

Sunday Night Message

September 20, 2020

2 Samuel 23

Topics – David’s Final Song

Series – 2 Samuel

Introduction

In the previous chapter, we listened as David sang his glorious song of praise to the Lord. In the beginning of this chapter, we read what is recorded as David’s last words. The conclusion of chapter 23 gives us a list of David’s warriors. The men who fought with him; men that were with him from the beginning, even before he was recognized by the nation as the rightful king of Israel.

We need to be reminded once again as has often been the case through these studies in 1st and 2nd Samuel, that these chapters and events are not necessarily in chronological order. David’s song from chapter 23, most likely occurred much earlier in David’s life; perhaps long before the internal problems that were a plague to his later years as king. The event in chapter 24 deals with David’s numbering of the people, which was certainly before his “last words” were given.

I. The Last of David’s Words (vs. 1 – 7)

Verse 1 – These “last words” are likely not the last words penned or spoken by David, but they are the last formal words written to Israel. The Hebrew word for “said” is (נֹאָמַר ne’um), which means “an oracle.”

It is very probable that David’s advice to Solomon, given in 1 Kings 2:1 - 9, was spoken by David after this, perhaps on his deathbed.

These last official words of David actually begin in verse 2. Verse 1 is a description given by the Bible of David. David was a Son, a Sovereign, and a Singer.

A Son - David is described as the son of Jesse who was raised up on high. This conveys the idea of somebody who came from humble beginnings and was elevated by the Lord. God said to David through the prophet Nathan:

"Now therefore so shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I took thee from the sheepcote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel: And I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies out of thy sight, and have made thee a great name, like unto the name of the great men that are in the earth. Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime, And as since the time that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel, and have caused thee to rest from all thine enemies. Also the LORD telleth thee that he will make thee an house." (2 Samuel 7:8-11)

A Sovereign - David was anointed by God through the prophet Samuel to be king over Israel (1 Samuel 16:13), and later he was anointed by the nation – first the tribe of Judah (2 Samuel 2:4), and then all of Israel (2 Samuel 5:3).

A Singer - Notice that David is also described as “the sweet psalmist of Israel.” McGee says, “He was a musician: he wrote music, he played music, and he loved to hear music. Good music, elevating music, music that thrills the soul has always contributed something beautiful to man’s worship of his God.”¹ David wrote at least 73 of the psalms (some say 75). The “last words” that followed are considered by some to be an additional psalm.

Verse 2 – Here we get a glimpse of God’s inspiration of the Scriptures.

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

"We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Peter 1:19-21)

How does God communicate to man?

Revelation - is God communicating to men truths that were previously unknown, and without God, man would not know them. (1 Corinthians 2:9-10)

Inspiration - literally means “God-breathed” or (God-spirited). The idea gained from the word is that God spoke through the writers of the Bible so that they recorded, without error, verbally what He wanted to express. (2 Samuel 23:1-2; 2 Peter 1:20-21; 2 Timothy 3:16)

Preservation-is the protecting and extending of the truth (having once been given) to all men throughout the ages. (Isaiah 40:8; Matthew 5:18; 24:35; 1 Peter 1:23)

"The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever." (Psalm 12:6-7)

Illumination-is the ministry of the Holy Spirit that helps us to understand the revealed, inspired, preserved Word of God. (1 Corinthians 2:14; 1 John 2:20-21; John 14:26)

We believe that the King James Bible has preserved inspiration. In other words, God’s breath is still on it. It is not merely preserved, it is alive.

Illustration – King Tut is preserved but not alive.

¹ J. Vernon McGee, *Thru the Bible Commentary*, electronic ed., vol. 2 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997), 238.

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." (Hebrews 4:12)

Let me be clear. I do not believe the English is superior to the Greek or Hebrew, but neither do I believe it to be inferior.

