



# Episode 5: God Reigns

## 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel

Key Verse:

*“ ‘The Lord declares to you that the Lord himself will establish a house for you: When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.’ 2 Samuel 7:11b–13*

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What makes a good ruler? Corrupt rulers can corrupt their people, and a corrupt people will support a crooked ruler. This was certainly true in the history of Israel. But good rulers? Good rulers are honorable and just. They are people of integrity who serve and guide their people, and their leadership makes their nation better. Israel would have some good kings — ones who loved God and walked in his ways, and many bad ones.

This week we’re focusing on one of the good ones, King David. He was a good king, but he was far from a perfect one. He did some despicable things, but he was also called a man after God’s own heart. He was a shepherd that God chose to protect and provide for his people when they cried out for a king to rule over them. It was from his line that the ultimate good shepherd would come, King Jesus, the Savior and Ruler of the whole world.

## Day 1

In our story we’ve watched Abraham’s family grow from a single, miracle-baby to a nation of people living in their own land. As part of his grand redemptive plan to save humanity, God chose Abraham’s family to be the one through which the entire world would be blessed. After rescuing Abraham’s descendants from slavery in Egypt, he led them through the wilderness and taught them what life as his kingdom on earth should be. He made a covenant with his

people and brought them into the beautiful, fruitful land that he had promised their forefathers.

In some sense, Eden had been reclaimed. At last they had a beautiful home and there, God's presence would dwell with them in the tabernacle he had designed. God gave them his law which showed them how to relate to him and to one another, and the sacrificial system allowed them to atone when they failed. In God's law there was a call to worship only Yahweh, live justly, and care for those in need. According to the covenant, peace and prosperity would come if they lived this way.

Israel should have been a shining example of what God's kingdom on earth could look like. But like their ancient ancestors, the people rebelled against God's guidance. They didn't always trust in his wisdom or his goodness. So often they betrayed God by turning to the false gods of the surrounding nations.

The book of Judges chronicles this chaotic time in Israel's history and tells some of the most horrifying stories of violence, rape, and murder. The nation routinely ignored God's good and just commandments and people prioritized their own interests over everyone else's. They defined good and evil for themselves and everyone did what was right in their own eyes.

And so, we see the same sad cycle repeated. Rebellion and sin in the place of obedience and faith send God's people into a downward spiral. They are also harassed by the nations that surround them and there is no peace. At last they cry out for a king to rule over them, but they aren't asking for an earthly king to rule *under* God, but a king who rules *instead* of God. In effect, they reject God as their king, and want a king like the other nations have. The Lord gives them what they ask for.

When they bring this request to their judge and prophet, Samuel, he warns them. A king will demand much of them. He would take their daughters to be his wives, their sons to be his soldiers, and their land as his own. But the people insist and at first God gives them Saul. Saul is exactly the kind of man the people probably imagined as their king. He was physically imposing — a mighty warrior. He led the people to win many battles against their enemies. But Saul's heart didn't belong to God, and it wasn't too long before his pride and arrogance brought about his downfall. So, God selects a different kind of king.

## Read the Word

### 1 Samuel 16:1–13 (NIV)

**16** *The Lord said to Samuel, “How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him as king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and be on your way; I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem. I have chosen one of his sons to be king.”*

<sup>2</sup> *But Samuel said, “How can I go? If Saul hears about it, he will kill me.”*

*The Lord said, “Take a heifer with you and say, ‘I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.’<sup>3</sup> Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what to do. You are to anoint for me the one I indicate.”*

*<sup>4</sup> Samuel did what the Lord said. When he arrived at Bethlehem, the elders of the town trembled when they met him. They asked, “Do you come in peace?”*

*<sup>5</sup> Samuel replied, “Yes, in peace; I have come to sacrifice to the Lord. Consecrate yourselves and come to the sacrifice with me.” Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.*

*<sup>6</sup> When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab and thought, “Surely the Lord’s anointed stands here before the Lord.”*

