



# 1 & 2 Samuel

## Bible Study

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Homework Schedule

<i>Week 1</i>	<i>1 Samuel 1-3</i>
<i>Week 2</i>	<i>1 Samuel 4-7</i>
<i>Week 3</i>	<i>1 Samuel 8-11</i>
<i>Week 4</i>	<i>1 Samuel 12-15</i>
<i>Week 5</i>	<i>1 Samuel 16-18</i>
<i>Week 6</i>	<i>1 Samuel 19-22</i>
<i>Week 7</i>	<i>1 Samuel 23-26</i>
<i>Week 8</i>	<i>1 Samuel 27-31</i>
<i>Week 9</i>	<i>2 Samuel 1-4</i>
<i>Week 10</i>	<i>2 Samuel 5-8</i>
<i>Week 11</i>	<i>2 Samuel 9-12</i>
<i>Week 12</i>	<i>2 Samuel 13-14</i>
<i>Week 13</i>	<i>2 Samuel 15-17</i>
<i>Week 14</i>	<i>2 Samuel 18-20</i>
<i>Week 15</i>	<i>2 Samuel 21-25</i>
<i>Week 16</i>	<i>2 Samuel 24, Hebrews 9:23-28</i>

# Week 1

*(Work together in Class)*

## **The Call of Samuel**

Read Chapters 1-3

Read 1 Samuel 1:1-20.

1. Why would God include Samuel's background in this story about the first 2 kings of Israel?
2. In what area of your life do you need to be reminded that God can bring life into what seems to be an impossible situation?
3. What is Hannah's role in the Gospel narrative?

Read 1 Samuel 3:1-11.

In the second part of chapter 2, we read about how Eli failed as a parent but God still used him. Eli figured out that Samuel was hearing God – even though “in those days the word of the Lord was rare.” He pointed Samuel toward God and told him to listen and then told him to speak what God spoke – even though it was hard.

4. Have you failed God in your life? Give an example of how God chose to use you anyway – despite your personal failures.



## *Week 2*

### **The Ark of the Covenant**

Read I Samuel 4-7. Ask God to speak to you. Write down any thoughts or questions that arise as you read.

1. What was the purpose of the ark of the covenant and what significance did it hold for the people of Israel? (Exodus 25:8, 17-22)
2. Is the presence of God something to be feared?
3. Is the power of God something to be feared?
4. What happens when we take either the presence of God, or the power of God, lightly?
5. How did the Israelites misinterpret the power and presence of God when they sent for the ark?
6. Can you think of an example today of how people misunderstand or underestimate God's power or presence?

7. What is the difference between using the ark to bring victory and using it as part of their worship?

Dale Ralph Davis: "Whenever the church stops confessing *thou art worthy* and begins thinking *thou art useful*, well then you know the ark of God has been captured again."

8. Describe the reactions of the Israelites and the Philistines when the ark entered the war camp.
9. Why do you think the Philistines captured the ark? Why do you think it had the effect that it did on the Philistines?
10. What represents the presence of God for us today? Where do we go to meet him?
11. Should the ark have any meaning for us today or was it merely a symbol in the Old Testament?
12. The ark was essential to Jewish worship in the OT. What is essential to our worship today?
13. Reflect on this past week – how have you experienced the presence of God?
14. How does this passage enlighten us about our own history? How can God use our past in shaping who we are now, for his glory?

## Week 3

### The People's King

Read I Samuel 8-11. Ask God to speak to you. Write down any thoughts or questions that arise as you read.

1. The people of Israel asked Samuel for a king. Why was it wrong for them to ask for a king?
2. Read Psalm 118:8-9. Contrast this passage with the motivation of the Israelite leaders.

Previously, God acted as their king, however they wanted a human king they could see, so they would *be like other nations*.

Read 1 Samuel 8:20.

3. What have you asked God for lately so that you could *be like other people*?  
(All of these requests may not be wrong, but look at the motivations behind your requests)

4. Have you ever asked God to replace himself in some way? How did that play out?
5. In chapter 9, Saul's servant describes Samuel as the "man of God." It seems that Saul had not heard of Samuel, the man through whom God judged and spoke to the leadership of Israel. Does this suggest anything about his spiritual state?

6. What in your life sheds light on your relationship with God? How would somebody know that you know God?
  
7. Before the lot-casting ceremony by which God chooses Saul for Israel as their first king, Samuel reminds the people of something in 1 Samuel 10:18-19. What did he want them to remember about God even as he chose a king for them?
  
8. Read Ephesians 1. What does Paul want believers to remember about God? Make a list.

Saul was handsome and tall, with unequalled attractiveness, impressive to the people.  
Read Isaiah 52:14 and 53:2-3.

9. How does the description of Saul contrast with the description of the Messiah to come?
  
10. Just after Saul is made king, God gives him a chance to prove himself as a military leader. Take another look at 1 Samuel 11:6-7 and 13. Who is credited with every aspect of this first military success for Saul?
  
