

1 Chronicles 11-12 - David Reigns in Jerusalem

Teacher: Pastor Paul LeBoutillier
Calvary Chapel Ontario

1 Chronicles, chapter 11. We got started on Chronicles a couple of weeks ago; and because of the fact that there are so many numbers and names of people and so on and so forth, we got through the 10 chapters last time. We were really moving quickly. I don't know how far we'll get here tonight, but we're starting to move into the life of David as the anointed king of Israel. And so, I probably—I don't know how quickly I'll go because I really do get into this sort of stuff. The life of David always fascinates me.

1 Chronicles is an interesting book because if somebody were to just begin reading through the Bible from Genesis and start moving forward, they would have already read through 1 and 2 Samuel, and then 1 and 2 Kings, and then they would get to 1 Chronicles, they would start reading it, and they would probably cock their head and say, this is a little strange. I'm getting a lot of stuff over again here and I don't really know why.

The fact of the matter is, there is a lot of repetition between particularly 1 and 2 Samuel and 1 and 2 Kings and the Books of Chronicles. But there are also several things that Chronicles adds for us that we don't get otherwise, and there's a lot that Chronicles leaves out. That's because 1 and 2 Chronicles, as we mentioned last time, is about the kings of the Southern Kingdom of Judah, and it's not about the Northern Kingdom of Israel.

Last time we met, we talked about the split that had taken place in the nation of Israel. There was the split between the Northern and the Southern Kingdoms. The Northern Kingdom retained the name of Israel; the Southern Kingdom was called Judah because of the largest tribe in that area. That split is very important to keep in mind.

So that's what we're going to get into here as we get into chapter 11. We're going to find out that David is going to be crowned king of the Southern Kingdom first, and then later on the Northern Kingdom of Israel will also invite him to be king.

But before we do that, let's pray, shall we?

Heavenly Father, as we get into the Scripture tonight, we just really pray for Your Holy Spirit to have a freedom here in our midst. We know that that begins, Lord, with the choice of our own lives to invite You and to yield to You tonight for the things that You want to say.

Father, I know that when we come together on a Wednesday night, we've already had a full day that has already taken place, and there's all kinds of distractions, and many people are very tired after a full day of work, and there's just stuff that can very much potentially stand in our path from really hearing You.

I'm asking You, Father, to help us to clear that away tonight and to really open our hearts to You, to yield to Your voice, to hear Your heart. Teach us tonight, Lord God, we pray. We ask it in the name of Jesus, who is Savior and King, amen.

Chapter 11 of 1 Chronicles begins this way:

“Then all Israel gathered together to David at Hebron and said, “Behold, we are your bone and flesh.” (ESV)

Now let me stop you right here for just a moment and tell you that 1 Chronicles omits the first seven-and-a-half years of David's reign because, as I said, when David first took the throne, it was just in the Southern Kingdom of Judah; and that was seven-and-a-half years before the Northern Kingdom actually said, oh, okay, David's our king, too. Chronicles doesn't mention that, and there's a lot that went on during that time, including several clashes between the Kingdom of Israel, the Northern Kingdom and the Southern Kingdom of Judah.

In fact, let me show you on the screen from 2 Samuel, this is talked about here a little bit. 2 Samuel 8, it says:

2 Samuel 8-9 (ESV)

But Abner the son of Ner, commander of Saul's army, took Ish-bosheth the son of Saul and brought him over to Mahanaim, and he made him king over Gilead and the Ashurites and Jezreel and Ephraim and Benjamin and all Israel.

But Abner the son of Ner, commander of Saul's army, took Ish-bosheth the son of Saul and brought him over to Mahanaim, ⁹ and he made him king over Gilead and the Ashurites and Jezreel and Ephraim and Benjamin and all Israel.

This is what's going on in the Northern Kingdom. David assumes power there in Hebron for the Southern Kingdom of Judah. But what's going on in Israel? Well, David should be king over all of Israel, and yet, this is the power that military commanders wielded back in those days and frankly still wield today.

And it says here that Abner, who was the commander of the army of Saul. In other words, of the Kingdom of Israel, took the son of Saul, Ish-bosheth, and put him on the throne and said, he's king. This military commander has the power to just say, this man is going to be king.

