

Dr. Elaine Phillips, OT History, Lit., and Theology, Lecture 21

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This Dr. Elaine Phillips in her Old Testament history, literature, and theology course, lecture number 21.

Well good morning. The peace of Christ be with you.

[Student's response]

And the peace of Christ be with those who aren't here. Are you being your brothers and sisters' keepers? Where's the class? It's nice when you sit in front you don't know who's missing behind you. All sorts of strange faces will show up next Wednesday that we haven't seen for a long time. But in any rate, thanks for coming. Do manifest some brotherly and sisterly concern for those that you happen to know should be here. I occasionally send little reminding emails but you know a word from you works a whole lot better than a word for me. It just does. So in any rate, here we are. It's Friday. That's a wonderful piece of news as well.

Here are the announcements about the exam. I don't think I need to reiterate any of them as I'm thinking. Please do take advantage of the material on Blackboard. There is a list of the names and once we get into history, you can't help it. There are names that you need to know if you are going to understand any of the events that unfold and many of those names are things that you don't run into every day. How many of your friends are named Ahithophel, for example. It's not one of those memorable kinds of things. Do you have a friend named Ahithophel? Anyway, you need to spend a little time working on them. I've said in the past it's often good to take that list of names and put them on flashcards because the very process of putting them on flashcards will be a good learning exercise for you. Then, of course, you can carry them around with you and learn them as well. So, let me encourage you to do that sort of thing. Don't lose sight of the prospect of the paper coming up as well. I'll probably say more about that next week.

We need to sing. The reason we need to sing this particular book...do you know why we need to sing this particular psalm today? It's Psalm 51. Do you know what the psalm title says about that psalm? We're going to study psalms on Monday so we'll get more into that a little later on, as in Monday. But do you know what the psalm title says about this particular psalm in terms of at least the traditional assignment to author and conditions or situations within which it was written? Yeah Kate.

[Student]

Right. This is David's psalm of repentance and confession, or maybe confession and repentance, following Nathan's challenging him with his sin of Bathsheba and Uriah and all that, which we're studying today so this is an appropriate one to be singing as we begin our class today. So I'll turn off the microphone as . . .

[Silence]

. . . Psalm as well or at least this part of it as we begin our time together in prayer.

Gracious God, our heavenly Father we acknowledge that right along with David, we need to pray these very words for ourselves. So we do ask as we come before you this morning, that you would create in us pure hearts, that you would restore us, Lord, renew us. We confess that we have on a daily basis been displeasing to you, so we ask for restoration. We pray you wouldn't take your Holy Spirit from us but restore to us the joy of your salvation. And Father, as we pray that prayer for ourselves, we would also ask it on the behalf of others as well that we know are struggling with whatever the issues happen to be. Father enfold those who are weary, are ill, are discouraged. Enfold them in your arms and carry them, we pray. We ask that you would draw us close to you, that we might then be vibrant and warm in our hearts with love for you. Father we're thankful for your care, your protection, your tender mercy. And so, as we ask these things, we're mindful that you are master of the universe and we ask them in the name of Christ our Savior. Amen.

Well we are going to move along today and actually finish up pretty much the story of David, which is an awful lot to do in one day, but here goes. Let's see if we can manage it.

As I said last time, as Saul dies, the kingdom is really in a shambles. It could be “kingdom” in quotation marks because of the fact that people have fled, the Philistines have invaded, Saul and his sons, in other words that whole ruling family is pretty much gone with the exception of that one son named Mephibosheth, with whom we’re going to deal in just a moment.

David is only recognized by the tribe of Judah as someone who’s really significant for them and he’s still on the Philistine’s side so things are in a shambles at this point but by the time we get to the end of 2 Samuel, we’ll see a united kingdom. Although, interestingly enough, it will unite and then it begins to fracture a little bit. If you’ve read the text for today, you know there’s some fracturing unfortunately by the time we get to the end of David’s life.

Before we do that we’ve got to talk a little bit about the content you’re reading in the biblical text at this point. Because, as you know, what we have in the books of 1 and 2 Chronicles is going to overlap considerably with 1 and 2 Samuel and 1 and 2 Kings. So we want to have just a little bit of perspective. The word literally up here is “intentional.” This is not dry history. You know, there’s this odd notion that once we sit down to read the Bible that we sort of gird up our loins and say, “I’m going to read the Bible” and this part seems to be dry history as opposed to that part which seems to be dry Torah, right? It’s not that way. This is wonderful literature. It really is, especially the Samuel materials. Talk about narratives that just engage our hearts and make us see ourselves all over again in the faces of these people that we’re looking at. Kind of take off your stained glass glasses that you have on and recognize this as a splendid piece of literature, divinely inspired.

