

TWO KINGS – ONE KINGDOM

[Story of King Saul & King David]

{Message by Pastor Joe Keenan given on Sunday, June 3, 2007}

“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” (Galatians 2:20)

The title of this message refers to the kingdom of Israel during the time when Saul was still sitting as king upon Israel’s throne, yet David had been anointed by the prophet Samuel to rule over God’s people. It truly was an awkward situation of one kingdom having two kings.

These Old Testament stories have spiritual application and relevance for our lives and are much more than mere historical records. This story of David and Saul speaks to us about the kingdom and throne in our life. There can only be one king upon our throne. King David can speak to us about Christ. King Saul, on the other hand, can speak to us about our self-life or “King Me.” So the question for us is: Who is seated upon our heart’s throne? Is it King Jesus, or is it King “Me”?

As we grow in the Lord, we must come to the place where we not only know Jesus as our personal Savior, but also as King – giving Him the Lordship of the kingdom of our heart. Realizing the importance of surrendering our every decision to Christ takes us to another level of fellowship with the Lord.

In the above quoted verse, what Paul is saying is that he has taken himself off of the throne of his life, and crucified himself. When “Self” is crucified and taken off of the throne, then Christ can begin to rule.

“Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward. And Samuel arose and went to Ramah. Now the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord terrorized him” (1 Samuel 16:13-14).

In this story of David and Saul, we see that Saul had been anointed as king over Israel, but because of disobedience and the wrong choices he had made, the Spirit of God had left him and he was being tormented by an evil spirit. Although many may scoff at the idea, as Christians we know that the devil and demons are very real. They are not simply the figment of someone’s imagination or merely a Halloween icon. The devil is real and he comes to kill, steal, and destroy – but “greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world!” (1 John 4:4)

“Let our lord now command your servants who are before you. Let them seek a man who is a skillful player on the harp; and it shall come about when the evil spirit from God is on you, that he shall play the harp with his hand, and you will be well” (1 Samuel 16:16).

“So it came about whenever the evil spirit from God came to Saul, David would take the harp and play it with his hand; and Saul would be refreshed and be well, and the evil spirit would depart from him” (1 Samuel 16:23).

In the above verses, another important lesson is unveiled for us. We see the importance of true worship and praise. Whenever these evil spirits would begin to torment Saul, David would begin to play upon his harp and these demons would flee and leave Saul alone. There is an awesome power in praise!

In 1 Samuel 17 we see that David is mightily used of God to slay Goliath and then he led all of the armies of Israel in winning a decisive battles for Israel. Then in the next chapter we read:

“And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. And Saul took him that day, and would let him go no more home to his father's house” (1 Samuel 18:1-2).

We can view this story as a picture of what occurs when we receive Jesus as our Savior and are born again. Saul saw what David could do and he accepted David into his house. David had saved him from a sure scene of destruction. In other words, Saul found a “savior.”

“And David went out whithersoever Saul sent him, and behaved himself wisely: and Saul set him over the men of war, and he was accepted in the sight of all the people, and also in the sight of Saul's servants” (1 Samuel 18:5).

Interestingly enough, David submitted himself to Saul. Likewise, Jesus comes into our life and it is His very character to come in humbly. He doesn't force His Kingship upon us. He blesses us and does some wonderful things for us, just like David did for Saul. David brought great victories and blessings for Saul. Why does He bring such blessing into our lives, even though we have not fully allowed Him to be our King? Only because He wants to prove that He loves us and that He only wants good things for us.

This is all the deeper many Christians and even some churches go in their relationship with the Lord. Like Saul, they feel content to merely use God to obtain victories and blessings, and they never yield or surrender the throne of their lives to God.

“The women sang as they played, and said, Saul has slain his thousands, And David his ten thousands. Then Saul became very angry, for this saying displeased him; and he said, "They have ascribed to David ten thousands, but to me they have ascribed thousands. Now what more can he have but the kingdom? Saul looked at David with suspicion from that day on” (1 Samuel 18:7-9).

All of a sudden, Saul realized that David was more than just a big “blessing giver” and he realized that it was David who should rightfully be upon the throne of Israel. Rather than surrender to David, this very thought became a threat to Saul's secure position on the throne.

