

## **Bible Readings**

### **Old Testament Reading**

2 Samuel 23:1-39

### **David's Last Words**

**23** These are the last words of David:

"The inspired utterance of David son of Jesse,  
the utterance of the man exalted by the Most High,  
the man anointed by the God of Jacob,  
the hero of Israel's songs:

<sup>2</sup> "The Spirit of the LORD spoke through me;  
his word was on my tongue.

<sup>3</sup> The God of Israel spoke,  
the Rock of Israel said to me:

'When one rules over people in righteousness,  
when he rules in the fear of God,

<sup>4</sup> he is like the light of morning at sunrise  
on a cloudless morning,  
like the brightness after rain  
that brings grass from the earth.'

<sup>5</sup> "If my house were not right with God,  
surely he would not have made with me an everlasting covenant,  
arranged and secured in every part;  
surely he would not bring to fruition my salvation  
and grant me my every desire.

<sup>6</sup> But evil men are all to be cast aside like thorns,  
which are not gathered with the hand.

<sup>7</sup> Whoever touches thorns  
uses a tool of iron or the shaft of a spear;  
they are burned up where they lie."

### **David's Mighty Warriors**

<sup>8</sup> These are the names of David's mighty warriors:

Josheb-Basshebeth, a Tahkemonite, was chief of the Three; he raised his spear against eight hundred men, whom he killed in one encounter.

<sup>9</sup> Next to him was Eleazar son of Dodai the Ahohite. As one of the three mighty warriors, he was with David when they taunted the Philistines

gathered at Pas Dammim for battle. Then the Israelites retreated, <sup>10</sup> but Eleazar stood his ground and struck down the Philistines till his hand grew tired and froze to the sword. The LORD brought about a great victory that day. The troops returned to Eleazar, but only to strip the dead.

<sup>11</sup> Next to him was Shammah son of Agee the Hararite. When the Philistines banded together at a place where there was a field full of lentils, Israel's troops fled from them. <sup>12</sup> But Shammah took his stand in the middle of the field. He defended it and struck the Philistines down, and the LORD brought about a great victory.

<sup>13</sup> During harvest time, three of the thirty chief warriors came down to David at the cave of Adullam, while a band of Philistines was encamped in the Valley of Rephaim. <sup>14</sup> At that time David was in the stronghold, and the Philistine garrison was at Bethlehem. <sup>15</sup> David longed for water and said, "Oh, that someone would get me a drink of water from the well near the gate of Bethlehem!" <sup>16</sup> So the three mighty warriors broke through the Philistine lines, drew water from the well near the gate of Bethlehem and carried it back to David. But he refused to drink it; instead, he poured it out before the LORD. <sup>17</sup> "Far be it from me, LORD, to do this!" he said. "Is it not the blood of men who went at the risk of their lives?" And David would not drink it.

Such were the exploits of the three mighty warriors.

<sup>18</sup> Abishai the brother of Joab son of Zeruah was chief of the Three. He raised his spear against three hundred men, whom he killed, and so he became as famous as the Three. <sup>19</sup> Was he not held in greater honor than the Three? He became their commander, even though he was not included among them.

<sup>20</sup> Benaiah son of Jehoiada, a valiant fighter from Kabzeel, performed great exploits. He struck down Moab's two mightiest warriors. He also went down into a pit on a snowy day and killed a lion. <sup>21</sup> And he struck down a huge Egyptian. Although the Egyptian had a spear in his hand, Benaiah went against him with a club. He snatched the spear from the Egyptian's hand and killed him with his own spear. <sup>22</sup> Such were the exploits of Benaiah son of Jehoiada; he too was as famous as the three mighty warriors. <sup>23</sup> He was held in greater honor than any of the Thirty, but he was not included among the Three. And David put him in charge of his bodyguard.

