

2 Samuel 8-10 • The Victories of David

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2 Samuel chapter 8. Are you there? We're going to do our best tonight to cover 3 chapters. I don't think it's going to be terribly difficult. Chapters 8, 9, and 10. Basically chapters 8 and 10 cover David's various military conquests and these chapters are given to us to show God's blessing and how He's being good on His promise. God is always good on His promise. Do you know that?

And then in the middle, kind of sandwiched between these 2 chapters, is an expression of David's compassion toward the house of Jonathan, his very beloved friend who lost his life in a battle with the Philistines at the same time when his father, king Saul, died. And we'll deal with that tonight as well.

Verse 1 of 2 Samuel 8 begins by saying, *“After this David defeated the Philistines and subdued them, and David took Metheg-ammah out of the hand of the Philistines.” (ESV)* Metheg-ammah is apparently a town. We're not exactly sure where it's located, but it was probably somewhere close to the Israeli Philistine border. And there were usual border skirmishes between these two countries.

It says here that David took back this place and it goes on to say, *“² And he defeated Moab and he measured them with a line, making them lie down on the ground. Two lines he measured to be put to death, and one full line to be spared. And the Moabites became servants to David and brought tribute.”* You'll remember that David's great grandmother was a Moabitess, Ruth. But they were also constant enemies of Israel.

And were told in these verses how David conquered the Moabites as well. It says, *“³ David also defeated Hadadezer the son of Rehob, king of Zobah, as he went to restore his power at the river Euphrates. ⁴ And David took from him 1,700 horsemen, and 20,000 foot soldiers. And David hamstringed all the chariot horses but left enough for 100 chariots.”* And David is doing this out of obedience to the Lord.

You'll remember that God had told the kings of Israel not to amass too many chariots, not to amass too many horses, because that was a sign of great power.

And God never wanted the people of Israel, particularly the kings of Israel to amass too much worldly power, because what happens when we do that? We start to rely on it. The things that we have a lot of in our lives, we start to rely on it.

Why do you think Jesus said concerning the rich young ruler, remember that whole story, conversation thing? Rich wealthy man, Jesus recognizes that his wealth actually is a barrier standing between this young man and the kingdom of God. So He challenges this young man, says take all that you have, sell it, give the money to the poor, and come follow Me.

That wasn't a word to everybody, it was a word to that man. Because Jesus knew that it was standing in the way. You guys know the story. Says he went away very sad. And as he was going away, Jesus began to speak of how difficult it is for somebody with a lot of wealth to feel the need to come to God. In fact, He says it's easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. (Matthew 19:24)

You'll remember that his disciples were incredulous at that statement, they're like, serious? Who then can be saved? Jesus said, well, with man this is difficult but with God, all things are possible. (Matthew 19:26)

But you can see that there's an inherent message involved there that simply says, when you and I have a lot of stuff, we tend to put our trust in that stuff, right? And that's just the way things go.

God had told the kings of Israel, don't amass too many horses. So he gets, all of these horses after defeating this king of Zobah, he only retains a hundred horses for a hundred chariots. A hundred chariots. It's an army, but it's not a great army. It keeps you on your knees, right? Good way to be.

The world is amassing things. You and I, sometimes we wonder why God doesn't give us as much as maybe people in the world. God says, I want to keep you on your knees. Right? I want to keep you praying.

Have you ever noticed that when you are short on things, you pray about it? It's just the way it is. We stop praying about things when we feel like the Lord is providing, don't we? But boy, I tell you when we have want of things, it keeps us on our knees.

It says in verse 5, “*And when the Syrians of Damascus came to help Hadadezer king of Zobah, David struck down 22,000 (in fact) men of the Syrians. ⁶ Then David put garrisons in Aram of Damascus, and the Syrians became servants to David and brought tribute. (tribute is basically tax, they would pay a tax) And the LORD gave victory to David wherever he went.*”

And that's the statement that the author really wants you to see in this chapter, in chapter 10 and so forth, is that the Lord is giving David victory. The Lord is being true to His word.