Now, Ish-bosheth was not God's chosen leader. In fact, Ish-bosheth was not a leader at all. He was really a weenie. For the most part, he was a puppet king, if you will. Abner probably knew that. I don't— whether he did or not, we don't know, but Ish-bosheth didn't have that much of a backbone, and he only reigned for about two years. But during that time, there was constant friction between the Northern and the Southern Kingdoms.

Let me show you how 2 Samuel puts it this way in chapter 3, verse 1; it says:

2 Samuel 3:1 (ESV)

There was a long war between the house of Saul and the house of David. And David grew stronger and stronger, while the house of Saul became weaker and weaker.

There was a long war between the house of Saul and the house of David. And David grew stronger and stronger, while the house of Saul became weaker and weaker.

And if you go through and read in 2 Samuel, you find out that eventually Ish-bosheth actually came up to Abner. I don't know how he had the guts to do this, but he accused Abner of sleeping with one of his father's concubines. Now, that may not mean a whole lot to you and I, but that was something— back in those days, that was done to try to establish your own right to a throne. In other words, once a king was either deposed or died, if somebody could get a hold of his harem, or at least some of his harem, he could then advance himself as a potential ruler in that country.

Frankly, we don't know whether Abner had tried that or not. All we know from 2 Samuel is that Abner denied it vigorously, and he was so upset by the accusation that he said to Ish-bosheth, dude, you just stepped over the line. I am going to make sure that all the ten tribes of the Northern Kingdom of Israel rally under David because of what you've done. And he made good on his threat.

He actually brought—Abner single-handedly, practically, brought those northern ten tribes down to David at Hebron, and they said, we want you to be our king.

And that's essentially where this chapter begins. Let's read verse 1 again and then we'll keep reading on. It says:

“Then all Israel (and again, that speaks of the northern tribes) gathered together to David at Hebron and said, ‘Behold, we are your bone and flesh.’² In times past, (they said) even when Saul was king, it was you who led out and brought in Israel. And the LORD your God said to you, ‘You shall be shepherd of my people Israel, and you shall be prince over my people Israel.’”

Isn't that interesting? They actually quote what Samuel had prophesied over David. In other words, the northern tribes were aware of the fact that David was prophetically to be the king over all Israel, and yet it took him seven-and-a-half years. And it took an accusation by this puppet king to their military commander for this whole thing to blow up, and then for these people to finally come down and say, yeah, God wants you to be our king.

Isn't that interesting? Well, we say it's interesting, on the one hand, but it's typical, I would say. It's amazing how, we humans—and I'll even go as far as to say, we as Christians—can know something God wants and yet delay and drag our feet in putting that in practice in our lives.

These people knew that David had prophetically been declared king. When Saul died, they should have gone to David right away and said, hey, boom, Saul is dead. You are the king. But they didn't. The northern tribes took seven-and-a-half years.

Does that remind you of anybody—like maybe yourself? We can know—it's funny when we talk to people, when we're confronted by our sin, and that sin might be going on for a protracted period of time, when we're finally confronted, rarely do people ever say, well, that's not a sin. There's nothing wrong. I mean, maybe on rare occasions, in almost every occasion where we're confronted by our sin, people always go, yeah, you're right. They knew, you knew it was the same. You knew you weren't doing what God wanted you to do.

And yet, what do we do? We just keep going on right until something happens, there's some blow-up, and we're forced to look at this thing and go, yeah, that's God's will all along. But we just didn't. I understand this. This is human nature in a sense.

It goes on here in verse 3, and it says:

“So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, and David made a covenant with them at Hebron before the LORD. And they anointed David king over Israel, according to the word of the LORD by Samuel.”

Again, it's mentioned *“according to the word of the LORD.”* Samuel has been long dead, but they remember the prophecy that he gave that Saul, or excuse me, David was to be Saul's successor.

Verse 4:

“And David and all Israel went to Jerusalem, that is, Jebus (that was the name of the city before it was Jerusalem), where the Jebusites were, the inhabitants of the land. ⁵ The inhabitants of Jebus said to David, “You will not come in here.”” Because Jerusalem was considered a stronghold, right? In fact, they even refer to it later on as a stronghold. Well, it says the inhabitants were flaunting this today, but there's no way you're going to get in here.

