

Unfolding Unveiling: Studies of Christ Revealed in the Types of Joshua, David, and Solomon

Part Six: David

Chapter Twenty: David at Hebron

The Death of David in our Understanding

The Lord's new thing in I Samuel 3:11-12 was the bringing in of a new reality for His people in the realm of their understanding. Of course, it is not new in the heart of God; it will only be the next step in the unfolding revelation for His people. It says in verse 12, "When I begin I will also make an end." This is a promise of seeing a whole new aspect of the Cross. The end that must come is the end of Israel's horrible existence at this time. The way of relating to God in the natural by the Holy Spirit only, the dead religion, and the self-life on the throne are what must pass away, along with Israel's concept of what being IN Christ means. Somehow they had gotten off the path of apprehending Christ; they were trying to live the spiritual reality in the natural realm. Their concepts of the ark also had to go to the Cross because their concept of God's heart and complete thought was not the the fullness of what it was meant to be.

Where do we see this death take place? It occurs in two places: first when the ark is carted off by the Philistines and later when David is forced to take refuge in the land of the Philistines.

The Cross is not just for sinners getting saved (typified by the Red Sea). The Cross is not just for believers who need to identify with Christ and make the transition from a natural realm lifestyle – living in Adam – to a Spirit realm lifestyle – living in Christ (typified by the Jordan). The Cross is also for believers living in the Land who have a natural, self-centered viewpoint of the mind of God and living in Christ. It is the same Cross and its One work, but there are different comprehensions of the One work. We were delivered out of Egypt. Good. We moved from the natural to the Spirit realm. Good. Now we need to see the Cross that we might be freed from a viewpoint that reasons from self as the beginning. This is the end of which God speaks to Samuel in verse 12.

What is the new beginning? That all might be gathered up in the One, who is David. The ark does not re-emerge into view until David is seated on the throne at Jerusalem.

As far as David's death is concerned, there is a David in Saul's kingdom. And though this David is important, and though he is anointed of God, he is just another guy to us. At the Cross, he dies and is resurrected as the One in our understanding. When this One dies, he takes the self-life, the system of the judges, dead religion, and viewpoints of spiritual

things conceived by self with him to the grave. And what comes out is a kingdom, a government and a people living in spiritual reality.

The Need for Being Gathered

God's people had to be gathered. This was the reason for their bondages, their lack of direction, their inability to know the Lord. Taking the Land under Joshua was right and good. It was in the will of God and in His timing; however, it was only a step. There was more that God had in mind for them. But because Israel got tripped up, they did not continue. They all but fell apart as a nation.

Taking the Land was necessary, but incomplete. The Scripture that gives this away is Joshua 24:28 (see also Jud. 2:8), which says, "So Joshua let the people depart, every man to his inheritance." Although they had taken the Land as a nation, they were still thinking as individuals. They each had their own inheritance. Furthermore, they had possessed the Land in some places, but not in others (cf. Josh. 12:7-13:6). It is a step in spiritual maturity where God's people know for certain that they are dead (they crossed the Jordan!) and know their new identity (the memorial of the twelve stones) and have begun, step by step, to possess the knowledge of the Lord. This is good. They had never known what it meant to be in Christ, and now they are beginning to know with spiritual knowledge. But as the story shows us, the renewing of their minds is incomplete. There are inhabitants left in the Land at the death of Joshua, and Israel is unable to root them out. They know truths and things about being in Christ. They have learned aspects and angles. They have possessed certain indispensable truths that cannot be done without. But this is an incomplete knowing. It is as though they have learned things about being in Christ, but they have yet to learn Christ.

Again, all of this takes place on the resurrection side of the Jordan. This is a stage in the revelation of Christ, but not a stage where we are to remain, and certainly not the final goal of all that God wants. Our comprehension of being in Christ starts with truths and things, and it is taught by the Spirit. As we lay old of these things that are true in Christ, a terrible conflict with the enemies of God results as they resist being disinherited. God's people are victorious, even with this limited comprehension of their God and all that He is.