11. Looking over the entire text for this week, do you see any examples of people submitting to God in chapters 8-11?
  
12. What area of your life do you need to submit to God this week?
  
13. What truths about God and his rule can you see in these chapters?

## *Week 4*

### **Saul's Rejection**

Read 1 Samuel 12-15. Ask God to speak to you. Write down any thoughts or questions that arise as you read.

1. In Samuel's farewell address, he reminds the people of what God has done for them in the past and says that if they will follow God, and if their king will follow God, all will be well. But if not, God will stand against them. Read Matthew 6:33. How does Jesus take this concept a step further in the New Testament?
2. Samuel acted as a priest in Israel and he promises to continue praying for them (interceding on their behalf). He is a picture of Jesus Christ in his role as our high priest. Read Hebrews 7:22-28. Which truth from this passage resonates most deeply for you?
3. In chapter 12, how do the Israelites come to understand their sin and need for God's grace?

Before there was a king in Israel God would raise up a judge when Israel faced a crisis and he (or she) would lead an army of citizens - a volunteer army, if you will - against the threat and God would save them through the leadership of the judge. When Saul's kingship was established he raised a standing army to always be ready to meet their enemies in battle. Read 1 Samuel 10:7-8.

4. What were Samuel's original instructions for Saul?

5. Read 1 Samuel 13: 8-14 What did Saul do? Why did he act this way? Was he justified?
  
6. Is there ever a good reason for not doing God's specifically revealed will? What about going against His general will?
  
7. Read Isaiah 1:12-18 and Matt 23:23. What is God's opinion of those who carry out procedures and liturgies when their hearts are far from God?
  
8. What was the consequence of Saul's action? Do you think it was too severe?
  
9. In condemning Saul for his disobedience, Samuel seems to reveal something about the kingship of Israel that makes it different. What distinguishes Israel's king from all other nations?
  
10. In chapter 14, Jonathan and his armor bearer sneak into the Philistine camp and God routs the enemy by confusing them. Saul enters the battle with the whole army and at the end of the day, God saves them, but the men are faint. Why?
  
11. What is Jonathan's reaction when he finds out that he accidentally broke his father's oath?
  
12. How did Jonathan escape Saul's threat to kill anyone who broke the oath?

13. Contrast Jonathan and Saul - how do they differ?
  
14. 1 Samuel 14:47-52 describes Saul's military successes. This was the people's king, the one they demanded of God. Was he a success in the eyes of God? Why or why not?
  
15. What is lacking in King Saul? Read John 15:4-6.
  
16. What can you do this week to pursue success in the eyes of God rather than success in the eyes of men? In what area of your life do you need to apply this most?
  
17. The kings of Israel were charged with faithful obedience to God, their true king. Jesus is the only king of Israel to fully carry out this requirement. He explains how he does this in John 5:19-24, 30. What does he say?
  
18. Compare Exodus 17:14 with 1 Samuel 15:8-8. In what way does Saul fail to listen to God and align himself with God's purposes?
  
19. In 1 Samuel 15:10-11, God states why he grieves having made Saul king. Compare God's words with Saul's assessment of the situation in 1 Samuel 15:13.

20. What does Samuel add to Saul's assessment in 1 Samuel 15:23?

21. Saul does admit to his sin, but what seems to be his greatest concern in 1 Samuel 15:30-31?

22. After all this, what is the significance of Samuel killing Agag, king of the Amalekites?

# *Week 5*

## **The Anointing of David**

Read Psalm 1

Explain the contrasts between righteous and wicked man.

Read 1 Samuel chapters 16-18. Ask God to speak to you. Write down any thoughts or questions that arise as you read.

1. Contrast the words about the king in 1 Samuel 12:13 with those in 1 Samuel 16:1b.
2. List all of the ways in these chapters that David and his credentials are disdained by men and considered insignificant in their eyes.
3. How does this illustrate the teaching of 1 Cor 1:25-29?
4. Why didn't Saul go out to fight Goliath? Remember: he was a head taller than anyone else - and he was king!

5. In 1 Samuel 17:45-47, David speaks to Goliath. What point does he make?
  
6. What was David's battle philosophy, so to speak? (see Joshua 2:10-11; Psalm 18:29-49)
  
7. Looking back to Psalm 1, and the first question in this week's homework, contrast the character and actions of Saul with that of David in these chapters, in light of the wicked and righteous contrasts from the Psalm.
  
8. David declares: "I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty...for the battle is the Lord's and he will give all of you into our hands." He declares God's name and fights under his authority and power giving God full credit for all that will happen that day. What battles are you fighting today where you need to declare the name of God and allow him to fight for you?
  
