



Sermon Study Guide

The Kingmaker: A King Who Bows
2 Samuel 24 – Sunday, August 18, 13
**Study questions are in italics*

Introduction

- *Richard III* is one of Shakespeare's most famous plays. Richard was a real king, the last king from the line of York. He died in battle on August 22, 1483. According to one historian, "Richard died fighting bravely against overwhelming odds." Though we don't know his motives, and though history (thanks, in part, to Shakespeare) remembers King Richard as a vile murderer, he did in the end what kings are supposed to do: he gave his life for his kingdom.
- The books of 1 and 2 Samuel are about a much older kingdom than that of York—the kingdom of Israel, and about a much greater king than Richard—David and, ultimately, Jesus Christ. Both books are foundational for understanding of the gospel. They are about our need for a king who will die for us. Chapter 24 is the capstone of all of Samuel.
- *Can you think about a time in your life that someone truly sacrificed for you? What was it like to be served that way?*

Are You Sensitive to Your Sin? [Read 2 Samuel 24:1-10]

- The nation of Israel sinned against God (v.1). We don't know what Israel did. But in response, God incited David against the people. However, in 1 Chronicles 21:1, a parallel passage, we are told that Satan is the one who tempted David to number Israel. *Why does 2 Samuel 24 say that God incited David?*
- Both Job and Paul experienced God allowing Satan to tempt them (see Job 1-2 and 2 Cor. 12:1-10). *Why do you think God gives Satan room in the lives of believers to tempt them? Do you think much about spiritual warfare and the need to do battle with "the spiritual forces of evil" (Eph. 6:12)? Why or why not?*
- David's sin wasn't his numbering of Israel's soldiers (see v. 9). His sin was in what this census represented: reliance upon his soldiers instead of the Lord. Joab, David's commanders, and ultimately David himself, recognized that his desire to count up all his men was a little like Scrooge stacking up his gold coins—he'd come to put his faith in those swords, instead of the Lord Almighty.
- Psalm 33:16 reminds us that the Christian's faith is to be solely in Jesus Christ, our King. It is a sin to put our faith in anyone or anything else. If David can be tempted to put his faith in lesser things, so can we. *What are some ways you are tempted to put your faith in something other than Jesus? Is it money, security, other people? When you do fall into this kind of temptation, what wakes you up to your need to trust in Christ alone?*

Are you hostile to God's wrath? [Read 2 Samuel 24:11-15]

- God has the right to punish sinners, and he proves it in this passage. In light of David's idolatry, he sends pestilence upon all of Israel. 70,000 of David's troops are killed. This was evidence of God's judgment against the sin of David and of David's people.

- We live in a world that has a hard time believing God is a wrathful judge. So many people think of God as standing at the top of a high mountain, embracing travelers who reach him through various roads: the road of Islam, of Hinduism, or of Christianity. But the God of the Bible says that there is one road to him, the road of Christ (John 14:6). Not only that, but there will be eternal torment for those who fail to submit to Jesus in this life (Matthew 24).
- *Have you ever wrestled with the reality that God is a God of wrath? What has helped you to better understand this important, biblical truth?* One of the best ways to reduce the confusion surround the idea that God is a God of wrath, is to remember that he is a God of holiness, and his holiness demands justice, and his justice demands that there be punishment. Consider reading *The Holiness of God* by J. C. Ryle or *The Pursuit of Holiness* by Jerry Bridges.

Are you thankful for Christ's cross? [Read 2 Samuel 24:16-25]

- The scene painted in verse 16 is stunning. The angel of the LORD is standing over Jerusalem ready to strike it with the sword—a figurative expression for God unleashing a plague on the citizens. *According to verse 17, how does David respond to this sight?*
- Instead of asking David to give up his own life, God calls upon David to offer a sacrifice. God even picks the place: the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite (v. 18). Araunah's land is special for two reasons. First, it is the place that God provided a ram as a substitute for Isaac. Second, it is the place where Solomon would build the Temple.
- But in this passage, it is the place where David would offer sacrifices to the Lord, and where the Lord would, in response, spare Jerusalem.
- Way back in 1 Samuel 2:10, Hannah prophesied that a king would come to Israel, and the Lord would “give strength to his king and exalt the power of his anointed.” Clearly, God provided Israel a strong and powerful king in David. But notice how we see his strength and power: First, he offers up himself as a substitute for his people (v. 17). Second, he spares no expense to make a sacrifice before the Lord—though he could have received everything for free (v. 24). Third, he humbly presented a sacrifice to God, his King (v. 25). In God's economy, strength is made visible in weakness.
- David should remind us of Jesus—the final King who, like David, did not come to be served, but to serve and who willingly gave his life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45). All of Samuel, but especially chapter 24, points us to Jesus Christ who died as a sacrifice for sinners like us—He is the King we need.

Application

- *Why is it significant that David's sacrifice is located in the same place as Isaac's ram and Solomon's temple?*
- *How should 2 Samuel 24 increase your confidence that Scripture is the authoritative word of God?*
- *What keeps you from being even more thankful that Jesus died for sinners like you?*
- *How does thankfulness for the cross make you a better boss, employee, mother, father, or friend?*