What is this limited knowledge that Israel has?

- That they are dead and have a new identity. They are now spiritual beings (Josh. ch. 4).
- The Land is theirs. It belongs to them (Josh. 1:3).
- The Lord fights their battles.
- A certain apprehension of the Lord's Sabbath. They enter into rest (Josh. 11:23).

The Land is taken with this Spirit-revealed knowledge. But what knowledge could possibly be missing? What more did Israel need to know? Like I said, Israel knew these truths, but they did not know the One from whom these truths had their origin. They did not know that they were to be found in the One. How do I know this, since there is no Scripture verse that actually says that? I know this because we can still see Israel. The Scriptures speak of nothing else all the way through the book of Judges. It is as if we are

sitting in the middle of a bunch of carnal minds, and God is off in the distance somewhere. Even in I Samuel, the first part of the book is all about this person, or that failure of Israel's. Even though Samuel pleased the Lord, God was still frustrated with His people. But when David comes on the scene, the people are all gathered up in David. Talking about the people just fades into the background, and David comes to the forefront.

This is the knowledge that the people need. Now, more than ever, they need to know the One and be gathered up in Him. This is what they did not know when they were taking the Land, though the aspects of truth with which they fought came from here. But they had not yet apprehended this reality. I am sure that certain ones of them had. Joshua had spent a lot of time in the tabernacle, and Caleb had fully followed the Lord. But as a nation, this knowledge is not apprehended until the entire nation is gathered up in David.

As long as we each have our own inheritance in Christ, and we can still see us, we are still not seeing Christ fully. For where you see Christ, you see nothing else. We are hidden in Him (cf. Col. 3:2)! It is during the reigns of David and Solomon that we see Israel "in" their kings – in a Person – and not just living according to truths, which can only wield an incomplete victory.

The King and Being Gathered

The King is the One in whom all are included. He reigns when we realize who He is and allow Him to be that. This is very different from our concept of a king here in the United States. To us, a king is a special guy who gets all the attention and a bunch of fringe benefits. The rest of the peons, meanwhile, are left to deal with their lack and low estate as best they can. Thoughts of corruption and power plays come to mind when the idea of a king is discussed. To God, however, a king is He who is Head of a corporate body. He is the One in whom all are counted to be. God deals with the king, and deals with the entire nation accordingly. Christ Jesus is our king, because we are in Him, and He is the head of the body. Every time the New Testament Scriptures talk about us being in Christ, it is indirectly referring to Him being our king.

This realization happened slowly for Israel. David was first anointed by Samuel in I Samuel 16:12-13. A remnant out of Judah recognized that anointing many years later, and chose to be identified with him by partaking in his sufferings. They went out to him in the wilderness during his banishment (cf. I Sam. 22:1-2). When Saul died, the entire house of Judah anointed him to be their king (cf. II Sam. 2:4) at Hebron. Finally, the entire nation recognized David for who he was and sought to identify themselves with him (cf. II Sam. 5:1-3). I think it is no coincidence that their being gathered up in him is marked by the statement, "Behold, we are thy bone and thy flesh." Compare this statement in Ephesians 5:30, where Paul says we are of Christ's flesh and bones.

Turning from a Self-Existence to a One-Existence

We have spent all this time discussing the differences between the two kingdoms. How do we turn from one to the other? Israel did when they turned from the house of Saul to the house of David. First of all, we would do well to understand that according to Scripture, a great deal of time elapsed between the times when the kingdom was torn from Saul (cf. I Sam. 15:28) and given to David (cf. I Sam. 16:13), and when Saul died and David ascended the throne (cf. II Sam. 2:4). The Lord anointed the risen One long before it is comprehended by us, and self still sits on the throne a very long while before our eyes are opened to it. It seems as though there were those in Israel who knew David had a right to the throne, such as Jonathan, Abigail, and the 600 men who followed him, but David could not rule as long as Saul was around. So even though at least some, if not most of the people, knew that David was king, no one seemed to be able to do anything about it.