*<sup>7</sup> But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”*

*<sup>8</sup> Then Jesse called Abinadab and had him pass in front of Samuel. But Samuel said, “The Lord has not chosen this one either.”<sup>9</sup> Jesse then had Shammah pass by, but Samuel said, “Nor has the Lord chosen this one.”<sup>10</sup> Jesse had seven of his sons pass before Samuel, but Samuel said to him, “The Lord has not chosen these.”<sup>11</sup> So he asked Jesse, “Are these all the sons you have?”*

*“There is still the youngest,” Jesse answered. “He is tending the sheep.”*

*Samuel said, “Send for him; we will not sit down until he arrives.”*

*<sup>12</sup> So he sent for him and had him brought in. He was glowing with health and had a fine appearance and handsome features.*

*Then the Lord said, “Rise and anoint him; this is the one.”*

*<sup>13</sup> So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the Lord came powerfully upon David. Samuel then went to Ramah.*

- What did Samuel think when he saw Eliab? What was God’s response?

## **Reflect**

In this chapter we are not only introduced to David but are given insight into the priorities of God.

When Samuel arrives, he takes one look at Eliab, the oldest son, and assumes that he must be the one. Remember that in Samuel’s culture, the oldest sons were valued above others. Add to his placement in the family his apparent height and strength, and we can see why Samuel

thought he had found God's anointed. In ancient times kings did not sit idly on their thrones commanding armies from afar. They had to be warriors as well as leaders and administrators.

God tells Samuel something that was probably as hard for him to internalize then as it is for us now, "The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart" (1 Samuel 16:7).

Today we live in a relatively superficial culture, where creating the illusion of the "good life" through a carefully curated Instagram feed can become more important than actually living a good life that blesses others. And while we might like to think we're above it, most of us have been guilty of ranking people on a superficial scale. Whether we look for beauty, or the appearance of wealth, culture, or education, we are missing what God says is the most important thing — character.

Israel had rejected God and demanded a king, and they got one who would be impressive to the nations that they longed to be like. Saul was tall, strong, and showed himself fierce in battle. But ultimately, he wasn't trustworthy, courageous, or faithful. But even more importantly, Saul wasn't steadfastly loyal to God. For all his faults, and there would be many, David deeply loved God.

Our culture loves an underdog, come-from-behind, Cinderella story (assuming the "Cinderella" looks good in formal wear.) But David's didn't. The firstborn and the strongest male, and the most beautiful and fertile women were more highly valued than all the others in the ancient world. But throughout the Old Testament God subverts this cultural preference by choosing the younger sons — Isaac over Ishmael, Jacob over Esau, and Joseph over Reuben. He gave children to barren women like Sarah and Samuel's own mother Hannah. It shouldn't have surprised Samuel that God would choose someone who defied expectations.

David, the Cinderella of his day, was the forgotten son who like the fairytale character was left to do the domestic chores because he wasn't even invited to the ceremony. Yet he would be Israel's greatest king. God isn't impressed by the things that so often impress us. He looks at the heart.

## Pray

If it's helpful, use the following to begin your own prayer time with God.

*Almighty God, teach me to care more about what you care about. Help me see people as you see them, not as my culture judges them. And help me become someone who loves you with all my heart, and loves others the way you love them.*

# Day 2

The story of David and Goliath is not only one of the most well-known stories in the Bible, but in all of ancient literature. It's everything we love in a good story – a seemingly invincible villain versus a scrappy hero, high stakes, and nail-biting suspense.

The account begins with David back at home with Jessie, tending to the sheep. Even though he'd been anointed by Samuel in 1 Samuel 15 and become a member of Saul's court in chapter 16, David seems to be basically back where he started.

The Philistines were a tribe of people who were in constant conflict with the Israelites. Like nations do today, they skirmished over territory and resources. They were once again threatening the Israelites, and Saul and his army were engaged in a standoff with the opposing force.

Three of David's older brothers were serving in Saul's military. At this time, the families of the soldiers had to provide their provisions, so David had been sent to the front line to deliver supplies for his family. He arrives to find the army engaged in a forty-day standoff with the Philistines. It appears that the commanders of the Philistine army were proposing an interesting alternative to a full-scale battle. Each nation would send out a champion to fight to the death, and the army of the loser would become slaves serving the opposing nation. The champion for the Philistines was Goliath, who at nine feet tall was a hulk of a man with an impressive collection of armor and weaponry. Saul and all the men of Israel were terrified (1 Samuel 17:10).

