

# March 08, 2026 - 2 Samuel 10:1-19 - "The King Still Reigns "

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[ 0 : 00 ] Please turn with me to 2 Samuel chapter 10. Samuel 7.

their garments in the middle, at their hips, and sent them away. 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. 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, twenty thousand foot soldiers, and the king of Meacah, with one thousand men, and the men of Tob, twelve thousand men. And when David heard of it, he sent Joab and all the host of the mighty men. And the Ammonites came out, and drew up in battle array at the entrance of the gate, and the Syrians of Zobah and Rahab, the men of Tob, and Meacah, were there by themselves in the open country. When Joab saw that the battle was set against him, both in the front and in the rear, he chose some of the best men of Israel, and arrayed them against the Syrians. The rest of his men he put in charge of Abishai, his brother, and he arrayed them against the Ammonites. 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. 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. So Joab and the people who were with him drew near to battle against the Syrians, and they fled before him. 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. When the Syrians saw that they had been defeated by Israel, they gathered themselves together, and Hadadezer sent and brought out the Syrians who were beyond the Euphrates. They came to Helam with Shobak, the commander of the army of Hadadezer, at their head. 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.

And the Syrians fled before Israel. And David killed of the Syrians the men of 700 chariots and 40,000 horsemen, and wounded Shobak, the commander of their army, so that he died there.

[ 3 : 10 ] 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 subjects to them. So the Syrians were afraid to save the Ammonites anymore. This is God's Word. Thanks be to God.

Winston Churchill spoke in the House of Commons on November 11, 1947, and he said, Many forms of government have been tried and will be tried in this world of sin and woe.

No one pretends that democracy is perfect or all-wise. Indeed, it has been said that democracy is the worst form of government, except for all of those forms that have been tried from time to time. I share that not to create debate about government or what is good or what is bad in government. I share that because in order to understand this passage of Scripture, we need to recognize the glasses through which we see the world. And one of those is that we are part of the modern liberal political situation.

We can't fathom a king who is literally a sovereign over people and can sentence them to die or grant them life based upon the whim of himself in the moment. We can't imagine a dictator that would have that kind of power. And yet kings who have literally been called sovereigns represent the kind of authority that we think of only God is having. In this passage of Scripture, we're dealing with King David. And King David is a king. He is in command. He is in control. But not only do we need to recognize our own inability to really grasp what it means for a king to reign, we also need to recognize how this chapter deals with the overarching story of King David. As we saw a couple of

weeks ago,

[ 5 : 23 ] Pastor Carmen preached on chapter 8 and he discussed the king conquering nations and ruling. And indeed, that is a part of it. And then we came to this story last week, chapter 9, where David shows kindness to Mephibosheth. And now we come to another chapter where there's conflict again. And then in the next chapter, we're going to deal with Bathsheba. We need to recognize that all of these battles, story of a crippled guy, battles, story of Bathsheba, we need to recognize that these are not just individual stories, but this is part of what God is trying to teach us and show us. And these individual pictures are elements of the story that are very, very important. And finally, we also need to recognize Hanan as a opposite, if you will, of Mephibosheth. Last week, Pastor preached on Mephibosheth, the man who was crippled in his feet and who was called before the king. And he came before the king and he fell on his face and he acknowledged his inability to stand before the king. And yet the king raised him up and made him as one of his own sons and granted him privilege. That's one view, but there's an opposite view. There is another perspective. And that's this king named Hanan.

My dyslexic brain switches those two vowels and I sometimes pronounce it Hunan and sometimes I pronounce it Hanan. And I'm sorry about that. It's part of the way my brain works, so you're going to hear it differently throughout the sermon. But King Hunan is an opposite of Mephibosheth. And we need to recognize that as Mephibosheth is an example of a person who receives the kindness of the king. We need to see Hanan as a man who rejects the kindness of the king. Last week, we saw what happens if somebody receives the kindness of the king. This week, we're going to see what happens when somebody rejects the kindness of the king. And what does happen when somebody rejects the kindness of the king? Well, the king still reigns. It doesn't matter whether you accept the king's kindness or reject it. He's still the king. He's still in charge. He still has authority.