That is so like us. There is a time in the life of the believer that we know that self is ruling and that Jesus should be ruling, but somehow we cannot seem to change the situation. As we can see from the Scriptures, Jesus never puts His hand to a situation! He waits on the Father (cf. I Sam. 26:9-10) to deliver Him and put Him where He belongs. So everybody is waiting, waiting. Waiting for what, though? Remember all that happens in the Land is a picture of the progression in the Spiritual comprehension of the people of God. Saul finally died in I Samuel 31. Actually, the work of death was wrought in completion at the Cross. But for the people of God, there had to be a comprehending of the fact that self was dead, and the resurrected One, in Whom we are and of which we are all members, could take His rightful place on the throne and rule His people.

Self will govern God's people until they realize that the self-life must be judged dead, just like the sin nature and the old creation. This is an understanding we must come to, or we are doomed to live individual Christian lives instead of the One life that finds its source in the One seated in the heavenlies.

Being gathered in Christ together means the total loss of being an autonomous Christian. You cannot be autonomous and a member of a body at the same time. And King Self will never stand for being a member only. He is what keeps us from being gathered together in One because he will never lose his soul.

It is significant that the self-life was not typified by an inhabitant of the Land but by one of the children of Israel. Self is not an inhabitant; we bring it with us wherever we go. It is us. It is not just an inhabitant that we can kick out. Self goes much deeper than that. We are self! It is not something bad nor is it necessarily something good. It is what makes us, us in the natural. But it has to go if we are to dwell in the heavenlies in Christ, because there is only room from Christ there.

Turning from a Self-existence to a One-existence: Being Gathered in One

I Chronicles 12 gives us great insight into how we are gathered in Christ. In reality, of course, this work was accomplished at the Cross. There is no need for us to try to “get up into Christ” for we are in Him now! What I mean by gathering in Christ is that we come to the realization by the Holy Spirit that we are in Him, and that to be in Him means that we are both members of Him (cf. I Cor. 6:15) and members of one another (cf. Eph. 4:25).

This gathering had begun with the 400 men coming out to him in the wilderness in I Samuel 22:1-2. People were trickling out to him all along (cf. I Sam. 23:13), but when he was outside the borders of Israel, the gathering in David started in earnest. This gathering at Ziklag is recorded in I Chronicles 12:1-22. Let us look at a few outstanding points in this passage.

The very first thing I noticed when reading this passage is that they look like David. No mention of these great men is found during the reign of Saul. So where did they come from? They become visible at the resurrection of David. Colossians 3:3-4 says, “For ye are dead, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.” When Christ appeared, these men appeared as well, because Christ was their life. They reckoned themselves dead and their life hidden, and they appeared at David’s resurrection. When Christ appeared, so did they.

The next point to notice is in verse one, which says that David restricted himself because of Saul. We have, however, discussed this point at length in earlier pages and will therefore move on for now. Please keep in mind that it is an extremely important point and should be studied thoroughly

Those who came to David were “mighty men” (v. 1), “men of might, and men of war fit for the battle” (v. 8), and “mighty men of valor” (v. 21). All those who came to David at Ziklag were skilled, mighty, brave warriors. The Scripture’s testimony of these men is significant in that it says nothing negative about them. The Scripture’s estimation of these men is so high that it is almost boasting. God must have thought highly of these men. Not only had He taught David to war, but He apparently had taught these men as well. God was so pleased with their warfare that He put their names in Scripture as a memorial to following generations. God must hold His warriors in high esteem.