And it says in verse 7, “*And David took the shields of gold that were carried by the servants of Hadadezer and brought them to Jerusalem. ⁸ And from Bethah and from Berothai, cities of Hadadezer, King David took very much bronze.*”

Do you remember what David did with all this stuff? He was just stockpiling it. Do you remember? We studied here just recently, a couple of weeks ago, how God had told David, you're not the one to build a house for Me. It's going to be your son who's going to do it. But David took the opportunity to go ahead and just stockpile all this stuff for the building of the temple.

When Solomon came around and he became king of Israel, there was so much stuff. In fact, we're told that silver was in such plentiful supply, it was considered to be about, worth as much as dirt. Isn't that interesting? Silver was like as common as dirt in the kingdom by that time. Gold was in plentiful supply too, of course. And bronze and all the things that they used. But this is largely because David was stockpiling these things for the building of the temple, which would take place under his son.

Verse 9 we find yet more. It says, “*When Toi...*” Your Bible may say, “*Tau...*” T-O-U. But you'll notice if it does, your Bible will have a footnote. The actual Hebrew spelling is transliterated T-O-I but, it's given in a couple of different fashions there.

“*...king of Hamath heard that David had defeated the whole army of Hadadezer, ¹⁰Toi sent his son Joram to King David, to ask about his health and to bless him because he had fought against Hadadezer and defeated him, for Hadadezer had often been at war with Toi. And Joram brought with him articles of silver, of gold, and of bronze. (more stuff to stockpile) ¹¹ These also King David dedicated to the LORD, together with the silver and gold that he dedicated from all the nations he subdued, (it lists them there) ¹²from Edom, Moab, the Ammonites, the Philistines, Amalek, and from the spoil of Hadadezer the son of Rehob, king of Zobah.*”

Did you notice in verse 12 that one of the names of the people or one of the people's groups that David conquered, was the Ammonites? Do you know those people still exist today? Some of these are, have been wiped out. For example, the Philistines. You won't find a Philistine anymore. They're gone. They're completely wiped out, but the Ammonites are still around. We call them Jordanians today and their capital city is Amman, which sounds very much like Ammonite, doesn't it? And that's exactly the case. Interesting that there's yet a current modern day historical connection to these people.

Verse 13 goes on. *“And David made a name for himself when he returned from striking down 18,000 Edomites in the Valley of Salt. (and) ¹⁴ Then he put garrisons in Edom;...”*

You guys remember the Edomites are descendants of Edom, right? Or the brother of Jacob, Esau, also known as Edom. Jacob renamed Israel, the father of the Israelites, if you will, from that standpoint. His, twin brother Esau also named Edom and their descendants who were also at times enemies of Israel. And here David is fighting against the Edomites. Breaks, cuts down an army of 18,000.

And it says in verse 14 that, *“...he (also) put garrisons in Edom; throughout all Edom he put garrisons,...”* Now, a garrison is a military presence. David, basically it means that David occupied those countries with a military presence. *“...and (it says that) all the Edomites became David's servants. And the LORD gave victory to David wherever he went.*

What's happening here is largely, God is extending now His promise of victory that was originally given to the Israelites when they came into the land under Joshua. And they were to go in and conquer the land. And you know that they didn't do it completely, not at all. They allowed the Canaanites to continue to live in the land.

And so David is living in the time when God has now basically told the Israelites, I'm not going to let you wipe them out anymore unless I give you the word to do that. He did that at one point with Saul to the Amalekites.

Do you remember that there was a point toward the end of Joshua, where the Lord finally said, you're not going to be able to wipe these people out anymore. I'm going to leave them in the land now to test you to see how faithful you will be. Or will you bow down to their gods? Will you Follow their gods. I told you to wipe them out completely, but you didn't do it so now you'll be tested by their continual presence.

David is conquering these countries, but he's not wiping them out entirely. But David is fulfilling at least what he is able to fulfill at this time in Israel's history, and that is the subjugation of their enemies. David is conquering them and subjecting them to his rule.

