

2 Samuel 5:1-25 | “The True Difference Maker”
Preached on July 31, 2022 by Pastor Matt Brown

Please turn in your Bibles to 2 Samuel 5 this morning. *[pauseeee]*

What is it that truly makes the difference in your life?

What is the true difference maker? *[pause]*

When someone is enslaved in an addiction, what’s the difference maker?

When a wayward child is making a shipwreck of their life, what can flip the script?

When you are slowly, yet steadily going downhill in depression, what will change that trajectory?

When sin seems insurmountable, when enemies seem to keep getting the upper hand, and discouragement abounds - what makes the difference? *[pause]*

Is it your courage or ingenuity that changes that situation from hopeless to thriving?

Meaning, if you just become more courageous or intelligent then, man, that’s going to change it all.

Is that the true difference maker? *[pause]*

Is it simply a mindset and attitude change, where you simply need to think positive things and that’s going to change everything and give us our “best life now”¹? *[pause]*

Is it just fate or chance that makes the difference in situations, so that all we can do is just throw up our hands and let things happen as they will? *[pause]*

What can change any situation? What can reverse the course of something hopeless?

What can totally transform a person, a nation, or a situation? *[pause]*

2 Samuel 5 shows us that it’s not us, it’s not mere positive thoughts, it’s not chance or fate - it’s the Lord God Almighty.

Let me show you how that truth is expressed in the chapter before us this morning. *[pauseeee]*

Last week, we covered almost 3 chapters, and we read about and felt the chaotic ups and downs of Israel’s history.

There was defiant kingmaking, vicious battles, bloody deaths, accusations and treachery, a revenge killing, and an assassination.

¹ A reference to Joel Osteen’s book, *Your Best Life Now*. (Joel Osteen is a false teacher, and his teachings are not only devoid of the gospel, but contrary to the gospel.)

And after such a tumultuous series of events, as you read through 2 Samuel 5, it's like a breath of fresh air. *[pause]*

Israel is no longer facing a civil war period of instability and mayhem, but enters a period of unity, blessing, and stability.

Look at what I mean, as we START READING in verse 1. *[read verses 1-5]*

The moment we have been waiting for since David was anointed by Samuel all the way back in 1 Samuel 16 has now finally arrived.

David is made king of *all* of Israel.

The elders of Israel recognize his kinship, his leadership, and most importantly, they recognize the promise of God upon his life, and they make him king. *[pause]*

It is this event that kicks off the unity, blessing, and stability in the nation of Israel because the elders of Israel have now acted in line with God's promise.

They are no longer in rebellion against the promise of God, but submit to His will. *[pauseeee]*

So David is made king of Israel, his reign is summarized, and then it goes on to tell us multiple instances of blessing that come upon David and Israel. *[pause]*

First, we read about his capture and expansion of Jerusalem.

Look there at verse 6 as I READ. *[read verses 6-10]*

This people group called, the Jebusites, were living in what we know as Jerusalem.

They were a deeply entrenched group living there, for although in the book of Judges, the Israelites had a great victory in Jerusalem, they weren't able to completely drive them out.²

So over time, it seems as though because they didn't completely get rid of them, that they overtook Jerusalem and regained it.

But that's all going to change because here comes David to make it his capital. *[pause]*

Now why Jerusalem as a capital?

Well, Jerusalem was on the border of Judah and Benjamin, so it was this centrally located, politically convenient location meant to unite all of Israel.

But also, strategically it was a good decision because Jerusalem was a natural stronghold. *[pause]*

² See Judges 1:8, 21.

You see, the city had a constant supply of water and was surrounded by steep valleys on three sides, so it had good natural defenses, as well as a thick wall.

That's why when David comes to take the city, the Jebusites arrogantly believe that their city is impenetrable, and jokingly say that the lame and blind would ward them off.

But, oh, does their arrogance backfire, for David devises a plan to go up the water shaft and decisively defeats them. *[pause]*

So David lives in this stronghold, expands it, and calls it "the city of David." *[pauseeee]*

As you can see, David's kingdom is starting to really thrive, but it only gets better.

Look there at verses 11-13. *[READ VERSES 11-13]*

David is being blessed by having a house built by a foreign king, and he's being blessed as he has a growing family with many sons.

And yet this blessing isn't meant to just prop David up, but David realizes that he's being blessed and established for the sake of Israel.

God is blessing Israel through blessing David. *[pause]*

So what a high point for David and Israel!

David has united Israel, they have a stronghold of a capital city, and David's house and household are being built up.