Who are these warriors? They are those of the New Creation who have chosen to take their position as such. They have not won God’s favor by their works, for we who are His workmanship can only walk in the works that are foreordained for us. These are not a group of elite “warriors” in the body of Christ who, by virtue of their special fighting abilities, have earned a superior position among their brethren. These are they who have realized who they are – a man of war – and have conformed to it. The only difference between those who have seen who they are and those who have not is that the former group have an obligation to the latter, to lay down their lives for their brethren, to fight on their behalf until all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man. So let us not use the type in the Scripture to cause division in

the Lord's body, for anyone who so chooses can be warrior. The requirements are found in the books of Deuteronomy and Joshua.

So we see that a large factor in turning the kingdom of Saul to the kingdom of David is the warriors, those who fight the good fight of faith, those who have not only begun to take the Land for themselves, but for their brethren. It is the warriors, not the Levites, not the judges, not the prophets, who turn the kingdom. And the warriors do not only have the potential to be any of us, they should be all of us. It is not a ministry for those special gifted few. The entire nation was to fight and take the Land.

Separated from Saul unto David

Verse eight says that these warriors "separated themselves unto David". A separating took place. They had made a complete break with Saul's kingdom and identified with David. They separated themselves. No one made them leave Saul or join David. They did this of their own volition. They wanted to be identified with David. This act of the will follows the seeing of who we are. God has already put self to death, but when by the Holy Spirit we see that, we will leave that old kingdom in the grave as we make the outward changes that are consistent with the reality we have beheld. We are in Christ, but for us to truly be identified there, we must choose it. We will never be forced to identify in Christ and as members one of another. But if God is to have a manifestation of His corporate Son, there must be a break with all that is opposed to this Corporate One.

These men's lives drastically changed when they broke with Saul and joined David's ranks. The separation that was worked by the Cross is made manifest in the actions of those who have been conformed to that Cross. By simply seeing who they were "of" – who their head was – they chose to forego the blessing and security of their lands and homes for a band of virtual outlaws (not really – it just looked that way!) who were constantly betrayed by their brethren (cf. I Sam. 23:12, 26:1) and hid out in caves. Either their change in lifestyle was an act of sheer lunacy, or it was an act motivated by a reality that is higher than what they saw with their natural eyes. Seeing the One of whom you are will result in separating yourself from the old and gathering into the new. In this natural realm, this conforming can result in any number of manifestations, but it most commonly works out in the believer leaving natural security and benefits to pursue spiritual invisible realities. Taking the lower seat by the world's standards, either by taking a humbler job to spend more time the Word and ministry, or taking a cut in lifestyle so that more of our income can be devoted to the furtherance of the kingdom are not uncommon in these. The rest of the Christo-religious world counts these as fanatics and outcasts because it does not see what these "conformed warriors" see.

Not only are these warriors separating themselves unto David, they are with each other. It is a group of men who have been separated. For there to be a kingdom manifest, there must be a kingdom, which requires more than one person. These men together allowed the Cross to govern them in their break from Saul and move towards David. They broke with a governing individual mentality when they realized that was not who they were, nor was it ever what God intended them to be. They were always meant to be members of

Another, which Another was purposed to be their head and source. Each one saw that they were meant to be a part of a corporate man who was One Man, not many men. This is where these men identified and unto what they separated themselves.

The Man of War

Verse eight gives us still more elements of how such a turning comes about. There are three characteristics listed concerning these men of war, which explain their effectiveness in battle:

1) “They could handle shield and buckler.” They had an impenetrable defense. No enemy could get through their defensive armor because they knew how to use it. God has given His church the shield of faith, but little good it does us if we do not learn how to handle it.

2) “Whose faces were like the faces of lions.” Proverbs 28:1 says, “The righteous are as bold as a lion.” When we know that we are right with God, we are unafraid. We find it so easy to walk in the one principle fundamental to taking the Land: “Have I not commanded thee? Be strong and of good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed; for the Lord thy God is with thee wherever thou goest,” (Josh. 1:9). When we are afraid, we will not trust God or His Word to us, that He has given us the Land. We will stay in bondage to the inhabitants as long as this is the case. But when we know that we have been reconciled to God and that He is with us, and that His Word is good, our faith toward God makes us unafraid of all that comes against it. For further development on this subject, refer back to the chapter on Deuteronomy.

