

2 Samuel 5:1-25

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[0 : 00] This land is your land.

This land is my land. From California to the New York Islands, from the Redwood Forest to the Gulf Stream waters, this land was made for you and me.

So sang Woody Guthrie in the 1940s about the United States, a land overflowing with promise and worthy of musical adulation.

This song and the vision of America that it captures have found so much resonance that in 2002, the Library of Congress deemed the song a national treasure, worthy of a spot in the National Recording Registry.

In a strange irony, the family of Guthrie would later report that on trips to Communist China, they would sometimes overhear little Chinese children singing in broken and stunted English those same words.

[1 : 14] California, New York, Redwood Forest, all of it, all about China. A deep and strange irony, but perhaps understandable, for men and women all over the world have often looked upon their own land with admiration, joy, excitement, and broken into song.

Human beings are creatures of location, of place, and we tend to think of those places as important, as having an importance that cannot simply be minimized down to a particular bit of real estate.

There's culture associated with the place. New Haveners brag about our pizza. Texans brag about their barbecue. In fact, all the South argues about their barbecue. Don't get in the middle of fights about the barbecue.

Paris is synonymous with romance. New York City is identical with a young man or woman's desire to leave an old life behind and make it for themselves in the world.

Location matters. In our text for this evening, we see God showing the importance of location by keeping a promise he made to David to make him king over all of Israel, which is itself a partial fulfillment of the promise that God made to Abraham.

[2 : 36] And this part of the promise is tied to a particular place. Jerusalem. The city of David. The city, indeed, of God. Think about all of the meaning associated with the city of Jerusalem.

Perhaps one of the most important, perhaps the most important city in the history of mankind. Jerusalem. And in our passage tonight, we see Jerusalem fall into the hands of the Israelites for the first time.

But just as a way of recap, let's talk about where we've been. Through our sermon series in 1 Samuel and 2 Samuel, which has been going on for a little while now, we have seen Israel cry out for a king.

And God answers this cry in Saul. Saul is anointed to fill this position, but Saul very quickly, it seems, disqualifies himself. Just a few years previous to our passage now, he was killed in a fight with the Philistines, he and his son.

But there was another one in Israel. Another one who was also anointed king, even before the death of Saul. And this was David. David had been anointed king over the southern tribes of Judah, but the northern tribes of Israel were still having a little bit of a power fight.

- [4 : 01] Trying to see who would secede Saul. That power struggle has left both good men and bad men dead. And that's where we are in our story when we arrive at our text for this evening.
- 2 Samuel chapter 5. Let's look at that text now. And as we read it together and try to make some sense of it, I hope that we'll see one thing.
- My main overarching point for this evening is, the Lord establishes his servant in Zion. The Lord establishes his servant in Zion.
- So, let's read together 2 Samuel 5. Here's what we'll do. We'll read a section at a time, I'll make some brief comments on that section, and then at the end we'll come back and we'll sum it all up. Okay? So, 2 Samuel chapter 5.
- The first thing I want you to see is that the Lord establishes his servant in Zion among a united people. The Lord establishes his servant in Zion among a united people.
- [5 : 04] 2 Samuel 5, verse 1. Then all the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron. Let's back up for a minute. Quick geography lesson.
- Okay? What I want you to do is make a fist like this with your hands. This is the topography of Israel. Okay? On your knuckles, that's the west, that's the Mediterranean. And then Israel goes up, and your knuckles right here are the mountain range.
- Jerusalem sits right up here, and then it goes down into the Dead Sea. Okay? That's how it goes west to east. Now, north to south. Take your hand like this. This is the south. This is the north.
- You've got Golan Heights. Jerusalem is right about here. And this is Hebron down in this area, and then this desert. Okay? Now you can sort of use your two hands like this, and you've got your map of Israel.
- Okay? Here we go. All the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron. Tribes of Israel are in the north. Hebron's down here. And said, Behold, we are your bone and flesh.
- [6 : 03] 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 a prince over Israel.
- So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, and King David made a covenant with him at Hebron before the Lord, and they anointed David king over Israel. David was 30 years old when he began to reign, and he reigned 40 years.
- At Hebron, he reigned over Judah seven years and six months. And at Jerusalem, he reigned over all Israel and Judea 33 years. So when you think of Israel, think of these northern tribes.
- When you think of Judah, think of these southern tribes. Okay? What's happening here is that our passage begins with this brief, yet tremendously important interaction between David and the elders of Israel.
- The elders of Israel recognized that even during the reign of Saul, it was David who led out Israel in battle and brought them back in in battle. It was David who had the real Lord's anointing, even during the reign of Saul.
- [7 : 15] But this introduced a problem, you see, both the problem of succession and now a problem of geography. The elders want to go over to the side of David, but his kingdom is way down here in the south.
- How is he supposed to rule over these northern tribes if he's all the way down south? He needs to get up and move. The most strategic city for ruling over this entire kingdom of Israel had to be a centrally located, well-fortified city.
- Ah, but there was a problem. For precisely such a city existed and unfortunately it was inhabited by enemies. Don't you hate when that happens?