Israel is thriving as a nation internally, but will all of that internal blessing be dashed by an external threat?

Let's find out as the old archenemies of Israel, the Philistines, decide to attack *twice*.

Verse 17. *[read verses 17-25]*

The Philistines challenge David's kingship early on because they know if they wait that he could grow stronger.

But David doesn't miss a beat, as he meets them head-on, yet he doesn't rely upon his leadership abilities alone, for he inquires of God both times as to what to do. *[pause]*

The first time is straightforward: God tells him to go and the Philistines would be given into his hand.

He does, has an amazing victory, and calls the name of the place, "Baal-perazim," for the Lord broke through the enemy.

In fact, this victory was so dominant that the Philistines left their idols laying there. *[pause]*

So the Philistines try once more and David faithfully goes back to inquire of the Lord.

But this time, God tells him to do something different.

God tells him to go around, opposite these balsam trees, and to wait until he hears marching in the tops of the trees.

That's when David was to attack, for the sound was God going before him into battle.

Remind you of other times in Israel's history of God going before them against their enemies?³
[pause]

The result is that Israel is victorious, and the Philistines routed.

And through these two battles, the kingdom is solidified, as even external threats are taken care of with ease. [pause]

Truly, David and Israel were being blessed by God, as God is found all throughout this chapter...

He's the promise-giver, the providential worker, and the ever-guiding, ever-empowering presence behind David's victories. [pause]

Does this not show us ever-true realities about God that impact our lives even now?

Surely it does! For we are reminded first that...

I. God's promises are unshakable.

In the first half of this chapter, we see God's promises come to fruition.

There are actually two main promises that are fulfilled.

First, David is made king of all of Israel, which was according to God's promise years back, and even the elders admit this. [pause]

Back when Saul sinned, God promised to give the kingdom to someone else.⁴

We then saw young David anointed by Samuel to be the next king of Israel,⁵ but he didn't become king right away, as there was a long waiting period.

And finally in the chapter before us David becomes king of all of Israel. [pause]

That's the first promise fulfilled in this chapter, but there's another one.

The other promise fulfilled is Jerusalem being taken. [pause]

³ See Deuteronomy 9:3 & Judges 4:14 for examples.

⁴ See 1 Samuel 13:14 & 15:28.

⁵ See 1 Samuel 16:1-13.

All the way back in Abraham's time, God had promised the land to his descendents, and the Jebusites are mentioned as one of the people whose land they would overtake.⁶ *[pause]*

This promise of specific land is repeated again and again in the Old Testament.

Now David has conquered them, and finally the promise of the Jebusites' land is fulfilled. *[pause]*

God's promises come true! They are unshakeable!

Although they may sometimes take a long time to be fulfilled - fulfilled they will be nonetheless. *[pause]*

Isn't that such a comforting thing to remember?

We can count on God's Word to be carried out to the tee.

While we can't always trust other people's promises, we can count on God's. *[pauseeee]*

From these promises we see fulfilled in 2 Samuel 5, we see a temptation and a truth to remember when it comes to God's promises.

First, there is a temptation to *resist* God's promises. *[pause]*

Saul tried to resist the promise of David being king so much so that he sought to kill him.

The elders of Israel tried to resist David becoming king by allowing Saul's son to reign instead.

And the entrenched Jebusites tried to outlast and repel the Israelites' periodic battles.

Yet what did all of these people come to find out?

It is truly "hard to kick against the goads"⁷ of God's will. *[pause]*

No matter how much they tried to withstand what God promised, it was a hopeless aspiration.

In the end, all they could do was bow the knee to God's Word, as it plowed ahead, dashing their desires on the rocks of His promises. *[pause]*

Be assured!

Though the enemies of God resist God's promises, they will someday be dismayed and disappointed.

Their dark attempts will prove to be utter failures that disappear and vanish when the sun of God's promises shines. *[pauseeee]*

⁶ See Genesis 15:18-21.

⁷ A saying used in Acts 26:14.

Why do we doubt God's promises?

Why do we think that the nations and evil people of this world will win?

Why do we think that they can resist God's unshakable promises?

No matter what they promise to do, their vain promises will lay conquered under the feet of God's promises. *[pauseeee]*

The gates of hell will not prevail against the church!⁸

The nations may rage, but they plot in vain, for "He who sits in the heavens laughs", and he will "terrify them in his fury."⁹ *[pause]*

Christ *will* come, He *will* rule, He *will* reign!

It is impossible to thwart His promises from coming someday, you cannot resist them forever.