3) “Who were as swift as roes upon the mountains.” These men of war were agile in the high places. Their footing was sure, and they did not slip. How we need to be sure of foot in the high places of God! We need the agility, the strength, the endurance of the inner man that we might be able to do battle in the high place, and take them that we might live there.

These identified in David, and God saw them in David. This is why He was so pleased with them. Ephesians 1:7 says that we are highly favored in the Beloved.

Against whom did they make war? The inhabitants of the Land, of course. Verse 15 bears record of a quickly mentioned incident that must hold great significance in God’s eyes. The Gadites had utterly routed the valley-dwellers on both sides of the Jordan in the first month, when the Jordan overflowed its banks. According to Caleb’s account in Numbers 13:29, it is the Canaanites to which this verse is referring. The valley-dwellers had chariots of iron, and Israel had been unable to drive them out for centuries (cf. Josh. 17:16, Jud. 1:19, Jud. 4:2-3).

If that were not enough, it is also significant that Saul is not connected with this battle at all, even though I Samuel 14:47 indicates that he was constantly at war. One of these two options must be the case: 1) Saul led them in battle, but God did not acknowledge him as king and therefore attributed the victory to those whose hearts were right, or 2) the children of Israel were rising up and fighting the Lord’s battles apart from Saul’s

leadership because he was too busy hunting David to fulfill his responsibilities as king. In any case, the victory was a great one because they could not have routed the Canaanites with their iron chariots had they not been fighting in the Lord's strength.

Finally, they routed the enemy on both sides of the Jordan when the river was at flood levels. This is reminiscent of Israel's first journey over the Jordan under Joshua's command. The month that the Jordan floods is the same month in which the first three feasts of the year occur: Passover, Unleavened bread, and Firstfruits, or death, burial, and resurrection. This is the time in which the enemy is defeated – in God's time! These warriors knew God's kind of warfare.

Back to our point about warriors gathering in David. Do you remember back when Israel crossed the Red Sea, that Moses sang a song in which he said, "The Lord is a man of war," (Ex. 15:3). How can anybody say that the Lord is a man? The Lord is a Spirit (cf. Jn. 4:24). It sounds similar to Paul's writings concerning the new man. Ephesians 4:13 says: "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man..." Colossians 3:10 says, "And put on the new man..." In Ephesians 6:10-17, Paul says that there is an armor for this "man," implying the necessity for warfare. It is a corporate man, made up of those who were raised together with Christ. This is a New Creation, according to II Corinthians 5:17. In this New Creation, old things are passed away, and all things are of God. "The Lord is a man." How can this be? Only if the Lord is not Spirit only. Jesus joined us to Himself in his death, burial, and resurrection. We have been made partakers of His Cross, and we are now members of Him. I Corinthians 15:47 says the second man is the Lord from heaven. Verses 48-50 go on to clarify that this Lord is not just Jesus only, but that we are included in that man.

Returning back to the Old Testament Scriptures, perhaps the Lord as referred to in Exodus 15:3 is a corporate man; the same man, in fact, of which Paul speaks in I Corinthians 15:47-50.

In I Chronicles 12:1-22 we have warriors gathering to David, who in God's estimation are "men of war fit for the battle". They identify in David and are in the same image of their head – as we are to be – and satisfy the heart of God in how completely they are men of war. They are the fulfillment of that about which Moses sang so long ago at the shores of the Red Sea. This gathering reveals that they are not just "men of war". They are the Man of war, the manifestation of the Lord. In picture, these men are the body of Christ, and David is the head. Each man is conformed to the image of His Head, but the gathering constitutes a corporate reality. The Head and the members together, with the members identifying in the Head and each of them understanding that he is a member and not an autonomous individual, this head and these comprehending members manifest the new man, this Man of war. So the gathering in David while he was at Ziklag is the beginning of comprehension dawning in the heart of Israel and the manifestation of their conformity that followed.

