UBF Message

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 King and Warriors

2 Samuel 23:1-39

Key verse 4

 He is like the light of morning at sunrise, on a cloudless morning, like the

brightness after rain that brings grass from the earth.

Today we will think about the last words of David. This is the second of the two songs David spoke in chapters 22-23. These two songs at the end of David’s reign serve as a counterpart to the song of Hannah in 1 Samuel 2:1-10. Hannah sang a song with hope of the coming of God’s anointed one who would reverse the injustice of the world, singing in 1 Samuel 2:10b, “He will give strength to his king and exalt the horn of his anointed.” As Hannah sang a song, God indeed raised a king David and exalted him. Then, David himself sang a song in chapter 22.

At this time, it is good to review 1 and 2 Samuel since we are close to the end. 1 Samuel consists of 31 chapters which can be divided into three parts: the story of Samuel with Eli (1-7), Saul (8-15), and David (16-31). God raised King Saul and David through the prophet Samuel; the first king Saul failed his kingship due to his pride, and tried to kill David. 2 Samuel consists of 24 chapters which can be divided into two parts: the rise of King David (1-10) and the fall of King David (11-24). David became a king over Israel. In chapter 7, God made a covenant with David, promising him that the offspring would build the temple and His kingdom will last forever. However, at the peak of David’s life, in chapter 11, he had a downfall by committing adultery and murdering Uriah. In the following chapters 12-21 David suffered the consequence of his sin, beginning with Amnon’s rape of Tamar, Absalom’s murder of Amnon, and a series of rebellions from Absalom and Sheba.

From David's song in chapter 22, we learned how God rescued David and used him as Israel’s king. From David’s prophetic song in chapter 23, we will learn how God would bring the true King, the Messiah, from the royal line of David according to His eternal covenant. So David’s song in chapter 22 is about what God did through king David in the past while David’s song in chapter 23 is about what God will do through the true Davidic King in David’s line in the future. Psalms 18 supports David’s song in chapter 22 while Psalms 72 and 89 support David’s song in chapter 23. It is good to read these Psalms together as you and I meditate on chapter 23.

In chapter 23, the author talked about a king and warriors. We will think about its meaning so that we may continue to build God’s kingdom as spiritual warriors in our places. I pray that God may help us to hear His voice through this Word.

1. King (1-7)

This short psalm is a beautiful song of wisdom from David at the end of his life. These last words of David describe the benefits of having a righteous king and God’s eternal covenant with David.

Verse 1 states, “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:” This verse shows a snapshot of David. David describes himself as the son of Jesse, a man exalted by the Most High, a man anointed by the God of Jacob, and the hero of Israel’s songs. Here, the title “son of Jesse” refers to David’s humble beginning for Jesse was a humble farmer. David was an unknown humble shepherd. Then, he was exalted to be a king by the Most High, being anointed by God who used him as the greatest king in Israel to bring peace and prosperity by defeating many enemies. The hero of Israel’s songs reveals David’s beautiful gift of eloquence and poetic expression before God. This title reveals David’s beautiful inner life with God. All of his beautiful psalms came out of his inner life with God. I am personally touched by David’s inner life and David’s humility who remembered his humble beginning. Once a person reaches the top, the person tends to forget where he or she came from and live out of pride and arrogance. David was the greatest king over Israel. But he remembered his humble beginning and lived with repentance in humility to the end.

 David calls his last words “the inspired utterance.” Here utterance means prophetic speech. So David said in verses 2-3, “The Spirit of the Lord spoke through me; his word was on my tongue. **3** The God of Israel spoke, the Rock of Israel said to me.” Although David was speaking, it was through the Spirit of the Lord. David said, “His word was on my tongue.” David emphasized that the God of Israel spoke directly to him by repeating the words, “spoke or said” three times. So the last words of David are prophetic in nature, meaning it is about the future. Here David prophesied about two things which are the major themes in the Scripture: the righteous king and God’s covenant.

First, the righteous king. Verses 3b-4 state “‘When one rules over people in righteousness, when he rules in the fear of God, **4** he is like the light of morning at sunrise, on a cloudless morning, like the brightness after rain that brings grass from the earth.” David uttered about a king who rules over people in righteousness and in the fear of God. David must have felt the need of such a king for he failed to rule, although he was the greatest king in Israel. The latter half of his reign had been tainted with his scandalous sins of adultery and murder and pride. As a result, both his family members and his people suffered and died. So he yearned for the ideal king as the one who rules in righteousness and in the fear of God. To rule in righteousness means to rule in justice. To rule in the fear of God means that the king rules with the awareness that God will evaluate and judge his reign at the end of his life. Because of his reign people will live in blessing and in safety.

