

Ministry on David

Part 2

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[00:00:00] The first book of Samuel, chapter 22, David therefore departed thence and escaped to the cave of Adullam. And when his brethren at all his father's house heard it, they went down thither to him. And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him. And he became a captain over them, and there were with him about 400 men. And David went thence to Mizpah of Moab, and he said unto the king of Moab, Let my father and my mother, I pray thee, come forth and be with you till I know what God will do for me. And he brought them before the king of Moab, and they dwelt with him all the while that David was in the hold. And the prophet Gad said unto David, Abide not in the hold, depart and get thee into [00:01:02] the land of Judah. Then David departed and came into the forest of Harath. We turn over to to the read verse 12, verse 11.

The king sent to call Ahimelech the priest, this is king Saul of course, the son of Ahitab, and all his father's house, the priests that were in Moab. And they came all of them to the king. And Saul said, Hear now thou son of Ahitab. And he answered, Here I am my lord. And Saul said unto him, Why have ye conspired against me, thou and the son of Jesse, in that thou hast given him bread and a sword, and hast inquired of God for him, that he should rise against me to lie in wait as at this day? Then Ahimelech answered the king and said, And who is so faithful among all thy servants as David, [00:02:01] which is the king's son-in-law, and goeth at thy bidding, and is honorable in thine house? Did I then begin to inquire of God for him? Be it far from me. Let not the king impute anything unto his servant, nor to all the house of my father, for thy servant knew nothing of all this, less or more. And the king said, Thou shalt surely die, Ahimelech, thou and all thy father's house. And going over to verse 19.

And one of the sons of Ahimelech, the son of Ahitab, named Abiathar, escaped and fled after David. And Abiathar showed David that Saul had slain the Lord's priests. And David said unto Abiathar, I knew it that day when Doeg the Edomite was there, that he would surely tell Saul that I have occasioned the death of all the persons of [00:03:03] thy father's house. Abide thou with me, fear not, for he that seeketh my life seeketh thy life, but with me thou shalt be in safeguard. And reading a verse in the next chapter, verse 6. And it came to pass when Abiathar the son of Ahimelech fled to David to Keilah, that he came down with an ephod in his hand.

When David was anointed king, back in the previous chapter, it tells us that he was in the midst of his brethren when the Lord anointed him. And we know that the Lord sent Samuel to anoint David because Saul, who was the man that the [00:04:06] people had chosen, or the man that the people wanted and that God had allowed to be king, that he had been unfaithful. And so the Lord sent

Samuel to anoint Saul.

We have that back in the 16th chapter. And I just want to read a verse there. In the 11th verse of chapter 16, after Samuel has had Jesse's sons brought before him, he says to Samuel, said to Jesse, verse 11, Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all thy children?

And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him, for we will not sit down till he come hither.

And if you notice, the margin of the Bible says, for we will not sit round till he come hither.

[00:05:06] And he sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy and with all of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the Lord said, Arise, anoint him, for this is he. Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brethren. And the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward, from that day forward. So here we find that David is anointed in the midst of his brethren. In fact, Samuel says to Jesse, We won't sit round, he said, until he come hither.

So they were going to sit around there, and the one who was to be the Lord's anointed would be in their midst. I'm sure that they didn't have any understanding or realization at that time of the great significance of this. But this is a thing of very great significance, of very great importance. God was anointing a man that we're told elsewhere he was the man [00:06:07] after God's own heart. He was the king that God had appointed to take the place of Saul.