This city, city of the Jebusites, existed right in the heart of Israelite territory in a city surrounded by mountains and difficult to lay siege to.

A city so well defended and so fortified that none of the previous conquests were able to dislodge its inhabitants who were called Jebusites. Joshua 15, 63.

[8 : 21] Remember Joshua is, he comes in and he does the conquest over all of Israel or almost all of Israel. Joshua 15, 63 says that Judah could not dislodge the Jebusites who were living in Jerusalem.

To this day, the Jebusites live there with the people of Judah. So they take over the whole area except this little citadel of the Jebusites. They stay surrounded by Israelites.

Their presence there represented not only a threat to the safety of the Israelites in the area, but also the fact that God's promise to give that whole area to Israel was still unfulfilled. Now the people were united and that promise had to take a step forward.

Unfulfilled until now. Let's keep reading and see what happens. And the king and his men went to Jerusalem against the Jebusites.

Verse six. The inhabitants of the land who said to David, you will not come in here. The blind and the lame will ward you off. Thinking David can't come in here. Nevertheless, David took the stronghold of Zion.

[9 : 30] That is the city of David. 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. And David lived in the stronghold and called it the city of David. And David built the city all around from the millow inward.

And David became greater and greater for the Lord, the God of hosts, was with him. I want you to see here that the Lord establishes his servant in Zion in keeping with his promise.

In keeping with his promise. The promise was that he would give all of the land of Israel to the people of Israel. But they hadn't had this little bit yet. And insofar as it didn't have this little bit, the promise was still unfulfilled.

So, David goes to take the city of the Jebusites. And indeed, David's triumph over Jerusalem is so swift that the narrator doesn't even give any lengthy account of the battle.

[10 : 30] Often you'll read verses and verses about how the battle went. These guys are smack talking and they don't even get a recounting of the battle. It's that decisive. We just know that David set a strategy.

The strategy was quickly followed, precisely followed, and with devastating effect. Now, these passages here about the lame and the blind, they've vexed some.

It seems that David really has it out for lame people and blind people. That's problematic, it seems. Let's see if we can give some explanation for what's going on here. Here's what I think is happening.

I think what's happening here is that the Jebusites, emboldened by their generations of unbroken security, have gotten a little overconfident. And like a few cocky kids on a city basketball court who don't realize an NBA star is in their midst, they start smack talking David.

The blind and the lame will ward you off. Which is something like the 11th century BC equivalent of you play ball like a girl. In response, David adopts the same language to describe the Jebusites, the lame and the blind, and he calls their bluff by soundly defeating them.

[11 : 46] So, it's not that David hates people with physical handicaps. He's just smack talking back to the Jebusites. Someone should write a theology of smack talking.

I think it would be very interesting. You can read a lot of what Paul says about death as smack talking with death. Where is your victory?

Where is your sting? Nana, Nana, Nana, Nana. You play ball like a girl. That's what Paul is saying to death. It's a beautiful thing. Can't get into that now. So, the promise that God made to Abraham to give his descendants this land is one step closer to fulfillment.

David now makes his own abode in the fortress city that he just conquered, and his resounding victory attracts attention from his international neighbors. Let's keep reading here. Hiram, king of Tyre, sent messengers to David and cedar trees, also carpenters and masons who built David a house.

And David knew the Lord had established him king over Israel and that he had exalted his kingdom for the sake of his people Israel. And David took more concubines and wives from Jerusalem after he came from Hebron and more sons and daughters were born to David.

[12 : 59] And these are the names of those who were born to him in Jerusalem. Shemua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon, Ibar, Elishua, Nepheg, Japhia, Elishema, Eliada, and Eliphelet.

David now controls a strategic fortress city. And he's demonstrated his ability to wage war against those who stand in his way. But we see here the Lord establishes his servant in Zion for the joy of the nations, the joy of the nations around him.

The king of Tyre, you see, in Lebanon, wisely decides to make peace with the man of David's stature and strength. And this peace is solidified by the king of Tyre, bringing the wealth and riches of his country into the service of David.

This is the third mention in this text of the fact that the Lord was with David. It was becoming more and more evident. The Lord is on David's side and everyone is realizing it.

However, there is a dark shadow in this particular section as well. Another way that David will attempt to make his own power known is by taking lots and lots of foreign wives, which was a natural thing for a leader of the time to do to make alliances and sort of keep his fingers in the alliances in the countries around him.