And you guys remember as we went through, hopefully you remember, when we went back through Joshua. Joshua is a picture. The whole idea of going into the promised land is a picture of our Christian walk. And we are called to go into the land of promise, right? And we are called by God to go in there and conquer the enemies. God wants us to wipe them out. And we are to have victory over the enemies of the Lord. The progression of Israel into the land is a picture of you and I walking out the promises of God.

David is this picture today, at least in the context of this chronology of Israel. He's a picture of what it means to be living in the world, but to be living victoriously.

We come up against enemies all the time, don't we? Enemies of our flesh, enemies related to the world, enemies related to the work of Satan that he's stirring up in the world. There's all kinds of enemies to trip us up, to come against us, to try to steal the freedom, and the calling that we have to live out our lives in Jesus Christ. We're constantly barraged by enemies who want to take away from you and I, our birthright.

The Bible says, Paul wrote that we're more than conquerors through Christ Jesus, right? And that our victory is in Him. But do you think that victory is not going to be challenged? It's challenged all the time. Every day. It's challenged by people and circumstances, the enemy, the world.

We're called to walk in victory. Do we always walk in victory? No, unfortunately we don't. Because we're still people of flesh. We're going to find out, we won't get to it tonight, but we're going to find out here in a couple of weeks as we continue our study in 2 Samuel, that David didn't always walk in victory. He allowed the flesh to trip him up. He allowed sometimes his own family and his lack of attention to his children to trip him up. His own bad parenting came back to haunt him in a big way. There were a lot of problems that came up, David didn't always walk in victory.

It's funny, sometimes when the enemy is coming at you with a sword and a shield, it's a little easier to recognize. When it comes at you in the form of a beautiful woman named Bathsheba, who happens to be naked, bathing on the top of her house, and your house just happens to be taller than hers, that is a

whole different threat. But it's still the same threat. It's still there to steal your victory, steal your birthright.

Sometimes that victory comes in all kinds of different ways. Even as we're going to get further into the book, as I said, it's even going to come in the form of his own children. But we have to be diligent to keep our eyes on Jesus regardless.

But right now, right here and now, we're seeing the victories. God is giving David the victory. And it says in verse 15, that, “...*David reigned over all Israel. And David administered justice and equity to all his people.* ¹⁶ *Joab the son of Zeruiah was over the army, and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder,* ¹⁷ *and Zadok the son of Ahitub and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar were priests, and Seraiah was secretary,* ¹⁸ *and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and the Pelethites, and David's sons* (now here in the ESV, it says) *were priests.*”

Now, that's an interesting thing. But if you know enough about the priesthood, you know, the David's sons couldn't actually be priests. This is an interesting Hebrew word that is most often translated priest, but it on rare occasions, it can be translated in another way. In 1 Chronicles, which as you know, is the parallel version of 1 and 2 Samuel. Let me put this actually on the screen for you because it gives the same information, but I've put it in red for you. In this case, and that bottom line, we're told,

1 Chronicles 18:17 (ESV)

*...and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and the Pelethites; and David's sons were the **chief officials** in the service of the king.*

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Now, those of you that maybe have a New American Standard Bible (NASB) tonight on your lap or in your hand, your Bible actually says, “*chief officials*” just like this in 2 Samuel, but the word is actually, priests. The NASB put in “*chief officials*” based on 1 Chronicles which is really a better rendering of what David's sons were.

They weren't priests because they were of the tribe of Judah and nobody from the tribe of Judah can serve as a priest. You had to be of the tribe of Levi, right? You had to be part of the Levitical line. That's why David's sons we're chief officials. Anyway, just a small point, but I wanted to point it out just in case

some of you might be a little confused, at least as far as the ESV translation goes.

2 Samuel 9. Now, before we get into this chapter, this is a great chapter. David we've just got, we've read the first chapter 8. And what do we see here? David is victorious. David is wealthy. David is powerful, power king. It's always a very dangerous time when somebody becomes wealthy and powerful and victorious. But we're going to see that at this point in David's life, he's still keeping his heart in the right direction.

