

## **Dr. August Konkell, Chronicles, Session 7, King David**

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This is Dr. August Konkell in his teaching on the books of Chronicles. This is session 7, King David.

The Chronicler has completed his section on establishing the identity of his people.

These are the ones who live around Jerusalem in his time in the Persian state of Yehud. Now it becomes his task to explain to them why they are so significant. That they in fact are the center of all the nations and that they are the ones who represent the one and only kingdom that matters.

Now, to introduce us to that, he starts off by describing how they became a nation. How do they become a people? We might say that they become a nation and become a people with Moses, but that isn't the Chronicler's interest because he is focusing on the promise of redemption that God has made to David. So, he needs to present David as the person who is God's choice.

The one who is described in Samuel as after the heart of God. That expression in Samuel is in reference to God's plan and God's thinking. It is not that David has chosen God, but rather it is that God has chosen David.

Because God has chosen David, David will represent God's work and salvation, which is the kingdom of God. So I'm going to take us back to the outline of Chronicles that we began with and that we've completed now, point chapter one, which has to do with the nation of promise. Here, we want to talk about what makes them a nation, which is what the Chronicler calls a kingdom.

Now, of course, there was a history before that. There was a king before David. The Chronicler is very aware that David is not the first king of Israel, and he wants to make very clear why David is the man after God's heart while Saul wasn't.

So, he goes back now to take up the story of Saul, and in order to take up the story of Saul, we actually have a repetition in the book of Chronicles. The family of Saul, as we have it in chapter 9, verses 35 to 44, is pretty much an exact repetition of what we were given about the family of Saul as part of the militia that was stationed at Gibeon. So, that needs no further comment.

That is simply introducing us again to the person of Saul and who he was. Now, here in these short 14 verses of chapter 10, the Chronicler summarizes everything that we know about the detailed story of the death of Saul and his sons on the hill of Gilboa

in their losing fight against the Philistines. As we may recall, when that battle took place, David was a refugee with the Philistines in the city of Ziklag, the town that he had been granted by the Philistines as a place for his troops and his men and as a place out of which he could function.

So that is where David was, and as a matter of fact, Samuel tells us how the Philistines excluded David from joining them in the battle against Saul because they said David would be to us a satan, which means an enemy. He's going to betray us because, after all, he's the one of whom the Israelites said Saul had slain his thousands, but David has slain his ten thousand. So, David was in Ziklag, Saul was battling on the Mount of Gilboa, and it was a very frightful time in which they were not a match for their old enemies, the Philistines, and Saul's body was left in disgrace and rescued by the men of Jabesh Gilead after the battle had taken place.

The Chronicler does not concern himself with any of that. He concerns himself simply with the question, why was Saul removed as king? His answer to the question as to why Saul was removed as king comes actually in the last verses of the chapter where the Chronicler introduces some of his vocabulary, and I'm going to put some of that vocabulary on the flip chart over here because it is going to become characteristic and introduced again and again. There is a Hebrew word that we may write as ma'al, and it is usually translated as being unfaithful.

Now, this is going to be the sin that brings about God's judgment, whether it's an individual or whether it's the whole nation when they go into Babylon. But when you are unfaithful to the covenant when you do not keep the oath of loyalty, which is what the berit, the covenant represents, then you will lose the mercy of God, and you will become judged for unfaithfulness. So, Saul was judged because he was unfaithful.

There's a difference between the way the Chronicler understands this and the way he understands other kinds of sin. It's not that David didn't have great sins, which everybody knows about. Who hasn't heard about the story of Bathsheba? But the Chronicler is never going to mention that.

The whole point is that David could come to the point where he would say, Blessed is he whose sin is forgiven, whose transgression is covered. In other words, David is still the converse of ma'al. He may fail, he may sin, but that doesn't make him unfaithful to the intent of his faith.

Saul is unfaithful in that he no longer trusts God. Failure to trust God, this unfaithfulness, is the thing that condemns. The other keyword that the Chronicler is going to use over and over again is the Hebrew word darash.

Now, this is the word for seek. So, the way to experience God's blessing is through faithfulness. And the way to experience God's blessing is by seeking.

What was Saul's fatal error? Well, when he couldn't get a word from the Lord because he was unfaithful, he went to seek a necromancer. He was looking for answers. He wanted to know what was going to happen against the Philistines.

And he goes to see what the Hebrews call an ob. That's the person who kind of communicates with the dead through a spirit enhancing situation. He goes to Endor and finds the person who will give him that message.

You remember very well how Samuel appears to Saul and gives him the condemning message. Saul did not seek the Lord. Instead,, he sought help through a necromancer, something that was completely forbidden.

That means that Saul is disqualified. He cannot be the person who is after the heart of God. That introduces us then to the story of David and why David becomes the king when, in fact, he's been a refugee out at Ziklag.

And that's the point at which the Chronicler begins in the story of David. He begins with him having been a refugee at Ziklag in his flight from Saul. And then he shows how David became the heir of the kingdom.