There is another element that is necessary if God's Spiritual Israel will be gathered into One: we must be taught of God to war (cf. Jud. 3:3). There can be no spiritual

progression until this occurs. The book of Judges is all about the fact that God could go no further with them until they learned war. Finally, finally, after all those years we see a breakthrough in Israel, not only in the person of David, but in the nation of Israel as a whole. They were finally knowing God's heart and conforming to it. The joyful and exultant tone of this chapter reveals the heart of God rejoicing over His people being gathered into One at last.

These warriors, remember, are not fighting for themselves, but for their brethren. Ever since the days of Joshua and Caleb, one never fought for one's self only, but for one's brethren. Paul did not fight for himself, but for the church (cf. II Tim. 4:7). We are not warriors if we take care of our own things; we are warriors when we fight for others – when we believe for them, stand for them, pray for them, and lay down our lives for them, when we cover the sinful and carry the weak and do not rest until all have seen the unveiled Christ. All must possess their inheritance for the work to be complete in us and not just the swift and the strong only.

There is yet another element necessary if we are to turn from a self-existence to the One-existence in which God has placed us, and that is the recognition by means of the Holy Spirit that God helps this One (cf. v. 18). Those of Benjamin and Judah who came out to David perceived by the Spirit that God recognized David as the head of His kingdom. God did not help Saul. In contrast, God did help David in battle, in hiding from Saul, in causing David to see Himself. This One is He whom God chooses to help. This is what moved these warriors to identify with David. It was no different for John the Baptist, who declared God's chosen after seeing the dove descend upon Him, or for Paul, who separated himself unto Christ after being blinded by God's light and realizing that Christ was the One dearest to God's heart.

We, too, must see that God has chosen David. God has not chosen us. He does not help or anoint us, with our individual problems, pursuits, and petitions. David is the One that God helps. And when we are gathered in Him, we are helped, too. As we see this by the Spirit, the Holy Spirit will come upon us, and we shall say with Amasa, "Thine are we, David, and on thy side, thou son of Jesse."

Turning from a Self-existence to a One-existence – I Chronicles 12, cont.

The first half of I Chronicles 12 is the gathering that occurred during Saul's reign, and the second half records the gathering after Saul's death. Both are the record of a nation turning from self to being gathered into One. The first half is the record of those who identified in the reproach of David, while the second half is the turning of the kingdom from Saul to David. Both aspects required men of war. We have looked in depth into the first half of the chapter. We will now turn our attention to the second half as we continue our search into the turning of the heart from the government of the self-life to the government of the Head in relation to the corporate, spiritual body.

First of all, those of Israel who came to Hebron to turn the kingdom to David were men of war. Indeed, there is great significance in these men being the delegates of Israel to the

king. It is the man of war of which Moses prophesied so long ago at the Red Sea. Taught of God to fight His battles, they are the extension of their head, David. In our study of the first half of the chapter, we went into detail about the men of war, and we need not repeat ourselves here. All that was said previously concerning the men of war applies here.

There are some specific things said about these men, however, that will aid us in “turning the kingdom” both in our own hearts, and then in God’s people as a whole. The delegation out of each of the tribes were all armed and ready for war. These were men who came ready to take the Land. Hallelujah! God’s nation finally turned from what kept them in bondage all the years of the book of Judges; they finally ceased from their own doings and from their stubborn way (cf. Jud. 2:19). It was a heart condition that insisted upon its own way, that had put them in bondage after the death of Joshua, and the turning of their hearts to David was bound up with carrying out God’s desire and intention for them in finishing what David had started – possessing the Land. They had fought for so long under Saul, but had failed to accomplish anything in the Lord that He desired. Israel began to realize that God was helping David. When David fought the enemy, he was victorious. But the Lord had left Saul. Under David’s hand, God’s plan was going forward in the earth. I think that Israel began to notice whom God was backing and began to move accordingly.

