

What It Takes for the Lord to Take Back His Throne

by Hoseah Wu

The Lord's return is delayed due to the hearts of people, but the Holy Spirit is working to prepare them for His return, giving them the gift of discernment and liberty in the Spirit.

Duration: 1:08:39

Scripture: Genesis 2:23, 2 Samuel 19:15, Matthew 24:44, Matthew 25:13, Luke 12:40, 1 Thessalonians 5:2, Revelation 22:20

Topics: "Sovereignty Of God"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of recognizing Jesus as God's anointed king. He highlights how the world has rejected and crucified Jesus, but believers have the opportunity to enthrone him in their hearts. The preacher also discusses the concept of giving with a purpose, referencing the story of Barzillai giving to King David with the expectation of being honored in return. The sermon concludes with a reminder to not just talk about the return of Jesus, but to actively prepare for his coming by welcoming him back into our lives.

Transcript

Good afternoon brothers and sisters. I am the second Chinese brother who is responsible for the afternoon session. Yesterday you met the other brother Kong.

The one who begins with C, now with K. So we just bow our heads before the Lord for a brief word of prayer. Lord our hearts are just full because you filled us with yourself. We thank you for your speaking to your people in such power and such clarity.

We bow low and worship you. Undeserving as we are Lord and yet you keep showering upon us, blessing. We thank you for mercy and Lord the fact we are able to sit this afternoon in this auditorium, Lord it's by grace.

Your grace brought us to this place and Lord we take grace by faith for all we need this afternoon. So Lord we look to you to present yourself with us in a mighty way. Lord make us conscious that you're with us.

Thank you Lord for your kingship, that you're ruling over your people. We commend our time to you. Use it Lord for your purpose and for your glory and for the edification of your people, for the preparing of a

people that's neat for your kingdom.

We give thanks, give praise and praise the Lord Jesus. I always stand here with a great deal of hesitation because the more I try to learn to serve the Lord, the more I discover how impossible it really is. I'm convinced more than ever that God's work only God can do.

God's word must be spoken by himself. We are simply but instrument in his hand. So for those who have some measure or some capacity in serving the Lord, we all sense that way.

It is tremendous responsibility not just to our brothers and sisters but to the Lord because when we stand here we're representing the Lord himself. So it's a very serious matter. But as I meditated before the Lord these last few weeks, in fact a few months, about this afternoon, nothing was really clarified before me by the Holy Spirit, not until a few weeks ago.

You know the theme for this conference is Thy Kingdom Come. And when I was approached by the brethren in Richmond about the affiliation, they said just share the burden of your heart. You don't have to be confined to the theme.

Now if you're given a theme, that would be much easier because you have some direction. But they said just share whatever the Lord has laid in your heart. Share that.

Now that's tough. And I tried. But I don't seem to be able to move away from that theme, Thy Kingdom Come.

The more I meditated before the Lord and reading his word, this phrase, Thy Kingdom Come, seems to be coming to me in such a force that I just couldn't get away from it because of the urgency of the time, the days that we are living. So if the Lord willing this afternoon we will look into the Old Testament, 2 Samuel 19. We'll read that account.

Let's record it for instruction. And by the help of the Holy Spirit, we hope we can learn some lessons together. Now just to give you a little background.

You know in chapter 19, it was about David's return to Jerusalem to reclaim his kingdom, his throne. But before that, we have the rebellion of Absalom. And David and a few of his followers, they retreated across Jordan.

And in 19, we have the account of how David was brought back to Jerusalem. So with the Lord willing, we're going to consider a few points. What it takes for the Lord to come back to his throne.

So shall we turn to 2 Samuel 19 and read some verses together. Let's begin with verse 9. Now all the people were in a dispute throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, The king saved us from the hand of our enemies. He delivered us from the hand of the Philistines.

And now he has fled from the land because of Absalom. But Absalom, whom we anointed over us, has died in battle. Now therefore, why do you say nothing about bringing back the king? Then David sent Zedok and Abiathar the priest, saying, Speak to the elders of Judah, saying, Why are you the last to bring the king back to his house, since the word of all Israel had come to the king, even to his house? You were my brethren.

