

Explore the Bible: Celebrated

May 29, 2018

- *The Explore the Bible lesson for June 17 focuses on 2 Samuel 5:9-12; 6:12-19.*

Last week's lesson ended with the understanding that much blood would be shed en route to David's kingship. While we may question the necessity of the "justice" and "innocence" of the previous two chapters, we do notice the unifying gesture of 5:1-5. All Israel came to make David their king.

We see David's continued call as a shepherd in verse 2: "And the Lord said to you, 'You will shepherd my people Israel, and you will become their ruler.'" David had to set out to prove himself as both protector and warrior of God's people.

If you were asked to step into such a role, what would your first action be? For David, it was to settle what God asked of Israel when they first began conquering Canaan, but what they never could do: Defeat their enemies and claim Jerusalem (Robert B. Chisholm Jr. *1 & 2 Samuel*, 207).

Recognized (2 Samuel 5:9-12)

Read 2 Samuel 5:6-8 before arriving at the focal passage and notice the irony. The Jebusites evidently had enough pride stored up to taunt David as just another Israelite who would not penetrate their walls. But they also did not consider their water entries as a possible weakness.

Such a seemingly improbable task was the perfect first action for David. His conquering of Jerusalem not only made it become the "City of David," but also showcased God's favor for his reign. This signified how "he became more and more powerful" (5:10a).

What are some other improbable victory stories that remind you of David's conquering of Jerusalem? While a victory may not always reveal divine involvement, we can see here that it was an affirmation. God established and recognized David, his anointed one. How has God given affirmation in your life to recognize you were doing his will?

Honored (2 Samuel 6:12-16)

Again, it would be wise to peruse the verses between the previous passage and this one. David's continued victory hit a hiccup as the Israelites first tried to move the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem. But learning from their mistake, they attempted this move properly.

Notice the excitement and sacrifices of the people. *Why was this move of the ark of the covenant worth celebrating?* In short, it was because it symbolized God's presence and action. Essentially, God was moving into Jerusalem with his people. *Why would anyone withhold celebrating that?*

Referring back to the "restored relationship" of Michal and David, we see she was the only one not celebrating. David danced, but she despised him. *What should we take from this conflicting response?* One thing we should remember is that when we honor God, celebrating is always— and should always be—our first response.

Celebrated (2 Samuel 6:17-19)

One word we should focus on in this section is "blessing." Too often, we belittle or ignore the significance of what it means to bless someone. For David in this role, we see the significance of a shepherd blessing his sheep.

David "blessed the people in the name of the Lord Almighty" and then proceeded to bless them with a parting gift of food. Do not miss this point:

The people went to their homes more blessed than when they left their homes earlier that day. *What difference could a blessing make?*

In church worship orders, especially the more formal and traditional, we often see the final element before dismissal labeled as “benediction,” which is meant to be a parting blessing. This should be a significant part of a congregation’s celebration before leaving the church house to speak the gospel to the world. *How else could we include blessings in the home, at work, and at church?*

Conclusion

The sad reality of this story is that while the people all left blessed, Michal and David interacted in such a way that Michal received the curse of barrenness (6:23). While David was able to shepherd the people, he seemed unable to shepherd his own house, which through his story proved to be true all too often.

When it comes to celebrating what God does, perhaps we should always keep in mind that the celebration of God’s work in our homes is as important—or more important—than celebrating God’s work in the church setting. Ask your group to consider how they should focus more on following and celebrating God at home as a family unit.

All that God does should be celebrated by his people, whether his believers are found alone, in a small group, or in a congregational setting. Rend Collective, a modern and unique worship band, released an album called “The Art of Celebration.” When listening to the tunes and lyrics, one gets a feel of how celebration should define the believer’s life. *What will it take for believers to celebrate God actively?*

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