Look at verse 1. *“And David said, “Is there still anyone left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?”*” Remember, Jonathan and David had a very close covenant relationship, a relationship of love. And Jonathan asked David, he asked him to promise him that he would bless his family, take care of his family. David is now making good on that promise.

It says, *“Now there was a servant (verse 2) of the house of Saul whose name was Ziba, and they called him to David. And the king said to him, “Are you Ziba?” And he said, “I am your servant.”* ³ *And the king said, “Is there not still someone of the house of Saul, that I may show the kindness of God to him?” Ziba said to the king, “There is still a son of Jonathan; he is crippled in his feet.”*

You might remember how that story went when Saul and Johnathan died in battle. The son of Jonathan was a small boy at the time and his nurse felt that his life would be in danger being the grandson of the king. She began to, she picked him up, and began to run with him to safety. And they stumbled and the boy was injured, and probably broke both of his ankles or something like that. And they were never set correctly or he never got the kind of proper medical treatment, and so he couldn't walk. He was crippled in his feet all of his life, well from that time on.

And verse 4 says, and *“The king said to him, “Where is he?” And Ziba said to the king, “He is in the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, at Lo-debar.”* (and) ⁵ *Then King David sent and brought him from the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, at Lo-debar.* ⁶ *And Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan, son of Saul, came to David and fell on his face and paid homage. And David said, “Mephibosheth!” And he answered, “Behold, I am your servant.”*”

Now stop there for just a moment. We don't know how much Mephibosheth has been told about anything related to what David wants to do for him. But if he's

thinking like a normal man, he probably thinks he's only got a couple of minutes to live because what happened in a very common way back in those days, although there's been a period of time since. When a king If a king is conquered or dies and another king rises to power in his place, he will usually put to death everybody in the king's family. Children, grandchildren, great grandchildren, if they're around, to try to eliminate any possible threat of someone being raised up to oppose him. This is very, very common.

We don't know what Mephibosheth is thinking. But, notice David's response to him first thing. Verse 7. *“And David said to him, “Do not fear, ...”* And you can tell he's probably saying that because Mephibosheth is afraid. He's thinking that he's going to wipe me out, but he says don't be afraid.

“Do not fear, for I will show you kindness for the sake of your father Jonathan, and I will restore to you all the land of Saul your father, and you shall eat at my table always.” That is amazing isn't it, really is amazing.

Keep in mind, just remember something. David is at the height of his power, his popularity, his wealth. He is at the height there. He's actually going to go downhill from here, sadly to say, but right now he's at the top of his game. And yet David is looking while at the top of his game for somebody to bless.

And he says here to Mephibosheth, don't be afraid. I'm going to bless you because of your father. I had a covenant relationship. I made a promise to your dad, Mephibosheth, and I loved your dad. He and I had a relationship that was like nothing else on earth. And we loved each other and we made promises to one another that we would look out for each other. And during your father's life, he looked out for me. And your father died in battle. And there's nothing I can do for your dad anymore but I can do something for you in remembrance of your father.

I'll tell you what I'm going to do. All the land that your grandfather had, that was the king, you guys. That's talking about a lot of land. All the land that belonged to your grandfather's Saul, I'm giving it back to you. And I'll be putting people in charge of that land to work it for you. And you'll have an income for the rest of your life. But you don't even need to worry about that because you're going to eat at my table for the rest of your days. This is an act of mercy and tenderness and compassion that is very encouraging to see.

And it says in verse 8 that Mephibosheth *“...paid homage and said, “What is your servant, that you should show regard for a dead dog such as I?”* He's referring to himself that way because he's crippled in his feet. And he's referring

to himself as “*a dead dog*” because, as you can well imagine, there's not a whole lot of use for a dead dog. I can't think of any anyway.

And so he's speaking about the fact that as a crippled man, I'm useless, so what in the world, what are you getting out of this David. what are you getting out of this? I'm as good as a dead dog. I'm as useful as a dead dog. What are you getting out of this?

David's not getting anything out of this. Remember, he's at the height of his power and authority, his wealth. He's been given things and given things and given things. And now he's looking to give back. That's a pretty sobering thought.