You were my bone and my flesh. Why then are you the last to bring back the king? And say to Amasa, Are you not my bone, my flesh? God do so to me and more also, if you are not commander of the army before me, continually in place of Joab. So he swayed the hearts of all the men of Judah, just the heart of one man.

So they sent this word to the king, Return you and all your servants. And let's turn to verse 31. Shall we? Verse 31.

Then Barzilla, the Giladite, came down from Rogillum and went across Jordan with the king to escort him across Jordan. Now Barzillai was a very aged man, 80 years old, and he had provided the king with supplies while he stayed in Mahanaim, for he was a very rich man. And the king said to Barzillai, Come across with me and I will provide for you while you are with me in Jerusalem.

But Barzillai said to the king, How long have I to live, that I should go up with the king to Jerusalem? I am today 80 years old. Can I discern between good and bad? Can your servant taste what I eat and what I drink? Can I hear any longer the voice of singing men and singing women? Why then should your servant be a further burden to my lord the king? Your servant will go a little way across the Jordan with the king. Why should the king repay me with such a reward? Please, let your servant go back again, that I may die in my own city and be buried by the grave of my father and mother.

But here is your servant Chiham. Let him cross over with my lord the king and do for him what seems good to you. And the king answered, Chiham should cross over with me and I will do for him what seems good to you.

Now whatever you request of me, I will do for you. Then all the people went over the Jordan and when the king crossed over, the king kissed Basil and blessed him and he returned to his own place. Just a portion of verse 40, the first half.

Now the king went on to Gilgal and Chiham went on with him. That's all the verses we will read for this afternoon. Now brothers and sisters, as you read this, as we have read this portion, you notice that there was talk about the coming back of the king.

There was talk. Talking about the return of the king and doing something about it are quite different. Now there's much talk in our days about the coming of the lord.

There's much talk and the lord heard about it. But in this account, the lord sent two priests, particularly to the elders in Judah. He said, why should we be the last to bring the king back? And he told them, he said, I'm your brethren, I'm your bone, I'm your flesh.

Why should you be the last? Brothers and sisters, if we honestly look into our hearts, when we say we want the lord to come back, brothers and sisters, that statement is not a reliable statement from our part. We talk about his return, but yet we are not preparing ourselves for his return. In this account, you notice one thing, as though the lord is waiting to be welcomed back.

Now we find that true in the last chapter of Revelation. Three times the lord said, behold, I come quickly, but he did not come. And he's still not with us.

We are still not with him. Why is there a delay? There's talk about his coming. And he said, behold, I come quickly.

Why is it a delay? Brothers and sisters, it's our heart's condition. There is a big gap between our lips and our hearts. The lord would not come if we merely say, lord, come lord Jesus, without a yearning from our heart.

Now you notice in this passage, that beautiful words, that beautiful phrase, the bone, my bone, my flesh. It's mentioned twice here in this passage. It's very meaningful.

Very meaningful. And we'll consider it in just a little bit. So what would take us? How much the Holy Spirit needs to work in us to bring us to such a stage that the lord will find it comfortable to really come? Or indeed, he's welcome to come.

So I think we should go to the New Testament in just emphasizing a few facts. I think it's very essential. In the New Testament accounts, the gospel, the epistles, as well as the book of Acts, there are three facts that are most outstanding.

One fact is that the lord Jesus, our lord Jesus, the son of God, he has come to this earth 2,000 some years ago. Historically, he did that. And he came and accomplished the work of the father, his God, accomplished it.

And now he has gone away. Now that is a fact. Resurrection is a fact.

His ascension is a fact. His glorification is a fact. He is now seated at the right hand of the father.

He is there. That is a fact. We find in the accounts of the New Testament.

The second glorious fact is that on account of his exaltation, the promise of the spirit is now poured upon this earth, giving to the church. And the holy spirit is here with us. The third fact is that in the scripture, we are given this blessed hope, the promise of his return.

These are three basic facts we have in the scripture. Every time the lord is there, when we come around the lord's table to remember him, these three facts are visible right there for us to feel. We remember what he has done for us.

We remember that we are here to bear the testament of Jesus, who he is, what he is like. At the same time, we are to remember him until he comes. Most of our remembering of the lord on the lord's day, we have a backward look at what he has done for us.

It is all for our good. But as far as we look forward to that day of his return, brothers and sisters, we overlook that fact. It is because we overlook that fact, sometimes in our remembrance of the lord, it is not that strong.