[14 : 29] But it's also something that Deuteronomy explicitly prohibits the king from doing. The king shall not acquire many wives for himself, lest his heart be turned away. Deuteronomy 17, 17.

This would be a problem for David's reign. Notice that one of the sons here is Solomon and all of David's sinful scheming surrounding his taking of Bathsheba, Solomon's mother, is skipped over here in this story.

It's going to be a problem that he takes these wives, but the greater problem will be for David's son Solomon, who follows in his father's footsteps and comes to ruin because of it.

Following your father's footsteps and you come to ruin. It's a bad fatherly example. Nevertheless, it is now beyond a doubt to all that would pay attention that David's is a kingdom that is anointed by God, even though it still has the sinful shadow of having taken too many wives.

However, there's still work to do in pacifying the land, which is the last portrait provided to us in our story. And we'll turn there now. Verse 17. When the Philistines heard that David had been anointed king over Israel, all the Philistines went up to search for David.

[15 : 36] All the Philistines. But David heard of it and went down to the stronghold. Now the Philistines had come and spread out in the valley of Rephaim. This is right around Jerusalem, by the way. Did David inquire 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. And David came to Baal-Parazim 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-Parazim. And the Philistines left their idols there and David and his men carried them away. The Philistines came up yet again and spread out in the valley of Rephaim.

Same place. When David inquired of the Lord, he said, You shall not go up. Go around their rear and come up against them opposite the balsam trees. And when you hear the sounds of marching 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. And David did as the Lord commanded him and struck down the Philistines from Geba to Gezer.

[16 : 42] So then, the last way that we see the Lord establishes his servant in Zion, the Lord establishes his servant in Zion by defeating his enemies. The Lord establishes his servant in Zion by defeating his enemies.

Now that David has captured the city of Jerusalem, he's in an important position to begin making military incursions against the Philistines who were just marauding across the northern parts of Israel whose leaders had just anointed David king over them.

The Philistines were a seafaring people that came from the Mediterranean coast and they were coming in and they were waging war little by little against the tribes of Israel who had just signed their allegiance over to David.

Now it's David's problem. And he goes to wage war against them. And he consults the Lord for his war plan and drives them out consistently.

David's really, really good at killing Philistines. He's incredibly good at it. One of the strange things about David is when you read all these beautiful, romantic, glorious, emotive psalms, you should think of them as being written by a man with enormous biceps who probably can kill people with his hands in dozens of different ways.

[17 : 51] He's an incredibly complex figure. But notice what happens. In all of his war for and against the Philistines, the Lord is with David.

The Lord is with David and the Lord being with David shows the Philistines and all those who are around who the true God is. Notice this insertion in verse 21. The Philistines left their idols there.

Why? Why did they bring these idols? Presumably because they would support them in the war effort. Presumably because they would give them the victory. And as they were being routed, they quickly realized these aren't so important to us anymore.

Let's leave them behind. And the Israelites captured the foreign gods showing that they are in fact nothing but sticks and stones. So then the conclusion of our passage, we see the Lord is with David in at least four different ways.

And the Lord has established his servant in Zion. Now, now that we have a greater sense of what this passage is talking about, does it have anything for us beyond simply a fascinating and perhaps even encouraging history tale?

[19 : 04] I think it does. I think David himself thought so. Turn with me over to Psalm chapter 2. The second Psalm.

I have said that this passage shows us God establishing his servant in Zion. Zion, Mount Zion, Jerusalem. Look what David says in Psalm 2, 6.

As for me, speaking in the voice of God, I have set my king on Zion, my holy hill. So if you were to read this Psalm, you could immediately see a lot of parallels here.

The Lord is protecting his people Israel against the nations all around them and the result of this is that he has placed his king on Zion, his holy hill.

But as you continue reading, you see, for example, I will tell of the decree. The Lord said to me, you are my son, today I have begotten you. The ends of the earth shall be your possession, etc., etc.

[20 : 13] It goes on and on and quickly it becomes clear that if this is referring only and simply to David, it's a good bit of hyperbole. There seems to be something else going on here.

And indeed, writers in the New Testament would see this Psalm as applying not only to David, but indeed even to Jesus. So then look at these points again in regard now not only to David, but to the Lord himself.

The Lord establishes his servant in Zion at the head of a united people. David here stands in in some ways for our Messiah Christ.

And just as David was the one who united the people of Israel around himself, so also Christ is the one who unites his people around himself. There were perhaps other Messiahs that we have sought after and chased after in previous lives, Saul, but these failed us.

They didn't give us the security we desired, the satisfaction. They didn't unite our hearts together both with him and each other. They failed us. But this Messiah Christ is different.

[21 : 28] Like David leading the united tribes of Israel and Judah, so also Christ leads his united people. When Christ calls people to him, he calls them not only as individuals to him directly, but also to each other.