How David comes to be the one who is on the throne of Israel. These verses, again, are a lot of names about David's warriors. And so, they may not seem to make a lot of sense, but they actually are in a pattern.

So, I thought that what we would do is notice the pattern in which the Chronicler presents this whole event of how David becomes king. And in the Chronicler's way of looking at things, the moment that Saul has been disqualified and dies on the hill of Gilgal, David is now affirmed as king. So, we don't have any notations about the historical process of the seven years that there were between David coming to Hebron and being claimed king and then conquering Jerusalem and establishing his rule there.

The Chronicler is not interested in any of that chronology. Instead, he wants to present a unified kind of way of seeing how all Israel, all Israel, north to south, everywhere, supports David. No mention of wars between Abner and Joab and the way in which there was this conflict until Abner eventually defects to David and they unify the kingdom.

From the Chronicler's point of view, God had this all worked out. And God having it worked out is evident in the way that you see that David had the support of all Israel.

And how do you see that David had the support of all Israel? Well, you can start with him coming to Hebron and being made king.

Then, there is the support that David had at Hebron, which is amplified by all of the troops that supported him earlier in Ziklag and, going back in time, to those who supported David at the fortress. And then there's a repetition of this shift of the people who supported David at the fortress. Adullam is the place.

Then he repeats those who supported David at Ziklag and then those at Hebron. And now it concludes with this transfer of the kingdom of David. So, the whole thing is constructed as a whole, as a single unit in which David is king of all Israel from east of Jordan, west of Jordan, and Judah.

All of Israel supports David. Now, we come to the enthronement of David, which the Chronicler presents right at the head of this whole account in the first nine verses. And he talks, first of all, about the covenant that all Israel has with David.

Now, that's really significant because if you go back to Samuel, it is the people of Judah who come around and say, well, you know, Saul has been defeated, and we need to have a king, and we want you to be our king. And God instructs David to go up to Hebron. But David has already cultivated loyalty in the Chronicler's mind.

And in reality, he has cultivated loyalty from people all over Israel. And so this coronation of David at Hebron to make him king is the united act of all of David's mighty men. He then talks about the conquest of Jerusalem.

As I mentioned, there's no mention of the chronology of the war that took place, and Abner eventually defected away from his loyalty to Ish-boseth and Saul's sons and came over to David. The Chronicler simply establishes David as the king in Jerusalem, which is a focal point that he wants to make. He's not interested in us knowing the chronology and sequence of events.

We know those well enough from the other history. What we need to know is that this was God's plan, and God was carrying out his plan. So here are David's warriors.

Most of this material is drawn from 2 Samuel 23, where we have key chief leaders who were David's mighty men. Then there's a mention of 3, and there's a mention of 30. And it's not quite clear how the Chronicler distinguishes the 3 and the 30, especially in the Masoretic text.

And frankly, I think to the Chronicler, it didn't matter all that much for us to distinguish between the 3 and between the 30. These were all key distinguished warriors who brought tribute to David. That little story that he tells about the water is the Philistines attacking in the Valley of Rephaim, just to the south of Jerusalem.

The warriors broke through the lines of the Philistines to draw water from a well to bring it to David. Not so much because he was so desperate for water, but rather to show, and this is the Chronicler's point, that they will sacrifice their lives to support David and they will do for David whatever they need to do. That's the point of breaking through the Philistine lines in such a dangerous matter and fetching this water.

And as you know, David pours the water out because he regards it as being absolutely sacred. It represents the lifeblood of these men who risked their lives to go and draw water for him. He then talks about Benaiah's feats in particular.

Benaiah is going to become the soldier who becomes the head of the palace guard, the one who protects the royal entourage in Jerusalem. But here we have Benaiah at an earlier point in time who kills the two mighty warriors, and they're called lions, Ariel from Moab, and the man who kills the Egyptian giant who has more than the usual number of digits, as you remember, fingers and toes, as you remember that story. He also makes a special note of those warriors who come from the east side of Jordan.

It's not just Judah, but it's everywhere that these warriors come, where these warriors come. So, there is support when David was a fugitive. And what's important here is that little poem in verse 18, which serves as a bit of a transition.

We are yours, O David, and we have a covenant with you. Now, those little short poems were ways that they expressed their loyalty or their disloyalty. This stands in complete contrast to the mocking of Sheba when David flees from Absalom in 2 Samuel.

Sheba was trying to rally the supporters of Absalom against David. He clearly was interested in his own properties there north of Jerusalem and said, What portion have we in David? Who is David, and should we follow him? And there's a two-line pole there that expresses this disloyalty to David. Well, the chronicler reverses that.

Absalom is long ago history. And now the soldiers are declaring, we are yours, O David. These troops come from everywhere, and there is a three-day festival that celebrates David's coronation in the city of Jerusalem.

So, David, in these chapters, has come to be the king of the nation. He succeeds Saul immediately and conclusively because all of Israel supports him as their leader and their king. Israel is one nation.

It's not warring tribes. It's not north and south. Chronicler sees God's view of Israel.

And God's view of Israel is that they are one nation under David to live out the promise that God has made that this shall be his kingdom.

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