One more point about the tongue:

*"[To the chief Musician upon Shoshannim, for the sons of Korah, Maschil, A Song of loves.] My heart is inditing a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made touching the king: **my tongue is the pen of a ready writer.**" (Psalm 45:1)*

God gave the inspired words to the prophets, and they wrote them down or made use of a writer (an amanuensis). The words are inspired, not the writers. Not everything David (or Paul, etc.) was inspired by the Lord.

Verse 3 – Notice what God instructed David about leadership:

Leaders must be just (or righteous).

Leaders must rule in the fear of God.

In other words, leaders must be more concerned about what God wants than what their constituents want, or what their donors want, or what their flesh wants.

We see very little of this type of leadership in our nation today!

Dr. A. W. Tozer said, *"Never follow any leader until you see the oil on his forehead,"* which explains why so many gifted men came to David and joined his band. It takes more than talent and training to be an effective leader and to be able to recruit and train other leaders. Jesus reminded His disciples, and reminds us, *"Without Me, you can do nothing"*²

*"Without righteousness and the fear of God, a leader becomes a dictator and abuses God's people, driving them like cattle instead of leading them like sheep. David was a ruler who served and a servant who ruled, and he had the welfare of his people on his heart (24:17)."*³

Verse 4 – Notice that David compares this type of leadership to light. Light that shines like the sun and shimmers like the reflection on wet grass after the rain.

"Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: he is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous." (Psalm 112:4)

"Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." (John 8:12)

² Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Restored*, "Be" Commentary Series (Colorado Springs, CO: Victor, 2002), 148–149.

³ Ibid, p. 149.

"For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:"
(Ephesians 5:8)

Regarding the leadership that we so often see in this world, God would say:

"Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!" (Isaiah 5:20)

Verse 5 – seems to be an admission, a confession, that his house, including his own actions had not always been what they should have been. Yet, God's covenant with him was unconditional. The throne of Israel would always have a descendant of David on it. Jesus, the final earthly King Who will rule over Israel and all the world during the Millennium is "a son of David." Christ is the ultimate fulfillment of the Davidic covenant.

The Davidic Covenant is recorded in 2 Samuel 7:12 – 16:

"And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever." (2 Samuel 7:12-16)

Verses 6 – 7 – "sons of Belial" was a Hebrew way of saying base, worthless, or wicked men.⁴

The word is used also in the New Testament:

*"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? **And what concord hath Christ with Belial?** or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."* (2 Corinthians 6:14-18)

Someday, all of the unrighteous will be rooted up and gathered, and burned. The word "fenced" means that they have to be gathered up with iron instruments because they are too dangerous to handle with the hands.

See the Parable of the Tares (Turn to Matthew 13:24 – 30; 36 – 43)

See also Psalm 2

See also Revelation 14:17 – 20.

⁴ John MacArthur Jr., ed., *The MacArthur Study Bible*, electronic ed. (Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997), 379.

II. The List of David's Warriors (vs. 8 – 39)

David could not have accomplished for the Lord all that he did without the help of some faithful and courageous men.

The following verses include a list of the faithful men who fought for David. He had many men, but these thirty-seven stood out. This list is also found in 1 Chronicles 11:10 – 47, where even more names are included.

1. Adino the Tachmonite (v. 8)
2. Eleazer the son of Dodo (vs. 9 – 10)
3. Shamah the Hararite (vs. 11 – 12)

Note – these are the first three mighty men.

Verses 13 – 17 record a feat accomplished by either this first group of three mighty men, or a another group.

4. Abishai the brother of Joab (vs. 18 – 19)
5. Benaiah the son of Jehoida (vs. 20 – 23)

These two are mentioned as being part of yet another group of three, but were not as prominent as “the first three.”

You will note that Urijah the Hittite is included as the last name. Urijah fought bravely and faithfully for David, and David had him murdered.

Note – if you count the names, you only discover 36 that are specifically mentioned. Joab is mentioned as well along with these other men, and must be included in order to get to thirty-seven.

This list is often called “the thirty.” Yet, there are at least thirty-one (possibly thirty-two) mentioned in verses 24 – 39. Asahel and Urijah each died on the battlefield, so the number likely varied at different times.