We are, he says, a priesthood. We are a people. We're not just individual people. We are a people. The Lord's anointed who sits enthroned in Zion is at the head of a united people.

And secondly, the Lord establishes his servant in Zion in keeping with the promise. He promised that he would give them Jerusalem. But then, in the book of Hebrews, you see this strange thing happening.

The strange thing happening is the writer of Hebrews holds forth a vision of rest that is still to come and he makes this argument. He says, if Joshua in the conquest of Canaan had given them the rest they desired, the fullest rest, they would not have spoken of a rest that was yet to come.

But even when the people of God conquer the land of Israel, they are not finally at rest. We know 500 years later they'll be kicked out, they'll be sent into exile.

[22 : 52] We know a thousand years later after that they'll be kicked out again by the Romans, this time with the king's palace and the temple smashed into pieces. This was not the final rest that God had promised.

But when Christ, the better and new David came, he brought with him a more glorious peace. A full kingdom where no citadels of the enemy yet remain.

And his kingdom is not only from the Mediterranean to the Jordan, his kingdom is from sea to sea to sea, from north to south, from east to west, all over the world.

This is the kingdom of which Christ is a king. This is the promise of rest that was promised to the people of Israel, to Abraham, and indeed to us.

In the book of Romans, Paul, the writer of Romans, will say the promise made to Abraham was that he and his heirs would be heirs of the entire world.

[24 : 03] The entire world. So this land promise back in the Old Testament was not the final chapter in the story. God was preparing for them a better rest, a greater promise in Christ.

Christ. Again, the Lord establishes his servant in Zion for the joy of the nations. We see here the king of Tyre coming to try to support David perhaps a little bit out of fear.

Think of the ways in which this truth that Christ enthroned in Zion is for the joy of the nations. Not only for the joy of Israel, but yes, for the joy of every people group in the world.

Consider, for example, Isaiah chapter 60. You don't need to turn there. But mark it perhaps. Go ahead and have a look and see how international Zion is when the Messiah will come.

The flocks of Kedar will come. The young camels of Midian and Ephah. Those from Sheba will come. He says, foreigners shall build up your walls and the kings will minister to you.

[25 : 12] Your gate will be opened continually day and night. They shall not be shut that people may bring to you the wealth of the nations and their kings led in procession. The enthronement of David was bad news for some of the foreigners around him.

Indeed, for the Philistines, for example. But the enthronement of Christ in Zion is good news for all those that would be in Christ.

This is a better promise, the joy of the nations. Do you know, like that treaty that Hiram of Tyre made with David, that Christ has prepared a way for us to have peace with this newly enthroned king?

Indeed, even better than the simply building of a house that Hiram of Tyre does for David, Christ has made a way through his blood for us to be brothers and sisters of Christ himself.

Co-heirs with Christ is a language the New Testament uses. So we need not fear if we are in Christ, covered by the blood of Jesus, that this enthroned king in Zion will turn on us in his wrath.

[26 : 30] Oh, indeed, he is a wrathful king. And we will see in this last segment, again, that he triumphs over his enemies from Zion. And we are indeed his enemies if he is a king of righteousness, if he is a king of peace, and we find in ourselves inclinations toward unrighteousness, a perverse longing for not peace.

Any good king of Zion must wage war against those like David did against the Philistines. But while David could only kill his opponents, Christ can redeem his opponents.

Christ has two ways of triumphing over his opponents. Those who will not bow the knee willingly to him will be defeated. But those who eagerly and willingly receive the invitation that he has offered to freely accept the truth of the gospel are not only made citizens of his kingdom but are adopted into his family.

So do you see then that the enthronement of this king in Zion is good news for all of those who place their trust and their hope in this king? do this.

If you have not done this, do this. Flee from your sin to Christ. Trust in the work that Christ alone can do and has done for you on the cross.

[28 : 13] Make peace with this newly enthroned king of Zion and live in a glorious kingdom forever. Otherwise, the Lord establishes his servant in Zion by defeating his enemies and you will be such an enemy.

Make peace with him while time yet remains. Flee to the king of Zion who is newly enthroned. Amen.

Lord, I pray now that you would, when we read these stories of David and the enthronement of that king in Zion that we would look toward a greater king, a heavenly king, that reigns over a new Jerusalem that comes down out of heaven made ready for us.

We pray that we would make our alliance with him. We thank you that you have given us a way to peace and righteousness through the blood of Jesus, this Davidic king who sacrificed himself for us to make us citizens, to make our standing in the heavenly Zion no less secure than Jesus' standing there is.

peace. We thank you that you have made a way of peace. We thank you that you have defeated our enemies. We pray that we would rejoice in these truths. In the name of Jesus I pray.

[29 : 36] Amen.