9. David walked into a crazy situation at that battle - a giant was taunting the armies of Israel. He, being a little shepherd boy, walked out in the name of God. In front of mighty warriors and the king himself. Give an example of a time God gave you the courage to do something you would never have had the courage or ability to do on your own? How have you given him glory for that victory?

10. Jonathan was the son of the king whom God rejected. What is the significance of David and Jonathan's relationship? How does Jonathan reveal his own Christ-likeness? (see Philippians 2:3-7)

11. Saul first took David into his service to play the harp for him, to soothe his spirit when he was tormented by the spirit sent upon him. The fact that David becomes popular with the people also drives Saul mad, but the fact that only David can soothe that madness (as he plays the harp) is highly ironic! Why is Saul afraid of David? Should he be afraid?

12. Saul offers David his daughter in marriage. David refuses. How does David show his integrity in this passage?

## *Week 6*

### **Saul's Pursuit of David (part 1)**

Read I Samuel Chapters 19-22. Ask God to speak to you. Write down any thoughts or questions that arise as you read.

1. What was the covenant between David and Jonathan, and what is the consistent component in David and Jonathan's relationship in verses 8, 12-14, 16, 22 and 42 that undergirds and guards that covenant?
2. David's world begins to fall apart. He becomes a fugitive and the only person he can trust is his best friend, the son of his greatest enemy. Compare the friendship covenant between them with the covenant whereby Jesus bound himself to us.

Read John 17 and consider whom we can trust when we find ourselves surrounded by enemies.

Do you consider yourself to be in a covenant relationship with Jesus?  
What does that mean?

Read Psalm 59

3. What does David do when he is afraid and in trouble? What does Saul do when he is afraid?

4. As David begins life on the run from Saul, he lies to a priest to get food and a weapon and then he goes to an enemy city and pretends to be insane. Read Psalm 34 (esp v 18) and discuss his state of mind at this time in his life.
  
5. Which words in this Psalm encourage you in your faith walk?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. In 1 Samuel chapter 22, we read about Saul's order to slaughter the priests at Nob. In looking back at 1 Samuel 2:31-36, we see that it is a fulfillment of prophecy. Read Psalm 52:1-7. What is God's assessment of the actions of Doeg and Saul at Nob?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. Drawing from 1 Samuel 19-21:  
  
In what ways are you like Saul?  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
In what ways are you like Jonathan?  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
In what ways are you like David?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. Where do you see submission to God in this passage?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. What does God require of you in light of this passage?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
10. What does God reveal about himself in these chapters?

## *Week 7*

### **Saul's Pursuit of David (part 2)**

Read 1 Samuel 23-26. Ask God to speak to you. Write down any thoughts or questions that arise as you read.

1. In 1 Samuel chapter 23, David inquires of the Lord repeatedly - a stark contrast to Saul, but David grows weary of being chased. Read Hebrews 4:14-16. Did God push him too far? What do you think God is doing during this time of waiting? Have you faced such a time of waiting?
2. In 1 Samuel chapter 24:3-7, Saul becomes vulnerable to David. What reasoning do David's men give as they urge him to kill Saul? Would David have been justified in killing Saul at that time?
3. Read 1 Samuel 24:8-13. What reason does David give for NOT killing Saul?
4. To whom does David appeal for justice? (see 1 Samuel 24:12-15)  
What does David base his confidence upon? (see 1 Peter 2:18-23)

5. Are you being asked to demonstrate this type of submissive trust in God for justice in any specific area of your life this week?
  
6. In 1 Samuel chapter 26, David has another opportunity to kill Saul when he and Abishai sneak into Saul's camp while everyone is sleeping. Abishai is stunned when David refuses to kill Saul. What does David's response say about the providence of God? (1 Samuel 26:8-11)
  
7. In what part of your life is God asking you to trust in His providence this week?
  
8. After David takes Saul's spear and jug, he reveals himself to Saul and his army, and Saul admits his sin and asks David to return to him. What does David say in response (verse 24) to make it clear that he is not depending on Saul's words any longer?
  
9. What does God require of you in light of these chapters?
  
10. What does God reveal about himself in these chapters?

## *Week 8*

### **Death of Saul**

Read 1 Samuel 27-31. Ask God to speak to you. Write down any thoughts or questions that arise as you read.

1. Look back at 1 Samuel 26:23-24. Then read 1 Samuel 27:1. Whom does David consult in chapter 27? What has changed for David and why do you think he has changed his attitude? (see Proverbs 14:12)
2. Compare what David does in 1 Samuel 27:1 with what he wrote in Psalm 62:5. Which of these attitudes do you relate to the most when you are walking through difficulty?
3. In 1 Samuel chapter 27, David deceives Achish. What measures does he take to prevent him from finding out the truth?
4. Compare this with what God told Saul to do and what he actually did against the same people (Amalekites). (1 Samuel 15:1-3, 7-9)
5. The Philistines gather for war against Saul and the Israelites, and Saul is terrified. Why does he summon Samuel through a witch?

