promised to us He is more than able to bring to pass!

3. Now one more point here and that has to deal with Joab and his brother helping each other out if they needed help. That is a good lesson for us as Christians. We might not all be fighting on the same front, but we are all brothers and sisters in the Lord and when someone is in trouble, you need to come to their aide, to their side and help them in the battle as the Lord leads. In John 15:15-17 Jesus tells His men and us, **“No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you. You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you. These things I command you, that you love one another.”** Jesus calls us His friends and thus, as friends we should love as He loves.

Listen to this story and you will see what true friendship is about, that it is sacrifice and it is not always easy. We are told:

Out of the furnaces of war come many true stories of sacrificial friendship. One such story tells of two friends in World War I, who were inseparable. They had enlisted together, trained together, were shipped overseas together, and fought side-by-side in the trenches. During an attack, one of the men was critically wounded in a field filled with barbed wire obstacles, and he was unable to crawl back to his foxhole. The entire area was under a withering enemy crossfire, and it was suicidal to try to reach him. Yet his friend decided to try. Before he could get out of his own trench, his sergeant yanked him back inside and ordered him not to go. “It’s too late. You can’t do him any good, and you’ll only get yourself killed.”

A few minutes later, the officer turned his back, and instantly the man was gone after his friend. A few minutes later, he staggered back, mortally wounded, with his friend, now dead, in his arms. The sergeant was both angry and deeply moved. “What a waste,” he blurted out. “He’s dead and you’re dying. It just wasn’t worth it.”

With almost his last breath, the dying man replied, “Oh, yes, it was, Sarge. When I got to him, the only thing he said was, ‘I knew you’d come, Jim!’”

One of the true marks of [a] friend is that he is there when there is every reason for him not to be, when to be there is sacrificially costly. As Proverbs 17:17 puts it, “A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.”

- Gary Inrig, Quality Friendship

That is the kind of love that Jonathan and David had and it is the kind of love we are to have, sacrificial, unconditional, agape love for others because we are friends of Jesus and He wants us to love as He loves!

VERSES 13-14

1. Now as you read this it seems that Joab just gives up. The enemy flees and Joab goes home to Jerusalem. Now as I read this it seems that this group of Syrian mercenaries did not even engage in the battle, they fled before Joab and his men. Thus, when the soldiers of Ammon saw this they retreated into their city. It is possible that Joab was not prepared to take these cities but was able to do battle in the open. We are not really sure, but it seems like that might be the case here. That is one explanation I have for them returning home and not defeating the enemy. Another explanation is that it was not time for war, the seasons were changing and there were times that you fought and times when you didn't fight. And I will deal more with this issue as we finish up this chapter but this may be the reason we see Joab and Abishai return home to Jerusalem without defeating the enemy. I do think that this is the reason. You see, the season for war was over and they returned home.

VERSES 15-19

1. The Syrians were spanked by Joab and the children of Israel and now they re-gather and come against Israel again. And when David hears what is going on he gathers up his troops to fight against them. And look at this massive Syrian army that came against the children of Israel and yet, David and the Israelites were victorious. The Syrian's were able to get other kings who were servants to Hadadezer to join forces with him until the battle was lost and then they made a peace treaty with the children of Israel. And the fear of Israel spread and the Syrians were afraid to help the people of Ammon anymore.

2. Now this chapter really ends with unfinished business. Yes, the children of Israel defeated the Syrians, but not the Ammonites. They returned home to their city and were not defeated. And next time, as we get into chapter 11 we will see David send out Joab and his army to fight against the people of Ammon in Rabbah as he waits in Jerusalem. We are told in II Samuel 11:1, **“It happened in the spring of the year, at the time when kings go out to battle, that David sent Joab and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the people of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem.”** You see, now it was time to go to war again, it was in the spring when the rainy season was over and they are going to deal with the Ammonites in Rabbah! So I think that is the reason they did not continue on in pursuing the Ammonites, it was not the season for war, it had ended but next time we will see them go after the people of Ammon in Rabbah!

3. Now as I begin to close there is something else I want to say that deals with where David is at now, in the midst of war and where he is at when he has idle time on his hands. You see, it interesting that Satan has tried repeatedly through frontal, direct assaults, and has not been able to defeat David! But Satan does not give up. Just because these frontal attacks don't work all the time, as we move into chapter 11 next time, we are going to see a new battle plan. He now moves to the area of the flesh, and we are going to see David succumb to this. And it will be from this point on that the wind is taken out of David's sails you might say. He has no fight left in him. And what Satan couldn't do by direct assault, he does by a back door approach, and he is victorious. And we will see that this sin had far reaching implications, it touched many lives and destroyed his family. The flesh must be dealt with and crushed daily, or it will destroy you!

Paul gives us this warning in Romans 13:11-14, "**And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.**"

And the way you make no provision for the flesh is that you put on the Lord Jesus Christ, that you fill yourself up with the things of God instead of the things of this world. David did not wake up that morning thinking he was going to sin, but he did not fill himself up with the things of God and he allowed himself to give room for the flesh to grow in his life to the point where he not only committed sexual sin, but murder and we will see that next time. But let me end with this. Don't ever think you are above any of these things we have read about here in the Scriptures for they are here that we may learn from them so we don't fall prey to the things that they fell prey to. It is a warning and an admonishing for us to live lives that are worthy of the high calling by which we have been called, to be holy as He is holy!