“Nevertheless (we're told in the middle of verse 5), David took the stronghold of Zion, that is, the city of David. ⁶ David said, “Whoever strikes the Jebusites first shall be chief and commander.” And Joab the son of Zeruiah went up first, so he became chief.””

Can I stop you just for a moment to suggest to you that that may not be the best way to find out who your next commander is going to be? I got to tell you something. First of all, Joab, you'll notice, is listed as the son of Zeruiah. Zeruiah is a woman. In fact, it's David's sister, that means Joab is David's nephew. And you'll see here that because of this attack that was going on the Jebusite city David made this broad kind of an invitation that whoever is first to go up to take the city, is going to be my commander— that's incentive.

And so, Joab did it. He was first, and he got to be commander. For all intents and purposes, Joab was a powerful man. He was a warrior. He was cruel and underhanded, too. I mean, the guy was a piece of work, and he remained a thorn in David's side for literally the entirety of his rule from this point onward.

We're reminded here by this story that the man who is best able may not be the man who is the best choice. Just because someone is able, they may not be the best choice in a situation. Like I said, I think David lived to regret his choice of bringing Joab in this way.

Later on, during his kingship, he even said, you sons of Zeruah are going to be the end of me. And Joab went on to murder Abner. It's not going to be talked about here, but so, he was a murderer, and he ended up paying for it at the end of his life. And there was a lot of things Joab did that were just really underhanded and ungodly.

Anyway, verse 7, it says:

“And David lived in the stronghold (meaning Jerusalem); therefore it was called the city of David.”

Now that might—don't let that confuse you because there are two cities in—well, I shouldn't say cities. There's one city and one village that are both referred to as the City of David, and they are Jerusalem and Bethlehem. Because you'll remember, even in the New Testament, the angels proclaimed that in the City of David *“a Savior has been born to you,”* but they were talking about Bethlehem because that was where David was born. Anyway, Jerusalem was also known as the City of David.

And it says in verse 8 that:

“...he built the city all around from the Millo in complete circuit, and Joab repaired the rest of the city. ⁹ And David became greater and greater (and then I want you to notice this last phrase in verse 9), for the LORD of hosts was with him.”

That's something that the author of Chronicles wants you to know. He wants you to know in no uncertain terms that David's success and David's power are from the presence of the Lord, are because of the presence of the Lord in his life.

And this was a fact that David rarely lost sight of. In fact, you'll recall, when things went bad in David's life, he would often say things like, hey, the Lord freely gave and the Lord can take away. He never felt like the things that he had been given in his life were his to own or for him to lay hold of in such a way as to defend or to grasp, even when his son Absalom came against him to rest-control of the kingdom from his father.

You'll remember that all of the abuse that David got during that period of time, he chalked up to the fact that God's the one who gave me this throne. If He wants to take it away, that's His business.

And you'll remember when this one guy was pelting him and his companions with dirt clods and rocks and showering them with dirt as they were leaving the city, fleeing the city from Absalom's control, you'll remember that one of David's men came up to David and said, just give me the word, man, I'm going to go; I'll just take care of this guy. Believe me, it won't take long.

And you remember what David said? He said, this could be the Lord's doing. How do you know this isn't God's doing? And if this is God's doing, who am I to say, no, you can't do this to me.

You see, David understood all that he had was from the Lord; everything he'd been given was from God. *“The Lord gives; the Lord takes away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.”* He wasn't this person that was going to sit and get angry, and get all pity-partyish sort of thing. I've lost this or something. It was like God gave it; it wasn't mine to begin with.

Wouldn't that be something? How would that change our lives if we carried that same attitude, that same understanding that this is the Lord's. This is the Lord's—I mean, including our very lives. Including our very lives. We hold on with a white-knuckle approach to the things that we've been given, and we're like hanging on for dear life. Oh-God! sort of a thing.

The Lord gave; the Lord is free to take away, right? Rather than pounding our fist and cursing at the sky and whatever, David remembered that his greatness and the establishment of his throne in all of Israel was God's doing, not his. Not his.

Over the years, I've tried to—I mean, staying humble, that can be difficult because as a king, you imagine that David would begin to look at his kingdom over a period of time as it grows, as it prospers, as it flourishes, and you start to believe your own press reports and pretty soon, you're like, wow, look what I have done!