<sup>24</sup> Among the Thirty were:

Asahel the brother of Joab,  
 Elhanan son of Dodo from Bethlehem,  
<sup>25</sup> Shammah the Harodite,  
 Elika the Harodite,  
<sup>26</sup> Helez the Paltite,  
 Ira son of Ikkesh from Tekoa,  
<sup>27</sup> Abiezer from Anathoth,  
 Sibbekai the Hushathite,  
<sup>28</sup> Zalmon the Ahohite,  
 Maharai the Netophathite,  
<sup>29</sup> Heled son of Baanah the Netophathite,  
 Ithai son of Ribai from Gibeah in Benjamin,  
<sup>30</sup> Benaiah the Pirathonite,  
 Hiddai from the ravines of Gaash,  
<sup>31</sup> Abi-Albon the Arbathite,  
 Azmaveth the Barhumite,  
<sup>32</sup> Eliahba the Shaalbonite,  
 the sons of Jashen,  
 Jonathan <sup>33</sup> son of Shammah the Hararite,  
 Ahiam son of Sharar the Hararite,  
<sup>34</sup> Eliphelet son of Ahasbai the Maakathite,  
 Eliam son of Ahithophel the Gilonite,  
<sup>35</sup> Hezro the Carmelite,  
 Paarai the Arbite,  
<sup>36</sup> Igal son of Nathan from Zobah,  
 the son of Hagri,  
<sup>37</sup> Zelek the Ammonite,  
 Naharai the Beerothite, the armor-bearer of Joab son of Zeruiah,  
<sup>38</sup> Ira the Ithrite,  
 Gareb the Ithrite  
<sup>39</sup> and Uriah the Hittite.  
 There were thirty-seven in all.

## **New Testament Reading**

Luke 1:26-38

### **The Birth of Jesus Foretold**

<sup>26</sup> In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, <sup>27</sup> to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named

Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup> The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favoured! The Lord is with you."

<sup>29</sup> Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup> But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favour with God. <sup>31</sup> You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. <sup>32</sup> He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, <sup>33</sup> and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

<sup>34</sup> "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

<sup>35</sup> The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So, the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. <sup>36</sup> Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. <sup>37</sup> For no word from God will ever fail."

<sup>38</sup> "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her.

## Sermon

### **God's Everlasting Covenant (2 Samuel 23:1-39 & Luke 1:26-38)**

22-Nov-20

It would be great to have your **Bibles opened to 2 Samuel chapter 23.**

There's the usual **outline** - if you like to take **notes**.

Let me **pray** before we begin...

Let's pray...

## Intro/Context

- **Chapter 23 of 2 Samuel** are said to be **David's last words**

- Not his last words on his **death bed** but his last words in terms of a psalm or song and as a **recognition of God's faithfulness** to him
- It's like a song at the **end of David's life**
- Some suggest it **might have even been read or sung** at David's funeral
- In v5 **David acknowledges** the **covenant** that God made with him

[PowerPoint 1-23:5]

2 Samuel 23:5 (NIV)

(David) *"Is not my house right with God? Has he not made with me an everlasting covenant, arranged and secured in every part?"*

- And we will **focus on God's covenant** this morning
- So, we'd better **define covenant** - the Bible word for covenant - is *beriyth* - and covenant means:

[PowerPoint 2-covenant]

- An **agreement** which brings about a **relationship of commitment** between God and His people.
- The **Hebrew word** for covenant literally means *cutting a deal* - as it was the **custom in OT times** - to make a solemn promise by **passing** between the **divided parts of animals**. Both parties in the agreement - normally **passed through the middle of cut up parts of animals**. It's notable in **Genesis 15** when God makes a covenant

with Abraham - **Abraham** is **asleep** and doesn't pass between the cut-up animals - **only God** passes between the cut-up parts of the animals - showing the covenant depends on God - not Abraham

- Sometimes there was the **custom to eat together when entering** into an agreement/covenant - e.g. **Gen 31** (Laban and Jacob)
- **God made a covenant with a few people in the OT** - some of the covenants God makes are conditional on obedience and others are not
- Here's a few examples...