It is weak. It is weak. Because the ultimate hope of everything is his return.

These three facts are very, very essential. And every time we come to the lord's table, we are reminded of those three facts. What he has done, what we are here for, and what we look forward to.

Now between the two comings, we have the presence of the holy spirit here. Now some people call this the dispensation of the church, or dispensation of grace, or dispensation of the holy spirit, the altar. And what marks this present age from all the other ages is the activity of the holy spirit in the hearts of the redeemed.

He dwells in our hearts and he dwells in the midst of us. Now what is he doing here? As we look around, among the lord's people, I am afraid there is some confusion. I think the issue of the holy spirit is very confusing.

But if we look at the scripture, look at the first coming down of the holy spirit and the last ministry of the holy spirit in the book of revelation, we see that the holy spirit has one work in view. Whether it is giving gifts or whatever the holy spirit does, he has that one thing in him. The holy spirit has one purpose, and that is declaring Christ, revealing Christ, incorporating Christ, or you want to put it, reproducing Christ in us.

In other words, preparing us, getting us ready for his return. The goal of the holy spirit is to bring the church to that point when the church, the bride, and the spirit can set it together in unison. So you can see, the lord in fact is waiting for us to welcome him back.

Like 2 Samuel 19, David sent word. He said, are you going to be the last to bring me back? And when the tribe of Judah heard it, somehow their hearts will unite as one and they will sing with the kings in our return. Now before we can arrive at such a point that we can all say together with the spirit come, there is much work that needs to be done in our hearts.

Now, like in this gathering here, I know some are ready. Some have been saying to the lord, come for a long time. The lord hasn't come yet.

Some are learning to say, come now. And some say, well, just wait for a little while. I'm not quite ready yet.

But the holy spirit is very patient. He is waiting until there will be a corporate representation of the body of Christ can say together in unison with the holy spirit, come. Then he will arson in his kingdom.

Now for the holy spirit to work something into us brothers and sisters is not very, very easy. We heard this morning how impossible we are for the lord. But thank god for the holy spirit.

He is a patient teacher. He patiently works in us and with us. I just want to call the attention of the ministry of the holy spirit this afternoon.

How does the holy spirit prepare us for his coming in the light of the story we read on 2 Samuel 19. Let me take you to Paul's epistle, Romans 8. You recall those beautiful words, predestined, Romans 8.28, the last 29, 30. Predestined and called and justified and glorified.

Those he predestined he called, those he called he justified, those he justified he glorified. Then if you read Romans 8 with 2 Corinthians 3, 2 Corinthians 3 is the chapter of the ministry of the holy spirit. So if you read those two chapters you will notice that justification is simply God's way of preparing a clean and suitable ground in our hearts for the holy spirit to begin his work of transformation, of changing us from glory to glory.

Justification is not the end. Justification is the beginning of God's way of preparing in our heart a suitable ground for the holy spirit to begin the work of transformation, to change us from glory to glory. In 2 Corinthians 3, verse 6, we have that phrase, it's the spirit that gives the life.

The letter here, but it's the spirit that gives the life. The life we have, brothers and sisters, is given by the holy spirit. Born by the spirit, the life in the spirit.

The holy spirit gives life to us. And then when you come to verse 17, the holy spirit gives us the liberty in the spirit. Life is not enough.

That life needs liberty in the spirit to what? To be changed, to grow from glory to glory. So 17 we have the holy spirit, he gives us liberty. Liberty from sin, from the world, from the flesh, from everything that's contrary to God.

Set us free, so that we can behold the Lord of glory with unveiled face. Brothers and sisters, if we are not free from all that is contrary to God, if we try to behold him, we'll be condemned. So when we are set free, we are given the liberty to behold, to be changed.

So we, that familiar verse, as we look into the glory of the Lord with unveiled face, and as we look, we are being transformed into the same image. Now if you read D'Arby's translation, he says it's not just a reflection, it's the same image. It's Christ incorporating into us.

And as we look, we are changed from glory to glory, just as the Lord the spirit himself. Now this word just as, or even, you want to put it in a more ordinary day language, this changing us from glory to glory is precisely, exactly the work of the Holy Spirit. That is the work of the Holy Spirit.