Saul was the man of the people's choice. David was the man of God's choice. David was the man that God was placing there as king. And he was there anointed in the midst of his brethren. And they would not even sit around to the feast that had been called for until the one that was to be the Lord's anointed was in the midst. So David here is a lovely type of the Lord Jesus, the one whom God has put in the midst. Now beloved brethren, we have learned, we who gather together to the name of the Lord Jesus, we've learned something of the preciousness of this truth, of what it is to be gathered to the name, to gather together to the name [00:07:03] of the Lord Jesus. Not to be gathered to a denomination, not to be gathered to a sect, not to be a sect we trust, although we could become that if we weren't careful, but to be gathered to the name of the Lord, to recognize him as the one who's in our midst and to whom we gather, and to recognize him in that sense as the Lord's anointed. It's a very precious thought. So David is the chosen anointed of the Lord, the chosen king. But there's another king on the throne. Saul is the king. God has rejected him. It says in the very next verse after where it says that the spirit of the Lord came upon David, it says that the spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit came upon him. And even though Saul doesn't know that David has been anointed king, it very, very soon became evident that David was the one [00:08:06] that God had chosen, and the people could recognize this too. And so Saul got very jealous and envious of David. Of course, in the meantime, there comes in the incident of David and Goliath. David goes down, this just shepherd boy who's been faithful in caring for his father's sheep, and he is able to slay the giant. And you know, Saul should have been the one as the king who could have killed the giant. Jonathan should have been the one who could killed him as Saul's elder son. Or David's three elder brothers who'd gone to the war and whose names are mentioned, they all should have been able to kill the giant. None of them could. Saul has been rejected as king, and his house was set aside in that sense. Even David's older brothers, that God has set them aside. David goes down, and with the ability that the Lord has given him, he's able to slay [00:09:05] the giant. Goliath was no more the David than a lion and a bear. The people of Israel were God's sheep. And just the same as the Lord had

helped him by using his sling and stone to deliver his father's sheep out of the paw of the lion and the bear, he trusted that the Lord would enable him to deliver his sheep out of this Goliath who defied the armies of the living God. And so David goes forth with his stone and his sling to slay Goliath, to lay him low and cut off his head with his own sword. It's a lovely picture, and it's a great spiritual, there's a great spiritual significance to it. Because Goliath represents the power of Satan. And as David slays Goliath with his own sword, we know that it was, that the Lord Jesus laid low the power of sin and Satan [00:10:08] through death. And he goes down into death, as it says in Hebrews 2, that through death, he slew him who had the power of death, that is the devil, that he might deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. The Lord, as it were, took Satan's own sword, his own weapon, which was death. Death was in the power of Satan, as it were. And the Lord uses that very weapon to conquer him. He goes down into it. And someone has said that when the Lord silenced Satan at the temptation, that was the slinging of the stone. He only needs one stone, he only quoted from one book, the book of Deuteronomy. He had five. He had the whole of the five books of the Pentateuch that he could have quoted from, and even more for that matter. He had the Old Testament. But if we just take the five books of Moses, he only took one. He quoted [00:11:04] three times from the book of Deuteronomy. There he, as it were, lays him low. And at the cross, through his death and resurrection, that's where he cuts off his head. Satan now is a defeated foe. He has no more power. The Lord is the triumphant one. He's the Lord's anointed. And David comes forth with the trophy in his hand. Well, now when we come to this chapter that we read this afternoon, Saul has made it very, very evident that he is going to kill David if he can. Of course, he can't kill him. David is the Lord's anointed. And God was going to allow him to be on the throne, and no one was going to be able to stop David being king. And so in that sense, he was immortal until his work was done. And so David is hunted. He's out in the desert.

[00:12:02] He's in the wilderness of Judea. And it says that a company gathered themselves to it. He goes to the cave of Adullam. It's a lovely picture. We see David there in the cave. And as we read this portion, we get a little idea of the hardships that they had living out there in the country, sleeping in caves, living on what they could. It was not a very cozy kind of life. Yet, there were those who gathered themselves to David. They were loyal to David. They knew. They recognized David. They owned David as the rightful king. And it says there in the first verse, when his brethren and all his father's house heard it, they went down there to him. It's good to see that. David's older brothers reproached him when he went to the battle.