6. Compare the words of Samuel to Saul in 1 Samuel 15:28 with his words (from beyond the grave) in 1 Samuel 28:16-19. What is the same? What is different?
  
7. Sometimes we search for guidance seemingly everywhere except for in the living God. How/where have you pursued guidance apart from God?

God removed his spirit from Saul when he rejected him as king. So he truly was forsaken by God. This is very different from people who *feel* like they've been forsaken by God - which happens to believers sometimes. Read Psalm 13.

8. What are we to seek when we feel abandoned by God?
  
9. How can we wait when it seems like it's been forever?
  
10. For what have you had to wait on with God? Are you still waiting?
  
11. Read John 6:66-69 and Matthew 28:19-20. What is the sure-fire evidence that we are not forsaken by God but truly belong to him?
  
12. How did Saul demonstrate in this incident that he did not belong to the Lord?

13. In 1 Samuel chapter 30, David returns to his city to find it burned and the women and children gone. His men turn against him in their grief. Where does he find strength, and what is his very next move? (1 Samuel 30:6-8)
  
14. Israel is defeated and Saul is dead at the hands of Israel's enemies, but then David completely destroys the Amalekites - the enemies of God. This is part of God's justice against them. When David returns from the battle, he shares the spoils with the people, beginning a new era of kingship with new policies. He begins to act like a king instead of a vagabond warrior. Compare the generosity of David with what Samuel predicted about what a king would be like for Israel in 1 Samuel 8:11-18.
  
15. David celebrates his victories by praising the Lord for HIS hand in every aspect of the victory. Read Psalm 18:46-50. What does David praise God for aside from the victories?
  
16. What truths about God are revealed in this passage?
  
17. Which truths that you've learned about God in all of 1 Samuel are most meaningful to you? Which truths cause you to rejoice and trust him more?
  
18. Review your notes and list the items that you want to apply to your own life, and mark which items you might want to share with a friend.

## *Week 9*

### **David Becomes King over Judah**

Read 2 Samuel 1-4. As you read, ask God to show you what he wants you to see about himself in these chapters. Jot down your observations and any questions you might have.

1. Why do you think David calls the people to lament the death of Saul and Jonathan? What does this say about David's character? Why was this also good for the country?
2. What does David call his people to remember about Saul? What does he lament losing in the death of Jonathan?
3. Read Ephesians 4:1 and reflect on how David walked in a worthy manner in 2 Samuel 1-4. What else do you observe about David in these chapters?
4. In chapter 2, David goes on to commend the men who took Saul's and Jonathan's bodies down from the walls of the city where they died and then buried them. Why did this matter?
5. In chapter 2, look at the first thing that David does. Asking God for the next step was crucial for the new king. It is also crucial for us in life. How have you seen God answer prayers about the next step in your life either recently or in major life decisions?

6. When David was anointed king in Chapter 2, how much of the nation of Israel did David rule over?

Because David was from the tribe of Judah they supported him, but he faced stiff opposition in the rest of Israel from Ish-bosheth, another of Saul's sons. The remainder of chapter 2 tells the story of the conflict over the kingdom for the throne. David's nephews pursue Abner who is Ish-bosheth's captain.

7. Read Psalm 133, which is a Psalm of ascent sung on high holy days. When the children of Israel came into the Promised Land they were twelve tribes each having their own territory, but they were united as descendants of the sons of Jacob. What are the implications of this Psalm for us today as brothers and sisters in the church of Jesus Christ?
8. The beginning of chapter 3 marks a distinct turning point in the narrative. The power of Saul's line is diminishing and David's is rising. David's family is growing as he takes more wives and has more children. David makes an alliance with Abner, but his foolish nephew Joab kills Abner in revenge for killing his brother. Why was David so displeased and why did he honor Abner with a lament?
9. Then Ish-bosheth is killed in his bed by two of his own men. Do you see God's purposes being fulfilled even in the murders of Abner and Ish-bosheth?
10. In what ways does David prove he is a man of God and the "king after God's own heart" in chapters 3 and 4? David's men began to take matters into their own hands. Have you ever found yourself in the difficult position of trying to do things God's way when others seem to be working against godly decisions? How can you handle such situations?

11. These men who were on David's side acted without the king's consent and blessing. How did David respond in each situation? (Chapters 3-4)

12. How do you see David becoming a good king and leader of his people?

13. Pray for insights into what God wants you to learn from these four chapters of 2 Samuel. How do we learn from these books of history recorded centuries ago about what God wants us to see for ourselves in 2020?

# *Week 10*

## **The Rise of King David**

Read 2 Samuel 5-8. As you read, ask God to show you what he wants you to see about himself in these chapters. Jot down your first observations and questions you might have.

