



Studies in the Life of David

Text

Second Samuel 5:1-16

Topic

The Jebusites and King David trade taunts
as the Israelites determine to conquer Jerusalem

Title

“If You’re Gonna Walk the Walk, You’ve Got to Trash the Talk”

Introduction

In sports it’s called *trash talk*. One of the greatest trash-talking moments occurred in the 1997 NBA Finals between the Chicago Bulls and the Utah Jazz. Game one was tied at 82. The game was played on a Sunday. As Karl Malone stepped to the free-throw line Scottie Pippen walked behind The Mailman, Karl Malone, and muttered, “The Mailman doesn’t deliver on Sunday.”

It seemed to work! The Mailman choked by throwing up two bricks. On the ensuing play one of basketball’s greatest trash talkers, Michael Jordan, won the game with a buzzer-beater.

We encounter some trash talk in our text. David was now king of a untied nation of Israel. His first order of business was to capture Jerusalem from the Jebusites.

When David’s men approached Jerusalem it prompted some high-level trash talking from both sides.

- The Jebusites, confident in their impregnability, looked down upon the Israelites and said, “You shall not come in here; but the blind and the lame shall repel you.”
- David turned their taunt back on them and after Jerusalem was taken by his army it became a motivational saying in Israel.

Conquering Jerusalem was both a strategic and a symbolic victory for David. You see, in their entire history the Jews had never been able to overcome the inhabitants of Jerusalem, never had they driven them out. It was as if even lame and blind Jebusites *could* repel the best soldiers of Israel.

What you see in this text is that the moment Israel recognized their rightful king, the conquest that had eluded them for so long became easy.

I’m going to suggest a correlation in our spiritual lives as believers in Jesus Christ. It’s simply this: In our lives there are things we struggle against that are essentially powerless because of the Cross of Jesus yet they continue to hold sway over us. If we will yield to the lordship of Christ we can, we will, overcome those strongholds.

I’ll organize my thoughts around two points: #1 The ‘Lame and the Blind’ Will Repel You Until You Settle The Issue Of Lordship, and #2 The ‘Lame and the Blind’ Will Repulse You Once You Settle The Issue Of Lordship.

#1 The ‘Lame and the Blind’ Will Repel You Until You Settle The Issue Of Lordship (v1-7)

I should spend a few moments defining what we mean by ‘lordship.’ A few years ago there was a big debate among evangelical believers over what was called Lordship Salvation. Its proponents emphasized that submitting to Christ as Lord over your life goes hand-in-hand with trusting in Christ to be saved. You can summarize their position with this saying - “If He’s not Lord of all, He’s not Lord at all.”

Of course Jesus is Lord! But spiritual growth is a process. The Bible calls this process *sanctification*. Some people grow more quickly than others

and even in our individual lives there can be circumstances and situations that affect sanctification.

Submitting to the lordship of Jesus is an issue of our sanctification, **not** our salvation. To quote one source,

A person does not have to submit to God in every area of his or her life in order to be saved. A person simply has to recognize that he or she is a sinner, in need of Jesus Christ for salvation, and place trust in Him. Jesus is Lord. Christians absolutely should submit to Him. [But] a changed life and submission to Christ's lordship are the result of salvation, not a requirement for salvation.

For our purposes this morning, in talking about the lordship of Jesus we mean a Christian resolving issues of spiritual growth, deciding who is really in control of their life.

As soon as Israel recognized David as king, something that had eluded them for centuries - the capture of the stronghold of Jerusalem - was achieved.

2 Samuel 5:1 Then all the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and spoke, saying, "Indeed we are your bone and your flesh.

2 Samuel 5:2 Also, in time past, when Saul was king over us, you were the one who led Israel out and brought them in; and the Lord said to you, 'You shall shepherd My people Israel, and be ruler over Israel.' "

2 Samuel 5:3 Therefore 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.

After the death of Saul the men of Judah recognized David as king. The northern tribes did not. David ruled the south from Hebron while a descendant of Saul's, Ishbosheth, ruled the north. This went on for some seven years until the murder of Ishbosheth by two of his own military captains.

The thing to notice is that the northerners knew all along that David was God's choice to be king. Even while Saul was alive it was David whose military exploits brought glory to God and defended Israel. Still they followed Saul and, afterward, his son. They therefore willfully refused to

acknowledge what they knew and believed to be true - that David was their king, to shepherd them.