God is not with Saul, God is with David. He is not “with us” in the sense of His main purpose being to bless and cheer on all our carnal endeavors, including our “spiritual” carnal endeavors. He is with Christ because Christ is about His business. We are in Christ, and the Father is with us in that respect. When we begin to recognize this, we will stop serving Saul and start serving David.

Contributing towards the Whole

Some tribes had specific qualities that aided in turning the kingdom as a whole. It is one thing to turn one’s own heart individually. It is quite another to attempt to turn an entire kingdom. God provided some elements within His people to aid this momentous shift in direction. Verse 32 says that Issachar’s contribution was “men who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do”. They understood not only the eternal reality, they also understood the way in which God was moving among His people in that season, for what purpose, and how Israel was to respond and move with the Lord. Israel had followed Saul for so long that they were probably not as clear on how to follow the Lord. What a blessing that God would provide such insight through His body, for His body. What a long way Israel had come from the days of Samuel, when “the word of the Lord was rare... and there was no open vision” (I Sam. 3:1). Here we have an entire tribe of Israel dedicated to knowing the Lord’s ways in the earth, and with such maturity, that they were of benefit to their brethren.

We need to hear from the Lord by way of our brethren. God does not always tell us everything directly. Coming into relating as members in a corporate spiritual body is a period of transition. All things may not be clear for awhile, and the transition into this new way of relating may be tricky. Those who see for the whole are God’s provision for

the rest of the body by a dual motivation: 1) love for the body, and 2) a desire for Christ to come forth as we minister one to another.

Verse 33 points out that those who came out of Zebulun were “not of double heart”. Cross-referencing this to the book of James, we see that to not be of double heart means to be unwavering and therefore stable. They did not have one foot in the natural realm and one foot in the spiritual realm, so to speak. They had both feet in the spiritual realm. They were stable there. They were consistent, unwavering, and not easily moved. Another New Testament passage that comes to mind is Ephesians 4:13-14. When we are grown up in Christ, not only individually with our own understanding, but when we all come to a perfect man, we are “no more children, tossed to and fro”.

All Those Men of War Who Could Keep Rank – I Chronicles 12:23-38

Verses 32 and 38 say that all of these men of war could keep rank. This implies the converse – that it is possible for God’s people to be unable to do so. To keep rank means that each individual man knew how to be a member. They did not stand out as individuals; rather, they lost their individuality for the good of the whole. Personal talent, abilities, and character traits were lost for the sake of appearing as One and for the sake of war. According to this passage, war is a corporate affair, not an individual one. There must be a losing of oneself and anything that we identify in that makes us autonomous if we want to help our brethren take the Land. This “losing” is a work of the Cross, which cuts away all that would keep us in bondage to the self-life. All that is cut away is left in the grave, and all that is left is Christ, where there is neither “Jew nor Greek, male nor female, bond nor free.”

It is those who keep rank that win wars. Keeping rank means giving up your own plans and ideas for military strategies, giving up how you are perceived for uniforms, and giving up being seen at all, for when all are keeping rank, you see an army, not many individuals. You cannot pick the one person you know out of the middle of a battalion, for he looks like everybody else. In the loss of others seeing you is the gain of others seeing the One. However, it is not simply perception only, but being effective in God’s ways, for in moving together is Christ expressed and His kingdom established, not in moving as each of us sees fit.