Let me ask you a quick question, and don't answer out loud, of course. But Do you consider yourself wealthy? Most people, when they are asked that question would say no. And then if you ask them, well, what do you consider wealthy? They will cite some income level that's obviously well above their own. Now that's wealthy me. I'm not wealthy.

But you might be interested to find out that there are people living in the world. When they would be asked, are you wealthy, they would say no. And if they would be asked, what would it take for you to be considered wealthy, they would talk about your income level. The things you have, your own home, a car that runs, clothing that you don't have to wear the same thing every single day. Enough food to eat every day without being hungry. They dream about the things that you have and they consider that vast wealth.

I bring that up because everybody, well, pretty much everybody who's asked that question doesn't consider themselves wealthy. It's always something above where they are. I want to open your heart to something here today, and that is that you are extremely wealthy as it relates to the income of the world.

If you were to take the income of the entire world, I'm not talking to the United States of America now, and I'm talking about many, many people's groups that, that live in this world. You're probably in the, well, easily in the top 5 percent of all the people in the world, maybe even higher. That's pretty amazing. Top 5 percent of the world's income is you, right here.

And this is certainly isn't the most, the wealthiest area of the United States to live in. I mean, there are incomes obviously in other parts of the country that are higher than they are here. Nonetheless, you are wealthy so think about yourself

right now, your life, in the same way that David was thinking about his life. The way we see him right here.

David's at this place where he's saying, and he's realizing, look what God has done in my life. We sang that song tonight and I was thinking about this, that lyric while we were worshiping. *"You have given me more than I could ever have wanted."* That's an interesting lyric, isn't it? I wonder how many of us saying it in sincerity.

But nevertheless, one of the things that I've been impressed with lately in my own prayer time telling the Lord, You have poured blessing into my life. You have just. There's an abundance. I am overflowing with blessing. Oh, maybe not compared to my rich neighbor or people in another community, but I'm going to stop comparing myself. If I look on a global level and I look at what God has done in my life, I'm like God, and I'm just talking about material wealth here. Of course, there's our spiritual wealth, which we can't even put a, there's no figure, there's no way to really express our birthright in Christ and the riches that we have in Jesus. I'm talking about the stuff you guys have, the stuff.

David started looking for a way to give it away. He had to go looking. He had to question, is there anybody around from the house of Saul? Well, there's a servant named Ziba. Call him. Get him in here. Are you Ziba? Yes. Is there anybody left of Saul's house that you are aware of? Yeah, as a matter of fact, there is. There's a son that was born to Jonathan. He's crippled, but he's living. Where is he living? He's living here. Go get him. Bring him here.

He's actively searching for an opportunity to pour out blessing on other people. David knows that all of this richness, all of this wealth is been has been given to him by God, and now he wants to give back to the Lord. He's looking for opportunities to be a blessing to others.

Can I suggest to you that's something we need to do. We need to actively be looking for ways that we can be a blessing and even be praying about it. Lord, how can I be a blessing? You've given me so much. You've given me so much.

And you know what? Here's the thing, here's the interesting thing about the things that God gives. You have a choice of how you're going to hold on to it. You can hold on to it with a clenched hand or you can hold on to it with an open hand. It's your choice. And you can say this is my stuff and I worked hard for it and I'm not going to give it away And then you're holding on to it like this or you can choose to say this is the Lord's stuff and He gave it. He allowed me to have this stuff so I offer it up as a sacrifice to the Lord.

Have you ever thought about your house? I mean, you know, we use our house for a place to lay our head and have our meals and once in a while we might have somebody over as a guest or something like that. Have you ever thought about taking your house and just dedicating it to the Lord and saying, I just want to use this house for God. It may not be big, it may not be fancy, but Lord, I just want to give it to you. I've got a living room, we can have Bible studies in there. Maybe invite some people from our neighborhood. Looking for opportunities to give back.

How about your car? Is it yours or is it the Lord's? It all depends on how, you know, you think about it. Well, I'll tell you this, the Bible says you belong to the Lord if you're a believer. Completely, you are His. It says, He bought you. Right? That's what the Bible says. You've been bought at a price in the New Testament. (1 Corinthians 6:20) If the Lord bought you, doesn't it stand to reason that everything that you have is His as well? So your house, your car, your clothes, your food, your money, that's the Lord's. That's why people...