Oh, they said, we know what you've come down here for. You were just a naughty little boy that [00:13:02] wanted to come down and see what the war was like. That's what they thought. And they didn't realize that David was there because his father had sent him. David didn't come down there out of curiosity to see the battle. They were a little bit ashamed of themselves that their brother should come down there and find that they weren't able to overcome Goliath. But here, apparently, they have come to the point where they have recognized who David is, because it says his brothers and his father's house gathered themselves to him. It's like the Lord's own brothers, Mary's other sons, when the Lord was here on earth. It says his brethren, in the seventh of John, it says, neither did his brethren believe on him. They said, oh, if you're who you are, you go up and show yourself. Go up to the feast. The Lord didn't go up publicly to the Feast of Tabernacles. He did go up privately, but he wasn't going to make himself known. The time for the Feast of Tabernacles hadn't come yet. The other feasts had to be [00:14:03] fulfilled. The Passover, the Lord had to die first, but he did go after it. But his brethren didn't believe on him. But we find, after the Lord's resurrection, that his brothers and Mary are there in the upper room. It says with Mary, the mother of Jesus, and his brethren. When were his brethren converted? I believe it must have been there at the time of his death, when they

saw the evidence of his death and resurrection. They realized who the Lord was, and they were faithful to him. And James the Apostle is recognized as one of the Lord's brothers.

His brother of Mary's other sons. And so we find it here, David's own brothers now own him as the Lord's anointed, and they gather themselves to him in the cave. And also it says, everyone that was in distress, and everyone that was in debt, and everyone that was discontented, gather themselves unto him. Why were they in distress, and in debt, and [00:15:05] discontented? I believe it was because of the policies of Saul. Saul was running the country into trouble, and they were not happy. You know, we know that in countries, when there's a good government, when there's a good administration, when there are good, when there are men at the head of affairs that know how to handle the business, things are going well, and the people are contented, and are happy. You get people at the head of affairs that are not responsible, they run the country into debt, and they put high taxes on, and they make people discontented.

People are in debt, people are distressed, and people are discontented. That's the picture of this world today. That's what we find in this world. We find this world full of people that are discontented, and distressed, and in debt. And not only in the physical sense, which is true, [00:16:05] but also spiritually. People are spiritually unhappy until they find Christ. And so if we were having a gospel meeting, we could take up these three points, and make a great deal out of the fact that there are precious souls who are in debt, because they haven't had their sins forgiven, they're discontented, and they're in distress. This shouldn't be true of a Christian. A Christian should not be one who is discontented, and who is in distress, and who's in debt. The only debt that there is, a debt that we never finish paying, of course, that is to show love one to another. But these things should all be settled when we come to the Lord. But they gathered themselves to David. So we have that word again here in the second verse. They gathered themselves unto him. They gathered themselves to him. They recognized David as the Lord's anointed, even though he's in rejection, and they're willing to share his rejection. And it says that there [00:17:02] were about 400, a little later on we find there's another couple of hundred added, and that David had 600 men with him, that are willing to go out into the wilderness, and share the hardships of the wilderness, just because the one that they're loyal to has been rejected, and they want to be with him. And this is a picture for us, beloved brethren. The one that we profess loyalty to today is rejected. He's refused. The world doesn't have him. The world won't have him. And we have to do, as it says in the 13th chapter of Hebrews, go forth unto him, outside the camp, bearing his reproach. There's always a reproach connected with faithfulness to Christ. And the measure, in the measure in which we're faithful to Christ, and let people know where we stand, we have to bear reproach. This world does not want the Lord today any more than it wanted him [00:18:05] when he was here. Perhaps in some ways less so. They want to leave him out of all their plans. And we are those who professed loyalty and faithfulness to him. So they gathered themselves to David. Now I want to notice two things in connection with David's being there.

The one is, in verse 5 it says, And the prophet Gad said unto David, Abide not in the hole, depart, and get thee into the land of Judah. David departed and came into the forest of Herod. David had a prophet with him, the prophet Gad. Now Gad is a very faithful man. We find that it's Gad later on who has to speak faithfully to David. And so he's one that God uses.

