

2 Samuel 23

Verse 4 praises the king who rules justly. In the Darby translation, verse 5 begins “Although my house be not so before God, Yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, Ordered in every way and sure.” Some other versions render it differently. Nevertheless, it seems fitting that David should follow his praise of a just king with a humble statement of personal contrition. Here at the end of his life he is only too aware of his human failings.

But what follows? An unwavering claim on God's promise to establish an everlasting covenant with David's house, culminating in the reign of the one perfectly just ruler. In his unworthiness David glories in God's grace.

Questions for study and discussion:

1. How can the four descriptions of David in verse 1 also picture Christ?
2. What does David give as his credentials for writing this passage?
3. How does verse 4 apply to our Lord, the Just Ruler?

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We too should take a humble tone in our inner autobiographies, in both our victories and our downfalls. On the other hand, we should always revel in promises God has made to those who belong to His Son, and the position He has given us. Don't we sometimes get it backwards, lifting up ourselves and neglecting our identity in Christ?

“But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world” (Galatians 6:14).

Notes

23:1 “Last words” does not mean the words spoken by David on his deathbed, but the last of his many inspired writings.

4. Read verse 5. What are some promises of God to us that fit the same phrases?

5. What do verses 6 and 7 tell us about dealing with contemptible people?

6. Why, do you think, is Joab not included among the mighty men after all he has done for David?

7. According to verses 10 and 12, who is responsible for victory?

8. What do verses 13-17 tell us about service for the Lord?