What a dangerous thing that is, and in fact was for other biblical characters. Remember Nebuchadnezzar? Boy, you ever want to just be reminded of what a prideful attitude can do to somebody. You'll remember Nebuchadnezzar walked out on his balcony and looked at his kingdom, and he's like, I am the bomb.

The Bible says, immediately his sense of rational thinking was removed, and he became like an animal for something like seven years or something like that. And he literally became like an animal. His mind was taken away because he became prideful.

Hezekiah was a godly man; he became prideful. After the Lord did an incredible miracle for king Hezekiah—now I'm moving way ahead; we'll get to this here in Chronicles eventually—but eventually we're going to see how God did this incredible miracle for Hezekiah; and it involved the heavens because you'll remember what happened: a shadow went backwards.

That doesn't happen normally and it caused people, astrologers, to come to Israel to inquire. The Bible says that Hezekiah became very prideful about all that God had done for him as if it was something he'd done for himself. And it can happen. It can happen.

We have to be very careful as we look at what we've been given. The attitude is, Lord, You gave this. When you look at what God has done for you, you need to say, God, look what You've done. Look what You've given me. When you hop in your car to go to work in the morning, just say, Lord, look what You gave me. This is great. Thank You. When you eat your food, that's why we give thanks, Lord, look what You gave me. This is great. Thank You. When you go to bed at night and you hop into your warm bed, just say, Lord, look what You've done. Look what You did. You think everybody's got a car, food to eat, and a warm bed? Very important.

Now, as we move on here at verse 10, the author is going to begin to speak of David's mighty men. Because the Lord was so with David, as we've mentioned, he was surrounded with men that were very much like him, in the sense that they were powerful in battle. These men had made a name for themselves; they were men who were feared. And because of that, they caused David's forces to be very powerful.

It says here in verse 10:

“Now these are the chiefs of David's mighty men, who gave him strong support in his kingdom, together with all Israel, to make him king, according to the word of the LORD concerning Israel. ¹¹ This is an account of David's mighty men (and it goes on to speak of): Jashobeam, a Hachmonite, (who) was chief of the three. He wielded his spear against 300 whom he killed at one time.”

We're talking about some incredible dudes here, a guy who literally took out 300 warriors. That is amazing. This man was the commander of the three. Now we haven't even been told who the three are. In fact, here's what's interesting – we're not going to be told. Let me keep reading and I'll explain. It says:

“¹² And next to him among the three mighty men was Eleazar the son of Dodo, the Ahohite.”

Now, if you have a different English translation that you're following here tonight other than what I'm reading the ESV, I want to just mention here that most English translations list this man, Eleazar, as one of David's three mighty men. But I want you to notice that that's actually not what it says. It says he was among the three. It doesn't necessarily say he was of the three.

And secondly, the other two are nowhere else mentioned that I can specifically find. It appears that David's three mighty men are in fact nameless or not mentioned at least in the Scriptures, but these other men are. This is a man who was among the three, and regarding this man, verse 13, it says:

“He was with David at Pas-dammim when the Philistines were gathered there for battle. There was a plot of ground full of barley, and the men fled from the Philistines. ¹⁴ But he took his stand in the midst of the plot and defended it and killed the Philistines. And the LORD saved them by a great victory.”

Now, I want to just explain to you that this was not uncommon. The Philistines and other groups, people's groups around Israel, would regularly raid Israel during the time of harvest, and they would take away their grain. This sounds like that's what's happening in this sort of a situation. And what happens is the Philistine army or at least a portion of the army shows up, and they're approaching this barley field where they're probably going to come and steal the barley or whatever.

And it says here that this man took his stand in the midst of this barley field, defending the right of Israel to own and benefit from their labors. And it says here that in the process, he single-handedly defeated this Philistine regiment. He was pretty crazy buff dude.

And it says here in verse 15 that:

“Three of the thirty chief men (as they go on to talk about some of these guys), went down to the rock to David at the cave of Adullam, when the army of Philistines was encamped in the Valley of Rephaim.”

And by the way, this could be the very event that set these men apart—these three of the 30. And it says:

“¹⁶ David was then in the stronghold, and the garrison of the Philistines was then at Bethlehem. ¹⁷ And David said longingly (probably to no one in particular), “Oh that someone would give me water to drink from the well of Bethlehem that is by the gate!””