And he's there with David. David's in rejection. But the prophet Gad isn't with Saul. He has gone [00:19:05] out with those who are loyal to David. He's not ashamed to go out into the wilderness and be with David. So David has the prophet Gad with him. Later on, in the chapter where we find, as we read it there, that Saul slays Abiathar, or rather he slays Ahimelech, the priest, and all his family.

Only one escapes and that's Abiathar. And what does he do? He flees to David. So now David not only has the prophet, he has a priest with him. So he is David, the king in rejection. He's the king, the rightful king, and he's in rejection. And with him is the prophet and the priest. Of course, I've no doubt that God allowed this slaying of Ahimelech's house in fulfillment of the word that was spoken to Eli. Ahimelech was of the light of Eli. [00:20:02] And we find that even Abiathar, who's faithful to David at this time, when Solomon becomes king, he sets him aside as priest. He doesn't kill him because he's the Lord's anointed and because he's been afflicted in all that David was afflicted in, in the wilderness here, and Zadok is appointed instead. This is another line. So Eli's house disappears in connection with the priesthood altogether. But that's not the point we want to make this afternoon. I just mentioned that. The point I want to bring out here is that here we find David in rejection, but he has with him a prophet and a priest. Now, I think the prophet and the priest give us two different lines of thought. The prophet is one who speaks the mind of God to the people.

So that when David's in danger here, the prophet comes to him, Gad says, comes to him and he says, abide not in the hole, depart and get thee into the land of Judah. Don't stay here, he says. [00:21:06] He makes known to David the mind of God. Don't stay here. You're in danger. So David does that. Does that. Now, today God has given prophecy too. And in the scriptures, the word prophet is used in two ways. It's been said, we have foretelling prophets and we have foretelling prophets.

You say, well, what's the difference? Well, the difference is this, a foretelling prophet is a prophet who prophesied the future. Now we have Daniel, the prophet. God through Daniel gave prophecies as to the future. Isaiah is a prophet who prophesied things as to the future. He prophesied things concerning the Lord's birth and the Lord's death and things that are yet to come. And so we find the apostle John was a prophet in that sense. God gave us the revelation through [00:22:06] him. But then in the 14th chapter of 1 Corinthians, it says there, it speaks there about prophecy and it says, he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, to exhortation and to comfort. Now we don't have foretelling prophets anymore. Their message is what's given us in the scriptures. God has given us a word, given us the foretellings of things that are yet to take place in the scriptures. But we do have, God still raises up men to make known his mind, to speak, to edification, exhortation and comfort. And a meeting like this, in a sense, is a prophetic meeting, or it should be. I think sometimes it isn't. But I think if we rightly understand when we have what we speak of as an open meeting for ministry, that should be a meeting at which [00:23:05] God is able to use whom he will, to give a word that will meet our present needs.

Or any kind of a meeting that is open in this way. That is that the Lord can lay it on the heart of a brother to give the message that is God's word for us for the time. In that sense, there are prophets today who make known the mind of God for the time. I think if we look back in history, we can see that there were special men raised up in the history of the church who made known the will of God for their day. A man like that was Martin Luther. He was a man raised up of God with a special message for his day. He, in that sense, was a foretelling prophet. He made known God's mind for his day. Mr. Darby was in his day. Some people think that Billy Graham's a prophet in the sense that he has a voice of God for this nation in this day. Although [00:24:03] we don't agree with a lot of things he's doing, sad to say, and that he's departed a great deal. But it could be that as far as the nation's concerned, that God doesn't allow a man like that in a public place to give a certain message to the nation that they don't heed. Because God can work where he will and even use men that we, in obedience to his word, would not be free to be associated with. He can still use them in his service and he does. We find that even in the division of Israel that there were those who were faithful to the