So the gift of the Holy Spirit are not an end in themselves, it's to change us from glory to glory, preparing a people fit for the return of the Lord. As we learn to behold the Lord and sit in his presence and enjoy that life and that liberty, in my recent meditation, and as I look back into my own life, I just thank the Lord. I just thank the Lord.

I believe the first gift of grace the Lord has given to each of us is the gift of discernment. To me that is very basic. That is fundamental for a Christian who walk every day, and who is to know what is of the Lord, what is not of the Lord.

Now isn't that essential? Otherwise we'd be so confused. You wouldn't know how to follow the Lord. You don't know how to walk down here.

So I believe the most precious gift that the Holy Spirit has given to us as we behold our Lord Jesus is this gift of discernment. What is of the Lord, what is not of the Lord. What is pleasing to him, what is not pleasing to him.

Isn't it our experience brothers, the moment you say you have that, something you've been doing, now you cannot do. Something you don't want to do, now you know you ought to do. There are places you had to go, now you cannot go.

There are places you don't want to go, and now you say go. It is Holy Spirit, it is discernment. You know something, there's an inward knowing what is of the Lord, what is not of the Lord.

And to me that is the most precious gift. But what I'm saying is that gift doesn't stay there. That gift has a tremendous potential as we behold, as we look to the Lord, and that gift, that discernment gets sharper and sharper and refined.

So that we not only know what the Lord has done for us, oh wonderful it is, but now we are getting a deeper perception. We are getting a penetration, a keen insight into who this person is, the Lord Jesus. Not just his work but his person and his office.

Now for most of us we know something of the work of the Lord Jesus. What he has done for us, we know something. But few of us know the person.

Few of us know the office of the Lord Jesus. But as we behold and learn to wait upon the Lord, we are given this insight. This insight comes by beholding him or waiting upon him.

You know most Christians, we look at the Lord only once, the day we are saved. That's it. There's nothing more to look to him.

He is my saviour. But what is he to God? He is God's sole heir. He is God's anointed king.

He is God's priest. He is God's prophet. He is the ruler of everything.

And he is the centre and heart of God the Father. He is the centre of all God's purpose. He is the beginning and the end.

And he is the beginning and the end of all God's activities and all God's doings. And the Lord himself in revelation said, I am the beginning. I am the end.

I am the first. I am the last. So the question, brothers and sisters, we have to ask ourselves from time to time, at least myself, when the Lord looks at me, when the Lord looks at you, when the Lord looks at the church, and as he sees me and sees you and the church, how much that's of himself that he can find in us.

That's what he's looking for. Now let's go to 2 Samuel and see what we can learn together this afternoon. Once we see him as king, as we heard last evening, our place is submission.

King demands total submission. Now in the account that's before us in 2 Samuel 19, and if you know the previous chapters, you will notice when David was retreating from Jerusalem, I would say that he was retreating from Jerusalem temporarily because of Absalom's rebellion. Temporarily.

Why temporarily? Because if you read the account, you know when David sent his troops back to fight with the troops, the soldiers of Absalom, the outcome of that battle was never questioned. You remember he told the generals in all his troops, he said, when you go fight the battle, you be kind to what? You be kind to Absalom. The outcome of that battle was in David's mind, it's already settled.

So he told the generals in the troops, he said, now just be nice to him, don't kill him right away, don't kill him. Preserve his life. So I said temporarily.

But you notice one thing, when David was retreating from Jerusalem, it's when we are in a crisis, spiritual crisis. Our true heart is revealed. So when David was retreating from Jerusalem temporarily, the thoughts of many hearts are now revealed.

Whether they know they are king or not, it's now revealed. So many of the Israelites, they abandoned David. Many of them, they fought with Absalom.

Why? Because outwardly, David was no man. Weak, maybe. Few were his followers.

And Absalom was a young man. And you read Absalom's account, you know how good looking he was. You know, his hair and all that.

They said from the top of his head and to the toe, there was no defect in him. You see, in this country, when somebody runs for president, they're always looking that his wife should be the best looking lady in the land. So all Israelites, they were drawn to Absalom.

He was young, charming, and he had a popular support. He knew how to influence people and make friends. You know how he did it, don't you? And so they thought David was just like any other king, earthly king.

