

## CHRIST OUR EVERLASTING COVENANT

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### 2 Samuel 23:1-7

Now these are the last words of David. Thus says David the son of Jesse; thus says the man raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel:

"The Spirit of the Lord spoke by me, and His word was on my tongue. The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spoke to me: 'He who rules over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. And he shall be like the light of the morning when the sun rises, a morning without clouds, like the tender grass springing out of the earth, by clear shining after rain.'"

"Although my house is not so with God, yet He has made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and secure. For this is all my salvation and all my desire; Will He not make it increase? But the sons of rebellion shall all be as thorns thrust away, because they cannot be taken with hands.

But the man who touches them must be armed with iron and the shaft of a spear, and they shall be utterly burned with fire in their place."

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We have been looking at, and meditating on quite a few of the Psalms over this past summer, and up until last Sunday. I happened to be reading this passage of Scripture in 2 Samuel the other day, and as we know, King David wrote 73 of the 150 Psalms. We have looked at quite a few of his Psalms, and really when we think of the Psalms we generally think of David, or at least I do. I thought then that it was most appropriate, as I felt led by the Holy Spirit, to consider the "last words of David". That is not to say that these are the words that David spoke just before he took his last breath. But it is, for us, to be considered as the last recorded words of David, which as one can then assume, is what really was in the heart of David, knowing that his time on this earth was about to end, and that he wanted these words of his to be written down for the benefit of God's people-which hopefully includes all of us.

David was considered by God to be "a man after God's own heart". What does that mean? As we have been examining the Psalms, we have seen how really, there are three elements to being "a man [or woman] after God's own heart". That is, to have it in one's heart to want to know God, and His ways, to learn to trust God, as all His ways are perfect, and then to honor God, loving Him with all our heart, to obey Him, and to give Him praise and worship, as He is most worthy. Loving God, obeying Him, and worshipping Him can all be said to be a

way of honoring God. To have a heart after God's own heart is to know God, trust Him, and to honor Him. David, as we know, was far from perfect. Yet, he never continued in his imperfections and weaknesses, his sin. He continually looked to God and when needed, he turned back to God.

David looked to God, as the Apostle Paul instructs us in **1 Corinthians 1:30**, for His Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption. He looked to God, as we read from **Psalms 18** as well as elsewhere, as his Strength. The Lord God was His Rock and his Fortress and his Deliverer, his Shield and the Horn of his salvation, and his Stronghold. Comparatively, the Apostle Paul said to the church at Galatia (in **Galatians 6**) to "take up the whole armor OF GOD, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand", which says to us that we are to be covered by God, from head to toes. I think that certainly applies to us, and is essential, as we are indeed living in a time of evil. Nevertheless, as we may be living in a time of evil, we also are being "raised up on high, [and are also] the anointed of the God of Jacob for we are "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light." (**1 Peter 2:9**) We are called by God to be His ambassadors (**2 Corinthians 5:20**), to be His living testimony of His love and saving grace in Christ Jesus. We are His ministers of reconciliation, as the Apostle Paul said, "Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation." (**2 Corinthians 5:18**) We are anointed and called by God, in Christ Jesus, to be sharing and showing the love and the gospel of Jesus Christ!

David knew all too well that the battle belongs to the Lord. That is why it displeased the Lord that David, in his later years, did a count of his troops, even though it ultimately didn't matter if he only had five men ready for battle or 50,000 or 500,000. Most likely David knew that Abraham, with just 318 of his servants, rescued Lot and defeated 5 kings and their armies. He knew that Israel, when they were delivered from their bondage in Egypt, that the Lord had the whole Egyptian army get swallowed up in the Red Sea. The Israelites just got to stand on the shore and watch. David also undoubtedly knew that God had told Gideon that the 32,000 men were too many when they were going up against the Midianites. So, God had them go and defeat the Midianites with only 300 men. Long after King David's reign, we can read of how an angel of the Lord killed 185,000 Assyrians, and therefore delivered King Hezekiah and Judah, without them even having to go into battle. The battle belongs to the Lord!

