

Message Six

**Spiritual Principles, Life Lessons, and Holy Warnings
Seen in the History of David**

Scripture Reading: 1 Sam. 16:1—2 Sam. 24:25; Acts 13:22, 36

I. In the history of David (1 Sam. 16:1—2 Sam. 24:25), we need to see God's sovereignty and David's learning the lessons of the cross:

- A. Under God's sovereignty David was tested and approved in his trusting God and defeating Goliath—1 Sam. 17:1-58:
1. David's experience as a shepherd had trained him to trust in the Lord, so when he heard Goliath's defiance, he could say to Saul, "Your servant has been tending his father's sheep; and when a lion or a bear came and took a lamb from the flock, I would go out after it and strike it and deliver the lamb from its mouth. And when it rose up against me, I would seize it by its beard and strike it and kill it...Jehovah, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine"—vv. 34-37.
 2. David told Goliath that "it is not by sword or spear that Jehovah saves, for the battle is Jehovah's and He will deliver you into our hand" (v. 47); David went forth to fight against Goliath (vv. 40-48) and killed him by slinging a stone into Goliath's forehead and beheading him with his own sword (vv. 49-54).
 3. David's victory over Goliath was a strong confirmation to God's choosing and anointing of him; from David's experience, we need to realize that because we are pursuing Christ today, every aspect of our environment is absolutely under God's sovereign hand—Matt. 10:29-31; Psa. 31:14-15a; 39:9; Rom. 8:28-29; Isa. 45:15.
- B. David, under God's sovereignty, was selected to be an attendant of Saul, the present king; by these two being put together, Saul was exposed as being a person who was opposite to God's will, and David was manifested to be a man according to God's heart—1 Sam. 18:6-11a:
1. For David to be tested in his relationship with Saul meant that David was continually put on the cross; on every mission that Saul sent him, David acted prudently, so Saul set him over the men of battle; once when David returned from striking the Philistines, the women came out of all the towns of Israel, and they sang to one another—"Saul has struck down his thousands; / But David, his ten thousands"—vv. 5-7.

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2. This praise did not affect David, but it affected Saul; Solomon said, “A man is tried by the praise given him” (Prov. 27:21); Saul became very angry and envious of David, showing that he was a person fully in the flesh and absolutely for himself; from that day on, Saul decided to kill David, and David had no place to hide; Saul went from being envious of David to plotting how he might kill him without damaging his own name—1 Sam. 18:10—20:42.
3. When Saul attempted to kill him, David did not fight or do anything to avenge himself; he only fled; avenging and fighting back are matters of the flesh, and those who practice the things of the flesh have no share in the kingdom of God—18:11; cf. Rom. 12:19; Eph. 4:26; Gal. 5:21, 24.
4. David was one who knew God’s authority from his heart; in 1 Samuel we see Saul chasing David in the wilderness in order to kill him; David had the opportunity to kill Saul, but he feared God and did not dare to overthrow the divine order arranged by God—18:6—26:25.
5. If David had rebelled against Saul, he would have been to the people an example of rebellion against the God-ordained, appointed king; David’s attitude was that of denying the self and submitting to God’s authority.
6. Saul had been disobedient to God and was rejected by God, but this was something between Saul and God; as for David, he submitted to God’s anointed, and this was his responsibility before God—24:4-6; 26:9, 11; 2 Sam. 1:9-16.
7. If some will pay the price to experience the breaking of the cross by living under the cross, know and deal with their natural life and disposition, put to death the flesh, and deny themselves before God, they will certainly know God’s authority and be able to bring in God’s authority—this is a basic principle.
8. According to the realization of the New Testament, David bore the cross every day under any kind of situation; Philippians 3:10 indicates that the strength for us to bear the cross is the power of Christ’s resurrection; Christ has come into us to live in us and to bear the cross within us—cf. S. S. 2:8-9, 14.
9. As David was learning the lessons of the cross, he enjoyed God’s provision with Jonathan and Michal; without them, David would not have had a way to escape from Saul—1 Sam. 20:1-42; 19:11-18.

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10. Under God's sovereignty, David took the lessons of the cross, and eventually, he was not a loser but a gainer and a winner, not a sufferer but an enjoyer—Phil. 1:19; 3:8-9; 2 Cor. 4:7, 16-18; cf. 2:12-14.
11. David's life signifies a life of brokenness; the breaking of the outer man is the breaking of our natural disposition, our self; the goal of the discipline of the Holy Spirit is for us to be a broken man; God puts us in a place of total inability and helplessness so that He can have the free way to work Himself with all His unsearchable riches into us—1:8-9; 4:16-18; 12:9-10; Hosea 6:1-3; Rom. 8:28-29; cf. John 12:3.

II. David cared for God's habitation on earth, the habitation of the Ark of God—2 Sam. 6:1—7:29; Psa. 132:1-18:

- A. Although God did not want David to build the temple, he prepared the builder, the site, and the materials for the building of the temple; God also revealed to David by His Spirit the pattern of the temple, and before David died, he gave this pattern to Solomon his son; thus, David fulfilled his ministry and co-worked with God for the completion of the building of the temple—2 Sam. 8:11; 1 Kings 7:51; 1 Chron. 22:14-16; 29:1-5; 28:11-19; Acts 13:22, 36.
- B. David was zealous to build a temple for God (2 Sam. 7:1-3), but God rejected David's good intention; God sent Nathan the prophet to David to ask, "Is it you who will build Me a house for Me to dwell in?"—v. 5:
 1. This shows that all our work and service in the church must be initiated by God and must be according to His desire; anything that is initiated or started by man, regardless of how much it is for God, is a religious activity devoid of the presence of Christ.
 2. Our heart to serve God is acceptable, but our decision to do something for Him is not acceptable; God said to David, "Is it you...?"; God does not want us to decide anything on His behalf.
- C. Because David was one who feared God and cooperated with God, he did not react when God told him through Nathan to stop in his determination to be the one who would build the temple; the act of David's stopping to carry out his desire to build the temple is a great matter; Sister M. E. Barber said, "Whoever cannot stop

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working for the sake of God cannot work for the sake of God” (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1953*, vol. 1, “Knowing Life and the Church,” p. 283)—Luke 10:38-42.