You know, so when you're old, you're finished. But here we see the contrast. For those who really knew David in heart, those who really had a real close relationship with him, David is no ordinary king.

Because in verse 21, chapter 19 of 2 Samuel, we have that phrase, he is the anointing of what? Others, they saw him as just any ordinary king. But those who knew David and the history of David, they said he was different. He was God's king, the Lord's anointed, not like Saul, man's choice.

Absalom was man's choice, but David was different. David was God's choice. God brought him to the throne.

God gave him the throne to rule over his people. God was behind David. And so those who knew David and followed him closely, they knew any attempt to drive David out of the throne would be impossible, because David was God's chosen man for that throne.

And so they resisted the rebellion and they sided, retreated lovingly, willingly with David. Basila and those who gathered around David, it's at a time of adversity, it's when David was retreating, they came to him, to his support. You know, brothers and sisters, when someone is retreating, seemingly on their feet, it would be very foolish for you to come and support that person.

But for those few that came to David, there was no doubt in their heart that David was not just an ordinary king, David was God's king, God's anointed. Because they knew that in their heart, they came and gave themselves to David. Their devotion to him was uttered, because in their heart, David was their legitimate king.

All the others are counterfeit or usurpers. He alone was worthy of their submission, and the kingdom was rightfully his. They took that ground with David.

Now this insight, brothers and sisters, for those few that really loved David and recognized him as anointed brothers and sisters, because of their life around David, they were his closest friends. They maintained an intimate relationship with David. They saw something in David.

Now brothers and sisters, applying to our life down here, as we behold the Lord, as we draw nigh to the Lord, as we learn to wait before him, we unveil faith. It's then, brothers and sisters, we can recognize, we are given the recognition that he is not just a savior, he is God's anointed king. The kingdom is rightfully his, the throne is his.

It's not easy. Because this world system has rejected the God's king. When he was on earth, they insulted him, they rejected him, and they crucified him.

But brothers and sisters, we, those who are loved by him, redeemed by him, enthroned by the Holy Spirit, and through the life that's given to us, and the liberty in the Spirit, through faith, brothers and sisters, we

can enthrone him now in our heart. So we heard this week, today the kingdom is a mystery. Why? Because it's hidden.

Where? In our hearts. So brothers and sisters, we can enthrone him even now in our hearts. And the work of the Holy Spirit, brothers and sisters, is simply to make room in our hearts, in our lives, for him to enthrone.

Room for him, more room for him. Now the Holy Spirit is always beautiful. As I shared a few minutes ago, the Holy Spirit has this one aim.

Whatever he does, he has the Lord Jesus in view. And it's a work of glory, because he's the Lord of glory. If we can allow him to enthrone in our hearts, the throne speaks of glory.

It is a work of glory. If we long for the Lord to return, brothers and sisters, to set up his kingdom on this earth, we must be willing for him to set up his throne in us now, in the church. That is the only way, that is the way the Holy Spirit paved the way for his coming.

It must begin with us. If the Lord cannot do that work in us, in me and you, brothers and sisters, we are delaying his coming. May we see him as king, God's king, our king, and learn to enthrone him in our hearts.

You know when you talk about the Lord's coming, we always think about signs. What are the signs of the Lord's coming? In time the Lord did tell us some signs. Brothers and sisters, we are looking for signs of his coming, but what do you think the Lord is looking for? He's looking for the right condition here.

Signs are really secondary out there. The primary sign he looks for is the heart condition. Is there a welcome sign in our hearts for his return? That's what he's looking for.

So, may the Lord help us. Now, the second thing is that as we gaze on the Lord of Glory, when we unveil his face and the Holy Spirit is doing the work of transformation, changing us from glory to glory, our love for him increases. Why? Because our appreciation for him increases.

Our appreciation and love more or less go hand in hand. How much do you appreciate your love? So, as we value him more, his worth, our love for him increases. But if you read the account of Barzilla, he gave everything to David because David was his king.

So, he gave everything at David's disposal. Imagine supporting David and all his men, I don't know for how long a period. Imagine that.

Look at the resource he has there. And he gave all those things at David's disposal. For instance, out of love.

Love for David. Any true giving to the king must be out of love. Not just obligation, because he's a king of love.