1. What is God doing in this passage to unify his people? Why is that so important?
2. Chapter 5 seems like a breath of fresh air after all the battles and intrigue. All the tribes of Israel have gathered together under one king. How do the people describe David (2 Samuel 5:1-5)? Do you think this is a good description at this point?
3. Read Psalm 23. These are the words of David. What a blessing that God's chosen king knows that the Lord is the true shepherd of his people! Reread 2 Samuel 5:10. What are the characteristics of a good shepherd?
4. Are there any hints in chapter 5 that David may not be seeking God in all his decisions?

5. Why did David decide to go up and capture the city of Jerusalem? Read Joshua 15:63. Jerusalem was an impregnable city on a high hill. David was following good strategy in setting up his kingdom. 2 Samuel 5:10 tells us why David was so successful. However, Jerusalem was chosen for his city of residence for other reasons. Why do you think that might be? Read II Kings 21:4.
  
6. Are you aware that the Lord, the God of hosts, is with you in your decision-making for yourself and for your family? What examples of His presence in your decisions can you give? Have you ever felt that God totally orchestrated events in your life?
  
7. How does David follow God's leading in defeating the Philistines? Remember that Goliath was a Philistine.
  
8. In 2 Samuel chapter 6, why was David's first attempt to bring the ark to Jerusalem not successful?
  
9. Can you trace a pattern of David's successes and failures according to when he does and does not seek God's face? Do you see such a pattern in your own life? How can we accurately gauge success?
  
10. What prompted David to try again to bring the ark up to Jerusalem?
  
11. Why was this such a cause for celebration? What did David do to show his exuberant praise and joy in God's presence?

12. Saul's daughter Michal was ashamed of David's show of emotion before God and the people. What was David's response in verse 21?

13. Do we praise God with this kind of joy and celebration? What was it about God that made David so joyful in praising him?

14. What do you see in the heart of David that would make you want to be more like him?

In his book **Leap Over a Wall** Eugene Peterson says, "We're never wholly ourselves until we're open before God, attending to the reality of God, responding to the action of God in us, receiving the word of God for us. Worship is the strategy by which we interrupt our preoccupation with ourselves and attend to the presence of God."

Pray that God would teach us how to worship like David with our minds and hearts set totally on God.

15. As a result of your reading this week, do you need to make any changes in how you worship?

16. In Chapter 7 David begins to contemplate what his next step should be since he has become king over all Israel. Who does he consult about his plan to build a house for the Lord? How is this different from Saul?

17. Reread 2 Samuel 7:1-17. This is a watershed moment of God's working with his people. List all the things that God says he has already done for David.

18. God has proved himself to be a covenant-keeping God with his people. Now he makes a covenant with David in which he reveals the hope of a Messiah in David's line, a king who will come to save his people. What does God promise in verse 16? Why was it significant that God would seek out a covenant with David and not the other way around?
  
19. What does this covenant with David mean for us in the church today?
  
20. Whose blood will seal this covenant?
  
21. What will be the difference between this promised king and all the other kings of Israel, including David?
  
22. Notice David's response to God's covenant (2 Samuel 7:18-29). How does he repeatedly address God in this prayer?
  
23. David claimed God's promises. Read Psalm 21. Write your own psalm of praise to God for his salvation in Jesus Christ, the Son of David.

24. In Chapter 8, David's many victories are recorded. He became famous for his conquests. In the last few verses of that chapter David chooses men to serve God with him. What does it say about David's reign in these verses? What does the chapter reveal about David's God?

25. In your own life, what do you recall as watershed moments of God working with you?

26. How are the promises that God makes to David similar to the ones he made to Abraham in his covenant with him? See Genesis 12:1-3.

27. How do you know that you can always trust the promises of God? Be specific!

# Week 11

## David & Mephibosheth

## David & Bathsheba

Read 2 Samuel 9-12. As you read, ask God to show you what he wants you to see about himself in these chapters. Jot down your first observations and questions you might have.

1. Look back at 2 Samuel 8. Note the contrasts between Saul and David. How do you see God teaching his people and us in these contrasts? (The peoples' king and God's king)
2. In Chapter 9, what prompted David's kindness to Mephibosheth?

The Hebrew word for kindness here is *hesed* also translated as *grace*. Look back at I Samuel 20:15-17 and reread David's covenant with Jonathan.

3. What things does David promise Mephibosheth?
4. Why does the writer continue to remind us that Mephibosheth is lame?
5. Read Psalm 112:5. How does David's kindness reflect what God has done for him? What should motivate our kindness and generosity to those in need? What scripture references refer to this recurring theme throughout the Bible?

6. In chapter 10, David and his army continue to do battle with surrounding nations. How does Joab, David's nephew, show that he has matured as a leader under David?
  
7. David's life at this time is war. That is his reality. Read Psalm 2:1-6. How does David's physical reality affect his spiritual reality? How have hard realities in your own life enhanced your confidence in your spiritual reality in Jesus Christ?
  