Lord and who stayed in the southern kingdom. And yet God raised up certain men with a message to the northern kingdom. That didn't say that those who were faithful in Judah should have gone and joined themselves to Jeroboam's system. But God did raise up faithful men there to give his message. So God, in that sense, is sovereign. He can use whom he will. But that is the sense of prophecy. It's God making known his mind. And I'd like to say this, brethren, in connection with our afternoon meeting like we [00:25:04] have it, that I believe that we should be exercised, when we come to this meeting, as to what part the Lord would have us take in it. You know, we can get into the habit of going along to the meeting, or even the breaking of bread for that matter, without any exercise as to whether the Lord would use us in that meeting. That we go along just thinking, well, we have quite a number of brothers there, and of course there'll be a number of brothers that take part in the meeting, and I don't have to be exercised about taking any part in the meeting. That's not the attitude we should take. We should be exercised as to what part the Lord would have us take to contribute to the meeting. Every one of us be before the Lord. And the Lord sometimes uses a brother even to give five words in a meeting. I remember a meeting many, many years ago when I was a young man, and a brother got up who was not a ministering brother at all, had to be right at the beginning of the meeting, and he read a portion of scripture and sat down. I think he said about five words on [00:26:05] it. That's all he said. But you know, that set the key for that meeting. He gave what the Lord had given him, and others followed on from there. And so, if the Lord's given us very little, if that's God's word that he would use us in that sense to give, we should give it. Of course, the other extreme is for someone who doesn't have anything to give to get up and act in self-will and try and give something when the Lord hasn't given them anything. That would be wrong too. But we should be exercised before the Lord and seek to be subject to the guidance of his Spirit as to the part we should take. So, here we have the prophet. He makes known to David the mind of God. So, this is a great privilege for us, I think. Our Lord is the rejected one, as David was rejected. We are gathered to him in his rejection, and yet he's made provision for us. [00:27:03] He is able to minister to us. He's able to give us a prophetic ministry, and he does give it to us, and we should avail ourselves of it. And we should thank God for the liberty that we have of gathering to his precious name, and of the precious truth that the Holy Spirit is the one that should guide and lead us in our meetings, not to have everything cut and dried, but to seek to be guided by the Holy Spirit. But now we come to the other thought, and that is that not only did David have the prophet with him, he had the priest. Of course, in a certain sense, through the priest, the Lord made known his mind too, because it says in verse 6 of chapter 23, that when Abiathar came down to David, he came down with an ephod in his hand. And it says there in verse 9, David knew that Saul secretly practiced mischief against him, [00:28:04] and he said to Abiathar the priest, bring hither the ephod. Then said David, O Lord God of Israel, thy servant hath certainly heard that Saul seeketh to come to Calah, to destroy the city for my sake. Will the men of Calah deliver me up into his hand? Will Saul come down, as thy servant hath heard? O Lord God of Israel, I beseech thee, tell thy servant. And the Lord said, He will come down. Then said David, Will the men of Calah deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul? And the Lord said, They will deliver thee up. Then David and his men, which were about six hundred, you see they've increased now by another couple of hundred, rose and departed out of Calah, and went with us wherever they could go. David has the priest with him, and the priest has the ephod. You know, the ephod was the robe that the high priest wore, and it had the breastplate on it. And then the breastplate was made like a [00:29:04] kind of a pocket. And in the breastplate, there was the urim and the thummim. And the urim and thummim, we don't know exactly what it was, but it was something by which the Lord made known his mind. Some have thought that this idea of the crystal ball that is used by spiritist mediums, that that was something to do with something like that, only that that's become completely in the hands of Satan. And that's why anything like that's forbidden. But the Lord made known his mind somehow through the urim and the thummim in those days. I believe the urim and thummim now,