Barzilla, he gave in his faith. He sustained David all those days with the hope, with anticipation that one day will come soon that he himself will personally have the privilege to escort David across Jordan. Now, you think of that.

That's unfaithful. To reclaim his rightful throne. See, our loving, our giving has something in view.

Barzilla, in his giving, loving, he has something in view. He has given him everything with the view that one day will come that he himself will personally have the honor to escort David across Jordan on his claim to his kingdom. Now, brothers and sisters, that's some giving.

That is giving with a purpose. You know, the Lord's Prayer, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done. As I meditate on this story, you know, I just discover myself and the fellows in South Jersey, when we come and pray, or I pray personally, we ignore the first half of the Lord's Prayer.

We all concentrate on the second half. When it comes to say, give us this day our daily bread, boy, we pray with real faith. Oof, we really mean it, because we are afraid to go hungry.

But when it comes to say, Thy kingdom come, our hearts will not laugh, because we do not love the king. We love the things of the king, we don't love the king. You know, in this country, we don't even pray, give us this day our bread anymore, because when you go home, you have a refrigerator full of food.

And some of your housewives, you have your menu for the week all planned. You know exactly what you're going to have when you go home. We don't pray.

But for those who are able to pray, Thy kingdom come, only those who really love the king, the love of the king, will pray that prayer. That prayer issued out from the depth of the heart, out of a relationship with the king himself, out of a light of beholding the king, and knowing down deep in your heart that the kingdom is his, the throne is his. Brothers and sisters, we know very little about the Lord, and we don't know what he longed for.

So we are still very self-centered Christians. May the Lord change our priority from self-centeredness to kingdom-centeredness. May the Lord help us.

The king requires our submission and our love. Next, I believe this love has to translate into something very, has to be tested, has to be tried. It's a loyalty out of the heart, loyalty, a true commitment, a surrender of everything.

Now we read that Bartholomew was a man of means. Some versions say he was a great man, and some versions say he was a rich man. Now when he was given his all to David and his men, what do you think the reaction from his family, from his friends, what do you think were their reactions? Particularly at this time, when the revealing of Absalom seemed so strong and so promising, and David seemed so weak.

And here this man, he cast his sluts with David. What do you think of his friends? What do you think? I'm sure many of his friends and relatives, they question his wisdom, particularly at this time. Is this the wisest thing to do? I just want to share this with you.

There's a brother in the Philippines, he was involved in one of the candidates during the election, and he thought this candidate was a sure win. So he cast sluts with him, but unfortunately he was a loser. And when he was out of the office, when he didn't get the office, for instance, half of his business was just wiped out, because he sided with the wrong party.

He always goes for the winner. And family and friends, they say, now this is the wrong time to do it. Look at David, he's not in Jerusalem.

Look at Absalom, my, he's overlooking and all his followers. They question his wisdom, but Bartholomew was unmoved. He was unmoved.

Why? Because down deep, he has an inward knowing that David was God's king. So when we take a stand for the Lord, we'll be challenged. If we do not know the Lord deeply and intimately, we may be shaken by it, that Bartholomew stood his ground.

For instance, that's what the Lord is looking for among his people. He is not with us. We do not see him.

Yet by faith, we can keep this ground for him. This world always rejected God's king. It asked for Barabbas, the murderer, and the religious world is still crying and shouting, we have no king but Caesar.

But what is our cry? Our cry is hallelujah, he is one, he is king. That is our song. So for instance, Psalm 2 becomes a very meaningful psalm.

We don't see him, yet by faith we know God's king is in Zion. The next lesson I think we need to learn is that as we approach, as we grow in the Lord, the Lord has a lot of refining work in us. Because our love for him, our loyalty to him, everything that we do for him is so mixed.

At first, it's a lot for us, very little for him. But he's looking for that first love, pure love. He's looking to look at his people and he can say those beautiful words.

I think those are the most beautiful words in Garden of Eden. When Adam looked at Eve, he said, now this is the flesh of my flesh. They are born of my bones.

I think those are the most beautiful words. It's me. You remember in 2 Samuel 5 when Israelites came to Hebron to crown David king over all Israel.

And the same phrase was repeated. They came to crown him king and told him, David, we are your what? We are your flesh. We are your bone.

We are your what? We are your flesh. We are here to crown you king. There is an echo there.