Now David's probably remembering his boyhood home, right? It says he's in the stronghold, which means he's in Jerusalem. Does this mean he's thirsty and doesn't have any water to drink? No. He's in Jerusalem; he's home; he's there; he's protected; he's in a stronghold. He's just reminiscing, and he's probably talking to his men about—oh, I tell you, there's this well. Oh, man, there's this well just there at the gate, right there at the gate of Bethlehem. And those Philistines are there now. Oh, that's the best water. Oh, man, what I wouldn't do to get a drink of water from that well.

Well, these guys take it seriously. It says in verse 18:

“Then the three mighty men broke through the camp of the Philistines and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem that was by the gate and took it and brought it to David. But David would not drink it. He poured it out to the LORD (and I want you to notice that he didn't just pour it out. He poured it out to the Lord.) ¹⁹ and (he) said, “Far be it from me before my God that I should do this. Shall I drink the lifeblood of these men? For at the risk of their lives they brought it.” Therefore he would not drink it. These things did the three mighty men.”

I want you to stop there for just a moment because I think this is worth explaining because this is an interesting story. These three men, as we said, probably heard David speaking longingly about this wonderful water from the well of Bethlehem. They decide they're going to mount an attack against the Philistines who are there, entrenched in the city of Bethlehem in control of it. They broke through those defenses. They drew some of the water out of the well for the king and brought it to David.

But we're told here in this passage that David refused to drink it. To us, this sounds like an attitude. It's like, dude, how ungrateful can you get? Right? I mean, that's what it sounds like to our American ears. We're like, hey, I risked my life to get you this water and you pour it out!

But you need to understand that this is not an act of ungrateful sort of a response from David. David poured out the water before the Lord or unto the Lord. In other words, as a drink offering would be poured out. And what he is saying in a symbolic sort of a way is that only God is worthy of such devotion. At the very risk of their lives, these men went to do this and I am not worthy of it. I'm not

worthy of these men risking their lives in this way. Only the Lord is. And so, he is expressing the devotion is rightly given to the Lord.

But the point of the story is not that element. The point of the story is to highlight the incredible bravery of these men, the devotion of these men who are, again, in this story unnamed. And as I was thinking more about these guys, these three guys, I was thinking to myself that they are a picture for us of those whose devotion toward the heart of God and to serve the will of God is such that they will do anything, they will risk anything to go or to do for the Lord, no matter the risk, no matter the consequences. It's just all-out devotion to God.

I think some of us have lost that. It's something we often see in a new believer. They're so overwhelmed by God's love. When they first come in contact with that love and they realize: He gave His life on the cross; He died; Jesus died on the cross for me, and He gave everything; what should I hold back? And they're just excited, and the zeal is just at a fever pitch in their lives. They're like, God, whatever, whatever You want to do, wherever You want to send me, I'll go, I'll do it. That first love sort of a thing.

But that's something that can wane after a period of time. I think it would be good for us to get that back. I want to be so in touch with God's heart like these men were in touch with David's heart, that I know what God's longings are, and that I respond to those longings by saying: Here am I Lord, send me. Even as Isaiah said, Lord, send me. Who will go for us? Lord, send me. I'll do it. I'll go. What do You need me to do? Where do You need me to go? Well, it's dangerous. I don't care. I'm Your servant. I belong to You. I belong to Your very heart.

That's the devotion these men showed. They loved David so much and they were so devoted to this man that they were willing to risk their own lives just to bless him with some water. And I'm understandably convicted by that.

What am I willing to do for my Lord? This was a reward having to do with water. And I'm thinking, Lord, what am I willing to do? Where am I willing to go for You? I think on the day when believers are rewarded for their deeds, there will be listed many valiant men and women who did incredible exploits just to please the Lord, for no other reason but to please their God. This is something I think is just very admirable.

He goes on in verse 20 here, saying:

“Now Abishai, the brother of Joab, was chief of the thirty. And he wielded his spear against 300 men and killed them and won a name beside the three. ²¹ He was the most renowned of the thirty and became their commander, but he did not attain to the three.

²² And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was a valiant man of Kabzeel, a doer of great deeds. He struck down two heroes of Moab. He also went down and struck down a lion in a pit on a day when snow had fallen.”