When David arrives and hears Goliath's taunts, he is incensed. How dare anyone shame the people of God this way.

## Read the Word

### 1 Samuel 17:21–50

*<sup>21</sup> Israel and the Philistines were drawing up their lines facing each other.*

*<sup>22</sup> David left his things with the keeper of supplies, ran to the battle lines and asked his brothers how they were. <sup>23</sup> As he was talking with them, Goliath, the Philistine champion from Gath, stepped out from his lines and shouted his usual defiance, and David heard it. <sup>24</sup> Whenever the Israelites saw the man, they all fled from him in great fear.*

*<sup>25</sup> Now the Israelites had been saying, "Do you see how this man keeps coming out? He comes out to defy Israel. The king will give great wealth to the man who kills him. He will also give him his daughter in marriage and will exempt his family from taxes in Israel."*

*<sup>26</sup> David asked the men standing near him, “What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and removes this disgrace from Israel? Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?”*

*<sup>27</sup> They repeated to him what they had been saying and told him, “This is what will be done for the man who kills him.”*

*<sup>28</sup> When Eliab, David’s oldest brother, heard him speaking with the men, he burned with anger at him and asked, “Why have you come down here? And with whom did you leave those few sheep in the wilderness? I know how conceited you are and how wicked your heart is; you came down only to watch the battle.”*

*<sup>29</sup> “Now what have I done?” said David. “Can’t I even speak?” <sup>30</sup> He then turned away to someone else and brought up the same matter, and the men answered him as before. <sup>31</sup> What David said was overheard and reported to Saul, and Saul sent for him.*

*<sup>32</sup> David said to Saul, “Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go and fight him.”*

*<sup>33</sup> Saul replied, “You are not able to go out against this Philistine and fight him; you are only a young man, and he has been a warrior from his youth.”*

*<sup>34</sup> But David said to Saul, “Your servant has been keeping his father’s sheep. When a lion or a bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock, <sup>35</sup> I went after it, struck it and rescued the sheep from its mouth. When it turned on me, I seized it by its hair, struck it and killed it. <sup>36</sup> Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defied the armies of the living God. <sup>37</sup> The Lord who rescued me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will rescue me from the hand of this Philistine.”*

*Saul said to David, “Go, and the Lord be with you.”*

*<sup>38</sup> Then Saul dressed David in his own tunic. He put a coat of armor on him and a bronze helmet on his head. <sup>39</sup> David fastened on his sword over the tunic and tried walking around, because he was not used to them.*

*“I cannot go in these,” he said to Saul, “because I am not used to them.” So he took them off. <sup>40</sup> Then he took his staff in his hand, chose five smooth stones from the stream, put them in the pouch of his shepherd’s bag and, with his sling in his hand, approached the Philistine.*

*<sup>41</sup> Meanwhile, the Philistine, with his shield bearer in front of him, kept coming closer to David. <sup>42</sup> He looked David over and saw that he was little more than a boy, glowing with health and handsome, and he despised him. <sup>43</sup> He said to David, “Am I a dog, that you come at me with sticks?” And the Philistine cursed*

*David by his gods. <sup>44</sup> “Come here,” he said, “and I’ll give your flesh to the birds and the wild animals!”*

*<sup>45</sup> David said to the Philistine, “You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. <sup>46</sup> This day the Lord will deliver you into my hands, and I’ll strike you down and cut off your head. This very day I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds and the wild animals, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. <sup>47</sup> All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves; for the battle is the Lord’s, and he will give all of you into our hands.”*

*<sup>48</sup> As the Philistine moved closer to attack him, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet him. <sup>49</sup> Reaching into his bag and taking out a stone, he slung it and struck the Philistine on the forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell facedown on the ground.*

*<sup>50</sup> So David triumphed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone; without a sword in his hand he struck down the Philistine and killed him.*

- Why is David convinced that he will defeat Goliath? To whom does he give credit? (See verses 36–37 and 45–47.)