Having said that, just a couple of notes. 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings are going to be those narratives that are coming with a little more, how shall we say...emotional, personal, angst in them. We see, for example, the seamy sides of David’s life. And you saw it for today as you read 2 Samuel. The text you read in 2 Samuel about Bathsheba and Uriah doesn’t show up in the Chronicles narrative. It shows up in Samuel. Once the kingdom splits, which we will be dealing with after our next exam, the materials in the

Kings text focus on this northern kingdom. Those tribes who have succeeded from the union, if you will. Chronicles, on the other hand is written later. One of the things it's doing actually, it's doing several really important things, which we need to keep in mind. Establishing the genealogy, as I note for you, whereas Kings is giving the history of Israel. We get into genealogies and go, "Oh my goodness when is this going to end?" and sort of skip ahead and skim them. There's lots of fascinating material in them as we've seen that already as we've seen the genealogy in Genesis, but Chronicles is concerned to establish the long, unbroken tradition that this is God's people. That's what the genealogy does at the beginning of 1 Chronicles and it's really important especially since it focuses on some of the key tribes there.

The other thing that it is going to do is to kind of raise the profile of the Davidic dynasty. It's the dynasty of David that continues in the southern kingdom. Again, we're going to have a split in the kingdom in a week and a half or so. Once we have that happening, it's going to be the southern kingdom where the dynasty of David, his successor, will continue to rule. And as I said a moment ago, the positive aspects of that dynasty are emphasized. The negative aspects are downplayed, especially as were talking about David's and Solomon's lives.

The third thing Chronicles will really focus on in a much greater degree than in the king's material is the temple, the temple personnel, and the importance of the Levites and priests as these narratives continue. So kind of look for those as I said, I think on Wednesday, there's a good deal of overlap between the Samuel/Kings content and Chronicles. In some cases, you're going to actually be reading word for word parallels but then there's also going to be places where they go off different directions. And that's where this gets really interesting. So that's our note on literary sources. Just a quick note to review where we are at this point, again a very schematic, simplified chronology; we started with Abraham approximately 2100 B.C.

We're about halfway through our time period now between Abraham and Christ if we're going to think in these broad, millennium, one thousand years plus one thousand years, right? The detail of where we are at this part point, we've dealt now with Joshua,

the conquest, we've had the period of the judges, we've worked our way through Eli and Samuel last time and got Saul established on the throne and then reached the death of Saul. So here we are at David and next time, after the exam I should say Lord willing next week, we'll be dealing with Solomon and the secession of Solomon to the kingdom. So that's our detailed stuff. Again, 1400 for the conquest or 1220 depending on whether you take an early date or late date to the Exodus and I bet you're really glad that whole unit is over with, right?

A couple more things we need to go over by way of introduction. Here starts, well it doesn't start, you've already encountered a number of names that are important. But especially when we get into these narratives, lots of names show up and now that we've got kind of some tension between the house of Saul and the house of David, we want to nail down the ones that are the most important on Saul's side. Saul is deceased, his sons with the exception of the grandson of Jonathan and the son Isbosheth are gone, there are some important folks who we still need to know.

Who is Isbosheth? I can't even say his name. Who was Isbosheth? Interestingly enough his name means "man of shame" but what does he do? Where do we see him showing up in these first couple of chapters of 2 Samuel?

Anybody know who he is and what he does? Sarah.

[Student]

Yeah. He's going to be established as king of the remnants, if you will, of the empire, I shouldn't even say empire, the kingdom of Saul. So one of his sons takes over, he'll get himself assassinated unfortunately by some people who *think* they're doing David a favor, although they're really not.

Abner is the commanding officer or the general of Saul's forces and of course we're going to see him in mighty conflict in the first couple of chapters of 2 Samuel until he meets his end. How does he meet his end?

What happens to Abner? Yes, Christy.

[Student]

Ah! You're thinking of Absalom, who does get stuck in a tree, that's true. All those "A"'s you know here's part of the problem, it seems like half of these names start with "A" and the other 48% start with "J" and then you got to figure out the rest of them. But yeah, Chelsea.

[Student]

Yeah, Abner also gets assassinated doesn't he? By a guy named Joab? Is that what you were going to say Ginger? All right and then thirdly, I've mentioned Mephibosheth a couple of times. He is the son of Jonathan, whose nurse drops him in this tumultuous time after the demise of Saul and his sons as the kingdom is sort of falling apart. She's fleeing and she drops him so he's lame in his feet and as you know, David will provide for him because of the covenant he has with Jonathan to provide for Jonathan's family.

Those are three you really want to know on the side of Saul, as the Saul family kind of goes down, we still have these important persons.

On David's side we still have a few more that we need to note. There might be others as well but these are the key ones. Joab, I think I mentioned him a moment ago. Joab is David's commanding officer—the general in David's army. Is he a nice guy? Would you like Joab as your best friend? Well maybe you would actually, because he's brutal. He is really brutal and he's conniving and he'll do just about anything probably to protect himself. He's the one that assassinated Abner and although he says to David, "Don't you know that Abner was probably coming here probably to do some dangerous, treacherous things?" Most probably Joab was protecting his own position as commanding officer. So we're going to see him throughout all these narratives, sometimes very wise and very shrewd and very crafty. But also always quite brutal, unfortunately.

How about Amnon and Tamar? What's this sorted narrative all about? Anybody remember? Yeah, you want to redeem yourself?

[Student]

And I'm going to actually make you make a tiny correction at that point.

[Student]

No you do, you actually close. But let's call them half-brother and sister. Different mothers.

[Student]

They're related.