And by the way, Benaiah went on—he must have been a fairly young man at this time because he went on to actually take over from Joab went on to lead the armies of Israel after Joab. It says in verse 23:

“And he struck down an Egyptian, a man of great stature, five cubits tall. The Egyptian had in his hand a spear like a weaver's beam, but Benaiah went down to him with a staff and snatched the spear out of the Egyptian's hand and killed him with his own spear. ²⁴ These things did Benaiah the son of Jehoiada and won a name beside the three mighty men. ²⁵ He was renowned among the thirty, but he did not attain to the three. And David set him over his bodyguard.”

“The mighty men (verse 26) were (and I'm just going to point out that the first warrior mentioned here is) Asahel, the brother of Joab.”

Now, Asahel, interestingly enough, didn't live long enough to see the kingdom come together under David. He actually died in one of those skirmishes between David's army and the armies of Saul (after Saul had already died), but while Ish-bosheth was king and Asahel was killed by Abner, the commander of the Northern Kingdom. Which is why when Abner brought, in peace, the ten tribes over to David, and Joab heard about it. Joab murdered Abner for killing his brother.

Anyway—and then the rest of the names that are listed here are going to be mostly unknown to us, with the exception of verse 41, which lists Uriah the Hittite who, of course, was the husband of Bathsheba, with whom David committed adultery.

Interestingly enough, that act, that event, is not mentioned in this book. It's not mentioned. The Lord chose not to list that here in Chronicles. Anyway, we're going to skip the rest of the names in this chapter because they're just an exercise in Hebrew pronunciations. It goes on through the end of the chapter.

Let's do chapter 12. It says:

“Now these are the men who came to David at Ziklag, while he could not move about freely because of Saul the son of Kish. And they were among the mighty men who helped him in war.”

All right, now we've just gone back in time. Chapter 12 takes us back, and the reason it's doing it is to, once again, talk about the mighty men who came to David. But it's bringing us back chronologically to the time when David was actually living in Philistine territory. David had gone to stay there because he was tired. He was tired of running. He was weary. Can you relate? And actually, his faith was beginning to waver.

In fact, David even said, one of these days Saul's going to find me, and so, he went to go live along the Philistines because he knew that some place Saul would never look. But even while he was there, men were coming to him, defecting from Israel, and joining his army, and making it even greater.

And that's the reason that the writer here in Chronicles is bringing all of this up. David had been given a city to live in with him and his men because it was a large group of people, and it included their wives and children. That city was called Ziklag. All right.

And look at verse 2. This is really interesting. It says that, speaking of these men who came to David (or defected to David), it said:

“They were bowmen and could shoot arrows and sling stones with either the right or the left hand (that's pretty impressive; but here's even more impressive); they were Benjaminites, (it says they were) Saul's kinsmen.”

Now, this is very significant in the sense that they defected from Saul's own family. Remember, Saul's dead, but his family is still very much alive; his son is ruling—I'm sorry, this is actually before Saul passed away. I beg your pardon. I forgot we went back in time. Saul is just about to buy the farm in this last skirmish with the Philistines. But this is amazing that people are coming from Saul's own tribe. This must have been a very big encouragement for David to show that God's favor was upon him here.

In verses 3 – 7, these men are listed by name. It says:

“The chief (or the commander of them) was Ahiezer, then Joash, both sons of Shemaah of Gibeah; also Jeziel and Pelet, the sons of Azmaveth; Beracah, Jehu of Anathoth, ⁴ Ishmaiah of Gibeon, a mighty man among the thirty and a leader over the thirty;” And then the rest of the names are given there through verse 7.

We'll skip down to verse 8; and it says:

“From the Gadites (in other words, the tribe of Gad) there went over to David at the stronghold in the wilderness mighty and experienced warriors, expert with shield and spear, whose faces were like the faces of lions and who were swift as gazelles upon the mountains:” And then— I love that description, by the way; it's the army I'd want— and then in verses 9 - 13, their names are listed there.

Then in verse 14, we're told that:

“These Gadites were officers of the army; the least was a match for a hundred men and the greatest for a thousand.” Wow.