It's funny, people will ask, Pastor Paul, how much are we supposed to give to the Lord? Everybody wants to go back to the law. Christians, even today will say, well, you need to, you're supposed to give 10 percent. That's not a new Testament principle. The new Testament principle is to give whatever the Lord lays on your heart to give. But with this understanding, it's all His. Yeah, that's it. It's like, Hey, you want to start at 10 percent. That's great. That's fine place to start, I suppose. But in the new Testament it's not a 10 percent thing. It's a 100 percent thing. It's all his because you're His.

He paid for you, lock, stock, and barrel, with His blood. Boom! Done, you belong to Him. Okay? It's all His. So we should be praying, Lord, how do You want to use this? And we should be doing what David is doing. We should be looking for opportunities to bless others. Looking for opportunities to give something of what God has given us, to others. Just out of our love for the Lord and our recognition that God has given this.

And there's, boy, let me tell you something, there's something that we've learned over the years, and it's also backed up in the Scripture, but we've learned you can't out give God.

He's not, He's never going to be anybody's debtor. God is never going to... You can't keep giving and giving to the point where God's like, I can't keep up with this. He's never going to be, it's never going to be a problem for Him.

In fact, back in the Book of Malachi, He challenged His people, Israel because they weren't bringing the tithes into the storehouse. He said, go ahead, test Me and see what I do. See if I don't bless your socks off. That's a paraphrase, but you know what I mean. That's what God was saying in Malachi. See if I don't absolutely just pour it into your laps in keeping with how you give.

God will never be any man's debtor. You can't out give God, you just can't do it. It's an exciting prospect actually when you think about it. But it requires one thing. It requires faith. And it requires looking at your belongings this way, with hands open. Instead of this way, with hands clenched shut. And I'll tell you right now that if you hold on to your stuff like this, they will slip through your fingers.

That's exactly what God said to the people of Israel. He said, have you ever noticed you got holes in your pockets? He literally said that to them. You guys have holes in your pockets. Let me tell you why. Because you're stingy and you haven't done what I've told you to do by bringing the offering into the storehouse. And doing the things that I told you to do with the widow, and the orphan, and that sort of thing. And you know what? Your money you put in your pockets and it just falls out.

And that wasn't a literal sort of a thing, but it was God's way of saying you, you have, but you don't have enough. You drink and you're still thirsty. You eat and you're still hungry. There's a leanness in your life because you're holding like this. Very, very important stuff. I love David's example here.

It says in verse 12 that, *“And Mephibosheth had a young son, whose name was Mica. And all who lived in Ziba's house became Mephibosheth's servants. ¹³ So Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem, for he ate always at the king's table. Now he was lame in both his feet.”*

Chapter 10. *“After this the king of the Ammonites died, and Hanun his son reigned in his place. ² And David said, “I will deal loyally with Hanun the son of Nahash, as his father dealt loyally with me.”*

Again, what do you see David doing? He's looking for opportunities to bless, isn't he? He realizes that the king of the Ammonites died. When his son came into the position after him, David thought, you know what? This guy was friendly to me, this king of the Ammonites. I'm going to be friendly back and I'm going to send a delegation of men to just express our condolences. See if there's anything we can do. Again, David is looking for an opportunity to console. And that's what it says.

“So David sent by his servants to console him concerning his father. And David's servants came into the land of the Ammonites. (verse 3) But the princes of the Ammonites said to Hanun their lord, “Do you think, because David has sent comforters to you, that he is honoring your father? (is that what you think?) Has not David sent his servants to you to search the city and to spy it out and to overthrow it?”

