

February 22, 2026 - 2 Samuel 8: 1-18 - "The LORD Gave Mercy wherever HE went"

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[0:00] 2 Samuel chapter 8. 3 Samuel chapter 9.

And the Syrians became servants to David and brought tribute. And the Lord gave victory to David wherever he went. And David took the shields of gold that were carried by the servants of Hadadezer and brought them to Jerusalem.

And from Betta and from Barothai, cities of Hadadezer, King David took very much bronze. When Toi, king of Hamath, heard that David had defeated the whole army of Hadadezer, Toi 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. These also King David dedicated to the Lord, together with the silver and gold that he dedicated from all the nations he subdued.

From Edom, Moab, the Ammonites, the Philistines, Amak, and from the spoil of Hadadezer, the son of Rahab, king of Zobah. And David made a name for himself when he returned from striking down 18,000 Edomites in the Valley of Salt.

[2:06] Then he put garrisons in Edom. Throughout all Edom, he put garrisons. And all the Edomites became David's servants. And the Lord gave victory to David wherever he went.

So David reigned over all Israel and all his people. Sorry. And David administered justice and equity to all his people. Joab, the son of Zariah, was over the army.

And Jehoshaphat, the son of Ahilud, was recorder. And Zadok, the son of Ahitab, and Ahimelech, the son of Abiathar, were priests. And Zariah was secretary, and Benaniah, the son of Jehoiada, was over the Cherethites and the Pelethites, and David's sons were priests.

This is the word of God. Thanks be to God. Well, good morning again, church. This is Carmen Arroyo back at it again in the pulpit.

It's a joy to be here to share God's word with you, to give Brent some respite after having surgery. On his mouth. So praise God.

[3:12] And after hearing 2 Samuel chapter 8 read, a couple of thoughts have probably crossed your mind. Most of you are probably like, praise God, I didn't have to read that out loud.

Because that was, those are a lot of names, and those are a lot of places, and those are a lot of things that do not probably go well with the English language. And Pastor Rick did a great job at doing it.

And the second might be that you're looking at this, and you're like, David just keeps on winning. It's like a montage of win after win, victory after victory, spoil after spoil.

It's like, wow, what's going on here? But I want us to see that the Bible isn't just giving us this highlight reel of David and showing us what it looks like when God is keeping his promises and by establishing his king.

And if we remember just last week at chapter 7, God made a covenant promises to David. And here, in chapter 8, we see those covenant promises come to fruition and in real history, in messy history, with real enemies and real deliverance.

[4:30] And that raises a question for us that when God gives, what do we do with it? When God gives you strength to endure, do you take the credit?

When God gives provision, do you clutch it? When God entrusts you with time, money, gifts, influence, a household, do you treat it like yours?

Or do you treat it like his? Twice the narrator in this chapter tells us how to read the whole chapter. We see in verses 6 and 14, the Lord gave victory to David wherever he went.

And that is the heartbeat. And in that point, isn't that David is great, but that the Lord is faithful. And by the end of today, we'll see the fruit of that refrain. So where we're going today, and the main point we'll keep on coming back to, is this, that because the Lord gives victory, our response is to mortify sin, consecrate all, and pursue justice in Christ.

[5:48] And church, I want us to make sure we hear this clearly from the start. What we're going over today are not ways to earn Christ's love.

This is not going to be a ladder that we can climb to gain God's favor. These are responses to the king's victory, the fruit of Christ's reign, and not the price of his love.

Because we don't obey to become his. We obey because we are his. And so in this sermon I've titled, The Lord Gave Victory, wherever he went, we'll walk through this passage in three parts. First, conquest. Second, consecration. And third, justice. And we'll see how God establishes his kingdom for the good of his people, and how all of this points beyond David to the greater son of David, Jesus Christ.

So let us pray. Father God, we thank you. We thank you for continuing to provide us with your word and an opportunity to come together and gather and praise and worship you and dive into your scripture, Father.

[7:03] I pray today that you open the eyes and open the ears and soften the hearts of everyone in this room or listening online, Father, that they're able to hear and see the victories in which you have done in our lives.