8. Why do you think the story of the humiliation of Joab's men would be included in the narrative?
  
9. What does David do for them? How did David reflect the image of his creator in this story? How can we?

#### Chapter 11 - Love Story or Downfall?

10. What change do you see in David at the very beginning of this chapter?
  
11. What made him so vulnerable to temptation?
  
12. In five short verses, on one evening, David slips into sin with grave consequences. Read also I Corinthians 6:18, Ephesians 5:3 and Romans 13:13. Why are sexual sins so abhorrent to God?

13. Why do you think Uriah the Hittite was so loyal to David?
14. Uriah is a Hebrew name meaning “the Lord is my light.” How did Uriah live up to his name?
15. In chapter 12, the prophet Nathan was sent by God to confront David about all that he had done. Why is Nathan’s parable so effective?
16. 2 Samuel 12:9 must have hit David hard. Then in 2 Samuel 12:14, Nathan tells David how terrible his sin is and the consequence that God had already decided. Think of a time when you knew that you had grieved the heart of God. How did God use discipline to bring you back to himself?
17. In 2 Samuel 12:24-25, we are told briefly that David and Bathsheba have another son named Solomon. What is the significance of the LORD calling the child *Jedidiah*, beloved of the Lord? What does this tell us about the character of God?

In the last part of chapter 12, God continues to bless David’s kingdom with another victory and the capture of the royal city of the Ammonites. There are so many lessons in these last four chapters (9-12).

18. What are your own personal takeaways from these chapters?

## *Week 12*

### **Amnon and Absalom**

Read 2 Samuel 13-14. As you read, ask God to show you what he wants you to see about himself in these chapters. Jot down your observations and any questions you might have.

1. Reread 2 Samuel 12:10-12. What were the consequences that God was going to bring on David because of his great sin with Bathsheba and Uriah?
2. Reread 2 Samuel 12:13-14. How could David know that God would keep his word in all these matters?
3. Who are the main characters in chapters 13 & 14 and where do they stand in the line of succession?
4. How is the stage set for this drama between brothers and sister? What does Amnon's attitude toward Tamar say about his true feelings for her and his character?
5. Why do you think that Absalom, Tamar's brother, told her to keep silent about what had happened?

6. Reread 2 Samuel 13:21. What did David do when he heard of this horrible event in his own household? What does this say about David's heart at this time?
  
7. When Absalom throws a party and invites all the king's sons and has Amnon murdered, what are the implications for the line of succession to the throne?
  
8. When Absalom flees for his life, what does David do?
  
9. What does his reaction say about David's heart at this point?
  
10. It is not possible to begin to understand the repercussions that David's sin with Bathsheba has caused his household. Do these stories of sexual immorality and murder and deceit seem out of place after God has made his covenant with David? What does this passage tell us about ourselves?
  
11. Reflect on the contrast of the ugliness of sin and the beauty of God's forgiveness. This sad story is not over. How does Joab try to force David's hand to bring Absalom back to Jerusalem?
  
12. What do we learn about Absalom in the last part of chapter 14?

13. Why did David relent and allow an audience with Absalom?

14. How does Absalom prove himself unfit for kingship?

15. This part of the story ends with no redeeming aspect. How can we take hope despite that fact?

16. What passages of scripture console you after reading this story?

One example might be Romans 5:1-11. We must continue to remind ourselves and each other that God is always faithful!

17. Was God done with David? Does he ever give up on his own?

18. How do you know that this is true for yourself?

Praise God that nothing can snatch you out of his hand!!

## *Week 13*

### **Absalom's Conspiracy**

Read 2 Samuel 15-17. As you read, ask God to show you what he wants you to see about himself in these chapters. Jot down your observations and any questions you might have.

1. In 2 Samuel 15:1-6, what did Absalom do to undermine King David?
2. Have you seen similar tactics used on the political scene in our world today?
3. In the political arena, is there a difference (or should there be) between those people who know God and those who don't?
4. How does a Christian worldview affect the way you look at political affairs? Did closeness to God affect the people of Israel at this volatile time in their history?
5. Why do you think David refers to Absalom as "King Absalom" when he speaks to Ittai the Gittite?

6. In 2 Samuel 15:19-23, David has a moment with Ittai the Gittite as they are leaving Jerusalem, about to go on the run from Absalom. How does David offer grace? And why does he do it?
  
7. What does Ittai's response say about him?
  
8. What does the story tell you about David?
  
9. What do you learn about God from this story?
  
10. Read Luke 14:15-28 and draw any parallels you see between Jesus' parable and the scene between David and Ittai.
  
11. In 2 Samuel 15:25-37, David makes several arrangements. In what way does he submit himself to God?
  
12. In his submission, what action does David take? Do his actions undermine his trust in God's sovereignty? Does trusting in the providence of God mean we must sit idly by?

