

# David Triumphs

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] Now, if you want to take a Bible from the sides, if you don't have one, we're going to be looking at first, second Samuel, sorry, chapter 9, that story that we read together that is sandwiched by two other chapters, chapter 8, obviously, and chapter 10.

So, shadows, we know that shadows can be quite frustrating, and just ordinarily in life, because we know what they are, we know what they point to, but they often leave us with an incomplete picture, sometimes with questions and sometimes with frustration, unless we can see the real thing of which they are a shadow, obviously.

And the Old Testament can be a bit like that for us, because we're really told that it's a shadow of the things that are to come. And in order to make sense of a lot of the Old Testament, it's important that we look at it through the lens of Jesus Christ, who is the real thing, to whom all the New Testament points.

And even then, it can be quite hard work for us. If you're reading through the Old Testament, you'll have known that. There's a lot that we find difficult, a lot that is troubling, a lot that we find from our twenty-first century Western cultural background difficult to take on board.

But we wrestle with that, and we work through it, and we see it through the lens of Christ. And what we have been seeing, and what Cori was speaking about last week from 2 Samuel 7, was the significance and the centrality of God's covenant with His people.

[ 1 : 4 8 ] God's promises, God who promises into the chaos of life and into the chaos of what we see around us, and His unflinching commitment to rescue us, to rescue our people, to forgive and to love His people, to take us from death, spiritual death to life, and never to let go of us.

That is the covenant that He makes. That's the promises that He speaks to us. And that is the centrality of the message, even as it comes through the Old Testament.

And the Old Testament is a revelation, a progressing revelation of His character and His purposes, particularly obviously to that ancient Near East culture, a culture of kings and wars and brutality, one that we're not common with, one that we don't necessarily understand.

But He took a people from such a culture and environment, and redeemed them and brought them back to Himself, and enabled them and commanded them to live in a right and in a just way, as an example to the nations around them.

To serve and to love their God, their Savior and provider, to live at peace in the land that God had given them, surrounded often by God's enemies.

[ 3 : 1 9 ] They didn't do it very often, and they didn't do it very well very often. But nonetheless, we see what it is pointing forward to, and we see Jesus Christ, as we look through the lens of Jesus Christ, we see what God is doing.

What God is, what in shadow He is wanting us to encourage, us to think about. And there's two kind of areas in this.

We're not going to look at the broader chapters around chapter 9, but I'll just mention them and the broader context. Because what we have is two kind of aspects of what God is doing.

We have what God is doing in a kind of global way, which is maybe less personal, but nonetheless very important. We have God's global work in shadow revealed in these chapters, but we also have God's personal work for us revealed in shadow.

So what we recognize, particularly from chapters 8 and 10, because these are chapters that just work through some of the victories that David had as the King, defeating some of the enemies who would have wished to annihilate God's people.

[ 4 : 37 ] What we see, what God is doing is He's establishing a kingdom with David as the great King. So He's establishing a kingdom. He's establishing a king, a people under this King, and a homeland somewhere to live.

So what we're seeing in these chapters and in many of the chapters around the life of David, that God is developing, building a person to follow, someone to follow, a righteous King, King David, and somewhere to call home.

So very simple things, things we understand, things we can grasp, someone to follow and somewhere to call home. And we see He's also in doing so in establishing a king and a kingdom and a people.

He's also establishing a society that was to reflect God's character, was to reflect what it meant to be a follower of God.

So in chapter 8, for example, at verse 15, we're told that David reigned over all Israel and David administered justice and equity to all his people.

[ 5 : 46 ] So there was to be this reflection of the character of God in the society in which David was to be king, a loving, secure, just and fair society.

And it was to be a society that was founded by God and in reliance of God. Again in chapter 8, you see in verse 6, we're told the Lord gave victory to David wherever he went.

And then also in verse 14, the same words I said again, and the Lord gave victory to David wherever he went. So it was to be a people that followed a righteous king who was dependent on the living God to give them victory, reliant on God dependent on His grace.

And that kingdom and that king and that people was to exist in the face of brutal opposition. And we see that right throughout the Old Testament. The surrounding nations were having none of it.

They were having none of this lordship of this unique, exclusive God of Israel. They wanted their own idols. They wanted their own rulers. They wanted their own choice of how to build society.

[ 7 : 02 ] And they would have nothing to do with this God of Israel. And they worshiped their own idols. In fact, often they wanted to annihilate with an underlying spiritual opposition from Satan, annihilate the seed of the women and the people of God in the Old Testament.