[Student]

Right and it's Absalom who is full brother to Tamar because they have the same mother and so Absalom is the one who will revenge the honor of his sister Tamar which has been completely ruined by Amnon who has taken her and raped her. And we'll say a little more about the implications of that narrative in a moment as well as other activities of Absalom because Absalom has a rather high profile in the middle of this book and we're going to look at it a little bit.

Bathsheba and Uriah, well you all know this because Bathsheba is the one whom David takes. Notice there's sort of an ongoing story line in David's family life that has some seamy sides to it. David will violate Bathsheba and he will murder Uriah in order to, well, arrange for the murder of Uriah, in order to cover it up. Well here are the two that are probably the least known.

Ahithophel and Hushai. Great guys. Who are they? Well at least one of them is. I shouldn't say the first one is. The first one's sort of a creep. Do you know who these characters are? Go for it Sarah.

[Student]

Yeah, they're counselors, aren't they? And where do they come into the narrative? We'll do the details later on but do you know whose sides they're on, if you will?

[Student]

Okay, think later than Saul. We got Saul off the scene and Saul's people off the scene. Actually this is in the whole mess with Absalom. When Absalom raises his military coup against David and tries to take over the kingdom and Ahithophel and Hushai are going to show up in very interesting ways here. Think of them as spies and counterspies, if you will. They're part of the intelligence system! And particularly Hushai is going to pretend to be on Absalom's side but really isn't. But we'll return to them in a

moment.

And finally Nathan and Gad what's their title? It starts with a P. They're prophets, right. So we'll come back to them as well. These are ones you need to know. Names you really need to sort of start nailing down for yourselves any questions on those? Yeah Ginger.

[Student]

Uriah is Bathsheba's husband and that's the one whom David arranges to get killed because he has obviously done something with Bathsheba that Uriah should have been doing with Bathsheba. More on that story later. You like the way I said that? Not very delicate, right? Okay. Okay, any other questions? Yes, Rebekah.

[Student]

Ah. Hushai is going to pretend to be on Absalom's side but he's actually on David's side but we'll come back to the details of that a little later on.

Well let's carry on a little bit in terms of David and what David is really like. We see him over and over and over again seeking the Lord. Now we had a little discussion about this last time when we were talking about contrast between David's character and Saul's character and I want to build on that a little bit. Even when he is running away from Saul, still back in 1 Samuel, notably in chapter 23. Where should I go? Should I go to Keilah? And God will help him with that. Likewise well into 2 Samuel when he's asking how, for example, to deal with the Philistines where to go to establish himself as king and the Lord says to Hebron. God gives him these answers.

[Student]

Yeah. The question – it's a great question. He seems to be using the Urim and Thummim and by the way, it doesn't specifically say "and he dragged out the Urim and Thummim and used them" but they were part of the ephod, part of the breast piece, and he does have the ephod because Abiathar brought it to him. So the conclusion is that he's probably using these Urim and Thummim which were the means of making decisions as we know that all the way back from Exodus 28. Now in answer to your question, I'm not entirely certain how they worked. Some people think they worked in the same way that

lots work. You cast the lots and they come up this that or the other thing. Some people think it's not quite that simple because often times, as you noted, these answers are not yes and no answers. They're words from the Lord and so at least one theory on this whole thing is that what happens when this is consulted is that there's actually an oracle from God that gives an articulated answer to it. But again, how that works, I don't know.

[Student]

I'm suggesting it's a possibility. The question is does David use these every time. I think he'd be a fool not to if they're there and again, I'm making an assumption that when Abiathar brings the ephod, he's got the Urim and Thummim as well. That's the assumption I'm making. And if he's concerned to seek the Lord he is certainly going to use the means he knows to be the avenue for doing that. But again, it's more than a conjecture. It's an assumption there at one point.

Yes, Rebekah.

[Student]

Well, yes, it's a great question. Aren't these things that the high priest is supposed to be using? Why is David using them? Two answers I'll give you to that. Probably, he's going through Abiathar. I'm suggesting that's probably the traditional conservative answer to it. There are, however, people who suggest that David himself will take upon himself the role of priest. There are other places where we see hints along these lines and I'll get to them in a moment today. That may sound really shocking to you until you stop and think for a moment; David is the father of the son of David who's going to draw together and, Jesus in other words, the roles of ultimate king and priest.

And then we have that interesting Psalm 110 which talks about "I will make you a priest forever after the order to Melchizedek" and so this person after Psalm 110 is both king and priest. Some people suggest that David, as he becomes king, is actually drawn together both of those roles. So he is actually functioning as priest and king. Otherwise, the roles are kept entirely separate. Just a suggestion. And there's going to be two other incidents that we're going to talk about today that may make us go that direction as well.

The guy that suggested this by the way is Eugene Merrill if you ever want to look that up. But we need to go on.

David is also a person after God's own heart. This is said in the text itself, we saw it in 1 Samuel 13, it's occurring frequently in the psalms and even in the book of Acts we have a reference to David's being a person, a man after god's own heart. That doesn't mean he's perfect and in fact we often see ourselves in his many many failings, but he knows to repent. His humility is just right up there front and center all the time. The real key, I think, is this central one: he's merciful. He's extraordinarily merciful. He's merciful to his own detriment. You see with Absalom, you see it over and over and over again. David is someone who knows to extend mercy and if that isn't a quality after God's own heart, I don't know one. Because as we know God is extraordinarily unspeakably merciful to us day after day and merciful to his people even though they're horrendous sinners. We're horrendous sinners. So I would suggest that mercy aspect might be one of the big deals here in terms of being someone after God's own heart. Clearly know that he struggles with sin--we're going to see some of it, we've already seen some of it. And interestingly enough, if you've read your assignment for today, you may have been kind of stopped in your tracks when you got to chapter 8 of 2 Samuel. Let me just read a little bit of this for you.