13. While trusting God does sometimes involve waiting, sometimes it also means embarking on something new or difficult. Give an example from your life where you submitted yourself to the sovereignty of God which meant taking action of one kind or another. How did it turn out?
  
14. Just like King David, Jesus was also betrayed by someone close to him. Note any similarities between the two instances. (see Luke 22:39, Luke 23:27)
  
15. In 2 Samuel chapter 16, Ziba meets King David and lies to him about Mephibosheth. Then Shimei attacks the king physically and curses him. Why was David so quick to believe Ziba? What was his state of mind?
  
16. Read Psalm 3, John 13:21-38 and John 19:1-3. Compare and contrast the feelings of David and Jesus at their points of suffering. Does one prefigure the other?
  
17. Jesus is the ultimate King who will reign on David's throne forever. In light of this fact, what is the significance David's suffering and betrayal have in comparison to Jesus' suffering and betrayal? Carefully consider the reasons for the suffering of each king.
  
18. In 2 Samuel 16:15-18, David's spy, Hushai, arrives in Absalom's court. These verses are filled with irony. Later, in chapter 17, Absalom consults both Ahithophel (the one whom David previously consulted, and a highly regarded advisor) and Hushai. How does God use Hushai to accomplish his will? (see verse 14)

What follows is worthy of an undercover spy TV show. David's network begins to accomplish exactly what God intends. David knew God's promises to him. He knew that he was the anointed king of Israel. He believed God always did exactly as He said.

19. Give an example from your life of how knowing God's ultimate purpose for you brought comfort and helped you to see the situation differently.

20. In 2 Samuel 17:27-29, King David and his men meet friendly supporters who minister to their needs. While we don't know exactly when Psalm 23 was written, read it now and then draw parallels between the psalm and this passage about what David and his men experienced on this night before an uncertain battle.

21. Give an example of God's gracious provision on your behalf in the middle of a nightmare scenario.

## *Week 14*

### **Re-establishing David's Kingship**

Read 2 Samuel 18-20. As you read, ask God to show you what he wants you to see about himself in these chapters. Jot down your observations and any questions you might have.

1. Looking back on David's relationship with Absalom, what mistakes could he have avoided? Was there a point of no return? If so, where?
2. How do we (as parents) strike a balance between unconditional love and unrestrained permissiveness?
3. If God told David the sword would never leave his house and David had acted differently in his relationship with Absalom, do you think God would have stirred up trouble with other members of David's family? Do you think what happened with David's children was inevitable?
4. In 2 Samuel 18:5, what order did David give?
5. The battle between Absalom's and David's armies took place in the dark forest, and it says that "the forest claimed more lives that day than the sword." (2 Samuel 18:8) What do you see as God's role in this battle? Was justice served?

6. Review 2 Samuel 14:25-26. Read Isaiah 2:12-13.

How did Absalom die?

Who killed him?

7. How have you seen God use irony in other stories, both in the Bible and today?
8. Read Deuteronomy 21:23. Though it was written LONG before Absalom was born, what does it speak about the death of Absalom? What about the death of Jesus?
9. Compare 2 Samuel 11:22-25 with 2 Samuel 18:33-19:4. David awaited news of a battle in both cases. Who was David MOST interested in learning about in each instance? Contrast both of David's responses.
10. Twenty thousand men died that day, and David grieved for the one who had split his kingdom in two. He grieved for his enemy more than for the men who died fighting to protect him. What effect did this have on his men? Was David right or wrong in his reaction?

God gave victory in this civil war (family fighting against family) to David. He restored the throne to the one he anointed to sit on the throne. David's next difficult job was to bring the country back together again. No easy task. He makes Amasa (Absalom's army general & Joab's cousin) head over his own army. Then Joab (David's demoted army general whom Amasa replaced) kills Amasa. Boom! Joab is head of David's army again.

11. What do these scuffles say about the state of the kingdom of Israel?

12. What responsibility does David carry for it?

13. When David meets Mephibosheth on his way back into Jerusalem, it comes to David's attention that Ziba lied about Mephibosheth's true intentions. Review 2 Samuel 16:1-4. How does David resolve the issue with Mephibosheth? Do you think it was fair? Why or why not?

14. At the end of 2 Samuel 20, Joab is victorious over the troublemaker Sheba. Looking at this entire chapter and all previous mentions of Joab, what sort of man do you find him to be? To whom is he most loyal? Read 2 Samuel 20:22b and 1 Kings 2:1-6.

## *Week 15*

### **Snapshots of the King after God's Own Heart**

Read 2 Samuel 21-25. As you read, ask God to show you what he wants you to see about himself in these chapters. Jot down your observations and any questions you might have.

Take note: these last four chapters include 6 stories, or snapshots, of the kingdom of Israel under King David. They are written in a very specific literary structure so do not mistake this section for a hodge-podge of random ideas tacked on to the end of this historic book.