David compared the king to the light of morning at sunrise and the brightness after rain. Here the light from the sun means healing from heaven and the brightness after rain means a new life from earth. Ps 72:5-6 similarly states, “May he endure[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalms+72%3A5-6&version=NIV#fen-NIV-15006a)] as long as the sun, as long as the moon, through all generations. **6** May he be like rain falling on a mown field, like showers watering the earth.” The King will be on the throne as long as the sun. During his reign he will continually shine the light like the sun and bring life.

The sunlight in the morning is really bright and beautiful (2 Slides). We feel good, warm, bright and happy. Sunlight is essential to life. It offers healing from heaven. It provides a life energy that graces us with healing and gives us vitality. Here are 10 healing benefits of sunlight. 1) To produce vitamin D; 2) To produce serotonin; 3) To increase melatonin at night; 4) To regulate blood pressure and to prevent heart disease; 5) To lose weight; 6) To improve skin condition; 7) To prevent near-sightedness; 8) to improve mental wellbeing; 9) to reduce cancer - colon, breast and prostate;10) to promote longevity by slowing down chromosomal aging. What a tremendous benefit! Most of all, it’s free. Have you gone out in the morning and received the free healing light from heaven? You should. If you do, your circadian rhythm will be activated, balancing your day with serotonin and your night with melatonin. You will look 10 years younger and live 10 years longer.

Beside these benefits, sunlight also kills germs like viruses, fungus, and bacteria. Similarly, spirit light kills spiritual germs; sins, and brings righteousness in us. When we expose our sin to light through repentance, our sin will be destroyed by the light and we will be right with God. Malachi compared the King to the sunlight. Mal 4:2 states,  **“**But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its rays. And you will go out and frolic like well-fed calves.” The future Davidic King would bring healing and righteousness. Zechariah also compared the King to the sun in Luke 1:78-79, “because of the tender mercy of our God, by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace.”

As prophesied, Jesus, the son of David, came to earth as the rising sun and the light of the world. When Jesus came to the earth as the King, people were stressed, anxious, confused, sick, and tormented under the spiritual and political situations. They were weary and heavy-burdened. Through his life Jesus healed them with his healing light. He gave them true rest. He guided them to real peace. Through his death he brought them righteousness.

The brightness after rain refers to a new spiritual life from earth. After rain, the grass springs up from the earth, meaning a new bright life. Rain is not pleasant. It makes the ground messy. But after rain, grass springs up from the earth. New resurrected life springs out of the earth. When Jesus died on the cross, God forgave all our sins. When Jesus rose from the earth, God gave us a new, resurrected life that we can live a bright life. Through the cross, God gave us a spirited life that we can victory over sin, death and the devil by the blood of Jesus. Psalms 103:2-4 summarizes well, which says, “Praise the Lord, my soul, and forget not all his benefits—who forgives all your sins, and heals all your diseases,who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s.”

When we accept Jesus as our King and allow him to rule our lives, we experience these full benefits. Although we have dark elements in our hearts, like fear, anxiety, depression, lust, pride, and so on, we will overcome these as we expose them to the light through repentance. Solomon described such people in Prov 4:18, “ The path of the righteous is like the morning sun, shining ever brighter till the full light of day.” Our path is bright and will be brighter as we expose our sins to the light.

Second, God’s covenant. David said in verse 5, “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.” From our perspective, David’s house was tainted with rape, murder, rebellion, pride, and more sins. His house was really bad and messed up. However, David said, “If my house were not right with God, surely he would not have made with me an everlasting covenant.” How could David say that? David could say this because he believed in God’s covenant more than his own sin. To David, the reality of God’s unfailing covenantal love is far bigger and more real than the reality of his own sin. So his repentance and faith in God enables him to be right with God no matter what as Habakkuk 2:4b says, “The righteous will live by faith.” This Davidic covenant is an extension of the Abrahamic and Mosaic covenant in that the promise of these two covenants is confirmed and amplified in the Davidic covenant. The seed of Abraham in the Abrahamic covenant was revealed as a king in the Davidic covenant.

