

First

Part 2

Opening text: Matthew 6:25, 31-33

“But seek FIRST the kingdom of God and its righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you”

There is a proper order that makes life work, spiritually and practically, like we saw last week. There are many passages in the Bible about this. Among many stories that exemplify this principle, the story of David and what he did when he became a king stands out:

1. When David became King, the first thing he did was to bring the ark back to Jerusalem. He understood that God had to be first in his life and in his kingdom.

1 Chronicles 15: 11-3 - *“And David called for Zadok and Abiathar the priests, and for the Levites: for Uriel, Asaiah, Joel, Shemaiah, Eliel, and Amminadab. ¹² He said to them, “You are the heads of the fathers’ houses of the Levites; sanctify yourselves, you and your brethren, that you may bring up the ark of the Lord God of Israel to the place I have prepared for it. ¹³ For because **you did not do it the first time**, the Lord our God broke out against us, because we did not consult Him about **the proper order.**”*

David wanted God at the centre of his Kingdom and FIRST. From the first day of his reign, David wanted God to be first. That’s how he built a successful kingdom. That is how you will build a successful marriage, that is how you will build a successful future for your children, that is how you build a life that works: God first, His presence first, His word first!

2. After bringing the ark back, David set it in the tabernacle and he worshiped God first.

1 Chronicles 16:7 - *“On that day David **first** delivered this psalm into the hand of Asaph and his brethren, to thank the Lord: Oh, give thanks to the Lord! Call upon His name; make known His deeds among the peoples!”*

David worshiped first – before any request was made, he worshipped God and thanked Him. We need to understand that we can come freely to the throne of grace but there is a protocol:

- a) **Psalm 100:4** - *Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, And into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him and bless His name.*

3. David didn’t think that his own house should come first

1 Chronicles 17:1-8 - *Now it came to pass, when David was dwelling in his house, that David said to Nathan the prophet, “See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the*

ark of the covenant of the Lord is under tent curtains.”² Then Nathan said to David, “Do all that is in your heart, for God is with you.”

V.20 - *O Lord, there is none like You, nor is there any God besides You, according to all that we have heard with our ears.*

As a result of David’s desire to put God first and build Him a house worthy of His name, God also promised that he was going to bless David’s house forever and his seed after him, as well as give him victory over his enemies.

When you get involved with His house, He gets involved with your house.

David said,

V.23 - *And now, O Lord, the word which You have spoken concerning Your servant and concerning his house, let it be established forever, and do as You have said.*

When you put God first, there is a boldness to appropriate His covenant promises by faith.

4. Solomon, David’s son, built God’s house first and then his own.

1 Kings 6:9-13

⁹So he built the temple and finished it, and he paneled the temple with beams and boards of cedar. [...] ¹¹Then the word of the Lord came to Solomon, saying: ¹²“Concerning this temple which you are building, if you walk in My statutes, execute My judgments, keep all My commandments, and walk in them, then I will perform My word with you, which I spoke to your father David. ¹³And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake My people Israel.”

Chapter 7:1 - *But Solomon took thirteen years to build his own house; so he finished all his house.*

Solomon’s own house came second. First, he built God’s house! As a result, God built Solomon’s kingdom to levels no king before or after him experienced. He was the most successful king ever to sit in the throne of Israel and the wealthiest ever. Why? He put God first. Putting God first and being blessed as a result of it are undeniable facts of the Scriptures.

This principle works in any circumstance:

a) A poor widow in the middle of a famine

1 kings 17:8-15 - *⁸Then the word of the Lord came to him, saying, ⁹“Arise, go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and dwell there. See, I have commanded a widow there to provide for you.” ¹⁰So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, indeed a widow was there gathering sticks. And he called to her and said, “Please bring me a little water in a cup, that I may drink.” ¹¹And as she was going to get it, he called to her and said, “Please bring me a morsel of bread in your hand.”*

*¹²So she said, “As the Lord your God lives, I do not have bread, only a handful of flour in a bin, and a little oil in a jar; and see, I am gathering a couple of sticks that I may go in and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it, and die.” ¹³And Elijah said to her, “Do not fear; go and do as you have said, but make me a small cake from it **first**, and bring it to me; and afterward make some for yourself and your*

son. ¹⁴ For thus says the Lord God of Israel: "The bin of flour shall not be used up, nor shall the jar of oil run dry, until the day the Lord sends rain on the earth." ¹⁵ So she went away and did according to the word of Elijah; and she and he and her household ate for many days. ¹⁶ The bin of flour was not used up, nor did the jar of oil run dry, according to the word of the Lord which He spoke by Elijah.

"Make me a small cake from it **FIRST**" – This was not a self-serving statement from the man of God. This was an illustrated sermon for all peoples of all times on what happens when we put God first, when we trust Him first – more than what we see, more than our resources, more than our supply.

With this understanding in mind let us also look at another passage:

Ezekiel 44:30 - *The best of all firstfruits of any kind, and every sacrifice of any kind from all your sacrifices, shall be the priest's; also you shall give to the priest the **first** of your ground meal, **to cause a blessing to rest on your house.***

One last passage:

2 Corinthians 8:5 - *And not only as we had hoped, but they **first** gave themselves to the Lord, and then to us by the will of God.*

Paul praised the churches of Macedonia for the fact that even in the middle of trouble, they "**first** gave themselves to the Lord" – The Lord was still first even though they were in distress. If we put Him first in any circumstance we will never be defeated.