And through your son, we pray. Amen. Amen. So as we step into this first section, David's conquest, I want us to go ahead and I'm going to set up some expectations.

I'm not going to do a deep dive into who, what, where, when, and why, how long, how far, where these things are going, and these battles. I think it is a great opportunity for you to take that on your own personal study to see all of that.

But I want us to see the fact that Israel and all of its enemies and these battles that are encompassed in today's scripture happen over a long period of time and happen north, south, east, and west of them.

All over. You want the timeline? Study. But what I don't want us to miss in the meantime for this sermon today is that this isn't merely just some type of land grab or a political flex or some type of resource hunt done by King David.

[8:20] These battles are tied to God's covenant promises to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joshua. And they're God's judgment on the nation who for generations have sinned against him and warred against him in their own sin and rebellion.

So, because it is this David, the same David, the one after God's own heart, the psalmist who wrote of the Lord, his soul hates the wicked and the ones who love, who loves violence and evil may not dwell with you.

And therefore, we see the singer, the shepherd, David, turn to soldier. And with that in mind, I want us to step into the text. So let's go back to verse 1, where, after this, David defeated the Philistines and subdued them.

And David took Methag Emma out of the hand of the Philistines. So we see here that in the opening verse, it says, after this, after what?

Chapter 7. Covenants that God gave David. So after all those things happened, David defeated and was able to go further than Saul ever was against their mortal enemy, the Philistines.

[9:46] You guys remember that, right? We went through 1 Samuel last year. We've been going through 2 Samuel. This year, or maybe two years ago, we went through 1 Samuel. I can't remember. However, it's Israel's arch enemy.

And by subduing the Philistines, Israel took Methag Emma, which is a Hebrew expression meaning the bridle of the mother city. It's probably likely referring to Gath, the metropolis of the Philistines.

We all remember Gath, right? Goliath was from Gath. Yeah, you guys got it. Good. So this is a huge military victory.

But we move on to verse 2. And he defeated Moab and he measured them with a line, making them lie down on the ground.

Two lines he measured to put to death and one full line to be spared. And the Moabites became servants to David and brought tribute.

[10:52] This verse is hard. And I don't want us to just rush past this verse because it could seem to be cruel.

And what caused David to do this to the Moabites, the Bible isn't clear. Is it something so despicable that he's going to slaughter two-thirds of them?

The Bible doesn't say. But what the Bible does say is that Moab is not just some random city or some random enemy in David's story.

Because if we remember back, David, when he was fleeing Saul, took his mother and father to the Moabites for protection, these Moabites were there to help his family.

And if we go even further back, we have to remember Ruth, the Moabite, David's grandmother. Great-grandmother.

[11:55] I apologize. So we have to see that when David stands over these defeated people, he isn't looking at strangers only.

He's looking at a nation that in God's providence is tangled up with his own family tree. And we also must remember that this world that this is happening in isn't something that's uncommon.

In this time, in this place, when you were dealing with a deadly foe, it was very common for the winner to execute all of them.

Especially when they were deadly. But this doesn't erase the weight of the verse. To say it happened at a different time doesn't justify the weight that we feel today.

But it does help us understand why the text presents this in a moment in grim sobriety and not with celebration. And still, one of the things that stopped me while I was studying and reading this verse today is that a full line, a third, was kept alive.

[13:13] We see that this judgment falls on the Moabites. But mercy is not absent. And I can't help but see a faint reflection there of something far greater.

That when God looks on us, real sinners, guilty in our sins, everything that we do amounts to nothing but filthy rags.

But he doesn't find reason to spare us with any of that. He finds his reason in his son and for those adopted by Christ.

He pardons, not because we deserve it, but because grace has a face and his name is Jesus Christ. So I will praise God for Jesus Christ.

So I want us to read on through verses three and five which say, David also defeated Hedadezer, the son of Rehob, king of Zobah, and as he went to restore his power at the river Euphrates.

[14:30] And David took from him 1,700 horsemen and two or 20,000 foot soldiers. And David hamstringed all the chariot horses but left enough for a hundred chariots.

And when the Syrians of Damascus came to help Hedadezer, king of Zobah, David struck down 22,000 men of the Syrians.