“¹⁵ These are the men who crossed the Jordan in the first month, when it was overflowing all its banks, and put to flight all those in the valleys, to the east and to the west.

¹⁶ And some of the men of Benjamin and Judah came to the stronghold to David.

¹⁷ David went out to meet them and said to them, “If you have come to me in friendship to help me, my heart will be joined to you; but if to betray me to my adversaries, although there is no wrong in my hands, then may the God of our fathers see and rebuke you.””

Pretty interesting statement, isn't it? Now listen, it was understandable for David to be cautious about men who were coming, because at this time, with Saul still being alive, Saul was looking to find out where David was staying, to find out where he moved, where he might be able to catch him. There had been other spies, and it was certainly not beyond Saul to send more.

So David was understandably cautious, but I want you to notice here what David says to them: If you come to betray me, if you come to betray me, this is— and then he begins to say, this is the deal.

Now, this is where you and I would probably throw in some idle threat, right? I mean, if you were really wanting to try to scare somebody, listen, if you're friends, great. If you've come to betray me, insert sort of scary talk. That's probably what I would try to do: intimidation. Look what David says; he says, If there's betrayal in your heart, *“may the God of our fathers see and rebuke you.”*

Wow, what a scary thing to say. But you know what? That was David. Listen, David could have easily threatened them. He had an army. He had mighty men

who are already gathering to him; there was a lot of them, and he could have said something like, listen, if you guys have come to betray me, betray us, there's some really strong dudes here. And let me just tell you how they could rearrange your lives very quickly if they wanted to.

I mean, that's a threat, right? But that's not what David said even though he could have. He says, “...*may God, the God of our fathers see and rebuke you.*”

I'm just so impressed by that. David was a man who left things to God to take care of; it was God's business, right? It's God's business. My life is God's. Everything I have is God's, and if somebody comes to threaten me or take something away from me, that's God's business, too.

See, we don't think like that. We don't think like David. The Bible tells us he was a man after God's own heart, and the more I study the life of David, the broader and more dynamic that description goes for me, or becomes for me.

Here is a man who entrusted himself to God in ways that just bring great conviction into our lives. Because when we think that something might be threatening our livelihood, we get all in people's business, right? Or we must start making threats or we start getting panicky or, well, let me tell you sort of a thing. David's just like what may God see and respond.

That's what's really going on here. You're going to have God to deal with—which is frankly more of a threat if you believe that God is on your side, which David did, by the way. I just think that's amazing. I really do. I think we get so panicky when things aren't going our way, and we ought to commit things to the Lord.

Verse 18:

“Then the Spirit clothed Amasai (now, your Bible may say, the Spirit came upon, which is what the Hebrew literally says and what it literally means—the Spirit came upon Amasai; and that, by the way, is the language of the empowering of the Spirit; he was), chief of the thirty, and he said,

*“We are yours, O David,
and with you, O son of Jesse!
Peace, peace to you,
and peace to your helpers!
For your God helps you.”*

(David obviously heard, knew that this was a work of the Lord.) *Then David received them and made them officers of his troops.*”

We're also told in verse 19 that:

“Some of the men of Manasseh deserted to David when he came with the Philistines for the battle against Saul. (That was the battle where Saul and his sons would ultimately die. We're told here that) Yet he (meaning David) did not help them (referring to the Philistines), for the rulers of the Philistines took counsel and sent him away, saying, “At peril to our heads he will desert to his master Saul.”) ²⁰ (And we're told that) *As he went to Ziklag (or meaning, back to Ziklag), these men of Manasseh deserted to him:”* And then it goes on to name them.

Let me just—this was one of those amazing stories in the Bible. Remember, David's living among the Philistines, and he actually became the favorite of the Philistine king. The king loved him. The king believed that David was on their side. And when the day came for a battle between the Philistines and the Israelites, the king came to David and said, well, I guess we're going to find out today where your devotion is. David said, no problem, test me.

And I read that before I knew how that was going to turn out, I was like, David, what in the world are you doing? It's like, are you an idiot? This is your people. You can't fight against your people. You're not going to kill your kinsmen. I don't know if David just had this crazy trust in God that he knew God was going to get him out of it. But he literally got on his horse and he told all his men, Let's go, we're marching with the Philistine army against Saul and his forces.