We can relate to this on a personal level. If we are Christians we know and believe that Jesus is Lord and means to shepherd us. But in one or more areas of our lives we may cling to some other 'ruler.' It may be self, or some idol that we have set up. We may struggle against it or we may grow comfortable with it. It may be a habit we've chosen or an addiction that has us in chains. We may find ourselves making the excuse, "That's just the way I am."

The encouragement of God's Word for us today is that overcoming that kind of stronghold in our lives, no matter how fiercely held or for how long, is possible if we will yield to the lordship of Jesus Christ in that area.

The "elders of Israel," representing the people, anointed David king. God had already anointed him some fifteen or more years earlier, while he was yet a teenager. They were just getting around to fully acknowledging what God had already done for them.

So much of our growing in Christ is fully acknowledging what He has already done for us. On the Cross Jesus defeated the devil. He conquered death and Hell. We're told that as we identify with Him on the Cross and in His resurrection that we are dead to sin and alive to Him - meaning we have power to not sin and to walk in victory over it.

Some areas of our lives can prove more resistant to this acknowledging than others. Or we might make the foolish mistake of returning to a stronghold that Jesus overcame for us. Either way the solution is the same: **Acknowledge He is Lord and yield your members to Him.**

2 Samuel 5:4 David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years.

2 Samuel 5:5 In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months, and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty-three years over all Israel and Judah.

In this historical note we see that the northern tribes suffered under the wrong lordship for some seven years. Stubborn to hold-out against David, it created a kind of stalemate in which their growth was on hold. And it affected the development of the entire nation as they remained unable to overcome the Jebusites and take their rightful capital city.

I say they “suffered” but it was mostly spiritual. Their lives went on. They got up, went to work, went to worship. But there was something missing; someone, actually. They did not have their shepherd-king to lead them to new glories.

The Christian life can be sort of stunted as well when we allow strongholds to continue. We go through the motions but we’re not really making any progress.

2 Samuel 5:6 And the king and his men went to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, who spoke to David, saying, "You shall not come in here; but the blind and the lame will repel you," thinking, "David cannot come in here."

Jerusalem, because of the way it was situated and fortified, was one of those seemingly impregnable fortresses. The Jebusites were so confident in its defensibility that they could taunt David by saying even the blind and the lame could successfully defend it against the Israelites.

In a sense, the blind and the lame had repelled the Israelites until now. Commentators point out that in addition to referring to actual blind and lame individuals this could be a reference to the gods of the Jebusites. Probably they would set-up the images of their gods on the walls when an army approached; it was common practice in those days.

It was also commonly known that the God of Israel had attitude about idols. Listen to this excerpt from Psalm 135.

Psalms 135:15 The idols of the nations are silver and gold, The work of men's hands.
Psalms 135:16 They have mouths, but they do not speak; Eyes they have, but they do not see;
Psalms 135:17 They have ears, but they do not hear; Nor is there any breath in their mouths.

Psalms 135:18 Those who make them are like them; So is everyone who trusts in them.

Part of the taunt of the Jebusites, then, was that the God of Israel was no match for their supposedly blind and lame idols.

If we are allowing some stronghold to exist unconquered it's as if we are being dominated by things that are essentially blind and lame - powerless in the aftermath of the Cross and resurrection of our Lord.

2 Samuel 5:7 Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion (that is, the City of David).

We'll see how in a moment. The point the writer seems to be making is that victory was certain and even easy once they acknowledged the rightful king.

Is there an area in your life you continually struggle against? It may be a sincere struggle, or it may be something you desire to hold on to. Either way the Lord has already overcome it. Victory may be as easy as acknowledging it is, in fact, an enemy stronghold that needs to be overthrown.

#2 The 'Lame and the Blind' Will Repulse You
Once You Settle The Issue Of Lordship
(v8-15)

David engaged in some trash talking of his own to motivate his men.

2 Samuel 5:8 Now David said on that day, "Whoever climbs up by way of the water shaft and defeats the Jebusites (the lame and the blind, who are hated by David's soul), he shall be chief and captain." Therefore they say, "The blind and the lame shall not come into the house."

Before we look at his strategy, notice the phrase, "the lame and the blind, who are hated by David's soul." Who or what was David referring to?

Certainly he was referring to the so-called 'gods' of the Jebusites. By extension he was referring to the Jebusites themselves who had put their

trust in dead idols of their own making instead of turning to the living God Who had made them.