### [PowerPoint 3-covenants OT]

- God's covenant with - **Adam and Eve** (Edenic covenant) - they must not eat of the tree in the middle of the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:17)- they **disobeyed it** - which meant they had to leave the **Garden of Eden** and would one day die
- God's covenant with - **Noah** - **God promises the preservation of humans** by never flooding the whole earth again - Gen 9 - this promise is **unconditional**
- **Abraham** - God promises land, descendants and blessings - Gen 12-15
- God's covenant with - **Moses** - after Moses brought Israel out of slavery in Egypt - **God supplied His Law [10 commandments]** which were meant to govern and shape the people of Israel for living in The Promised Land
- [In Exodus 19-14] This **Covenant was conditional** on the people's obedience of God's Law - with blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience

- And then as we've **seen** in our look at 2 Samuel so far- **God made a covenant or promise with King David in 2 Samuel 7:16** - God said to David:

[PowerPoint 4 - 2 Sam 7:16]

Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever

I want to make **3 POINTS** about this covenant

My 1<sup>st</sup> point - *God's Covenant is made with a King!*

[PowerPoint 5-Covenant made with a King]

### 1. GOD'S COVENANT IS MADE WITH A KING (David? Jesus!) - (vv1-4)

- Although God made this covenant with David as King
- In v1 David reflects on his humble beginnings
  - *David son of Jesse* - David was the son of a humble farmer - called Jesse - in **Bethlehem** and David was a **shepherd boy**
  - When God sent the prophet Samuel to find the new king to replace King Saul - **David the shepherd boy wasn't even considered as a worthy candidate** - until God stepped in and told Samuel - none of these sons are the one
  - Still in v1 - David described himself as *exalted by the Most High, God. God raised David* from a little shepherd boy to King of Israel - from rags to riches
  - David also says he is *God's anointed* - chosen by God to be King

- And **describes himself** as the *hero of Israel's songs* - which should remind us a) of his **military prowess** (who can forget David slaying the giant Goliath) and b) should remind us of David's **psalm writing** where he puts his heart & feelings in words for us to learn from
- In v2 **David attributes everything** he writes and **everything** he says in this chapter to the *Spirit of the Lord* - without God's Spirit working within David - **we would not have any of his psalms** in our hot little hands
- And **David also acknowledges God** as the initiator of this covenant - and describes him as "*The God of Israel*" and "*The Rock of Israel*" - and its **God who will speak through David here...**
- And God in v3-4 - **describes what an "ideal" king** or ruler of the people should be like:
  - The King must **rule over the people in righteousness** (following God's ways) and **rule in fear of God**
  - Such an ideal King, God says, is like 2 lovely experiences:
    - A **beautiful sunrise** where the light of the sun shines so bright on a clear cloudless morning
    - And the **brightness of the sky after rainfall**, which enables the grass to sprout
  - What we have here is a picture of the light and brightness that a **godly King brings to the people's life**
- As we saw back in chapter 21 v17 - David was seen as the **lamp of Israel** - he was the one **guiding the people in God's ways.**

- So, **God is making His covenant with the godly King - David**
- **But as we've also learnt in the past few weeks - David was far from perfect - and didn't always follow God's way - yet - we also know - he had a heart towards God - and was **known as a man after God's own heart** (1 Sam 13:14)**
- **David is a flawed character - and a flawed King -**
- **But he points to or foreshadows another King - a descendant of David's - whom God sends to fulfill this promise or covenant of a forever King**
- **That of course is King Jesus -**
- **Jesus is not flawed - He is the perfect Son of God - a perfect God/Man**
- **Jesus fulfils this promise - as He is the King who can rule God's way - He always does the will of His Father - and His is the true Light of the World - calling people out of the darkness of their sins - and into His glorious Light**
- **So, God's Covenant is made with A King [David]- and fulfilled by THE KING - JESUS**
- **In fact, at His Last Supper - Jesus confirmed this covenant promise by saying in Matt 26:28 - that the cup of wine he was holding - This [cup] is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.**