Another important thing that we have noticed, from our studying the Psalms, is that our Creator God, the one and only true God, who reigns over all of His creation, wants us to acknowledge Him and live

appropriately, as He is our God, our Lord, and our Savior. He is not wanting us to just give Him lip-service, saying nice things about Him, so that we can gain His favor. That may be a good start IN recognizing Him as God, but we know from what God spoke through His prophets, to His people, the Israelites, that God expects more than to just be "battered up" with kind words. Through the prophet Isaiah we have God telling His people, "Inasmuch as these people draw near with their mouths and honor Me with their lips, but have **removed their hearts far from Me**, and their fear toward Me is taught by the commandment of men." (**Isaiah 29:13**)

What we really come to know and hopefully understand, is that God wants us to know, trust, and honor Him, and to live our lives with respect to Him being our Lord, God, and Savior. To go along with that is that we are to be loving others as ourselves, which is like the golden rule of doing unto others as you would want them to do to you. Jesus summed up the great commandment and the second commandment, which still to this day is what God expects of His people, to love God with all of our heart, soul, strength, and mind, and to also love others as ourselves. (**Matthew 22, Mark 12**) That, as we know, includes even those who are our perceived enemies. God is no longer, as was the case in King David's time, having His nation, the Israelites, wiping out the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Canaanites, etc., because they were completely corrupt. We are told now, in the new covenant that is in Christ, that Jesus will eventually separate the wheat from the tares (**Matthew 13:36-43**). Another analogy that Jesus used is that He will separate the sheep from the goats. (**Matthew 25:31-46**) Meanwhile we are TO BE His sheep that are being led by the Chief Shepherd, the Good Shepherd, the Great Shepherd. As Jesus stated, "If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor." (**John 12:26**) Paul said the same in saying, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God" (**Romans 8:14**) and that it is His Spirit that testifies with our Spirit that we are His children. (**Romans 8:16**)

We are first led by the Holy Spirit to believe on Christ Jesus, dying on a cross for our sins, and then to receive Him, His Spirit, which becomes a deposit guaranteeing what is to come (**2 Corinthians 1:22**). That is the New Covenant that we have in Christ Jesus-to be born of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, to become a child of God, which means, as Jesus put it, to be "born-again". That is the beginning of being a new creation in Christ, as a child of God, where He begins to work in us His Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption. We were never expected, I'm speaking of all of mankind throughout all of the history OF mankind, to live our lives outside the reign and governance and salvation of God. After all this is HIS creation. "The earth is the Lord's, and all its fullness, the world and those who dwell therein." (**Psalms 24:1**)

David starts his "last words" by saying, "The Spirit of the Lord spoke by me, and His word was on my tongue. The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spoke to me: 'He who rules over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. And he shall be like the light of the morning when the sun rises, a morning without clouds, like the tender grass springing out of the earth, by clear shining after rain.'" Doesn't that sounds beautiful and refreshing? While we aren't "ruling over men", just as the Apostle Peter said we aren't supposed to be lording over one another but being good examples to Christ's flock, (**1 Peter 5:3**) we are to be His ambassadors, His light to this dark and evil world. Jesus tells us, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." (**Matthew 5:16**) As we know from the Old Testament, in the times of the kingdoms of Judah and Israel, there was no guarantee that the rulers would be governing with justice and righteousness or that even the prophets would be speaking God's truth.

Jesus prayed to God the Father, for His people, "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth." (**John 17:17**) Pontius Pilate asked Jesus, "what is truth", in a mocking way, basically saying that truth is relative and not absolute. We know there is Truth, **His Word IS Truth**. Jesus boldly claimed, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." (**John 14:6**) Jesus also said that the Holy Spirit, which we know as being the Spirit of Christ, "will guide you into all truth". (**John 16:13**) Therefore that two-fold meaning that we know of as the Word of God, is His written Word, and then also as being Christ Jesus, who IS the Word. He promises us that He will guide us into all truth, that which is necessary and pertinent, of which we then testify of His truth, namely that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, and that we must believe on Him and receive Him.