So rest upon His promises, for they can't be resisted! *[pauseeeee]*

Not only should we rest on His promises, but we should also *wait* on His promises.

Both David's kingship and the capture of the Jebusites' land was a long time coming. *[pause]*

Many people believe that David was only a teenager when he was anointed king, and now we find that he doesn't become king of all of Israel until he's about 37.

That's about a 20 year waiting period!

Wouldn't that be hard? Yet David patiently waited on God's promise to be fulfilled. *[pauseeee]*

Even more of a waiting period was the Jebusites' land.

It may have been around a thousand years from the time of the promise to Abraham to the time when David conquered and took the Jebusite land.

That's a long time! *[pause]*

So this reminds us that God's timing is not always our timing.

We want things done fast, but God's view of time is different from ours.¹⁰

Just because His promises seem delayed, doesn't mean they won't come, for they will come at just the right time, *His time*. *[pauseee]*

In what situations are you doubting God's promises because they don't seem to be coming true?

⁸ A reference to Matthew 16:18.

⁹ See Psalm 2.

¹⁰ See 2 Peter 3:8.

His promises may appear delayed, but they will come to pass!

Wait on Him! Trust His Word! *[pause]*

Are you worried about God providing for your needs because it seems as though He won't?

He has promised, so wait on Him!¹¹ *[pause]*

Whatever you are going through, wait on His promises, knowing that His Word will not fail.

Though I know that it's hard to wait, our confidence 'in the waiting' is the perfectly trustworthy character of God. *[pauseeeee]*

On March 3rd, 2019, a tornado ripped through a Georgia neighborhood leveling everything in its path.

Everything, that is, except one house.

For some reason, that house was left unscathed, while everything around it was demolished.¹²

It was unshakable. *[pause]*

But infinitely more unshakable than a man-made house in a tornado are God-given promises.

While everyone else's words and promises fall short all around them, God's promises stand firm, unscathed, and unshakable. *[pauseeeee]*

Not only do we see something about God's promises, but we also see that...

II. God's presence and guidance are indispensable.

You know sometimes you will hear someone ask the question, "If you were on an island, and you could only have 3 things, what 3 things would you bring with you?"

When you start narrowing down the list of things in your mind, what remains?

The items that you truly believe are *indispensable*. *[pause]*

Well what are the indispensable things of the Christian life?

Aren't two of them God's presence and guidance? *[pause]*

We see that in this chapter when it comes to David's life.

Notice verse 10, "And David became greater and greater, for the Lord, the God of hosts, was with him." *[pause]*

¹¹ See Philippians 4:19.

¹² Wright, Pam. "Georgia Tornado Leaves House Seemingly Unscathed." *The Weather Channel*, 12 Mar. 2019, <https://weather.com/news/news/2019-03-12-georgia-house-left-standing-path-tornado>.

The only reason that David could become greater and do the things that he did was because of God's presence with him. *[pauseeeee]*

God's presence includes God's favor, power, guidance, and comfort.

This is why David can say in Psalm 23, "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, *for you are with me.*"¹³ *[pause]*

David wasn't successful merely because of his unique strategy, but because of God's presence and guidance.

In fact, when he goes to fight the Philistines, he just keeps going to God for guidance as to what to do. *[pause]*

He didn't trust in his own abilities, even after being so successful with the Jebusites.

He didn't trust the original strategy against the Philistines for the second time, but went right to God again.

He let God lead and go out before Him in battle. *[pause]*

It is truly God's presence and guidance that make the difference! *[pauseeee]*

God's presence makes all things possible!

While the Jebusites said, "You can't" - God said, "Just watch me."

And after they arrogantly believed that David couldn't get to them, it says, "Nevertheless, David took the stronghold of Zion." *[pause]*

God's presence makes 'Nevertheless' possible in any situation!

Though there's something in my life that could make me so fearful, *nevertheless* I don't have to fear, for God is with me!

Though Satan seems intimidating and strong, *nevertheless* because God is with me, I don't have to tremble, but I can resist him and he will flee from me.¹⁴ *[pauseeee]*

In what circumstances are you forgetting that God is with you?

In what situations are you neglecting His all-knowing guidance? *[pause]*

Like David, may we continually go before the Lord, asking, "Lord, tell me what to do."

His answers may be straightforward like, "Go up."

¹³ Psalm 23:4a (Italics mine).

¹⁴ See James 4:7.

But his answers may also surprise us like, “Go around opposite the balsam trees.”

Yet no matter what the answer, we follow His leading, and we let Him go before us. *[pauseeee]*

May we see how indispensable His presence and guidance is in our lives!