The carnal mind does not like to lose all of this stuff. In evaluating the situation, the carnal mind thinks, “I am insignificant. I don’t matter. I’m not important. I’m just another guy.” The carnal mind only thinks that we are valuable to the degree that we can be recognized. This is achieved by some marking factor: a particular talent, a brilliant personality, striking good looks, a Holy Spirit-charged ministry. The carnal mind does not like these things to be laid aside. But it is when we lose our “individual-ness” as our source that we are actually more valuable and effective because we have made ourselves of greater capacity for the whole kingdom. But you cannot see this with natural eyes; it is only seen as you see Christ by revelation. It is in the denying of the self-life that Christ has an unblocked channel to flow through us. But to do this means to lose our strengths and marking factors as an individual.

So we see that keeping rank is necessary for gathering. The losing of oneself is for a specific purpose – that we all might conform to a pattern together. We conform to the image of Christ.

Associated by Christ

Hebron was the name of the place where Israel came to make David king because he was ruling over Judah from there already. Hebron means “seat of association”. This is the place where we are gathered, and from which David governs – from the seat of association. He governs us when we identify with Him.

These men came freely to make David king. This is so important in turning from a self-existence to a One-existence. Saul required things of his subjects. They had to fight for him. But in order for David to be king, the subjects must come voluntarily. When we see that God has placed us in His Son in such a way that we even relate to one another from there, we will voluntarily cast off our self-centered identity for our true, Christ-centered identity. David will never take His kingdom by force, though the kingdom is rightfully His. It is not the premise upon which He operates. He rules over those whose hearts belong to Him. He does not rule by outward requirements.

Gathering – I Chronicles 12:38-40

To make David king means we will have fellowship one with another. When we cease to go our own way and turn the kingdom to David with one heart (motivation!), we find ourselves feasting with our brethren. We are identified together in Christ, typified by their meeting in Hebron, and this reality lays a beautiful banquet for those who receive it.

“Their brethren made preparation for them.” Being gathered in One means that we do not each individually hear everything we need from God on our own. There are those who may have arrived at this comprehension before us, and they, through eyes of faith, will have anticipated our coming up to Hebron. They will have prepared food for the feast that will be thrown at our coming. I would think that it takes a certain amount of humility to receive from our brethren. But if we are now in David’s kingdom, there is only one mind. God’s people supply the feast. They have what we need to feed on. We can sit at the same table because we are of the same kingdom.

A Comparison of Joshua and David

Joshua is primarily known for taking the Land, but David had a lot to do with it as well. He was very involved in driving out the enemies that were left behind at the time of Joshua’s death. According to Judges 3:1-3, God left certain inhabitants in the Land that He might teach Israel to war. And though throughout the book of Judges Israel fought many battles, it was not until David’s time that we see a generation of men emerge that are “expert in war” (cf. I Chron. 12). Even David says in Psalm 18:34 that God was teaching his hands to war. Perhaps David was familiar with the passage in Judges and

understood its meaning. Or maybe that particular line in David's Psalm is only a "Holy Spirit coincidence".

Regardless, it is a signal to us from the Holy Spirit that the time period of teaching God's people to war was coming to an end. Joshua was never meant to take the land completely, and the judges only brought temporary deliverance. David, on the other hand, wrought a complete and lasting deliverance.

I believe that some enemies can only be dispossessed by being gathered in One, whose type is David. These enemies are too strong to be taken by a group of people with an individual mentality, which is what we see in Joshua. Joshua – Christ – must be succeeded by a greater, more powerful reality of Christ, which is what we see in David. After all those years of wars and bondage, it was David who finally defeated the Philistines, the Jebusites, the Amalekites, and other inhabitants of the Land. Our David is meant to complete the taking of the Land. It is true that Joshua leading Israel is a picture of a corporate reality, but to finally be gathered in such a way that God's reality can become our government is more typified by David than by Joshua.

Joshua led Israel into the Land and helped them to settle there. Up until the time of Saul, there was no stable, lasting government. Government, when Israel had that luxury, was regional and lasted until the death of that governor. Surely this state of affairs could not have offered a great deal of stability for the Israelites. David, however, caused them to find their identity in the One and to be governed from that place in Him.