My 2nd point is - God's Covenant can be Trusted

[PowerPoint 6-Covenant can be trusted]

## 2. GOD'S COVENANT CAN BE TRUSTED (vv5-7)

- In v5 - **David - seeks to rule His kingdom in a godly manner - and even though he doesn't always get this right**
- **David acknowledges that God's covenant can be trusted because the promise relates to David's Kingdom and David's throne lasting forever**
- **It's an everlasting covenant God makes with the **House of David** - that there will always be a King on David's throne and in David's Kingdom**
- **David sees that as already arranged and secure in every way - at the end of v5**
- **And with confidence - David knows he has been **saved for eternity** - and God will grant his desires - because He is God's King**
- **And despite his failings - David is not like the evil men - that he has encountered throughout his life - those **from other nations** following **false gods** - and those who were **against him**, as God's king**
- **And David sees a sticky end to these evil men - in v6 and v7**
- **These evil men will be gathered up like thorns (weeds) and burnt up in a **fire**.**
- **Now remember God's covenant is for David's kingdom and throne to be forever**
- **And so, we must fast forward to David's descendant, **King Jesus**, again**
- **Jesus is the one who says - "**The Kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the Good News!**" (Mark 1:15)**
- **Jesus is the one who comes to **offer salvation** - by dying on the cross for the **forgiveness of sins** - and **offers eternal life** in **Heaven** through His glorious resurrection**

- Jesus is the one who **speaks of God's judgment** - and that the wicked - those who rebel against God and reject His son - **will have a day when they have to face judgment** - in fact we all must face God's Judge - King Jesus - one day
- Jesus even tells a parable in Matthew 13 about this judgement to come
- This parable speaks of **two sowers sowing seed**
  - Jesus sowing good seeds - which **grow into people believing in Jesus**
  - And the **devil** sowing weeds
  - But at **harvest time** - which represents God's judgment
  - Those people who have grown into **followers** of Jesus will be **saved for Heaven**
  - But **those people who have rejected Jesus** - will be like the weeds in the parable - and thrown into a **fiery furnace**
  - Basically - there are **2 destinations** for people - when they die - **Heaven or Hell**
- King David believed in this judgment
- King Jesus confirms this judgement - and says **He is the judge** (Acts 10:42; 17:31; 2 Cor 5:10)
- Because Jesus IS the perfect Son of God - and because Jesus IS the Supreme Judge of the World - we can trust Him - and so we can also say - **God's covenant can be trusted**

The 3rd point is - *God's covenant depends on His faithfulness*

[PowerPoint 7-Covenant depends on God's faithfulness]

### 3. GOD'S COVENANT DEPENDS ON HIS FAITHFULNESS (vv8-39)

- As we saw throughout **David's life**
- As much as he was a **man after God's own heart**
- He wasn't always **faithful** to God
- Like his **sin with Bathsheba** and the **murder of Uriah**
- Yet God still made a **covenant agreement with David**
- And God also forgave **David** - when he confessed his sins
- And God didn't go back on His **covenant agreement with David**
- Because God said - it was an **everlasting** covenant
- And so, what we have here is a **situation** - where **God's covenant promise** for an **everlasting Kingdom** and **everlasting King** - depends on His faithfulness - and not necessarily on **human beings**
- So - in the **rest of the chapter** (vv8 to 39)
- We have the **acknowledgment of the human help** David had
- But we need to **understand who** arranged for this human help for David
- It wasn't just coincidence that **David had the brave soldiers** he had
- God provided them!
- That's because **God's covenant depends on His faithfulness!**

### When David was **fighting Israel's enemies**

- He had **Josh-Basshebeth** with him - who **killed 800 men** (v8)
- He had **Eleazar** - who **stood his ground against the Philistines** (v9-10)
- And he had **Shammah** who struck down the **Philistines** too (v11-12)
- But look who brought about the victory - in v10 and v12 - it was the **Lord** who brought about a **great victory**

- Because God's covenant depends on His faithfulness!