May we have the attitude of, “Lord, I can only do this if You go with me. You have promised to always be with me. So Lord, show me the way.”¹⁵ *[pauseeee]*

God’s promises and presence make a difference, but thirdly, we see that...

III. God’s power is unparalleled.

God’s power is evidently seen in the victories that God gives David over the Jebusites and the Philistines. *[pause]*

If you notice, David says to the Lord, “Will *you* give them into my hand?” And God says, “I will certainly give...”

David knew that it was God’s power that would bring the victory, not his own.

And then once that first victory is secured, David gives credit to the Lord, who broke through his enemies. *[pauseeee]*

God’s power is so dominant that the Philistine idols are left laying on the ground, which is a resounding statement to the omnipotence of God.

They are lifeless idols who stand no chance against the Almighty One. *[pauseeee]*

During the second time that the Philistines tried to defeat Israel, God actually went before them to strike down the Philistines. *[pause]*

Can you imagine the scene?

Israel is lying in wait, waiting for the marching sound in the tops of the trees.

And all of a sudden as one of the Israelite soldiers, you hear it.

And you’re thinking, “This is amazing! It happened just as God said!”

Wow, what courage that would you give you to rouse yourself and charge, for God is going before you into battle! *[pauseeee]*

Our God is the all-powerful God of hosts!

He’s the Lord who leaves enemy idols laying in the dirt, only to be carried off and burned.¹⁶

¹⁵ See Isaiah 41:10.

¹⁶ 1 Chronicles 14:12 shows us an additional note that David had them not only carried off, but also burned.

He's the Lord who breaks through the enemy lines like a flood.

He's the Smasher, the Breaker, the Leveler, the Champion!

He's the One who goes before us, defeating our enemies. *[pauseee]*

And yet we question whether He can defeat that addiction.

Yet we doubt whether He can change us or another person. *[pause]*

As commentator Dale Ralph Davis said, "We do not have a namby-pamby godlet who is house-broken in line with our canon of conceivability."¹⁷

He is the God of the breakthrough, who can break through any of sin's holds on your life.

He is the Smasher and Leveler, who can knock down your fear and anxiety, and give you confidence in Him. *[pause]*

If God can easily defeat the Jebusites and the Philistines, won't He go before you into any situation, so that all you need to do is follow in faith? *[pauseee]*

It's HIS power that produces the victory for David and Israel.

We can't do anything, but by the Lord!

He deserves all the credit in our lives, so that any victory in your life is ultimately God's doing. *[pause]*

God's power is unparalleled: believe it, trust it, rest in it. *[pause]*

As you can see in this chapter...

God works through His promises, presence, and power for the sake of His people!

In verse 12, it says that David recognized that his blessing and success was really *for the sake of his people Israel*. *[pause]*

So for the Israelites, God worked through his promises, presence, and power through King David.

But for us, God has worked through His promises, presence, and power for our sake through His Son, King Jesus. *[pauseee]*

We were all sinners, separated from God, and condemned in our sin.

Yet through Jesus' death and resurrection, God's promises came true. *[pause]*

¹⁷ Dale Ralph Davis, *2 Samuel: Out of Every Adversity*, Focus on the Bible Commentary (Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications, 2002), 70.

He promised a Deliverer and we got one, as he died for our sins so that we could be promised eternal life!

His promises are unshakable. *[pause]*

In Jesus, God's presence was with us, as He came to this earth to die and reconcile us to God.

And now, because of that work, He is with us and guides us through the Spirit to the end of the age.¹⁸

His presence and guidance are indispensable. *[pause]*

And through Christ, God's power was displayed.

He took our place, taking our sin and its penalty upon Himself, so that we could be forgiven and declared righteous.

He then rose from the grave in power, showing that He won the victory - sin and death don't have the final word on our lives.

His power is unparalleled. *[pauseeee]*

Satan and his legions may have thought they could win, but God went before us and struck them down with his power on the Cross.

Sin's enslaving hold on us may have seemed unbreakable, but the God, who breaks through, came and broke the chains through Christ.

Sin's condemning nature may have said, "Your standing won't change," but the God of 'nevertheless' said, "Just watch what I can do." *[pauseeeee]*

His promises: utter trustworthy, so trust them even now.

His presence and guidance: always with you, so do not fear.

His power: grants us all things that pertain to life and godliness, so rely upon Him.¹⁹ *[pause]*

It's the Lord who is truly the difference maker.

¹⁸ See Matthew 28:20b.

¹⁹ See 2 Peter 1:3.