We must not ever reject the kindness of the true king, the Lord Jesus Christ. I hope and pray that you recognize that you recognize that important truth. This morning, the title of the sermon is The King Still Reigns. And the main point that I want to try to get across to you today is that when the king's kindness is rejected, he still reigns. As was read through this story, this account in this chapter, there are three situations that arise. And in each one of those, the king still reigns. That is the recurring theme of this message and of this chapter.

The king still reigns. I'm going to divide the sermon up into three situations. The first one is chapter 1 through 5.

[ 9 : 13 ] We're going to be looking at the fact that the king still reigns when hearts are hardened against him. In verses 6 to 14, we're going to be looking at the king still reigns when opposition escalates against him.

And in verses 15 to 19, we're going to be looking at the king still reigns even when kingdoms unite against him. Before we dive into this any deeper, let's take a moment and look to the Lord in a word of prayer.

Heavenly Father, we recognize your word as just exactly that. Father, this is your word. This is something you want us to hear and you want us to know.

Father, this isn't just some story from centuries past. Father, this is eternally valuable information that you have shared with us.

We pray that your spirit would enlighten our minds and our hearts. We pray, Father, that you would help us to understand what is being said and help us to apply it to our hearts. In Jesus' name, amen.

[ 10 : 21 ] Well, look with me, if you will, please, at the first situation. This is verses 1 through 5, and we see that the king still reigns when hearts are hardened against him.

This chapter opens up with mentioning that the king of the Ammonites died and Hunan, his son, reigns in his place. That's just background information.

That's what happened. But notice that the king demonstrates kindness. And he specifically says, in verse 2, David said, I will deal loyally with Hanun, the son of Nahash, as his father dealt loyally with me.

The Ammonites, incidentally, are originally from the youngest daughter of Lot. That's where the nation of Ammon came from.

And therefore, they are related to Israel, but not through Abraham. They're actually related a step further back than that. But King David shows kindness to him, and he sends servants to console

him about his father.

[11:34] And it says in verse 2 there, that David's servants came into the land of the Amorites. Now, that implies that they went and they did their job. They went to Hanun, and they said to him that David wants to console you and express his concern for you.

But notice that the kindness being shown to Hanun, just like the kindness that was shown to Mephibosheth last week, is not based upon that individual.

It's not based upon Hanun, the king. It's based on the father before him. So there's a parallel that's being drawn here. We need to pay attention to that as we read through this passage of Scripture. So the king has expressed his purpose, and he sends his ambassadors to Hanun. And the ambassadors went and they did their job.

But how were they received? Look at me with verse 3. It says, But the princes of the Ammonites said to Hanun their lord, Do you think that because David has sent comforters to you that he is honoring your father?

[12:43] Has not David sent his servants to you to search out the city, to spy it out, and to overthrow it? So King David has demonstrated kindness to Hanun.

But how do the princes and Hanun react? Well, they accuse him of having suspicious motives, that he's coming to spy the place out.

And they accuse him of taking actions and having purposes that are at odds with what he's actually doing. They think he's there to try to overthrow them.

The offer of kindness was received instead as a threat. And they hardened their hearts against the king.

Not only did they harden it by accusing the king of having misplaced motives, but notice this next passage, which is actually a very important passage in the Scripture. Notice that they hardened their hearts against the covenant.

[13:46] Verse 4. Look with me at verse 4 if you will, please. This isn't just a weird story of some bizarre thing that some mad king did.

This is a direct and purposeful attack against the covenant that David and his kingdom represents. By cutting off half the beards, they are actually denouncing the Levitic covenant. In Leviticus chapter 21 and verse 5, they're told that they are not allowed to trim their beards.

So by cutting off half of their beards, they are making fun of the Levitical requirements to not shave their beards. It was intentional.

And it was supposed to be a slap in the face. But not only did they do that, they cut off their garments at the waist. And we wonder, why in the world would they do that? Are they just perverse people?

[14:53] No. What they're saying is that the sign of your covenant that was given to Abraham, the sign of circumcision, is going to be exposed. And we want you to go away unclean and in opposition to the covenant.

They are denying the covenant that has established David as the king in line here. Now, David is an illustration, a type, a picture of a king that is to come.

And we know that king who is to come by the name Jesus, our Lord and Savior. Christ, the true king, offers kindness to, as the King James says, whosoever will.

Whosoever will may come. I am very glad to say that I hold to Reformed theology. And Reformed theology has been given a bad name because it is often claimed that those who are Reformed cannot offer the gospel to everybody.