Then David recalls the time when some of his men at the cave of Adullam - did something very daring (in vv13-17)

- Remember back in 1 Samuel 22:1-2. - David spent time in this cave at Adullam
- During this time, David, longed for the taste of water from the well near his childhood home in Bethlehem. [it would be like me saying: "I long for a pint of Guinness from my hometown of Dublin"]
- Three of these warriors - even though they were not asked or commanded to - fulfilled David's desire by risking their lives and broke through the Philistine lines and went and got David water from that well.
- They did this because of their love of the Lord's anointed, David.
- But David didn't drink the water! Why?
- Because - David was so honored by the men's self-sacrifice, he felt not worthy to drink the water - instead he felt the water was worthy to be poured out as a sacrifice to the Lord. David believed that the great sacrifice of these men could only be honoured by giving the water to the Lord.
- The sacrifice of the men and the pouring out of the water before the Lord - should remind us of Jesus' great sacrifice on the cross - and His blood poured out before the Lord, for our sins to be forgiven.

Two more notable men are mentioned in v18-23:

- 1<sup>st</sup> - **Abishai**, brother of Joab, son of Zeruah - who **raised his spear against 300 men**. He became leader of the Three.
- And 2<sup>nd</sup> - **Benaniah**, son of Jehoiada, a **valiant fighter**. He **struck down Moab's two mightiest warriors**. He also **killed a lion in pit on a snowy day**. And **struck down an Egyptian, with only a club, when the Egyptian had a spear**.
- Again, it is God who provides these men to help David
- Because God's covenant depends on His faithfulness!

And finally, in vv24-39 - we have a list of 30 of David's mighty fighting men [Thankfully our Bible Reader - Penny - didn't have to read them!]

Amongst those 30 men, notably, **Eliam** (v34) and **Uriah** (v39) are mentioned

**Eliam** is Bathsheba's father and **Uriah** is Bathsheba's husband - the man David had killed.

These two men **Eliam & Uriah** - are mentioned - to show that David's sin of adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of Uriah - are forgiven - and to also **acknowledge** that **David had wronged these two men** - who bravely served him.

From this list of men - we can see that **God provides people to help us** - for a season

In my time at St. David's, I have had many people help me at different times.

Most recently, for example, it's no coincidence that God provided Charles for us - at a time when we faced the great challenge of COVID19 - and his wisdom and guidance as COVID coordinator have been invaluable

God provided this help at just the right time (JIT) and just for a season - as Charles and Louise will be leaving us - in a couple of weeks

God's provision and timing for help for us - is always perfect!

### TAKE HOME - APPLICATION

#### [PowerPoint 8-Application]

So, what are we to take home from this chapter today?

Let me give you a fistful of take-home applications:

1. We are secure in our belief in Jesus, He is THE everlasting King. God always keeps His promises. The Covenant Promise God made to David - that there would always someone on David's throne - finds its fulfillment in Jesus. In our NT passage from Luke 1:33 this morning - the angel says that Jesus will reign forever and His Kingdom will never end!
2. Remember to walk in the light of Jesus - He is our guide for life!
3. Remember we all must face judgement - so - are we sharing our faith with others - before it's too late - and those people end up like the weeds (in the parable) thrown in the fire?

4. Remember to **acknowledge those who have helped us** - as David does here in this chapter. And remember that **God sent this help**.
  
5. We have a mighty warrior fighting for us - that is **Jesus** - He **wages war over the darkness of evil**. **Jesus has already won victory of sin (evil) and death** and **He has given us the ability to resist temptation, when we rely on the Holy Spirit to enable us** (1 Corinthians 10:13)

(pause)

**Thank You Jesus - You are the Forever King of the Forever Kingdom!**

Let's pray...