And note that David is in the phase here of establishing his kingdom. I said at the beginning, he has sort of landed with something very small and falling apart when he first became king and as he establishes his kingdom obviously there are some things that have to be done that are brutal. Let's read chapter 8:2, "David defeated the Moabites. He made them lie down on the ground and he measured them off of the length of court. Every two lengths of them were put to death and the third length was allowed to live. So the Moabites became subject to David and brought tribute."

Not exactly the most savory thing in our minds. You may remember chapter 21 where there's been a famine in the land and David inquires of the Lord. He finds out that it's because Saul had violated the treaty with the Gibeonites and the Gibeonites say, "Well give us seven of Saul's household" and David turns those seven over. And the

seven people are killed in that context. Sort of a measure for measure. Innocent lives of the Gibeonites were taken; these seven are given away as well.

There are places as we read this text and he's also a man of war, as he expands his kingdom. So we've got to come to grips with the reality of where David is in the point and time of history. He's not your perfect paragon of virtue and yet he's a person after God's own heart. Well, all that to say, actually all of that to say that we need to go on.

Early years at Hebron, now. Seven and a half years to be precise, tribal King of Judah. Let's pose that as a question. Why was the tribe of Judah so favorably disposed towards David? We went over it last time. Does anybody remember? Why the tribe of Judah is going to embrace him as king even though he's been "with the Philistines?"

Kate, is that an answer? Try.

[Student]

Yeah. He's really protecting those southern clans in the tribe of Judah from the Amalekite rulers. Even though he tells something entirely different to the king of the Philistines, he's been a good protective fence and hedge for this southern tribe. They owe him. They really owe him. Now, he's also a member of the tribe of Judah because he himself is from Bethlehem. Going to Hebron is not just a happenstance. "Oh let's just go to Hebron as opposed to anywhere else." It's kind of a central hub in the tribe of Judah. When you look at a map, it's centered there, it was one of the cities of refuge that was established and has everything to do with some of the travel connecting routes internally in the land. So it's a good choice of a place. During these first years, and I'm just going to run through these rather quickly, and you can go back and read the narratives as you do just to refresh your own memories but I want you to notice as you read the first three chapters of 2 Samuel, this principle that I've articulated right here at the get go.

David refuses to rejoice when he heard the death of Saul and Jonathan and he refused to do that consistently throughout. He will not see himself perceived by the people of Judah or Israel as being usurper to the throne, and that's important. But also I would suggest that his whole sense of mercy and the way he is as a person does not allow him to gloat and to rejoice over the death of his enemies. In any rate, the first couple of

chapters, two and three actually, do indeed described the war between the people Abner is commanding on the side of Saul, or the Saul's household and the people that Joab is commanding, and you read those back and forth.

Chapter three records the sad assassination of Abner by Joab and then chapter four talks about these two people from the tribe of Benjamin. Rechab and Baanah, excuse me, who think they're doing David a favor as they assassinate the king, Ishbosheth. They haul his head down to Hebron and David says, "No. Not the right thing to do." And so then he has them killed. Then also he does, as I have noted for you, later on we're informed in chapter 9 because of the covenant he had with Jonathan, he does covenant to take care of Mephibosheth, Jonathan's son.

So that's our early years in Hebron, just a couple things to look at here. To kind of get a sense in terms of how it is that Joab could so easily wipe out Abner in the city gate. How many of you have seen city gate pictures before? Is this making sense to you? Here's how it works. This is not the gate at Hebron by the way it's the gate at Hazor but at any rate, you'd be coming through. Here's the main route but you may not know this. Gates were very important structures. Things that were judicial activities, commercial activities took place there, any kind of governmental procedures. It was the city gate where all the stuff happened.

The book of Ruth. Remember when Boaz is talking to the near kinsperson? They go to the city gate and take care of that kind of thing. And we're actually going to have, a little later on today, Absalom at the city gate, stealing the hearts of Israel. So city gates were really, really significant. But here's the thing. You don't just have a door with bars. You have a structure like this and you have roads on either side: one, two, three, four, five, yes, six here. And these rooms in antiquity, of course, we only have structures left now, not the walls of them but they would have had walls up about like so and they would have been covered over. So this would be a covered structure as well. Therefore it would be very easy as they're walking through this whole area for Joab to say, "Oh, just come off into the city gate" into those little rooms. It happens to be empty, no judge is sitting there at time or whatever and in that context, and Joab wipes out Abner. So kind of

look at the city gate that way but again I'm wanting you to see it as sort of the center of major activities that take place in these contexts. It's not necessarily everything is going on in the palace, lots of important events take place on the city gates.