Church, I want us to notice this, that these victories, these aren't just random victories for random enemies surrounding all of Israel. What they're doing is they're tracing a covenant horizon that again, God made to Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and started carrying out through Joshua.

And now the Lord is establishing his kingdom in David even to this day. It's just as he said because he is faithful even when we are not.

And so, when it comes to verses 3 through 5, David pushes north to Hedadezer of Zobah and then faces the Syrians of Damascus who rush in to help. And the text is brief but the point is very clear that God's extending his rule and securing his people.

[15:41] And what we see here today, we will see in the coming chapters ahead when we see what God is going to do through Solomon. But, in the middle of that verse, in verse 4, it slows down for one peculiar detail.

That David hamstringed all the chariot horses but left enough for a hundred horses. Some of you might be thinking, well, what does hamstringing mean? Did he pull his, did the horses pull their hamstrings or what?

Similar, but, what they actually ended up doing was the practice of disabling a horse for war to hamstring a horse was to take a blade and cut the hind ends so that it would make them immobile to maneuver fast and left them to be farm animals.

and so, that's what this verse is saying is that they're not going to build their kingdom on this military technology of the day and we won't trust in these horses.

And church, this restraint matters, especially when we circle back to Deuteronomy 17 when God warns Israel's kings not to take on multiple wives nor make many horses.

[17:04] And David, at least here, he's not stockpiling a massive cavalry after all of these victories and he cripples most of them.

And this church, here, is where the Bible keeps us honest because David is not presented as some flawless hero. And even on the heels of God's promises that we saw last week in chapter 7, we've already seen cracks start to form.

We saw in chapter 5, David taking on multiple wives and concubines. And even here today, though the restraint is there with the majority of the horses, he still keeps some of the chariots.

It's this quiet tension. This is the same David who will sing, some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of our God.

In Psalm 20, verse 7. And it's also a David who is still capable of subtle compromise. So yes, the Lord is giving victory, but the narrator is also gathering clouds on the horizon and the snow is starting to drift and drift and collect slowly and quietly.

[18:36] It collects on the mountain until the avalanche. We move on to verse 6. Then David puts garrisons in Aram of Damascus and the Syrians become servants to David and brought tribute and the Lord gave victory to David wherever he went.

And verse 6 closes out our first section by showing what victory produces. David doesn't merely win a battle, he secures the territory. he puts these garrisons in Aram of Damascus.

And for you note takers, I want you to write down garrisons. What this means is lasting control, stability, and restraint against future rebellion.

Lasting control, stability, and restraint against future rebellion. And the result is spelled out here is that the Syrians become servants and bring tribute. It's the language of an established kingdom. It's not a language of oh, they won one battle but they didn't win the war. No, they decimated them. They won the war. And they're establishing garrisons, military fortresses within their lands.

[19:55] And the narrator tells you how to read everything that you've just seen. And the Lord gave victory to David wherever he went. And that's the emphasis. David's strength is not ultimately his strategy, his troops, or his reputation.

His strength is that the Lord is with him, fulfilling what he promised, subduing Israel's enemies through his anointed king. And these victories are real.

The battles are real, but the explanation is theological. God gave the victory. So church, I want to press on us for just a moment.

Are your victories mainly rooted in your effort? Or are they rooted in God's presence and guidance? When things go well, do you instinctively take credit?

Or are you giving glory to God, who gives you the very breath and wisdom and opportunity and strength? love? And here's the pivot.

[21:09] Once God gives the victory, what's next? What's the next question? Well, what do we do with that gain? The next text shifts from the battles to spoils, from conquest to what happens after the Lord gives victory, showing how the kingdom is consolidated and the riches are consecrated to the Lord.

So we begin part two, consecration and consolidation. Let's begin with verses 7 through 8. Come with me.

And David took the shield of gold that were carried by the servants of Hadadezer and brought them to Jerusalem. And from Beta and from Barathai, cities of Hadadezer, King David took very much

bronze.

In verses 7 through 8, the narrator shows that David does after the Lord, what David does after the Lord gives victory. He takes the shields of very much bronze from Hadadezer cities and he brings them to Jerusalem.