what they correspond for us to know the mind of the Lord is the Word and the Holy Spirit. We have the Word and we have the Spirit. Someone asked the brother what he thought the urim and thummim meant, and he held up his Bible. He says, use him and thumb him. Well, that's good too, that we [00:30:02] learn what the Lord's mind through his Word. But I think it's the Word, but it's the Word applied by the Spirit of God, the Word in the power of the Spirit. But in those days, when they brought the ephod that had the urim and the thummim in, the Lord answered. He definitely gave them an answer of yes or no when they asked his mind through the ephod. So you see, this was priestly work. They approached God in prayer. David inquires of the Lord, and that's a precious privilege that we have, beloved. We are priests. We're not only prophets. The Lord would use us to make his mind known to us through prophecy. But the Lord has given us the privilege of being priests. We're holy priests and we're royal priests. And when we come to the Lord in prayer, we're exercising our priesthood. When we come to the Lord to give him our praise and worship, as we did this morning, we're exercising our priesthood. When we're living for Christ before [00:31:04] the world, we're to do that as holy priests. I don't think when we think of priesthood, even the royal priesthood, as we have it in 1 Peter 2 and chapter 9, I don't think there it's a question of gift. When it comes to prophecy, perhaps that more comes in the question of gift. But when it's a question of priesthood, it's not a question of gift at all. Every believer is equally a priest. And with holy priests, it says we're holy priests to offer up spiritual sacrifices. That is our praise and our worship. And as we come together on the Lord's day, every brother and sister has the privilege of offering up their praise and their worship to the Lord. The sisters are all contributing to it. They're giving their praise and worship. The brother who gives thanks or asks for a hymn, he is the mouthpiece of the gathering. And if we all come [00:32:02] to the meeting in the spirit, as we find the apostle John, it says he was in the spirit on the Lord's day. And I think that's a lovely thought. John wasn't able to be with the saints. He'd been sent away and put on an island. I understand that they had tin mines there, and John was sent there, this old brother was sent there to work in the tin mines. And this was his punishment for being a Christian. Something like some of our dear brethren in Siberia that are sent away over there in Russia. They don't have to work hard until they just have, they just about kill them off by making them work so hard, to crush their spirit. And I've no doubt there must be many of the dear saints in these countries today who, when the Lord's day comes, even though they're deprived of the fellowship of the Lord's people, they're in the spirit on the Lord's day. They're thinking of their brethren gathered together elsewhere. And we should not forget them when we gather, and with all the liberty that we have, to remember that we have our dear brethren in many parts who do not have this precious privilege because of circumstances. [00:33:05] But we should also be in the spirit on the Lord's day. When we come together, let us see that we respect the Lord's day as the Lord's day, and realize what a precious privilege it is to be gathered, to be in the spirit, and to be under the guidance of the Holy Spirit as to what part we should take. And we all have some part to take. And the brothers, of course, to take audible part as the Lord leads them in praise and worship and thanksgiving. And then when we think of our royal priesthood, it says also in 1 Peter 2 and verse 9, it says, we're royal priests to show forth the excellencies of him who's called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. As we said before, that's not so much a question of gift. It's a question of our testimony, the kind of life that we live, what the people see in us. Do they see by the way we act that we're showing forth [00:34:02] the virtues of him? How do we react under difficulties when someone does something to us that they have no right to do? How do we react in our daily life? These are the tests as to whether we're really living as priests. We might be able to speak very well or talk very well, but the royal priesthood is at the whole demeanor of our life as to whether we really act as those who belong to the Lord and in that way seek to give a right testimony for him.

Well, I just have these thoughts on my mind, the thought of David as the rejected one, and we faithful

to the Lord, our Lord who's the rejected one, and then as the Lord sent there to be with him not only this company of 400 and later on 600 men who were faithful, but he had with him the prophet and the priest. So the Lord has made provision for us in this [00:35:03] the day of his rejection, the provision of prophecy and the provision of priesthood, and may we endeavor and seek daily to be faithful to him and miss the scene of his rejection while we're waiting for his return to take us to be with himself.