2 pictures of deliverance

1 song of thanksgiving and glory to God for those deliverances.

1 song which contains the last words of King David

2 accounts of the mighty men, early in David's reign

1. To get the full background of how this story started, read Joshua 9:3-20. What was the oath made between Israel and the Gibeonites?

Fast forward to the time when King Saul is king: he put the Gibeonites to death (despite the oath sworn on behalf of Israel).

Fast forward to the time of King David: there is a famine in the land and King David seeks the Lord. God tells him the famine is because of what King Saul did. So David asks the Gibeonites how he can make it right. Reread 2 Samuel 21:1-6.

2. What must King David do to appease the Gibeonites?
3. Look at 2 Samuel 21:3. How does it show that it's actually God's name and reputation that have been wronged?

4. It's a difficult passage. What does it reveal about the wrath of God?

5. What does it reveal about deliverance from God's wrath?

When God's reputation is on the line, He won't back down.

When people break covenant with God, when people sin, there must be atonement and it's never pretty and it's almost always offensive.

6. Considering what God ultimately did for sinners at the cross, why do you think this passage is included in the Bible?

7. Read 1 John 4:10. In light of this passage, what does this story in 2 Samuel 21 reveal about the Gospel?

8. Reread 2 Samuel 21:15-22, the second snapshot of David's kingdom reveals four battles against four giants. How did David spend much of his reign?

9. If you consider the picture of a smaller man defeating a giant, it calls us back to David's first battle. But then we read about his mighty men overcoming 4 more giants, later on. What significance does this snapshot have in light of the whole of Israel's history from its very beginning to present day?

10. As you read through chapter 22 again, write down the phrases that are most meaningful to you.
  
11. Recount the answered prayers in your life which come to mind today.
  
12. Reread 2 Samuel 22:21-31 and look for five reasons you can be confident in the Lord to handle your daily needs and trials.

Chapter 23 begins with David's last words. While chapter 22 looked back over all that God did for David throughout his life, chapter 23 looks forward to what God has promised to David. He refers, in his last official words, to the covenant God made with him and his house.

13. List all the ways David identifies himself in 23:1-2.
  
14. How does David describe the king to come in 23:3-4?
  
15. David's life was, by many accounts, a disaster. He messed up royally, paternally, and personally; yet how does he describe his life in verse 23:5?
  
16. Do you choose to dwell on how you've messed up or on how God has rescued you? Do you need to change your focus? How will you do it?

17. In the next section of scripture we find a picture of David's mighty men. They were extremely loyal warriors. The incident in 23:13-17 may have taken place during the time David was running from Saul. What do the men do for David?

Why did David react as he did?

18. God honors the mighty men by listing them in His word. These men served David and he led them when he was at his best, devoted to God and to those whom God gave him to lead. Why do you suppose the very last name in the list is still included?

19. Read 1 Corinthians 15:9-10. Draw a comparison between Paul's attitude and everything David learned throughout his life.

In chapter 24, we see our last snapshot of King David. In it, he orders a census of the army. 1 Chronicles 21 provides a second telling of this same story. Read 1 Chronicles 21:1-3.

20. What was wrong about taking a census?

What was David's reason for taking the census?

Read Exodus 30:11-12. What significance does it carry for the incident found in 2 Samuel 24?

21. How does God make a way for Israel to remove his wrath from them and atone for the sin? Reread 2 Samuel 24:18-25.

22. David chooses to be placed into the hand of God rather than that of men. Would you have made the same choice? Why?

The plague is lifted when David offers sacrifices to the Lord for sin.

“For the next 1000 years the people of Israel will rely on the sacrifices made at this very spot for the propitiation of their sins. The temple comes to be because a sinning nation with a sinful king knew that unless there is a place where the wrath of God can be turned away, they will all perish. For a millennium the sacrifices made at the Jerusalem temple will point to the One who one day came to offer the final sacrifice for his people’s sins.” --Kay Gabrysch

Pick up the story in the midst of the plague of punishment by reading 1 Chronicles 21:18-22:1.

23. Where was the temple to be built? What is the significance of how David acquired the land?

In perfectly poetic form, God’s holy temple would be built on the place where God’s judgment stopped and where His mercy began. Read 2 Chronicles 3:1 and Genesis 22:2.

24. What else happened on this same spot? Why is this significant?

## *Week 16*

Review 2 Samuel 24. Read Hebrews 9:23-28.

1. How does the sacrifice in 2 Samuel 24 point forward to the sacrifice we read about in Hebrews?
2. Where do you see Jesus in the books of 1 & 2 Samuel?
3. What lessons from 2 Samuel stand out the most or have had the greatest impact on you in your personal life?
4. If you could apply only two things from this whole study, which ones would you like to apply now to last you the rest of your life?