Another picture, a fairly old one but at least it gives us a little sense of one of those events in 2 Samuel chapter 2. Do you remember where you have the forces of the house of Saul gathered on one side of the pool at Gibeon and the forces commanded by Joab on the other. They decide to have 12 people stand up and make sport together, that's what the words are in Hebrew, and they all sort of stab each other and fall down at the pool of Gibeon. The archaeologists when they begin excavating at Gibeon, in the early part of the 20th century, came up with this pool. Actually didn't come up with it, they dug down into it and here's what is generally labeled as the pool of Gibeon. Kind of fuzzy by now, faded red slide, but you can just barely see some steps heading down into that.

Alright, let's carry on a little bit. David's first necessary thing to do is to get all of Israel back together again. More than just the tribe of Judah and there's going to be a couple of ways to do this as he makes his headway along these lines. First of all, he's going to capture the city that will become Jerusalem. Now in the conquest, we're told that Jebus was taken but apparently it wasn't held by the Israelites so you've got this foreign enclave right about there in the area right between the tribe of Judah and the tribe of Benjamin. That is significant. David's going to take that and he's going to move his capital from Hebron smack dab in the center of the tribe of Judah to Jebus, now Jerusalem. By the way the narrative of him taking this city is very interesting. He happens to do it apparently, through the water system. Sneaking up somehow through the water system, he and Joab take the city and take the people by surprise as they're there.

Come to Israel with us, May/June 2010 have I thrown that in there yet? Yes, I have. We'll look at this whole thing and see how it works. At any rate, why is it strategic for David to move the capital from Hebron? Why is it politically strategic for him to move the capital from Hebron to Jerusalem?

[Pause]

And let me give you a little bit more of a flavor of this, picking up on what I just said. Hebron is smack dab in the middle of the tribe of Judah. Jerusalem is just over the border to the north. Is that helping a little bit? Technically once it became an Israelite city in the tribe of Benjamin. Are you thinking strategically? What's the political brilliance here?--because it is brilliant.

[Pause]

The tribe of Benjamin, Saul, right? If we move the capital into a *different* tribe, first of all, from David's tribe and if it happens to be *Benjamin*, that's going to be a way of reaching out, if you will, to those tribes who have been rather disaffected to that tribe particularly, the tribe of Benjamin, from which Saul, the first king had come. It's a brilliant move. Plus he's just going farther north and that helps too.

[Student]

Big move, I would suggest for unification. Very clearly because he's had overtures made, first when Abner came and then the other elders of the tribe of Judah came to him. He's had overtures made in terms of reuniting the tribes but this is a move that he can make and return that says "alright." Let me back this up just a little bit. When our country was first formed, those of you who've studied this history know that there was a good deal of debate between Boston and Philadelphia. Who gets to have the capital? Two very important cities. Carving out the District of Colombia was absolutely brilliant because it was an entirely separate entity. The same kind of thing, not entirely, but the same kind of thing is what's going on here. David takes a formerly Jebusite city, captures it, and makes it a place for unification. So that's a first move that's really important politically. He manages to subdue the Philistine threat twice. Twice the Philistines are up in the Rephidim Valley and you need to look at a map to know that the Rephidim Valley is just west of Jerusalem. The Philistines haven't been totally subdued yet and they still make some end roads but as you read those chapters about this, David will win victories against them twice in the Rephidim Valley and they back off. They go back out to the Philistine plain where they belong

And then of course, we have finally, his move in terms of developing religious unity. That's our story I'm going to pick it up in 2 Samuel chapter 6. Of course, there is a parallel renditions of this in Chronicles as well. But I want to look at it a little bit. Chapter 6 verse 2, "David and all his men set out to bring the ark of God." They recognized things have been really desperate, not only has this whole area been split up politically, but religiously it's been split up as well. There's still some worship going up at Gibeon, there's a tabernacle one place, the ark is somewhere else it's been in a place called Kiriath Jearim for 20 years at least. David realizes that there's got to be some unification here and therefore he decides to do that. But of course they don't do it quite right, do they? Let me start reading at chapter 3, "They set the ark of God in a new cart." What's the problem? After all, isn't that what the Philistines did? They stuck it on a cart, it goes back to Beth Shemesh, all is well.

[Student]

Yeah, they weren't supposed to be, and they should have known better. We can't hold the Philistines accountable for knowing they should have carried it on rods through rings in the ark, but they should have known that because it was in the Torah in terms of how to carry it. It was not on an ark sorry, on a cart, but they do that and unfortunately, something happens. But before we have that, let's just read verse 5, "David and the whole house of Israel were celebrating with all their might before the Lord." They are really rejoicing. This is a moving of their main symbol of God's presence back to where it ought to be. Interestingly enough, and I'm not sure how far you want to push this. You can take it or leave it, but interestingly enough the Hebrew word that is translated "delicately," or "nicely" as I should say by your NIV as "celebrating" is also a word that means "to play, to make sport," it's the word that underlies Isaac's name, "laughter. And it's the word that's describing the relationship between Isaac and Jacob, right. Jacob and Rebekah when he's caressing her. So maybe this isn't exactly what they shouldn't have been doing as part of the whole celebration as well and I'm going to suggest to you the next time when they really do bring it up, David's dancing with all his might but a different Hebrew word is there. And not only that, when they finally bring the ark up,

what do they do? They go six steps and then they offer sacrifices. And then they go six steps and they offer . . . there's a whole different tone when they actually get that ark to Jerusalem.