Then we read, “Therefore they say, ‘The blind and the lame shall not come into the house.’” This apparently became a saying in Israel, something soldiers would say to one another as motivation before a battle. They’d come upon a fortified enemy and say to one another, “The blind and the lame shall not come into the house,” and it would remind them of their great victory over the seemingly impregnable stronghold of Jerusalem. It would remind them that the gods of the pagans were blind and lame and no match at all for the living God.

We’re told David “hated” the blind and the lame. He was repulsed by them.

It’s been my experience over the years that once Jesus has taken over an area of my life, the thing or things I used to be drawn to are shown to be repulsive. I see the damage they can create, the ruin they instigate. They’re just plain ugly when compared to the beauty of Christ.

Jerusalem seemed secure in her defenses. David identified the one weakness. There was a “water shaft” that supplied the city its fresh water. The soldiers could enter there and attack and defeat the Jebusites.

Water is a common symbol in the Bible for the cleansing and the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Everything we are talking about depends upon the cleansing and the power of the Holy Spirit. We cannot overcome strongholds on our own, in our own strength.

The words “he shall be chief and captain” in verse eight are in italics. That means they were added by translators to give you a better sense of the history of this event. You find them in the text of a parallel account of this event in First Chronicles 11:6. There you read that Joab went up first and claimed the command of David’s army.

But I thought Joab was already David’s military commander? He was, but he had recently murdered Abner and was on the outs with David. Still Joab was an amazing warrior. By issuing this kind of challenge it gave Joab

opportunity to prove himself to David and before all of Israel - especially those in the northern tribes whose general Joab had killed.

The thing I get from this personally is that I cannot rest in former victories or some current position or office. My Christian life is to be a daily overcoming of sin, routing the enemies of my God, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

One of the things that leads me to ignore or establish or reestablish enemy strongholds in my life is thinking I've somehow arrived. I won't arrive until I awake in Heaven and am in the presence of my Lord and Savior. Until then I strive in His power against those things that ought to repulse me.

The remaining verses of this section read like a footnote. They give us a glimpse of life under the rightful king.

2 Samuel 5:9 Then David dwelt in the stronghold, and called it the City of David. And David built all around from the Millo and inward.

David fortified the already fortified city. If God has given you a victory, if you've overcome a stronghold in your life, then seek to fortify your position.

2 Samuel 5:10 So David went on and became great, and the Lord God of hosts was with him.

2 Samuel 5:11 Then Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar trees, and carpenters and masons. And they built David a house.

2 Samuel 5:12 So David knew that the Lord had established him as king over Israel, and that He had exalted His kingdom for the sake of His people Israel.

Other nations began to recognize God was doing something in Israel through David. In other words, his testimony increased. So does ours when we settle the issue of lordship because we are hearing from the Lord with greater confidence.

For his part David was encouraged in his walk and work. It doesn't mean things were smooth, or that there were no discouragements. It means that he knew he was where he was supposed to be, doing what he was supposed to be doing. He was looking past people and circumstances and unto the Lord.

2 Samuel 5:13 And David took more concubines and wives from Jerusalem, after he had come from Hebron. Also more sons and daughters were born to David.

2 Samuel 5:14 Now these are the names of those who were born to him in Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon,

2 Samuel 5:15 Ibhar, Elishua, Nepheg, Japhia,

2 Samuel 5:16 Elishama, Eliada, and Eliphelet.

We're not too excited about this. God had instructed His kings in the Book of Deuteronomy to not multiply wives to themselves. David totally ignored this from the very beginning of his adult life.

It was customary in those days for a king to have many wives. A lot of them were the daughters of foreign rulers and helped cement treaties and such. But God wanted His kings to be separate from that pagan practice.

What you have here, then, is an enemy stronghold under construction in David's life. It would eventually be his undoing as he would take not just another wife but another man's wife. The adultery he would commit with Bathsheeba would lead to the murder of her husband.

It sort of illustrates what we've been talking about. Even in the midst of a Christian's life there can be evil or enemy strongholds. Jesus *is* Lord... **But He may not be lord of all.**

God's Word is a mirror. We look into it, see ourselves as He sees us, with the understanding that we want to 'look' more like Jesus when we're done.

If the Lord has revealed to you some area in which you are being repelled by the blind and the lame, see them as they really are, become repulsed by them, and walk in the power of the Cross and resurrection of Jesus.