The end goal is as Paul said in **Ephesians 4:11-16**, that after we each have believed on Christ and have received Him into our hearts, that "He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers [as well as differing gifts of the Spirit that Paul elaborates on in **1 Corithians 12**], for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, **to a perfect man**, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, **speaking the truth in love**, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ— from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which **every part does its share**, causes growth of the body for the **edifying of itself in love**."

We all have a vital role in His building of His eternal kingdom! We can only come to be that perfect man, as the body of Christ, as we are each abiding in Christ and His Word. Paul spoke of the Word making us "complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work". (**2 Timothy 3:17**) Hence the reason we are gathered together, to spend time in His Word, encouraging one another in Christ, until we have become complete in Him. The more we each do our part the more we are blessed in the fellowship and in our witness to our community. We may be waiting awhile though if we are waiting for a Spirit-filled Christian to lead us in government, but we can still be God's beacon of light, individually and collectively, as we testify to His love and His truth!

David continues saying, "Although my house is not so with God, yet He has made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and secure." There has been two interpretations of what David was saying, "Although my house is not so with God". That could mean that David was acknowledging that not all that were in his house were honoring God. It could also mean that ultimately it is not in his house that the covenant was being established, but in God's house. As we know from what the Apostle John saw in the new heaven and earth, he said, "But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light." (**Revelation 21:22-23**) That light can only come from Christ Jesus, as HE IS THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD! Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life." (**John 8:12**) That is the new covenant WE have in Christ Jesus! We are promised that when God does the separating of the wheat from the tares (what I call the weeds), or the sheep from the goats, as Jesus tells us, "Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!" (**Matthew 13:40-43**)

David continued saying, "For this is all my salvation and all my desire; Will He not make it increase? But the sons of rebellion shall all be as thorns thrust away, because they cannot be taken with hands." Right now we are the light of Christ in this world. Will He not make it increase for us too? The answer for us is yes, we are presently His light that shines through us but we will "shine forth as the sun" in His eternal glory! Unfortunately, there will be many that have not believed on Christ and received Him. There are many who do not want to know God, trust God, and to honor Him. There are many who will not acknowledge God as their Lord, God, and Savior. We can't

change that fact. After all, we cannot save, heal, or deliver anyone. But Jesus can and will! Isaiah the prophet said, "Seek the Lord while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near." (**Isaiah 55:6**) Right now the Lord is near, and His salvation can be found in Christ Jesus. "Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is [near]. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." (**Philippians 4:4-7**) Now is our time of salvation, the Lord is near! Tomorrow may not come, right?

King David's ultimate goal is stated in **Psalms 27**, "One thing I have desired of the Lord, that will I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple." Do you want the salvation of the Lord? Do you want to know God and to be with Him in His eternal kingdom and see the glory and beauty of the Lord? You may say that you want that but that it isn't in your heart. That may be, as it has been with me many times, to pray as David did, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me by Your generous Spirit. Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, and sinners shall be converted to You." (**Psalms 51:10-13**) Change my heart o God!

We have no need to concern ourselves with who is a tare and who is the wheat, who is a goat and who is a sheep. God promises that He will sort that all out in the end. But as we have the love of God working in us, we can and will be praying for our friends, our family, our acquaintances, our community, and even our nation. The best that we can do is let Him be our Lord, God, and Savior, to get to know Him, trust Him, and honor Him. "But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." (**Hebrews 11:6**) To be one who is seeking the heart of God, we aren't just seeking Him for our own selfish interests though, are we?

Christ Jesus alone is our Wisdom, our Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption. He is the Way, Truth, and our Life. He is our all and all. We just are expected to walk in it. "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." (**Ephesians 2:10**) "He is the Rock, His work is perfect; For all His ways are justice, a God of truth and without injustice; Righteous and upright is He." (**Deuteronomy 32:4**) Praise the Lord, Christ Jesus is our everlasting covenant with God and if God is for us who can come against us?