- D. David’s stopping established a twofold testimony in the universe: first, all the work in the universe should come from God, not from man; second, all that matters is what God does for man, not what man does for God—2 Sam. 7:11-14a, 18, 25.
- E. We must learn deep within that God wants only our cooperation; He does not need us to do anything for Him; we must stop all our opinions, decisions, and ideas; we need to let Him speak, let Him come in, and let Him command—Matt. 17:5.

III. The account of God’s punishing judgment on David is written as a warning to us today (1 Cor. 10:11); God is not only loving and merciful, but He is also just and fearsome; God forgave David, but He also disciplined and chastised David according to His governmental righteousness (2 Sam. 12:10-14):

- A. After all the enemies of Israel were subdued and David was exalted as the king of Israel, David committed great sins while he was in a peaceful situation—adultery and murder; this indicates that whenever we are at ease in a peaceful situation, it is easy for us to be seduced to indulge our flesh—11:1-27; 1 Pet. 4:1 and footnote 4.
- B. David’s sin was the issue of his indulging the lust of the eyes and the lust of the flesh (2 Sam. 11:2-3); David, abusing the power of his kingship (vv. 4-5), committed willful adultery by robbery.
- C. After committing such an act, David tried to cover his evil deed by means of a pretense (vv. 6-13); then he murdered Uriah, his faithful servant, by conspiring with Joab, so that he could take Uriah’s wife (vv. 14-25; 12:9).
- D. By his one sin David broke the last five of the Ten Commandments (Exo. 20:13-17); his sin was a great insult and offense to God, and it nearly annulled all his attainments from the past.
- E. David, being a man according to God’s heart (1 Sam. 13:14), afforded God the way to begin the age of the kingship for the establishment of His kingdom on earth for His coming Christ, but he failed in the matter of the indulgence of the lust of the flesh (1 Kings 15:5); in this matter David was loose, and he sacrificed his high attainment in his spiritual pursuit of God; this should be a warning to all of us.

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- F. How regrettable it was that David, at a crucial time of the evil one's temptation, did not exercise strong control over his lust but indulged in it and committed a gross sin that offended God to the uttermost.
- G. God loved David, but because of his sin David lost his standing and position as well as eleven of the twelve tribes (2 Sam. 20:1-2); David's sin sowed the seed of Solomon's corruption (12:24), which issued in the dividing of the God-given kingdom (1 Kings 11:9-13; 12:1-17), and the seed of the corruption of Solomon's descendants in the kingship, which issued ultimately in the loss of the nation and of the holy land of their fathers, in the captivity of the holy people, and in their being scattered around the globe and having no peace up to the present time.
- H. We can see from the history of David that falling under God's governmental hand is a serious matter (2 Sam. 12:10-14); David restored his fellowship with God very quickly, but God's discipline continued even after his death (v. 15b—20:26).
- I. Through the confessing of his sins, David's fellowship with God was restored, as revealed in Psalm 51, but he came under God's governmental hand; after his failure many evils, including incest, murder, and rebellion, took place among his family—2 Sam. 12:15b—20:26.
- J. God exercised a severe punishment upon David because his sin was very evil; the source of the unprecedented evil in David's family was David's indulgence in the lust of the flesh; this shows that God's chastisement and His governmental dealing with those who love Him may even affect their children.
- K. This should be a solemn alarm and warning to us in our relationship with Christ; what we are, what we desire, what we intend to do, and how we behave have very much to do with our remaining in Christ and participating in all of His unsearchable riches for our enjoyment; if we are not right with God in any of these matters, we will suffer the loss of Christ as our enjoyment.
- L. The all-inclusive Christ as our dwelling place, our all-inclusive good land, and everything we need for our enjoyment will vomit us out of Himself and not allow us to enjoy Him any longer if we are not proper in relation to Him—Lev. 18:25; Rev. 3:16.
- M. Eventually, David not only became old but also was fading away; David's life had a good beginning, like the bright sun rising, and

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his life with his career became like the sun shining at noon; however, his indulgence in lust (2 Sam. 11:1-27) spoiled his career and caused his bright life to fade like the sunset in the evening; in David's old age there was nothing bright, excellent, or splendid (1 Kings 1:1-4; cf. Deut. 34:7; Gen. 48:14-16; Prov. 4:18).

- N. The Christian life is a life of learning God's government; we reap what we sow; the more generous we are to others, the more generous God will be to us; if we are mean and severe to our brothers, God will be mean and severe toward us; when others are sick or in trouble, it is the time for us to help them, not the time for us to criticize them—Gal. 6:7; 1 Thes. 5:14-15; Luke 6:36-38; Matt. 7:1-2:
1. We must learn to be generous and forgiving persons; if we are severe toward others, God will be severe toward us; we should avoid criticizing, condemning, or speaking about others in a light way; our criticism and careless comments about others often become a judgment upon ourselves—6:15; 18:23-35.
 2. There are many brothers who have fallen miserably today for one reason only—they have criticized others too severely in the past, and many of their weaknesses today are the very weaknesses that they criticized in the past.
 3. We have been called to bless others, so we, as a blessed people, should always bless others that we may inherit blessing; what we bless others with, we will inherit ourselves—1 Pet. 3:8-11; Matt. 10:13; cf. Num. 6:22-27.