Those same words were repeated. The Lord is saying, I'm your flesh. I'm your bone.

I'm your flesh. Can we say to him, we are your bone, your flesh. Can we? But in 2 Samuel 5, they came to David and they said, we are your bone, your flesh.

We are here to crown you king. And he became king over all Israel. Well, you know, our love for him, our loyalty for him need to be refined.

And we find that in this story. Let's look at verse 32 and 33. Bartholomew was a very aged man, 80 years old, and he had provided the king with supplies while he stayed in Mahanaim.

And he was a very rich man, in verse 33. And the king said to Vasilei, come across with me. I will provide you while you are with me in Jerusalem.

Oh, what an offer. What an attractive offer. Brother and sister, if we were in his shoes, he'd say, okay, I accept.

Now and then he'd say, I deserve it. Look what I have done for him. I have given all to him and now I get some back.

That's fair. That's how we are. But what was his attitude? What was Bartholomew's attitude? Verse 36.

Your servant will go a little way across the Jordan with the king. And why should the king repay me with such a reward? He refused. He declined.

An offer from David the king, he declined. So we can see here, Bartholomew was attracted to David as a person, as a king in his office. Not what he has done for him or what he can do for him.

If you read further down to verse 39 with me, and I think this is most beautiful. Then all the people went over Jordan. And when the king had crossed over, the king kissed Bartholomew and blessed him.

Of all the commotion at that moment, everybody is there greeting the king. If you read the story, there were a lot of people there. The tribe of Judah and there were others.

There was a lot of commotion there. And yet, Bartholomew was seen to go out by David and he kissed him. What honor.

You know, with Bartholomew, I'm sure we all agree that his greatest reward was in seeing David regain his kingdom. That's pure love. That's first love.

That's what the Lord is looking for in the church. And may the Lord grant us that love. May the Lord purify us each day of the week, each day as we live on this earth.

That our love for him will be refined, will be purer and purer. He's looking for that first love. And only first love will permit him to occupy that supreme place.

Now lastly, I want to share something maybe a little more practical with most of us. Bartholomew refused to go to Jerusalem to enjoy the palace life, the court life. But he was preparing somebody to go with David.

And I most beautiful picture I can see here. Some Bible commentaries say that Ching Ham, his son, went to Jerusalem on the merits of his father. It was because his father's relationship with David and that's how he got to go to Jerusalem.

And I don't think so. If I'm wrong, correct me. You can see that to supply David and his men with all the things they need is quite logistic planning.

And for an aged old man, 80 years old, he has to rely on a lot of help to carry all these things out. I have no doubt that his son played a very, very important part in supplying David's need. And on many occasions, I'm sure this young man had a personal contact with David.

I'm sure the father said, now I have something that's very special. Now don't give it to the captains. This is something special.

Just give it to David. I'm sure there are many occasions like that. You remember David himself had that experience when his brother was fighting Goliath and the father said, now you take all these things with you, not to your brothers, but he has some special thing for the captains, you know, special for the captains.

So the father said, now you take care of all this supply, but he has something special, something that's better. Now reserve and make sure that David gets it because he's king. Love, expression of love.

I'm sure. We will do it. We will do it.

So I don't think it's on the merits of his father. I think he himself came to know David. So Bartholomew's business was kingly business.

He loved the king. He wanted to see the king in throne in Jerusalem. And Bartholomew is not himself is doing it.

He's influencing his offspring. Brothers and sisters, there are a lot of families, father and mother, they love the Lord. How about their kids? It makes me very sad to see husbands go to the church and wives not there.

Or wives there and husbands not there. And the parents are there and kids aren't there. If loving the king is that important to you, don't you want your kids to do the same? If loving David is your life, don't you want to see everybody in your family love that king? And many of our housewives, we advise our kids to all kinds of activities, gym, gymnastics, and that lesson and that lesson.

Nothing wrong with that. And make sure we remind them, king's business must be number one. Others we can do, but king's business comes first.

So when I read this account, it's so beautiful, you know? Verse 40, that first half. And now the king went on to Yorgo and King Ham went on with him. My Lord, what a beautiful phrase there.