So there's much of war and killings and kill or be killed. And there was much desire for the destruction of God and His lordship, His exclusive claims and His people.

So there's this global shadowy picture in the Old Testament of a kingdom, a people, a king and a homeland, somewhere to call home.

And if we look at it through the lens of Christ, if we take it into the New Testament and we remember the claim of Jesus in John chapter 8 verse 12, which is, I am the light of the world.

And He's speaking that very much into His own people who were in the shadows. And He comes and claims to be the light of the world.

[ 8 : 09 ] And we know and we've seen before that Jesus is the greater Son of David, that He is the David that is to come. He is the great King who is to be the fulfillment of all the Old Testament kings and none after Him.

He was God, but also one of us. And so we're to recognize in Jesus and in what Jesus established this moving forward of the trajectory of a king, a people and a homeland, somewhere to call home.

He is to be our king. He is to be, how can we say, our idol as it were. He's our hope. He's our Savior. He's our God. And we're to see Him in that light just as the people were to see David as their king in that same light.

But we see something far greater in Jesus Christ, someone who alone is worthy, someone who alone provides for our deepest needs. Our warrior king who's already fought the battles that we can't fight, who's already gone plunged into death and defeated it and removed its sting, and who is with us and who will never leave us, who provides us with a home and who provides us with a people to worship Him with.

He's the man. And I think it's easy for us to lose sight of that. It's easy to lose sight and to lack enthusiasm for this King of kings, this Lord of lords who is the fulfillment of all of the Old Testament that we struggle with.

[ 9 : 43 ] We find difficult. We don't always understand. But it was a trajectory pointing forward to Jesus Christ. And the kingdom that was being established in shadow has been established by Jesus Christ and He will return to usher it in all its fullness.

So easy for us to forget that. And He's the one who meets us and meets our deepest needs, just as this people looked for peace and looked for belonging and looked for security and looked for a homeland.

These are the things. These are the things you're looking for and I'm looking for in life. We're looking for that belonging, that acceptance, that security.

We're looking for that love that surrounds us and that takes us and that walks with us. And we find in Christ we have that without an end date, with no eviction notice, with no borders for us.

But we have that family and that ground that we build, the houses on that we live in today. That ground, scarred by sin, will be reclaimed on the day He returns.

[ 11 : 01 ] And we will live in it and stand on it as we're standing on it tonight forever. Homeland, His creation, renewed and revitalized for us to be living in with His people, with Christ as King.

And that all happens in the context today still of spiritual darkness and opposition and enemy territory.

So this evening we can't get away from the reality of evil and we can't get away from the reality of darkness. And we can get away from the reality of the battle that we face with our own hearts and our own sin, but sin leads to death and destruction and the annihilation of all that God is setting up.

And we see and we recognize and we battle with daily His Lordship and with His greatness. And we deny that and we recognize not only on our own hearts but in the society in which we live that Satan rails against God at every level.

And darkness is a reality that we face daily. But we need to remember that in Christ a war has been won and in Him we also can win the battles.

[ 12 : 22 ] But there's no point in pretending that battles aren't there. There's no point in pretending that darkness and evil isn't real, either in our own hearts or in the world in which we live, because that is the reality that God has made clear to us through His Word.

So there's this kind of cosmic picture of a king and a kingdom and a people and a homeland which just soaks through everything that's being taught in the Old Testament, being fulfilled in Christ.

But that can seem a little bit distant sometimes from us and it can seem a little bit maybe just far away. And so what we have in the middle of these two chapters, chapter 8 and 10, we have something very personal in shadow pointing to the relationship that Jesus wants with us also.

It's a beautiful cameo of the relationship between David, a new relationship between David and Saul's grandson, Mephibosheth.

And so it moves from looking at what the covenant of God is in kind of macro terms or in global terms to look at what the covenant of God looks like with you and me in our own lives.

[ 13 : 42 ] And that's very important. It's what the covenant looks like at eye level. So what we have is kind of a grace oasis in the middle of the shadows of the Old Testament.

We have a shaft of light in the Old Testament attic as we look at this chapter, a sunspot in the shadows of the Old Testament garden.

And it's a picture of God's covenant love for you and me as believers and also of God's covenant love that we should show to others.

And a recognition of that challenge personally in our lives. So the background of the story of chapter 9 is really quite simple.

And it goes back to a couple of events. Well in one way it's just David's recognition of God's covenant love for him.