But a man named Fisher, many years ago, wrote a book called The Marrow of Modern Divinity. And in that, he talks about the free offer of the gospel. The free offer of the gospel is part of Reformed theology.

[16:13] We proclaim Christ and we say, whosoever will may come. And we plead people to come to Christ as ambassadors for Christ. Just as these ambassadors were for David, we are ambassadors for Christ.

And we call people to come to Christ. But how does the world generally receive the gospel message? By taking offense.

They say, who do you think you are calling me a sinner? Saying I need a Savior. Saying I need to confess. But the gospel message is faithful and true.

People harden their hearts against the true king. People harden their hearts against King David. Will you be like Mephibosheth?

Who falls down before the king and confesses his need? Or will you be like Hanun? The king who hardens his heart and rejects and acts against him?

[17:19] Don't be like Hanun. Don't be like King Hanun. Well, that's the first section that we saw. We saw that when the king is rejected, he still reigns when hearts are hardened against him.

Look with me, please, at verses 6-14. We'll see the second situation that we want to look at. The king still reigns when opposition escalates against him.

Look with me, if you will, please, at verse... Let's see. Let's go down to verse 8.

And the Ammonites came out... I need to back up. Verse 6. And the Ammonites saw that they had become a stench to David. The Ammonites sent and hired the Syrians. And then it goes on to describe what cities they're from.

Opposition is escalating against King David when Hanun hires these mercenary armies to come against him. Opposition is escalating.

[18:24] He's called in. It started out, David and Hanun. And then it went into the princes. And now it's escalating to thousands of people who have been called together to stand against David and the nation of Israel.

So what does David do about this situation where Hanun has brought about this opposition? What does King David do?

Well, notice with me in verse 9. It says, when Joab saw... Well, let me back up. Verse 7. And when David heard of it, he sent Joab and all the host of the mighty men.

So what did David do when opposition was escalated against him? He was a king. He's sovereign. He sent out his general and his army to take care of the situation. He commanded and his forces obeyed. They went out to war.

[19:31] They went out to deal with the situation. Interestingly enough, in this passage of Scripture, we have in verses 10 and 11 a very, very interesting statement.

I'm going to back up to verse 9. Sorry. Verse 9. And when Joab saw that the battle was set against him both in front and rear, he chose some of the best of Israel and arrayed them against the Syrians.

The rest of the men he put in charge of Abishai, his brother, and he arrayed them against the Ammonites. And he said, Joab and his brother are fulfilling the command of David to go against the Ammonites.

And what they do is they prepare. They have a plan. They have a plan of battle prepared. And when they see the situation, they take steps.

But they not only plan and take steps, they also trust in the sovereign God who rules and reigns. One commentator mentioned this passage of Scripture as being a perfect example of how we as believers are supposed to prepare and engage while at the same time trusting the providence of God to work according to his purpose.

[21:13] These individuals are responding to King David exactly as they would respond to a sovereign, to a king, to somebody who has commanded them. They're taking it seriously.

And they're going to fight. I think it's quite interesting to note that in verses 13 and 14, it says, So Joab and the people who were with him drew near to battle against the Syrians, and the Syrians fled before them.

I don't know if you caught what's going on here, but there's a city. The Ammonites come out of the city to fight against Israel, and the Syrians come up behind them.

And so then they divide, and they're going to go against the Syrians, and they start running away. And then the Ammonites run away, and there's no war. There's no battle.

They just run away. And so what does Joab do? How does he respond to that? It says at the end of verse 14, Then Joab returned from fighting against the Ammonites and came to Jerusalem.

[22:21] In other words, it really wasn't much of a battle. I'm not saying that nobody drew a sword or scared the other person, but there really wasn't much of a battle here. Why? Because the king still reigns.

That's why. He sent his men to do a job, and they did it. As I was reading through and researching to try to come up with information for this sermon, I kind of got curious about organizations that are opposed to Christianity.

Did you know that a very quick internet search, I came up with ten national organizations that are specifically devoted to being in opposition to God and Christianity and Christian morality. Ten national organizations that want to absolutely destroy Christianity and biblical truth. The world is still escalating opposition to Christ.

It hasn't slowed down any. That is still the world we live in. And we still must confront this situation. As believers and as Christians, we need to share the gospel with the lost world, recognizing that they are in opposition to us.

