

## Forsaking God's Call

2 Samuel 8:1-6

Arise to follow the Lord today.

Has the summer been a time of spiritual progress or malaise?

You are in Jerusalem, David's new capital city. David has finally gained Jerusalem and is quick to make it God's city. God prefers that, rather than build the Lord's house, David set himself to building up his own home by becoming a good father and husband. David does not seem interested in this task. Instead, he slothfully rejects the Lord's calling, laying the groundwork for trouble.

Pray that the Lord draws you out of sloth to embrace the kingly mission he has given you. Pray for the grace of freedom and humility for all Exodus Men, just as they are praying for you.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Lord and Master of my life, spare me from the spirit of indifference, despair, lust for power, and idle chatter. Instead, bestow on me, your servant, the spirit of integrity, humility, patience, and love. Yes, O Lord and King, let me see my own sins and not judge my brothers and sisters; for you are blessed forever and ever. Amen.

### A Reading from the Second Book of Samuel

After this David defeated the Philistines and subdued them, and David took Metheg-ammah out of the hand of the Philistines. And he defeated Moab, and measured them with a line, making them lie down on the ground; two lines he measured to be put to death, and one full line to be spared. And the Moabites became servants to David and brought tribute. David also defeated Hadadezer the son of Rehob, king of Zobah, as he went to restore his power at the river Euphrates. And David took from him a thousand and seven hundred horsemen, and twenty thousand foot soldiers; and David hamstringed all the chariot horses, but left enough for a hundred chariots. And when the Syrians of Damascus came to help Hadadezer king of Zobah, David slew twenty-two thousand men of the Syrians. Then David put garrisons in Aram of Damascus; and the Syrians became servants to David and brought tribute. And the Lord gave victory to David wherever he went.

### Reflection

This is a very telling episode and marks a turning point in David's life and kingship. Previously, we read that the Lord had given David rest from his enemies. Now, David is on the warpath again. There is the sense that, discontent with the task of raising his family and building his own house, David will go back to what he finds easier and more familiar: conquering. Notice that in these episodes, David does not ask the Lord whether he should fight his enemies. He just goes on ahead. Not only this but for the first time, we read that David is accruing plunder. He is building his house, but not as a father. He is becoming a worldly ruler and gaining wives, bronze, gold, people, and territory.

In 1 Chronicles 22:8, David explains how the Lord revealed to him why he did not allow him to build the temple: "You have shed much blood and have waged great wars; you shall not build a house to my name, because you have shed so much blood before me upon the earth." The Lord helped David to recognize that his exploits were not sanctioned and indeed disqualified him.

It seems that David was discontent with what the Lord had given him, especially the task of being a father and husband. The hints of sloth that we detected earlier are now beginning to take over, as David neglects his role as father and husband, preferring instead to be warrior and victor.

Do you see this mentality in yourself? Are you actively neglecting things you know the Lord has called you to because you do not want to spend your time and energy on them or because you prefer to do what is more familiar? Consider these questions honestly in prayer today.

Now place yourself before God, and converse with him.

#### Week 5 Action Items

1. Bookend your day with a morning offering and nightly examen.

God should be Lord of our life and that means being Lord of each and every day. If we start and end the day thinking of God and offering our lives to him, it will help us to live underneath God's Lordship. He is the true king, and we are meant to extend his kingly rule through our own lives.

Be sure you make a morning offering to give the day to God and ask for his help. At the end of the day, thank God for the blessings he has given you and ask pardon for your sins. If you make a good examen, you can attend to how God is working in you, where you need deeper conversion, and how you can continue to grow.

2. Check in with your anchor.

Summer is a time when we can get distracted by our vacation time. It is a time when we need brotherly help and support. Keep in regular touch with your anchor. Try to keep each other on track even when traveling.

3. Don't give in to distractions.

Relaxing isn't the same as letting down your moral and spiritual guard. Going on vacation shouldn't be an excuse to give in to technological distractions and lose the vigilance we have built up through our disciplines. Make good use of vacation time for prayer, leisure, and relationships. Keep technology as a tool, and do not allow it to dominate you.

4. Invite men to join the second half of Kings of Summer.

In two weeks (Day 43, July 9th), we are entering into the second half of our reflections on Second Samuel. Our theme will move more toward the remedy for overcoming spiritual sloth through embracing spiritual fatherhood. We will see how David slowly pulls himself out of the chaos he has created. Are there men you know who need to reflect more deeply on this call? Invite them to join your fraternity or encourage them to get another one started. It's not too late to live differently this summer and become the kings and fathers God wants us to be.