Yeah. I think I'd get rid of these guys. Little paranoia going on in that boardroom. Right. But, unfortunately, the king listened. And it says, *“⁴ So Hanun took David's servants and shaved off half the beard of each and cut off their garments in the middle, at their hips, and sent them away.”* This was just an act of humiliation. He was just humiliating them

And *“⁵ When it was told David, he sent to meet them, for the men were greatly ashamed. And the king said, “Remain at Jericho until your beards have grown and then return.”*

I want you to notice a couple of things here. First of all, I want you David is not taking any action against the king of the Ammonites. There will be a battle that will ensue, but not because David started it. David allowed his men to be humiliated, but he didn't muster his army. And he decided that he was just going to let this thing go. He was trying to respond graciously. The young king of the Ammonites responded badly, but okay, it happens. We're just going to let this go.

Now, Hanun the king, you'll notice here, got a lot of counsel on this. We're told that his princes, or those who were reigning with him, essentially gave him this advice. And it was very, very bad advice. And it was, we know that it was bad advice because as we go on in the chapter, we're going to find out that several thousand men are going to die because of this advice.

Have you ever heard that Scripture quoted about how there's safety in many counselors? Let me put it actually up on the screen so I can show it to you. It's from Proverbs 11:14, and in the ESV it says,

Proverbs 11:14 (ESV)

Where there is no guidance, a people falls, but in an abundance of counselors there is safety.

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Now, the reason I bring it up is because it's often quoted. Christians like to quote this and they like to say, well, there's safety in a multitude of counselors. And that's absolutely right. The Book of Proverbs is a wonderful book of wisdom that gives us generalizations of wisdom. But it doesn't mean that every time you listen to a counselor, you're going to get good advice.

And I've brought this up several times to you guys. King Hayden had a lot of counselors but lot of people are going to lose their life because these were bad counselors. What this proverb assumes is that your counselors are wise, that they know the Word of the Lord, they are godly individuals, and they are giving you godly advice.

Have you noticed how quick people are to give advice these days? It's really amazing. Most of you know, I'm a computer nerd, and a lot of times I'll get online to try to solve a problem. And many times when you do a web search to try to solve a problem, you'll be taken to a discussion board where these things come up and people discuss them.

Oh it just I need to be careful not to let it irritate me so much, but opinions. Somebody will post a question about, hey, has anybody ever come across this? And here's a problem I'm having and does anybody know how to solve it?

And before anybody brings up any kind of a real resolution to the problem, there's always 5 or 6 people who post and they guess. They don't have any idea what the answer is, but they guess. They give their opinion. They give their advice. But it's bad advice and you have to sort through all the bad advice to finally come to the maybe one person who says, yeah, I've been there. Here's how you fix that.

There's wisdom when you know and wisdom is the appropriation of knowledge. And as believers, you and I need to be going to people who are applying the wisdom of God. Because listen, you might work at a place where conversation goes on and you start telling about your life. You tell about what's going on in your marriage. You tell about what's going on in your home, in your parenting, maybe with your children. You start telling about what's happening in your extended family, what's happening in your finances.

And there's always somebody to give ungodly advice. And they'll pour it on. And sometimes those people are even family members. That's the tragedy. Many times it's mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, cousins, who you love to death. You love them. They're family. But sometimes they're not saved. Or they are, and they are foolishly giving advice that is not in keeping

with the Scripture. And that's dangerous. And you know what? There are consequences.

In this situation, this young king is going to listen to the counsel of his princes, and several thousand men will lose their lives because of it. Sometimes the advice that you and I listen to that comes from unbelievers. People who are, who respond, sometimes even respond out of great motives.

Family members usually have very good motives and very bad advice. I'll just be honest with you. And the reason they have good motives is because they love you. The reason they have bad advice is because they love you, and they want what they think is the best for you. But they're not always keeping godliness in mind. They're keeping other things in mind, like, I don't want you to have to go through hard times.

And many times what family will do, is they will suggest the fastest route to getting out of bad times. Even if it violates the essence of Scripture. Have you ever heard that kind of advice? Divorce the bum! Get over it! Get over him! But is that godly advice? That's the part that you and I have to always ask ourselves.

And some of that advice is going to be very tempting to take because it is going to be a solution of sorts, but it's not God's solution. And when we play into solutions that aren't God's solutions, we invite all kinds of negative consequences that we have to be very careful about. Watch how this basically evolves.