In 1 Samuel 24, Saul was chasing David with three thousand soldiers. In this chapter, David had the perfect opportunity to attack and kill King Saul and his own men told him so, but David chose not to do this. Instead, he cut off a piece of Saul's robe while Saul was sleeping – it was just a little expression that he had been there!

“Now afterward David arose and went out of the cave and called after Saul, saying, "My lord the king!" And when Saul looked behind him, David bowed with his face to the ground and prostrated himself. David said to Saul, "Why do you listen to the words of men, saying, 'Behold, David seeks to harm you'?” (1 Samuel 24:8-9)

“When David had finished speaking these words to Saul, Saul said, Is this your

voice, my son David? Then Saul lifted up his voice and wept. He said to David, You are more righteous than I; for you have dealt well with me, while I have dealt wickedly with you. You have declared today that you have done good to me, that the Lord delivered me into your hand and yet you did not kill me. For if a man finds his enemy, will he let him go away safely? May the Lord therefore reward you with good in return for what you have done to me this day. Now, behold, I know that you will surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel will be established in your hand” (1 Samuel 24:16-20).

For a brief moment, a veil came off of Saul’s eyes and he attempted to acknowledge David as the king he should have been. This was a gift of God. It is called true repentance that only God can bring. It is in times of repentance like this that with brokenness of heart we can surrender to God’s Lordship over our lives. These are times that we should never reject or take lightly – they truly are gifts from God! Sadly, though, although God was mercifully granting repentance, Saul did not take it seriously. This was his opportunity to change. It was this fallen king’s time to hand over the keys of the kingdom to King David, but unfortunately, Saul went back to his home and just continued doing things his own way.

*“David swore to Saul. **And Saul went to his home**, but David and his men went up to the stronghold” (1 Samuel 24:22).*

God will never push you out and take over the throne of our life by force. Instead, He only tries to win us with His love and blessing. Likewise with King David, he never took Saul’s throne by force. Nevertheless, in the end, Saul had fallen wounded in battle and he told his armor-bearer to finish him off:

“The battle went heavily against Saul, and the archers hit him; and he was badly wounded by the archers. Then Saul said to his armor bearer, "Draw your sword and pierce me through with it, otherwise these uncircumcised will come and pierce me through and make sport of me." But his armor bearer would not, for he was greatly afraid. So Saul took his sword and fell on it” (1 Samuel 31:3-4).

No one else can take us off of our own throne. The decision is left completely in our hands. We must be the ones who de-throne “King Me.” After having seen all that God has done for us, we must make that choice to let Christ rule over our lives as King and Lord!

A spiritual leader named Henry Varley shared some words that still serve to challenge God’s people. Here are the words:

“The world has yet to see what God will do with and for and through and in and by a man who is fully consecrated to Christ.”

God used these words to change a man named D.L. Moody forever. Moody was just a Chicago shoe salesman when he heard those words of Henry Varley. As he meditated on those challenging words, he wrote, “He said ‘a man.’ He didn’t say a great ‘man,’ a learned ‘man,’ or a smart ‘man.’ He just simply said ‘a man.’ I’m a ‘man.’ And it lies within me – whether I will or will not make this full consecration to Christ. **I will do my best to be that ‘man.’**”

That was the turning point in D.L. Moody’s life. He went on to start one of the greatest churches and Sunday Schools in all of America. He was the Billy Graham of his day, traveling around the world winning thousands and thousands to Christ. The Moody Bible Institute in Chicago continues to train world-class leaders that impact the nations.

So we can see that the decision is in our hands. Will we remain seated upon the throne

of our life, or will we crucify our “self-life,” de-throne King “Me,” and allow King Jesus to be enthroned there? If we make the right decision to allow Christ to reign, God can turn our life around. He can turn our finances around. He can turn our health around! He can use us to be “that man” that turns the world around! This is what happened in the book of Acts where we see men that and women that fully surrendered their lives to Jesus. May it happen in our lives as well.

*“And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, **These that have turned the world upside down** are come hither also; whom Jason hath received: and these all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, **saying that there is another king, one Jesus.**” (Acts 17:6-7).*