## Reflect

True courage is doing the right thing even when the stakes are high. It’s living devoted to Christ regardless of the result. Where does that kind of courage come from? Our American culture tells us to believe in ourselves – to be confident in our own ability. But that’s not David’s approach. David’s faith is completely in the Lord because he knows Yahweh is worthy of that trust.

David displays an intimate knowledge of God that could only come from a relationship with him. David seemed convinced that God would fight on his behalf and defeat Goliath, but Scripture records no guarantee. As his covenant people, Israel’s victories reflected on Yahweh. Just as Goliath’s insults had been offensive to God and not just to Israel’s army, David’s victory would be attributed to the Lord’s actions, not David’s. Yahweh’s fame throughout the world would invite others to worship him as the one true God. David’s bravery came from his faith in God, and his desire to see Yahweh honored.

Likewise, for us true courage comes from seeing the bigger picture of who we are in Christ and how our actions reflect on him. When we face adversity, our culture tells us to “just believe in yourself.” We are told to march out there just like David and face down our giants. But that’s not the lesson we should take from this story. We aren’t the brave shepherd boy in this tale, we’re the Israelites who need a champion. We aren’t David, we need a David. We have a Savior who’s already faced down every enemy for us. We never face our giants alone — ever. Jesus goes before us.

David's greatest descendent is willing to go to battle on our behalf. We rest in his victory whenever we're called to make a stand for what is good and just. It's faith in him that gives us courage.

## Pray

If it's helpful, use the following to begin your own prayer time with God.

*Jesus, thank you that you have faced all the giants I'll ever face. You were tempted to sin in every way that I am, but you didn't. You trusted in the Father and defeated sin and death. Teach me to rest in your victory. May I find my strength and courage in you.*

## Day 3

We're fast-forwarding a bit in the story of David, so let's fill in the gaps. After his victory over Goliath, David became Israel's hero. His popularity didn't sit too well with Saul and the king decided that David had to die. He hunted David for years, and although the Lord always protected him, David lived on the run. The promise of his own kingship must have sometimes felt like a fanciful dream. But eventually, David was made king over Israel. He led the nation's armies and defeated all of their enemies. Finally, he could find rest and enjoy the peace for which he had waited so long.

David makes his home in Jerusalem and brings the ark that represented God's covenant home too. The ark was a wooden chest that was overlaid with gold. Inside the chest were the two stone tablets on which God had written the law, a staff belonging to Aaron, the first high priest, and a jar of manna, the food God fed the Israelites in the wilderness. These were symbols of God's care, guidance, and provision. On top of its lid sat two golden cherubim, in between which the glory of the Lord would appear. This was the mercy seat, a representation of God's heavenly throne, where God would meet with the high priest who represented his people.

The design for the ark and the tabernacle that housed it had been given to Moses by God when they met at the top of Mount Sinai. The people had built this tabernacle exactly as God had prescribed. It was essentially a large tent that could move as the people moved. Outside this tent was an altar where the priests would make sacrifices to God. Inside the tent was an outer chamber, and a sacred inner one. In the inner chamber, the Holy of Holies, the ark of the covenant resided. The New Testament book of Hebrews tells us that the Tabernacle was a picture of God's heavenly throne room. It is God's house on earth with echoes of the Garden of Eden found in its design and furnishings.

We can imagine the hundreds of miles the tabernacle must have traveled as the Israelites roamed the wilderness. It moved with them into the promised land, and now generations later, it was brought home to Jerusalem by Israel's great King.