And here's another test. Who remembers what is in Jerusalem from two weeks ago? The ark.

[22:28] Yes, the ark of the covenant is in Jerusalem. So, what we have to remember is that this isn't just some king city of David. It is going to be the covenant center of Jerusalem.

It is where God dwells with his people. And so, these are merely trophies for David's ego. They're being gathered into the orbit of God's worship and they're dedicated to God for his purposes.

And again, I want us to think ahead and see what these spoils of war are going to be used for in the future with David's son Solomon when God builds his house.

So, in other words, what we see is that God's victories are already laying material groundwork for his plans and for his glory. But this chapter is more than just physical war and physical wealth.

Next, the story starts to pivot from battle to blessings because a king named Toy hears what God has done through David and he sends his son to pay tribute.

[23:41] It's a little story I like to call the toy story. Yeah? All right. Let's continue reading to infinity and verses 9 through 12.

When Toy, king of Hamath, heard that David had defeated the whole army of Hedadezer, Toy sent his son Joram, the king of David, to ask about his health and to bless him because he had fought against Hedadezer and defeated him for Hedadezer had often been at war with Toy and Joram brought with him articles of silver, of gold, and bronze.

These also king David dedicated to the Lord together with the silver and gold that he dedicated from all the nations he subdued, from Edom, Moab, the Ammonites, the Philistines, Amalek, and from the spoil of Hedadezer, the son of Rehob, king of Zobah.

And so we see here in verses 1, verses 9 through 10 that the scene shifts from this battlefield to diplomacy. Toy, king of Hamath, hears that David has crushed Hedadezer, his rival, and he sends his son Joram to greet David and bless him and give gifts.

And this isn't just merely some simple courtesy. It's this political symbol, signal, that the Lord is establishing David's kingdom.

[25:12] kingdom. And I don't want us to miss who Toy is at this very moment because Toy isn't some Israelite or he's not some covenant Jew. He's a Gentile king.

And so this is something that's a little bit important because God is working through David and displaying his might across all the nations, both Israeli, Jewish, and non-Jew alike.

And this King Toy responds like this foreign embassy and approaches the throne bringing articles of silver and gold and bronze and gestures of submission and allegiance to King David.

Pretty much what King Toy is doing is acknowledging that I'm not going to resist this king. He just beat the guy I've been warring with for decades.

Had a daiser, the geezer. So, what we see is that David's victory have made something plain even to all the other nations, that Israel's God is at work.

[26:20] And so, church, I have some more questions for us today. When people watch your lives, your decisions, your speech, your habits, do they see a holy God working through you?

Or would they be surprised that you're a Christian at all? And I don't want us to think about this as whether or not it's something that can be explained by some type of personality trait.

Like, oh, well, he's happy, he's extroverted, well, of course he's going to be nice and pleasant. No. I also don't want us to think about discipline.

Oh, well, he always shows up to work on time or she does this, but it's just something that they can't put their finger on as to why you are the way that you are.

Is that something that happens to you or that you've experienced? Then moving on to verses 11 through 12, give David's response to all of this.

[27:29] And this is, again, David doesn't keep these gifts for personal gain. He dedicates them to the Lord. And verse 12 widens the lens that this dedication isn't just, oh, well, Hedadazer gave this to me, Toy gave

this to me.

It also includes silver and gold from all of the nations the Lord has brought under David's rule. Edom, Moab, Ammon, Philistia, Amalek, and the spoils of Hedadazer.

What a Gentile king offers in submission to David, David offers to worship to the Lord. And that the victory is the Lord's and so are his spoils.

So, church, here are some more questions I have to ask you. Make sure you guys are staying awake this morning. It's a little cold outside. It's nice and warm in here. I'm sure you guys aren't falling asleep. When God gives us gain, do we clutch it or do we consecrate it?

Do we treat resources as a private possession or a stewardship for God's purposes? Let that sit with you as you go throughout your week.

[28:40] Let's move on through verses 13 through 14. Let's read. And David made a name for himself when he returned from striking down 18,000 Edomites in the Valley of Salt.

Then he put garrisons in Edom. Throughout all of Edom, he put garrisons and all the Edomites became David's servants and the Lord gave victory to David wherever he went.