This first time seems to be a little bit spontaneous, seems to be a bit too happy go lucky perhaps and of course, we know what happens. The oxen stumble, the ark appears that it's going to totter off the cart but somebody reaches out, Uzzah, to steady it, and was stricken dead. And we have yet another lesson. It's interesting, and here I'm going to take a tiny tangent. Interesting is a dumb word to use. It's compelling and perhaps sobering to note as we read through scriptures that every time something new is happening in terms of God's presence with his people, unfortunately a lesson has to be learned and usually it's learned the hard way. Go back to Nadab and Abihu when the tabernacle is established, they roar on in, desecrating the holiness, and God will smite them dead. This instance is another one because Uzzah should not have been touching the ark and lest you think this is the wrathful God of the Old Testament and it doesn't happen in the New Testament, what happens to Ananias and Sapphira? They're lying to the Holy Spirit aren't they, as the new church is getting started and underway and God's people are again taught a lesson--you don't trample on the holiness of God. That's the lesson here. Not saying there's not a place for great rejoicing, wonder and spontaneous worship, I'm not saying that at all. But God had given particular requirements in terms of how to approach him and they hadn't taken them at all seriously.

As I said, the interesting thing is when they do indeed come up bringing this ark, finally to Jerusalem, verse 13 of chapter 6 of 2 Samuel, "When those who were carrying the ark took six steps, David sacrificed a bull and a fattened calf." And then notice verse 14, which then gets back to Rebekah's question. David is wearing a linen ephod. If we are reading the parallel in Chronicles, it says he's wearing white, *fine* linen and then emphasizes on the linen ephod. That is usually the description of the clothes of the priests, right? The priests were the ones who wore that so perhaps David here is indeed functioning as a priest even though we don't have any specific comment that says, "And

David takes on the role of the priesthood.” Maybe that’s what’s going on and maybe that’s what Psalms 110 is alluding to in some context.

Well interestingly enough, we then have to move on. David expresses a desire, this happens in chapter 7, to build the temple. Obviously he’s got the ark, you still got a tabernacle that’s out on the mountain northwest of Jerusalem in a place called the High Place of Gibeon. David wants to bring it all together. It’s part of the unification, the religious unification. Another suggestion, and this is reading between the lines and again this is just certain scholars that are suggesting this, in the broader cultural scene, when someone took over a kingdom under rather questionable circumstances, and there were those who perceived David as a usurper, even though he didn’t want that and worked against it, there were those who perceived him that way. The way to counter that was to actually build a temple for the deity. And so, that’s the broader cultural context. Maybe that’s part of David’s motive here too. I don’t know that, but it might be. What we do notice is that God says, no. And the Lord’s response “Your son’s going to build a temple, not you. Your son’s going to.”

David had blood on his hands too, we’ve already talked about that, Solomon is going to be, as his name suggests “Shalom.” His name suggest he’ll be a man of peace and it will be Solomon who will build the temple. However, lest David be completely overwhelmed with grief and despair at God’s refusal, and by the way it’s Nathan the prophet who will give him this message. Notice what God says to him in response through Nathan, and this is reoffering God’s covenant to David. Chapter 7 middle of verse 11, “The Lord will establish a house for you,” and that house is a house that’s going to be bigger than anything he might imagine. He talks first of all about your son, your offspring. Verse 13, “He is the one who’s going to build a house for my name and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. When he does wrong I’ll punish him,” and Solomon will get his share of chastisement as will his descendants. Verse 15, “My love will never be taken away from him as he took it away from Saul.” Verse 16, chapter 7: “You and your house and your kingdom will endure forever. Your throne will be

established forever.” Of course, that has all sorts of overtones in terms of the coming Messianic Son of David.

Well those are the good things. Just reorienting ourselves in terms of yourself in the map here to where we’ve been and what we’re doing. If you look at this fairly carefully, here is, if I can find it, Jerusalem. Right there. So it’s a move from Hebron down here, center of the tribe of Judah, right up there to Jerusalem. The ark had been out here in Kiriath Jeaarim and so it’s brought from that point and although this map makes it look pretty easy, it would not have been an easy journey. There’s some hills and valleys to maneuver through this kind of thing as they’re making their way from Kiriath Jeaarim all the way to Jerusalem. So here we are now and we’ve got some kind of a united kingdom.

We’re now going to talk a little bit about some of the other events of David’s reign. So this is sort of our picture between what went before and what is after. The oval there is outlining the city of David. That’s small, I may have said this before, here’s our current temple mount and when Solomon does indeed build a temple, it’s probably in that general vicinity. The little spur of mountain that comes down here and it’s actually “mountain” in quotation marks, is lower than all the hills around about it. This is higher, down here is higher, over here is higher as well. So the city of David and Mount Zion are actually surrounded by higher mountains around them. We’re talking about an area right up in here where David probably built his palace. In fact, for those of you who come to Israel in May of 2010, we are going to see what the archaeologists are finding now in terms of a monumental structure, probably dated from the 10th century. And it’s right up in this area right here. Some good archaeological evidence is showing up to indicate that we do indeed have a fairly significant Davidic and Solomonic kingdom established at that particular point in time.