Here David added “arranged and secured in every part.” David knew that God made a covenant with him so arranged and secure in every part that it would be impossible to break the covenant like when we make a legal contract. Covenant is a legal term that consists of the promise, the blood and the seal. God gave David a promise, the blood sacrifice was done in 2 Sam 6, and the covenant was sealed with the sun, moon, and sky as faithful witnesses. Ps 89:36-37 states, “That his line will continue forever, and his throne endure before me like the sun; it will be established forever like the moon, the faithful witness in the sky.” God cannot break His covenant with David because the sun, the moon and the sky are witnesses. Whenever God sees them, he remembers His covenant with David just as the rainbow reminds Him of His covenant with Noah. David believed in God’s unbreakable covenant that is secured in every part. So, David never had a shadow of doubt in God and His covenant for he knew that God was legally bound to His promise.

1. Warriors (8-39)

 In this part, the author lists David’s mighty men. Verses 8-12 list the Three, David’s most prominent warriors. In verses 13-17, the beautiful story of David and the Three mighty men at the cave of Adullam is recorded. Verses 18-39 list the Thirty, detailing the exploits of two warriors. Going back to the Three mighty warriors, Josheb-Basshebeth, Eleazar, and Shammah, Josheb-Basshebeth was the chief of the Three, who killed 800 men with his spear in a single encounter. Eleazar stood his ground and struck down the Philistines until his hand grew tired and froze to the sword while other Israelites were retreating. Shammah also took his stand in the middle of the field and struck down the Philistines when Israel's troops fled. The Three warriors remind us that we should not retreat or shrink back for God does not like that. God said in Heb 10:38, “But my righteous[[g](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+10&version=NIV#fen-NIV-30172g)] one will live by faith. And I take no pleasure in the one who shrinks back.”[[h](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+10&version=NIV#fen-NIV-30172h)] He wants us to stand our ground to defend our place, instead of shrinking back.

The Davidic King already won the War through his death on the cross. The place we stand is ours. As a result, in our small remaining battles, we fight *from* the victory, not for the victory. All we should do is not shrink back, but stand our ground to defend our place, striking down our enemies with the Word. Paul said in Eph 6:10-13, “**10** Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. **11** Put on the full armor of God, so that you can **take your stand** against the devil’s schemes. **12** For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. **13** Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to **stand your ground**, and after you have done everything, to **stand**.” Paul encourages us to stand by repeating the word three times.

In verses 13-17, the Three mighty men broke through the Philistine lines, drew water from the well near the gate of Bethlehem and carried it back to David who was very thirsty. David was so moved by their loyalty and courage that he refused to drink: instead he poured it out before the Lord, saying in verse 17, “Far be it from me, Lord, to do this! Is it not the blood of men who went at the risk of their lives?”

In verses 18-39, the list of Thirty was recorded, among them, two warriors, Abishai and Benaiah. Abishai was chief of the Thirty who killed 300 men with his spear. Benaiah was a valiant fighter who killed two of Moab’s best men, a lion, and a huge Egyptian. David put him in charge of his bodyguard. David could build the kingdom with the help of these mighty warriors. Without them it would be impossible.

 How can we apply this Word of God to our lives? I would like to ask two kinds of people; the young and the old. To the young, have you accepted Jesus as your King? If not, I pray that you may accept him as your king so that you may experience healing from heaven and a new life from earth, and that your path may be like the morning sun, shining ever brighter till the full light of day. You will overcome the dark elements in your hearts. When you accept him as king, you make a covenant with God that God is bound to help you to overcome those. So, you are destined to overcome them. Your future will be brighter and happier.

 To the old, Do you stand and defend your place? Or do you shrink back? As we get old, we like to shrink back. Or when life gets tough, we tend to become discouraged. Then, we tend to shrink back. But we should remember that our King already won the war through his blood on the cross. We are on a winning side. The place we stand is ours. When we believe this, we don’t have to shrink back. We can stand our ground and defend our place: home, work, church, and city, striking down our enemies with the Word, and build God’s kingdom here. So I encourage you to stand in your place to defend your home, work, church, and city with prayer and the Word. I encourage you to read Ps 72 and 89 along with chapter 23 this week so that you may have the Word of God in your hearts and stand and defend. I also pray for myself to do the same. I pray that God may help us to do so in Jesus’ mighty Name. Amen.