And here we see again, the narrator gives us another summary of conquests and with a covenant spotlight that David made a name for himself. Again, that phrase should ring a bell to you guys because it was last week in chapter 7 verse 9 where God promised David I will make for you a great name.

And this isn't some type of self-made greatness in the verse that we see today. This is the Lord keeping covenant, lifting up his anointed and continuing to establish his kingdom as promised.

And I want us to notice again that with victory comes lasting stability. Remember that word I told you to write down, you note takers? It comes back two more times.

[29:57] Garrisons were put in Edom. Throughout all of Edom, garrisons were put. Say it twice. And garrisons, like I said, aren't flashy, but they do matter.

They're the difference between the momentary win and a secured kingdom. They signal consolidation, order, restraint, and sustained rule.

So that rebellion is checked and Israel can live in peace under God's appointed king. And what we see is that the result is very clear, that all the Edomites became David's servants, that the nations after nations is brought into submission, not ultimately because Israel is unstoppable, but because the Lord is establishing his king just as he said he would.

he gave victory. So church, some more questions. Are we awake? Are you ready? Are your resources being devoted to God's purposes?

Are they only being used for your own goals? How are you using your influence and your possessions to build God's kingdom rather than merely expanding your own personal kingdom?

[31:18] God's God's kingdom. And so after the Lord gives victory through David, after the spoils are brought to Jerusalem and dedicated to God, after the kingdom is consolidated across the land as God promised, the Spirit now shows us that the fruit of this rain is supposed to produce.

As we move on to part three, justice and equity. will be going over verses 15 through 18. So let us begin with verse 15.

So David reigned over all Israel and David administered justice and equity to all of his people. From a biblical standpoint, justice means the right judgment according to God's standard, which is true, which what is true is upheld.

What is wrong is confronted. The innocent are protected and the guilty are held accountable and the vulnerable are not crushed by the powerful.

Church, it's the steady pace of doing what is right. And equity means fairness and uprightness in how this justice is applied.

[32:45] That there's no type of favoritism, that there's no bribery, that there's no crooked scales. And some translations capture this word as from equity to righteousness, making it justice and righteousness.

And that's exactly the point. Because David is not merely strong. He aims to rule rightly toward all his people, both Jew and non-Jew alike.

And so, I know that this word equity can be a trigger word for us in today's culture because it's been loaded with a lot of modern meanings.

But here, it's not just some type of slogan. It is a moral quality, impartial, consistent, righteous judgment.

And I want us to notice again the scope of this. All Israel, over all Israel, to all his people.

[33:50] As David expands his kingdom, so does his responsibility. responsibility. And despite whether they are Jew, non-Jew, despite their background or what they look like, is the hallmark of his leadership.

And it's not just power, it is justice and righteousness. And so, this is how true kingship isn't measured by land taken or enemies crushed, but by how leaders treat the people under their care. And David rules like a shepherd and not a tyrant. and it reflects the heart of God who loves justice and opposes oppression. So here, church, I have more questions.

Are you leading in your home, your work, your ministry, your community with justice and integrity? What would it look like for you to use your influence fairly, truthfully, and for the good of others and not just yourself?

I want us to notice here that David's justice isn't just a personal virtue. It's further supported by diligent stewardship. And as we see in verses 16 through 18, the text lists officers and roles.

[35:13] And this isn't just some type of filler. What this is, is an infrastructure of righteous rule. David establishes this government with order, organization, delegation, with military leadership, civil administration, and priestly oversight.

And for some of you who notice that word priestly in there talking about the sons of David, you're like, wait a second, they're not Levites. You're right. Go to 1 Chronicles chapter 18, they use a different word.

They're more seen as governors. So, just for some of you guys out there. But, what we do see is that justice doesn't depend on any type of mood or moments, but it's faithful structure.

In other words, David doesn't only love justice, he helps ensure justice can actually be carried out. Because what good is a plan without actually seeing it through?

And this is something that we need to take on too, that holiness isn't only about what you feel, but it's also about how you order your life.

[36:25] Justice often requires structure. Faithfulness often requires organization. Stewardship means building patterns that protects what matters.