Well take a look at that and imagine that palace being right about here and then we’re going to look at this close-up and I’m going to ask you to do something. David’s palace is right over here. Imagine in antiquity that the housing structures on this side were probably on this side as well. This is the modern day village of Silwan, a xenophobic

village if we ever met one. Don't go walking through there these days. But look at the houses. They're kind of stacked top to bottom and in David's day when it was this part that was inhabited, you can imagine the houses on that slope would be pretty much the same. Why am I going on and on and on about these houses? What's the story that might come to light here?

[Pause]

With David's palace being right there. Let's back up.

[Student]

Yeah. If David's palace is here and you've got houses stacked up down there, and one evening Bathsheba was out on the roof of her house, and by the way she's not being an exhibitionist. That's where she would have to be bathing and David is looking down at her and you know the story after that particular point in time. That brings us to the sordid parts of David's reign, sordid on his part but also sordid on the part of some of the folks that are associated with him, notably his sons.

What's a scourge? It would be helpful to find that word. It's a whip. It's a whip. And here it's kind of used metaphorically to see what sin is doing as it will really takes apart David's family and actually, ultimately, his kingdom. None of it is in Chronicles, that's quite true. We know the terrible narrative of David's adultery with Bathsheba, his attempt to cover it up by bringing Uriah back to sleep with Bathsheba, from enemy lines. He doesn't do it because he's too loyal and David arranges for his death out on the front lines. With the complicity of Joab by the way. Joab is part of the whole process here.

As a result of that, Nathan tells a parable and the parable is about a rich man and a poor man. And the rich man taking something that was just a treasure, precious treasure to the poor man--a little ewe lamb. And of course, David is incensed not realizing the parable is told against him and he says, "Let that man be punished." And of course, Nathan says, "It's you!" And then we have the following statement. I'm in chapter 12 and you may want to review this on your own as well because this is an extremely important declaration. Nathan isn't just talking off the top of his head. Nathan is a prophet and what he says here is going to be what unfolds for the house of David for the rest of David's

life. Let's look at it. I'm going to start with verse 9, chapter 12, "Why did you despise the word of the Lord by doing what is evil in his eyes? You struck down Uriah the Hittite with a sword. You took his wife to be your own." Two things: murder and adultery. Killing and sexual abuse. "You killed him with the sword of the Ammonites," verse 10. "Now, therefore, the sword will never depart from your house." So there's going to be violence and killing within the household of David. That's the first thing, it's measure for measure. And then verse 11, "Out of your own household, I'm going to bring calamity on you before your very eyes I will take your wives and give them to the one who is close to you. He will lie with your wives in broad daylight." You did it in secret, I'm going to do this thing in broad daylight. What does Absalom do when he takes over the kingdom? He sleeps with David's concubines in broad daylight. It's a political statement. Absalom is making a political statement at that point that's also fulfilling in a measure for measure, an ugly, odious measure for measure, this prophecy that Nathan makes. Well David does repent and this is where, of course, Psalm 51 comes in in its entirety and I encourage you to go back and read that.

But there's consequences. God forgives him. This is the beauty of the mercy of God. God forgives but there are consequences our sins and we need to come to grips with that. David had to come to grips with it. There are serious consequences, as I said earlier, with lifelong effect in his family. First of all, the first son dies. David fasts, he mourns while the son is dying in hopes of perhaps God's mind will change. It isn't, the son dies, and David gets up and says, "Got to get on with life" and then he'll have other sons and the second one from Bathsheba will be Solomon as we'll see. We have the Amnon and Tamar incident. Amnon is David's firstborn son. We need to keep that in mind. Firstborn son. He rapes Tamar, she goes out utterly disgraced as a result of that, and she is Absalom's full sister.

[Student]

David. Did I say that wrongly? Mother, who is Amnon's mother? It might be so...I think it's Ahinoam. I'd have to go back and look at that, I'm pretty sure it's a Ahinoam. But somebody else can check that (2 Sam. 3:2).

[Student]

Long before Solomon. Solomon is somewhere down there, eighth in line actually.

Say that again? Probably so. Remember, he's got two wives. He's got Ahinoam and Michal and he's got Abigail, right? And then there's a few others who are in there as well. So there's a line of sons that are here. The ones that we're concerned with are Amnon and then Absalom because Absalom will be third born. When Absalom is taking his vengeance on behalf of Tamar, as you know from reading the narratives, he arranges to kill Amnon. So Absalom has blood on his hands as well. He's wiped out David's first-born son in this whole thing. As a result, he flees. Joab is going to arrange for Absalom to come back, which is in this case, a crafty but very unfortunate move on the part of Joab. Because as Joab does that, he's bringing back Absalom who will, as you know from reading 2 Samuel 14, 15, 16, and 17, Absalom raises a military coup against his father. That's where we're going next.

Any questions on this? I know I went through that fast.

Zip zap.