And they're marching along, they're riding on their horses, the commanders look back, and they see David and all of his guys, and they're like, king, excuse me, what is he doing here? And the king said, hey, the guy is like an angel of the Lord to me. I trust him.

And they said, well, be that as it may, I can't think of any better way for him to get into the good graces of his king but to turn on us in the battle. In fact, here we are approaching the Israelite army. He's back there. What if they both start fighting us from both directions? We're trapped.

And the king finally gave in to his commanders, went to David and said, listen, I think you're great, but my commanders are not convinced that you're on our side, so go home. And that's the time frame. It says, so David and his men

said— after a little bit of arguing, they decided, okay, we're going back home. They started heading back to Ziklag.

That is in verse 20 here, where these men who are named from Manasseh deserted to David as he's making his way back to Ziklag. And it says in verse 21 that:

“They helped David against the band of raiders, for they were all mighty men of valor and were commanders in the army. ²² For from day to day men came to David to help him, until there was a great army, like an army of God.”

Isn't it interesting in verse 21 it mentions they helped him against the band of raiders? They didn't even tell us about the band of raiders. They assume you know. In Samuel, you got to read about it. When they got back to Ziklag, they saw this smoke rising where the city used to be, and they found out that some raiders had come, taken all their stuff, and their families.

They didn't know whether their families were dead or alive, but they went after them. They got everything back. They got all their family back. But these men from Manasseh, who deserted to David from the Israelite army, actually helped him to get his family and belongings back.

Verse 23:

“These are the numbers of the divisions of the armed troops who came to David in Hebron to turn the kingdom of Saul over to him, according to the word of the LORD.”

Now we're seven-and-a-half years back into the future, alright? And it goes on to say:

“²⁴ The men of Judah bearing shield and spear were 6,800 armed troops. ²⁵ Of the Simeonites, mighty men of valor for war, 7,100. ²⁶ Of the Levites 4,600.” And by the way, the Levites were only counted here from the sense that they were standing with David; they were exempt from war.

But among them, it says in verse 27:

“The prince Jehoiada, of the house of Aaron, and with him 3,700.” And the word, prince, here does not refer to loyalty, or excuse me, royalty. It refers to loyalty to leadership. He was a priest. He was of the priestly line.

And it says in verse 28, also from the same line, *“Zadok, a young man mighty in valor, and twenty-two commanders from his own fathers' house. ²⁹ Of the Benjaminites, the kinsmen of Saul, 3,000, of whom the majority had to that point kept their allegiance to the house of Saul. ³⁰ Of the Ephraimites 20,800, mighty men of valor, famous men in their fathers' houses. ³¹ Of the half-tribe of Manasseh 18,000, who were expressly named to come and make David king.”*

Check out this next verse. Verse 32:

“Of Issachar, men who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do, 200 chiefs, and all their kinsmen under their command.”

That's an interesting statement, isn't it? It speaks here of them having understanding of the times. In other words, that is discernment of what God is doing. It's not just what men are doing; it's what God is doing. That's a gift of discernment. That's a gift, the ability to understand the times, the signs of the times, the movement of the times, and so forth. And by the way, I believe God still gives that gift.

“³³ Of Zebulun 50,000 seasoned troops, equipped for battle with all the weapons of war, to help David with singleness of purpose. ³⁴ Of Naphtali 1,000 commanders with whom were 37,000 men armed with shield and spear. ³⁵ Of the Danites 28,600 men equipped for battle. ³⁶ Of Asher 40,000 seasoned troops ready for battle. (You can see this is quite an army) ³⁷ Of the Reubenites and Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh from beyond the Jordan (the other side of the Jordan), 120,000 men armed with all the weapons of war.

³⁸ All these, men of war, arrayed in battle order, came to Hebron with a whole heart to make David king over all Israel. Likewise, all the rest of Israel were of a single mind to make David king. ³⁹ And they were there with David for three days, eating and drinking, for their brothers had made preparation for them.

⁴⁰ And also their relatives, from as far as Issachar and Zebulun and Naphtali, came bringing food on donkeys and on camels and on mules and on oxen, abundant provisions of flour, cakes of figs, clusters of raisins, and wine and oil, oxen and sheep, for there was joy in Israel.”

And so now we see the coming of the kingdom under David and the unification of the tribes under his leadership.