If you know there are certain websites you shouldn't go to or apps you shouldn't use, delete them. Get a dumb phone. Do things to protect your heart.

If you know there are places that you shouldn't go to, drive a different way. If you know there are people in your life that are sinning and they are causing you to be tempted, it may be time to move on.

And as we see here in 2 Samuel chapter 8, the Lord gives victory. And what follows is this pattern that God gives success and David gives God glory.

That God gives gain and David consecrates it to the Lord. That God gives authority and David is called to administer justice and righteousness.

[37:32] righteousness. But even as we see David at his very best here, we have to remember that David is not the final king.

That even with righteous instincts and ordered administration, he will not rule perfectly. His justice will falter. His heart will stumble.

The avalanche is coming. which is why this chapter ultimately points beyond David to the greater son of David in Jesus Christ.

The king whose justice never bends, whose righteousness never fails, whose kingdom is perfectly ordered, and whose mercy is so deep that he brings sinners into his reign, not by crushing them, but by being crushed in their place.

And so, another question is how do we respond when God gives? Because it is this Christ Jesus that the Father so loved the world that he gave his only son, that whosoever believes in him shall not perish and have everlasting life.

[38:59] So, as we observe this Lenten season of repentance, let us remember it is this Jesus that was born into humility and in the manger where other Gentiles saw God's mighty hand at work and brought tribute of gold, frankincense, and myrrh to kneel and to submit to the one true king.

It is this Jesus that went from being a carpenter to a conquering king that faithfully obeyed the word and defeated his subjects enemies of sin, death, and Satan not with a sword in hand but through nails that those very hands thrust through with nails.

It is this Jesus that overcame death and on the third day rose again and is ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God with complete authority over all on earth and in heaven.

It is this Jesus that has sent his helper the paraclete the Holy Spirit to set up a garrison in your heart. God's seal upon his people his presence within you.

So with all of this Christian what say you? What say you to the gift that was given? What say you to the king that has defeated all of your enemies? How will you respond to the gift of your eyes being open and your ears hearing church?

[40:31] Christ reigns as our one true king, the better son of David, the one who strengthens you and who will see you through. So I beg you, I implore you, that through the victories that God has won in his son, Jesus Christ and the garrison in your heart that his spirit dwells in, you must repent.

You must continue to mortify, to kill your sins. You must recognize that everything that you have has been given and you must consecrate it to the Lord, your God and you must pursue righteousness that is the fruit of being in Christ.

I want to remind you, church, that we must not do this to earn his love but because you are already his. You don't do this not to purchase a kingdom but because you have already been purchased by his blood.

To those of you now that are not in Christ or even those of you that are wondering whether or not you are or you're not, you cry out for justice, you cry out for equity, you cry out for peace.

So I have to ask you, how long will you put your trust, your hope, and your faith in the principalities of this world? What do you hope to gain from what the government or some politician says they'll give to you?

[42:11] What do you do when they fail you again and again and again? Furthermore, when all this continues to fail and you continue to live your life, what will you cling when yet again you are faced with the tightening grip of death?

Today was no accident and if you are hearing this, it is a reason and there is an answer to all of these questions and they can be found in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

I want you to read them. I want you to study them. I want you to get to know them because everything depends on it. Read them because our Lord, Jesus Christ, will not fail you when everything else and everyone else will.

For he reigns even to this day because he is faithful. God does a work in you and I pray that you take heed to this call for he will either give you grace and welcome you into his kingdom with everlasting life or you will receive judgment and perish.

But for those of you in Christ, God offers mercy for all who rebel. So if that's you, turn away from this world and all of its false saviors.

[43:37] Come to him, repent and believe. He welcomes the sinner. So don't postpone Christ today because today is a mercy that you may never get again because it is the Lord who gives victory over defeat and when our God takes hold of our heart, our response church is to mortify sin, consecrate all, and pursue justice in Christ alone.

Because he is our victory. The curse has been undone. Its power has been broken because of his blood. The captives we are singing, the battle is won.

Salvation belongs to our God. Soli Deo Gloria. Solus Christus for the glory of God and Christ alone. Let us pray. Amen.