[ 14 : 43 ] In chapter 7 of 2 Samuel, verse 28, David in the prayer that Cori read last week, and now, Lord God, you are God and your words are true and you've promised this good thing to your servant, and it speaks about his covenant love and the amazing revelation that he's given in that covenant.

But it also goes back, and if you turn with me to 1 Samuel 20, we looked at this a while ago, the relationship between David and Jonathan, and the covenant love that they shared together and the covenant they made to one another in 1 Samuel 20 and verse 14.

We have these words. This is Jonathan, who is, and David, they're about to separate, and Jonathan recognizes that David's going to become the king, and that Saul and Jonathan and his family are not going to be the next in line for the throne.

And he says, if I am still alive, David, show me this steadfast love, remember that Heseb love, that covenant love, show me that love of the Lord. It was something they had experienced, something they knew, and something that was important to them, that I may not die and do not cut off your steadfast love from my house forever.

And so they made this covenant together because of the steadfast love of God for them. They had a steadfast love for one another, and Jonathan was saying, show me that Lord's covenant love, and don't cut me off.

[ 16 : 14 ] You'll have every right to cut me off because that's what you do to the descendants of the king that you've deposed. But don't cut me off for the sake of the covenant and for the sake of God's love that you've received also.

And that was the kind of relationship they had, a tremendously deep covenantal, loyal love and forgiveness that they shared because they'd experienced it from God.

So Jonathan made this, or David made this covenant with Jonathan and promised and made an unbreakable commitment to protect him or to protect his offspring, care for them and to love them.

And that's what's outworked in this chapter, Mephibosheth, Jonathan's son, Saul's grandson.

Fantastic picture of God's covenant love, God's hessed love, God's grace outworking in the way David dealt with him.

[ 17 : 25 ] He calls for him. He says, is there someone? Is there someone that I can show, it's that same word, show this covenant kindness? Is there someone I can show this covenant kindness to for Jonathan's sake?

And he recognized that relationship. He calls for him. Twice he calls for someone to get Mephibosheth here.

And then he brings Mephibosheth to him. And it's a hugely unexpected relationship between the two. He loves this descendant of Saul, who in the ancient Near East tradition, he has every right to destroy as a potential suitor to his throne.

He's anonymous. Nobody really knew he lived or he was existed. His lineage was one that made him hide. He was the grandson of Saul. And his injuries made it very difficult for him because we're told that he fell, he was dropped by his nurse when he was just a baby because they were running away from other people who would have sought his life.

So everything about his life, even the injuries they had reminded him who he was and reminded him of the danger that he was in. And he himself had no self-respect.

[ 18 : 42 ] He calls himself in verse 8, a dead dog. Why should you regard a dead dog like me? He comes from low to bar, which means nothing.

It's the name of the place. There's a few places like that in Scotland. There's a dull, there's a boring, and there's a bland. All name places in Scotland. Well, this is low to bar. This is nothing.

Nothing happens there. And you know, there's a message in that that was the kind of, that was where he was coming from. There was nothing in his life, nothing in his experience that really made him someone that David the King would have any interest in whatsoever.

But what does David say to him? Well, it's very reminiscent of God, isn't it? He says, don't be afraid. Fear not.

Do not fear, for I will show you kindness for the sake of the covenant. So there's this, he had every right to be afraid, he's called into the presence of the King.

[ 19 : 47 ] He said, don't be afraid, I'm going to show you kindness. And then there's this outstanding generosity that is just poured out on Mephibosheth.

It must have been unbelievable. The restoration of all his grandfather's land fellowship at the King's table. You will eat with me every single night at my table in Jerusalem.

This who would go and plant crops for him and harvest these crops so that he would have an income. He was treated like one of David's sons. He was to sit with my sons at the table.

He had no rights to any of that. It was absolutely beyond his wild of dreams. He must have pinched me. What's going on here? What on earth is happening?

And we find here in the personal outworking of the covenant in shadowy form in the Old Testament, the glory of the reality that we have in Christ, as we shine the New Testament light of grace in it, we see it.

[ 20 : 59 ] We see this incredible insight. I think this is David's finest hour. I don't think he ever tops this hour, this particular passage.

This is when he's most like Jesus Christ. I know we talk about David as being a type of Christ, but I think he's also here an exemplar for how it is to act as a Christian and how it is to reflect God's love.

And it really is his greatest point. I know it's shadowed between these global pictures of victory in chapters 8 and 10, but it's also before his miserable collapse into lustful and loveless sin with Bathsheba.