## Read the Word

### 2 Samuel 7:1–17 (NIV)

*7 After the king was settled in his palace and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies around him, <sup>2</sup> he said to Nathan the prophet, “Here I am, living in a house of cedar, while the ark of God remains in a tent.”*

*<sup>3</sup> Nathan replied to the king, “Whatever you have in mind, go ahead and do it, for the Lord is with you.”*

*<sup>4</sup> But that night the word of the Lord came to Nathan, saying:*

*<sup>5</sup> “Go and tell my servant David, ‘This is what the Lord says: Are you the one to build me a house to dwell in? <sup>6</sup> I have not dwelt in a house from the day I brought the Israelites up out of Egypt to this day. I have been moving from place to place with a tent as my dwelling. <sup>7</sup> Wherever I have moved with all the Israelites, did I ever say to any of their rulers whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, “Why have you not built me a house of cedar?”’*

*<sup>8</sup> “Now then, tell my servant David, ‘This is what the Lord Almighty says: I took you from the pasture, from tending the flock, and appointed you ruler over my people Israel. <sup>9</sup> I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have cut off all your enemies from before you. Now I will make your name great, like the names of the greatest men on earth. <sup>10</sup> And I will provide a place for my people Israel and will plant them so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed. Wicked people will not oppress them anymore, as they did at the beginning <sup>11</sup> and have done ever since the time I appointed leaders over my people Israel. I will also give you rest from all your enemies.*

*“The Lord declares to you that the Lord himself will establish a house for you: <sup>12</sup> When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom. <sup>13</sup> He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. <sup>14</sup> I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with a rod wielded by men, with floggings inflicted by human hands. <sup>15</sup> But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. <sup>16</sup> Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever.”*

*<sup>17</sup> Nathan reported to David all the words of this entire revelation.*

- At first, what does David want to do? How does God respond?
- What does God promise David?

At first glance, David's impulse seems right. While he is enjoying his newly built palace, God's house is a dusty, old tent. Shouldn't God dwell in a better house than David's? But God doesn't permit David to build a permanent temple, but instead promises that he will build a house for David instead.

David is speaking of a physical house, but God is promising a dynasty. The royal house of Israel will belong to David's sons and not move from tribe to tribe or family to family the way the kingship jumped from Saul to David. Once the Lord has established this house for David, David's son will build a house for the Lord. This house, or temple, would connect heaven and earth.

As for David's dynasty, the gift of hindsight gives us clarity. Although David might have envisioned a line of kings stretching into eternity, we know that's not the way it works out. David's reign represented a high point for Israel. Within two generations, the nation splits into two. A few generations later, the northern kingdom is captured, and its people are carried off into exile. After a few more generations the same thing happens to the southern Kingdom. Israel will become an occupied kingdom, oppressed by one nation after another with no throne for a descendent of David to sit on.

Does that mean God's promise failed? No, it means that God didn't intend an eternal line of kings, but an eternal king who would rule forever.

The promises of God we've seen so far in the Story are taking a more and more recognizable shape, and he's looking more and more like Jesus. Way back in Genesis 3 we learned of the offspring who will defeat the serpent. God's promise to Abraham showed that he would come from one particular family. Now we see that he will come from David's royal line. In both the Gospel of Matthew and of Luke, the authors take great care to show that Jesus is in the line of David.

God's eternal son would live the life of complete trust and obedience that Israel's kings never could. He will sacrifice himself for the world and be raised to life again. He will ascend into heaven where he now sits at the right hand of God as the eternal King Jesus. And one day, he will return and once and for all establish his kingdom in a new heaven and a new earth where he will dwell with his people forever. The house of David and the house of the Lord will converge. But we're skipping to the end of our story.

As we anticipate the glorious return of our king, let's consider how we should respond to King Jesus now. What do we owe our eternal king? We owe him our loyalty and allegiance. We live according to his royal decrees. We represent the goodness of his kingdom in our world today.

## **Pray**

If it's helpful, use the following to begin your own prayer time with God.

*God almighty. Thank you for my eternal king. Teach me what it looks like to live in your kingdom, under your rule. I want to display your goodness to those around me so that people will come to you.*

## Day 4

Do you see him? As we move further along in the story, our picture of Jesus is coming into focus. We know that he's the promised offspring of the woman who will crush the serpent's head. We know he is the promised seed of Abraham through whom all the earth will be blessed. Last week we saw that he's the Passover lamb who takes away the sins of the world. This week we're seeing that he's the rightful King of Kings who will one day rule the world.