Okay. Here's the conspiracy. Absalom's a clever guy. He's also pretty handsome. This is how he wins the hearts of the people. He looks good. 14:25, "handsome in appearance." He has all the right accoutrements. A BMW, well here it just says a chariot and horses and 50 men to run ahead of him. But you know, he's pretty good at making the appearances. And whenever anybody approaches him at the city gate he pretty much says, "I'll take care of your problem. Just let me do it." And the text goes on, "He stole the hearts of all the men of Israel." And then he goes to Hebron, which is of course a political statement in itself. His father had reigned in Hebron, he goes to Hebron. Has himself crowned king. This is chapter 15 verse 12 in case you want to look at it later. He sends for Ahithophel, David's counselor. So he recognizes the wisdom of Ahithophel. In fact, it will say later on the advice that Ahithophel gave was like advice from God. And Absalom knows that so he gets Ahithophel on his side. David realizes he's got to leave because Absalom is on his way to Jerusalem. When Absalom gets there, after David

leaves, some interesting things happen but in the meantime we have to catch one important thing.

As David is going, and here I'm at the end of chapter 15, he says to this guy named Hushai. He says, "You can help me by frustrating Ahithophel's advice." So David sends Hushai to go after and apparently join the ranks of Absalom. But David's instructions to Hushai are, "You go there and whatever Ahithophel says, you counter it." And the text is actually going to say in chapter 17, "it was God's plan to frustrate the advice of Ahithophel," via Hushai. And we'll see that happen in a moment.

Here we go, Absalom shows up, chapter 16 at the end of it. Verse 20, "Give us your advice Ahithophel. What should we do?" And Ahithophel says verse 21 chapter 16, "lie with your father's concubines, the ones he's left to take care of the palace. All Israel will hear that you have made yourself a stench in your father's nostrils and the hands of everyone with you will be strengthened. They pitched a tent for Absalom on the roof and he lay with his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel." Totally, well I can't even think of the right word. Odious, heinous, unsavory, and yet it's a political statement. What was my father's is now mine.

Here's the other piece of Ahithophel's advice. Chapter 17 verse 1, "I would choose twelve thousand men tonight and set out in pursuit of David." In other words, go get him while he's weakened, while he's fleeing. But here's where Hushai comes in because Hushai says, "Oh no, no. You shouldn't do that. You know your father. When he's trapped he fights like a lion. Give yourself some time. Back off. Get your forces together. Gather lots of people and then go after them." And of course, Hushai is buying time for David because David can do the same thing and gather his forces and then they'll have the battle. So Hushai manages to frustrate that second piece of advice that Ahithophel gave. And ultimately then, it'll be David's forces that win the battle based on Hushai's counter intelligence.

Once they do come to battle, Absalom will die but he will die because he gets himself caught in a tree, gets his head caught in a tree and Joab will come along and wipe him out. This is probably the ultimate in David's merciful heart, he weeps over his son

Absalom, almost refusing to be comforted until Joab says, “You’re going to lose everybody if you continue to show this kind of remorse over someone who’s your enemy and against whom your guys are fighting.” And so Joab talks him out of that. They do go back to Jerusalem but here’s the thing and we need to do this fairly quickly. As you read the next three chapters, there’s increasing fracturing of the kingdom. There’s rebellion from somebody of the tribe of Benjamin, no surprise, that’s the tribe of Benjamin. And there’s rebellion from tribes up north. Things are edgy here. And in that light, we look at our last incident.

The text in chapter 24 of 2 Samuel says, “God incited David to number the Israelites because he was angry with them.” Interestingly enough when you read the Chronicles parallel in chapter 21 it says *Satan* incited David to number. So God is using Satan. There’s a lot of reasons where it might be that Satan shows up in the Chronicles text. We don’t have time to do that now. Our big question is why is the Lord angry with the Israelites? Let us suggest that tapping your wisdom in this, that he’s seeing, obviously, what the Israelites are doing in terms of their rebellion against David, their rebellion against David as God’s chosen person and the Davidic dynasty, and this is going to be a punishment for those kinds of things that are unfolding in that rebellion stuff that’s starting to ferment in those chapters that I just referred to. So David goes ahead and numbers them and it’s the wrong to do. Joab even knows it’s the wrong thing to do but Joab goes ahead and does it and Gad comes and says, “That’s the wrong thing to do” and Gad rebukes him, confronts him and says, “You’ve got three choices.” And I’m trying to get to those three choices so I can read them to you. “David says I have sinned greatly. Gad says, ‘Do you want three years of famine, do you want three months of fleeing from your enemies, or three days of plague?’” And David of course, says, “let me suffer at the hands of God himself.” The three days of plague unfold at the hand of a destroying angel. When that angel is stopped it happens at the threshing floor of Araunah.

Two things that I need to say and then we’ll stop with this.

David will buy this threshing floor and the sacrifice from a guy named Araunah the Jebusite. And we learn from reading Chronicles later on that that's the place where the temple is built. And so there's going to be an important continuity there.

The second thing we need to say, and then I'll let you go, David will say here, cause Araunah's going to give him the threshing floor. Araunah has seen the angel too and he's scared to death. He's going to give him the threshing floor and David says, "Shall I offer sacrifices to the Lord that have cost me nothing?" And of course, that's the principle. Sacrifices are sacrifices because they cost us something and so David pays well, offer a sacrifice and again, that sets the stage for the building of the temple, which will happen under Solomon.

We're going to take a break and do Psalms on Monday but we're going to take a break now.

Shabbat Shalom, have a good weekend.

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