It's finest hour. He's most like the Christ that he points towards. And it speaks also, doesn't it, the fact that we are Mephubishith.

In many ways, as he is the great King, we are Mephubishith. By nature, you know, we have nothing to offer God. We're hopeless. We have no rights before him.

[ 22 : 06 ] And that's worse than hell does. He didn't have rights to claim before God. He couldn't bring him a CV and say, except me, there's nothing.

I mean, grasp the reality of that. And I wonder who of us, I hope we don't, but I wonder if there's anyone who shares the same self-loathing of Mephubishith.

You know, why should you regard me a dead dog? Maybe feeling like a dead dog this evening. Maybe. That's the one verse that stood up, stood out tonight when we read it.

How can I associate with that? Low self-esteem, worthless, insignificant, damaged goods. If you're a Christian, can you re-evaluate your worth in the light of Jesus Christ and the light of God's covenant, He said, love for you.

Soak up His promises. Hold on to them. Hear them. Repeat them. And if you're not a Christian and you feel like that, your world is broken.

[ 23 : 16 ] And it can be like that for you. Hear the invitation of Christ and see the shadow of Christ and the way David treated Mephubishith and come to Him and accept His grace and His love.

Don't be afraid. Don't fear, but rejoice. Isn't that such an echo of how God speaks? It's what God speaks all the time. Don't be afraid. And can we grasp something which in shadow is shown to us here of what we have as believers, you know, feasting at the table of the King, resources, adoption, unbreakable love, His own company in our lives beyond what we can ask or imagine that lies ahead for us?

And just as I close, we are Mephubishith and we can see that here, but I think we are also David. Nah, okay. You've got to watch how you connect these things.

And I know people say that David is a reflection or is points towards a type of Christ and is the great Christ. I know that's true. I know that's the case. But is he not also a sinner saved by grace?

He is the great King. He's the forerunner of the Christ, but he is also a sinner saved by grace. And therefore an example, who himself had to show this hessed love, who had to show it as a believer.

[ 24 : 48 ] And he did in this occasion. It was the highest point of his life because he was most like his covenant God when he did this, because he understood who he was and who God had saved.

Him as a lowly shepherd had no place to be the King and he recognized he'd been forgiven and brought into this place. And so as we understand God's covenant love for us, this is why it matters.

Because if we understand it, if we understand who we were and what we were and what we didn't have before Christ came into our lives and what it is to be rescued and forgiven and redeemed and brought back, then it changes how we live and it changes how we act towards others.

It means that you and I live in covenant love with one another. It means we share hessed love together. It means we love others like that. So we love others like David loved Mephubishith and like David loved Jonathan and like God loved David and Jonathan Mephubishith.

And that's how we live our lives. That's how we move out of the shadows ourselves and that's how we begin to reflect what we are as children of the King. It's a wonderful place to be that we...

[ 26 : 00 ] The... Our eyes are opened to see more clearly how much we've been loved sacrificially and how much then we are called to love sacrificially and love differently from what we do naturally or what we see in the world around us.

We are to be David because we have been Mephibishith and that's how we live our lives and that's what the covenant speaks of and that's what we celebrate when we do the Lord support together this new covenant, the outworking of all of this Old Testament picture.

You've got to live your religion deep inside when you try for the kingdom on high by His grace, by His grace, Van Morrison, great words, by His grace.

May we do so. Let's pray. Father God, help us to live by Your grace. Help us to live in the shadow, the light of the shadow of Your covenant which is unpacked in these Old Testament pictures and which point us to the great outworking and the new covenant of Jesus.

His blood was shed, His body was broken for us. And help us to understand the depth of Your love and the provision of Your love and what it means for us.

[ 27 : 25 ] We've all got great weight on our shoulders. We've all got great concerns and great anxieties. And we all got maybe great fears about waking up tomorrow and what tomorrow holds.

But remind us Lord of who we are as Your children. Because of what lies ahead, remind us that it is unspeakably great, that it is beyond what we can ask or even imagine and that eternally.

And help us to live in that perspective of being covenant children of the living God. And not only with that future perspective, but may it affect and challenge how we live now with one another, even without enemies.

Because in a sense, this picture is of David with an enemy, at least a potential enemy, one who could have challenged his place for the throne.

And Lord, remind us that You ask us to love You, to love one another and to love our enemies. We can't do it without Your Holy Spirit, without Your grace.

[ 28 : 25 ] May we be dependent children this evening, we ask, in Jesus' name. Amen.