Today we're reading one of the "Messianic Psalms" because they anticipate the Messiah who will surpass even King David. This Psalm was written by David himself and shows him looking forward to an even better king who will come — David's lord. David anticipates that one of his sons will be even greater than himself, a great king and a great high priest.

### Read the Word

#### Psalm 110

*Of David. A psalm.*

*<sup>1</sup> The Lord says to my lord:*

*"Sit at my right hand  
until I make your enemies  
a footstool for your feet."*

*<sup>2</sup> The Lord will extend your mighty scepter from Zion, saying,  
"Rule in the midst of your enemies!"*

*<sup>3</sup> Your troops will be willing  
on your day of battle.*

*Arrayed in holy splendor,  
your young men will come to you  
like dew from the morning's womb.*

*<sup>4</sup> The Lord has sworn  
and will not change his mind:  
"You are a priest forever,  
in the order of Melchizedek."*

*<sup>5</sup> The Lord is at your right hand;*

*he will crush kings on the day of his wrath.  
6 He will judge the nations, heaping up the dead  
and crushing the rulers of the whole earth.  
7 He will drink from a brook along the way,  
and so he will lift his head high.*

- Where does the Lord invite David's lord to sit? What will he do for him?
- What does David call this lord in verse 4?

## Reflect

This Psalm stumped the Jewish scribes for generations. Who could David be talking about? Who could be David's lord? Because of this Psalm and other passages of scripture, they began to anticipate a messiah, a savior and king who God would one day send.

The New Testament authors saw Jesus, the Messiah in this Psalm, and the authority he'd been granted. To be seated at the right hand of God is a place of highest honor. The New Testament authors inferred quite a bit about who Jesus is and what he'd done for us from just that phrase.

Here are five examples that New Testament scholar, D.A. Carson points out<sup>1</sup>:

First, *he is greater than David*. [Acts 2:34](#): "For David did not ascend into heaven ..." But he ascends into heaven and sits at God's right hand.

Second, *he is greater than angels*. [Hebrews 1:13](#): "For to which of the angels has he said, 'Sit at my right hand'?" There is no other mediating person that sits at the right hand of God.

Third, *he is exalted to God's side*. As one author has put it, "God exalted him as emphatically as man rejected him." Again, [Acts 5:30-31](#): "Jesus whom you killed.... God exalted at his right hand."

Fourth, *his session, his being seated at the right hand of God, grounds his intercession for us*. [Romans 8:34](#) and [Acts 5:31](#): "Christ ... who is at the right hand of God and who intercedes for us."

Fifth, *his session, his being seated at the right hand of God, signals the completion of his sacrifice*. [Hebrews 10](#): "Every Levitical priest stands daily offering sacrifices repeatedly ... but Christ sat down at the right hand of God." It signaled that his cross work was utterly finished. The sacrifice of Christ does not have to be repeated.

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<sup>1</sup> Don Carson, "Getting Excited About Melchizedek," Sermon, October 24, 2017, [https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/conference\\_media/getting-excited-melchizedek/](https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/conference_media/getting-excited-melchizedek/)

Another significant observation that David makes in this Psalm about the Messiah comes in verse 4 when he compares him to Melchizedek. You may want to go to Genesis 14:17–22 and read about this enigmatic figure, who appears suddenly, blesses Abraham, and is never heard from again. (You may also want to read how the author of Hebrews connects Melchizedek to Jesus in Hebrews 5:5–10 and 6:19–7:28.)

Melchizedek is described as both a king and a priest. David anticipates that not only will the Messiah be a great king who sits at the right hand of God, but a priestly intercessor who mediates between God and humanity.

As Hebrews notes, Jesus is our great high priest: “Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.” (Hebrews 4:14-16)

Hundreds of years before the birth of Christ, David anticipates what kind of Messiah people will need. A king to rule them and a priest to intercede for them. How do you need both?

## Pray

Take some time to reflect in prayer on what it means that your Messiah is a king and a high priest.

# Day 5

And here we are at the end of another episode in our story. It’s Friday, our day to reflect and worship. Let’s review, so we can put the pieces of our story together. We’ll also think about our place in God’s story and how we should be living in light of these truths.