It says, *“⁶ When the Ammonites saw that they had become a stench to David, the Ammonites sent and hired the Syrians of Beth-rehob, and the Syrians of Zobah, (in other words, mercenaries) 20,000 foot soldiers, and the king of Maacah with 1,000 men, and the men of Tob, 12,000 men. ⁷ And when David heard of it, he sent Joab and all the host of the mighty men. ⁸ And the Ammonites came out and drew up in battle array at the entrance of the gate, and the Syrians of Zobah and of Rehob and the men of Tob and Maacah were by themselves in the open country.*

⁹ When Joab saw that the battle was set against him both in front and in the rear, he chose some of the best men of Israel and arrayed them against the Syrians. ¹⁰ The rest of his men he put in the charge of Abishai his brother, and he arrayed them against the Ammonites. ¹¹ And he said, “If the Syrians are too strong for me, then you shall help me, but if the Ammonites are too strong for you, then I will come and help you. ¹² Be of good courage, and let us be courageous for our people, and for the cities of our God, and may the LORD do

what seems good to him.”¹³ So Joab and the people who were with him drew near to battle against the Syrians, and they fled before him.¹⁴ And when the Ammonites saw that the Syrians fled, they likewise fled before Abishai and entered the city. Then Joab returned from fighting against the Ammonites and came to Jerusalem.

¹⁵ But when the Syrians saw that they had been defeated by Israel, they gathered themselves together.” In other words, they regrouped for a second attack.

And ¹⁶ And Hadadezer sent and brought out the Syrians who were beyond the Euphrates. They came to Helam, with Shobach the commander of the army of Hadadezer at their head.¹⁷ And when it was told David, he gathered all Israel together and crossed the Jordan and came to Helam. The Syrians arrayed themselves against David and fought with him.¹⁸ And the Syrians fled before Israel, and David killed of the Syrians the men of 700 chariots, (presumably more than 1 man in each chariot) and 40,000 horsemen, (good grief) and wounded Shobach the commander of their army, so that he died there.¹⁹ And when all the kings who were servants of Hadadezer saw that they had been defeated by Israel, they made peace with Israel and became subject to them. (and) So the Syrians were afraid to save the Ammonites anymore.” In other words, they didn't go out to war with them anymore.

You read about this and on the one hand, hey, David's being given victory and that's all cool and stuff. But then you look at this loss of life and you think, that could have been saved. That could have been helped. That could have been avoided. It was bad counsel.

You know what good counsel would have been in a situation like that? First of all, the good counsel would have been, hey, David sent a delegation because your dad was good to him. Now be good to David and things will go well with you. That's good counsel.

After the king made the mistake of humiliating the men, better counsel would have been, go to David and apologize now. Go and humble yourself before David and tell him, you know what, that was foolish. You and my dad had a good relationship and I had men who stirred me all up with all kinds of terrible things said about you, and you know what, I believed him, and I did this, and I'm sorry. And that shouldn't have been done. I apologize.

Again, that's the kind of council we're looking for here. It's not the kind of council he got. And as a result, look how many people lost their lives? Probably somewhere around 50,000, maybe more depends on how you count all these things up.

But the consequences of you and I taking the wrong course, getting the wrong council, doing the wrong thing, can have huge implications for you and your family. So get godly counsel, go to the Word. You and I have the Scriptures, go to the Scriptures, hang out in the Proverbs. The Proverbs are a great place to hang out. The wisdom of God, great wisdom literature.

Be in the Scriptures, know what they have to say about things. If you're still new in the Lord, or you're wondering about what kind of a decision to make in a situation, go get good, godly counsel from people who have a track record of making good choices. Good family choices, good financial choices, good relationship choices.

People who you can see have a stability and a structure and a foundation to their home and their family. Who you can go to and say, give me counsel about what to do in this situation and show me in the Word where the Scriptures speak of these sorts of things. It's in that kind of counsel, there's safety. There's safety.

And I believe that the Lord will respond to that kind of humility, sensitivity to do what's right.