[ 23 : 47 ] But you know what? They will flee in the face of God's authority. We can proclaim Christ, and we can prepare to do what is right, and we can trust God that His will will be done.

Sometimes there is battle. Sometimes there is offense. But we need to recognize that when the king's kindness is opposed, opposition escalates, but He still reigns.

He still reigns. Praise the Lord. The third section of this passage of Scripture that I would like to deal with this morning is in verses 15 to 19.

In this section, we see that as the king's kindness is opposed, kingdoms unite against him.

Now I want you to think for just a second of what we said has happened so far. King David sent ambassadors to Hanun. There was this hardening of heart and this little bit of increase in opposition to him.

[ 25 : 05 ] But then it got bigger. There was mercenaries called in to fight against Israel. And now we're going to go even bigger and the Syrians are going to fight on their own behalf.

No longer as mercenaries, but as people on their own. They're going to fight against the king.

In verse 15 it says, when the Syrians saw that they had been defeated by Israel, they gathered themselves together. In other words, they took stock. They didn't like the fact that they had been scared away and beaten.

And so they gather together and they're going to do this differently. So what do they do?

Hadad-Azer in verse 16 brought out the Syrians who were beyond the Euphrates.

So this is geographically increasing. They came to Helam and Shobach, the commander of the army of Hadad-Azer, at their head.

[ 26 : 12 ] And when it was told, David, he gathered all Israel together and crossed the Jordan and came to Helam. So what's going on here? Kingdoms have united against David, much like this battle previously, but it was mercenaries.

Now it's kingdoms uniting against him. So what does the king do? The king himself comes to war.

Did you notice in the last section, David sent Joab?

He sent the army. But in this one, he gathers all of Israel and he with Israel comes to the battle.

David is a type of Christ.

He is coming to war. David is coming to war against the Syrians in verse 17. And what do they do?

Well, they take it seriously. They arrayed themselves against David and fought with him.

A real battle. A real fight with a real sovereign king. But what happened to them?

[ 27 : 21 ] Verse 18. The Syrians fled before him and David killed of the Syrians the men of 700 chariots and 40,000 horsemen and wounded Sobok, the commander of the army, so that he died.

Not only did David defeat the enemy in battle and kill the one who was in charge of them, but it goes on, verse 19, when all the kings who were servants of Hadadiz or saw that they had been defeated by Israel, they made peace with Israel and became subject to him.

What that means is that they surrendered and they acknowledged him as king and they paid him, they would have to have paid him money every year as a tax, as vassals of his kingdom.

So what happened in this passage of Scripture? They thought they were going to destroy David and his kingdom, and yet they became part of his overall rule and reign.

The lost world is joining forces against the true and living God. I don't know how the future is going to play out and how Christ is going to return, but I do know that the kings of the earth set themselves and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against his anointed.

[ 28 : 58 ] That's Psalm 2.2. I do know in Revelation 19.19, it says, I saw the beast and the kings of the earth with the armies gathered to make war against him who was sitting on the horse and against his army.

And the one sitting on the horse is the one on the white horse, the Lord Jesus. I know that the kingdoms of the world are opposed to the Lord Jesus Christ.

We need to recognize that the true King, the Lord Jesus Christ, is going to conquer and rule in this world. Revelation 20 is a scary, scary chapter.

It talks about the great white throne judgment when the King will rule and pass judgment on the world. So what have we seen in this text of Scripture?

What have we learned? Well, we've learned that when the King's kindness is rejected, the King still reigns. David continues to reign even though he was opposed.

[ 30 : 08 ] We must not be like Hanun. We ought to be like Mephibosheth in the previous chapter who came before the King recognizing his offer of kindness and fell on his face before the King.

We dare not stand up and shake our fist in the King's face. We dare not go up against our King. We will lose.

So this morning, will you be like Mephibosheth? Will you bow down before the King? Will you accept His kindness and all the provision of goodness that comes from Him?

Or are you going to be like Hanun? Are you going to harden your heart and increase opposition and bring armies to bear against Him? How are you going to respond to the kindness of the King?

I beg of you in the place of Christ, I beg of you, come to the King in humility. Give yourself to Him and allow Him to work through you.

[ 31 : 29 ] Let's pray together. Amen.