## The Story

### Episode 1: God Creates

- **Key Verse:** So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. (Genesis 1:27)
- **Key Passages:** Genesis 1–2
- **Key Figures:** Adam and Eve

### Episode 2: God is rejected

- **Key Verse:** And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel." (Genesis 3:15)
- **Key Passages:** Genesis 3–11
- **Key Figures:** Adam, Eve, and Noah

### Episode 3: God creates a family

- **Key Verse:** "He took him outside and said, 'Look up at the sky and count the stars—if indeed you can count them.' Then he said to him, 'So shall your offspring be.'" (Genesis 15:5)
- **Key Passages:** Genesis 12–21
- **Key Figures:** Abraham and Sarah

### Episode 4: God rescues his people.

- The Lord said, "I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. So I have come down to rescue them..." (Exodus 3:7–8)
- **Key Book:** Exodus
- **Key Figure:** Moses

### Episode 5: God reigns

Israel's greatest king began his life as a shepherd. Though they were stubborn and prone to wander, David took care of his sheep, protected them from predators, and led them to fresh water and green pastures. God knew that a shepherd's heart is what's needed to rule over a rebellious people. After all, it's the kind of heart he has.

When we left our story last week, God's people had finally made it to the promised land. God had taught his people how to relate to him and to each other. He made a covenant with them and promised to lead them with his very presence. I wish I could tell you that everything went wonderfully well in this beautiful land, but by this point in our story, you probably know that's not how it went. The same sad cycle was repeated. The people rejected God and chased idols. They selfishly exploited one another. They defined good and evil for themselves and everyone did what was right in their own eyes. Chaos reigned until they cried out for a king.

Now, a king wasn't the worst thing they could have asked for. The problem was their motives. They wanted a king like the nations who surrounded them. They wanted a king *instead* of God rather than a king *under* God. God was being rejected once again. But he gave them what they asked for.

Israel's first king was Saul, an imposing figure and fierce warrior who was probably exactly what the people had in mind. But he was arrogant and proud, and his heart didn't belong to God. That was his downfall.

That brings us to David, the shepherd boy who became a man after God's own heart. David's faith in God is legendary. He faced down and defeated the Philistine Goliath in the name of the God of Israel. And though he faced years of adversity as he waited to become King, he trusted in the plan of God.

David wasn't a perfect King. In fact, he did some truly despicable things and paid the price for his actions. But he loved God and God made him another big promise. He promised to build David a great house. Not a physical house, but a dynasty. The Lord promised that his son would sit on Israel's throne forever. Now David might have envisioned a line of kings extending into eternity, but we know that's not how it will go.

The kings that follow David will be a mixed bag. Some good, many horrible. The kingdom will break in two and eventually dissolve under the rule of conquering nations. There is no son of David on any throne. Or is there?

What God promised David was likely beyond what he would have ever dreamed. An eternal king who would come from his line. An eternal son whose rule will never end. That's precisely who Jesus is. The son of David who now sits at the right hand of God as the King of kings, ruler above all rulers. Another king with a shepherd's heart who loves, cares for, and guides his people.

## Key Verse

Meditate on our key verse for the week. Read each phrase slowly and prayerfully. Allow the Spirit to speak to you through God's Word.

***“The Lord declares to you that the Lord himself will establish a house for you: When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.”( 2 Samuel 7:11b–13)***

## Finding your place in God's story

Ask the Spirit to guide you, then consider these questions. Ponder the ones that speak to you:

- As you reflect on what you've read this week, what's your biggest takeaway? For example, what did you learn about God as Ruler? What kind of King is he? How is Jesus the fulfillment of God's promises to David?
- How did you see yourself reflected in the stories we read this week? For example, are you more impressed by the superficial than what's in the heart? How is Jesus the David

that you need when you face your giants? How do you respond to Jesus as your king? As you reflect, seek his forgiveness and ask for his power to change.

- For what do you want to praise and thank God?
- What requests do you want to bring to your loving King?

### **Tune in Next Week:**

When Kings fail and priests become corrupt, the prophets speak on behalf of God. What will their message be? Find out in Episode 6 of The Story.