Brothers, if we don't get to see the Lord's return, are we preparing the next generation to welcome him? Are we? Do we have that responsibility? Do we? I believe we do. That's why the Lord has given these offsprings to us, to prepare them for the return of the Lord. We had a part to play.

And if you look into Bible dictionary, you'll notice Barthelat, the meaning is iron. In other words, his devotedness to his king's business is utter, unmoved, totally committed, loyalty, love, submission, purity, iron, iron will. Nothing moved me.

And because of his utter devotion to the Lord, his son saw it. And king said, yes, there is an outtaken with me. And he went on.

He left his inheritance and went to Jerusalem. We have big responsibilities as parents. If we ourselves are longing for the king's return, for instance, are we preparing our sons and daughters to do the same? Are we? In the Lord's words.

Now, just to give you some more encouraging words. You know, Qinghyang is a very interesting name. It means longing.

Because the father has such longing, such iron will for the Lord, and the son longs for him too. It rubs off longing. So in a sense, he also longed for David to be king.

And so he went across with David to make him king in Jerusalem. You know, recently we have a Chinese family fellowshipping with us in South Jersey. And he's beginning to read the Old Testament books.

And he came to me and said, Brother Wu, you know when I read the Old Testament books, a lot of names sound like Chinese. And this Qingyang sounds very much like Chinese names. Yeah.

But you'll notice one thing. It's a beautiful story. To see an aged father loving the Lord, and yet his son also loved the Lord.

My, what a beautiful picture. That is the most beautiful picture we can behold nowadays. That itself is tremendous testimony that father and son are one in heart.

In Brother Harry Foster's book on Bible Catholic, he said, God's king is determined that the man who had been true to him in his rejection shall have a permanent place with him in his exaltation. That's what we see here. In his rejection, Barcelona came alongside.

And now another Barcelona's son sits with King David in exaltation. Now more than that, if you turn to Jeremiah 41, just touch a little bit as we conclude. Jeremiah 41, verse 17.

Now, we cannot go to the background of this, but one of the governors installed by King Nebuchadnezzar was murdered. And then some of the Jews, they're now running away to Egypt. They're fearful of their life.

And so this is what happened. Verse 17. And they departed and dwelt in the habitation of Bethlehem as they went on their way to Egypt.

So when they were departing from the land and skipping for their life, they were refreshed, ministered in Ching Ham's habitation. So hospitality and refreshing, refreshing their sins has been the ministry of this family for ages, for many generations. So here we find it.

And they departed and dwelt in the habitation of Ching Ham, which is near Bethlehem, as they went on their way to Egypt. A place of spiritual refreshment. Now there is some speculation whether it's true or not, because it's mentioned Bethlehem here.

And so some tradition, we're told that when the Lord was born, there was no place that would receive him, because they find no place for his birth. And the only place is in Bethlehem. He was born in Bethlehem in Egypt.

And so some thought the site, the estate of Ching Ham is the very place where the Lord was born. The old body of Bartholomew received David the king, and the future generation of the same family received the greater David, the king of kings. But we need that among us people.

So it's a challenge to parents, to the older ones, whether we must love the Lord with all our hearts, with all our mind, with all that we are. And to see to it that our offsprings likewise, so may the Lord help us. And may the Lord make us a prepared people that will really welcome him here, not here.

Not just talk about his return, but make ready for his return. Don't look at the outward signs, but look into ourselves. And that's the road.

How much in me, how much in you, how much in the church that when you see, you can say, that's myself, that's me. And the work of the Holy Spirit is incorporated into Christ, into us. And brothers and sisters, the Lord is waiting to say those beautiful words, first uttered in Genesis 2, now.

Now, why now? This word now. Now, this is the bone of my bones, the flesh of my bones. Why now? The way he's waiting.

Now. So may we be a people that are eager to hear those words, now, you are the bone of my bones, the flesh of my bones. And together we can say, Lord, we come to enthrone you because we are your bone and we are your flesh.

And that will usher in the Lord's return. Father, we want to confess again our total inadequacy, but we thank you for the adequate ministry of the Holy Spirit. We do pray that you continue to teach us Christ, reveal Christ to us, form Christ into us.

Lord, we desire you to increase and we to decrease. Lord, we long for that day when you look at us, you can say, now, you are the bone of my bones and the flesh of my flesh. And Lord, do it for your glory.

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