

Explore the Bible.®

DEAF PERSONAL STUDY GUIDE

31 And, behold, Cushai came and said, Tidings, my lord the king: for the king hath avenged thee this day of all them that rose up against thee.

32 And the king said unto Cushai, Is the young man Ab'sai-lom safe? And Cushai answered, The enemies of my lord the king, and all that rise against thee to do thee hurt, be to that young man as.

33 ¶ And the king was much afflicted: he went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept; and as he went, thus he said, O Ab'sai-lom, my son, my son Ab'sai-lom, where art thou? O Ab'sai-lom, my son, my son, where art thou? God I had died for thee, O Ab'sai-lom, my son!

Victory Turned to Mourning

19 And it was told Jo-ab, the captain of the army, that he had slain the king's sons: and he swepteth and mourneth for all the day.

2 And the victory that day was turned into mourning unto all the people: for the king's sons were slain: and the king's army heard say that day how the king was weeping for his son.

3 And the people gat them by crys, and they went into the city that day: and the people being sorrowful, they did not eat that day: for the king's sons were slain.

4 But the king covered his face, and he wept, and he said, O Ab'sai-lom, my son, my son, where art thou? O Ab'sai-lom, my son, my son, where art thou? God I had died for thee, O Ab'sai-lom, my son!

5 And Jo-ab came into the chamber, and he said, Then hast thou slain the king's sons: and the king's army heard say that day how the king was weeping for his son.

6 And Jo-ab came into the chamber, and he said, Then hast thou slain the king's sons: and the king's army heard say that day how the king was weeping for his son.

7 And Jo-ab came into the chamber, and he said, Then hast thou slain the king's sons: and the king's army heard say that day how the king was weeping for his son.

8 And Jo-ab came into the chamber, and he said, Then hast thou slain the king's sons: and the king's army heard say that day how the king was weeping for his son.

9 And Jo-ab came into the chamber, and he said, Then hast thou slain the king's sons: and the king's army heard say that day how the king was weeping for his son.

2 Samuel

Jason Allen, General Editor



JESUS

**Long ago, God promised to bring a Savior into the world.
God always keeps His promises.**

The promise was made to King David. David had wanted to build a house (temple) for God. God had something bigger and better in mind. Through David, God would establish a house (kingdom) that would never end (2 Sam. 7:12-13).

Jesus is the fulfillment of God's promise to David. David's earthly dynasty came to an end centuries ago, but Jesus Christ will reign for eternity. He is the eternal King.

Christ was with God the Father before the world was created. He became human and lived among humanity as Jesus of Nazareth.

He came to show us what God the Father is like. He lived a sinless life, showing us how to live; and He died upon a cross to pay for our sins. God raised Him from the dead.

Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6). He is waiting for you now.

- **Admit** to God that you are a sinner. Repent, turning away from your sin.
- **By faith receive** Jesus Christ as God's Son and accept Jesus' gift of forgiveness from sin. He took the penalty for your sin by dying on the cross.
- **Confess** your faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

You may pray a prayer similar to this as you call on God to save you: "Dear God, I know that You love me. I confess my sin and need of salvation. I turn away from my sin and place my faith in Jesus as my Savior and Lord. In Jesus' name I pray, amen."

After you have received Jesus Christ into your life, tell a pastor or another Christian about your decision. Show others your faith in Christ by asking for baptism by immersion in your local church as a public expression of your faith.

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» MEET THE WRITER



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A WORD FROM THE GENERAL EDITOR



Throughout history there have been certain figures who were considered “larger-than-life.” Few Bible heroes hold this distinction more than David. He rescued his nation from the Philistines via his legendary slaying of Goliath. He articulated true relationship with God while expressing life’s every emotion in penning numerous psalms. He is often seen as a role model for being “a man after God’s own heart.” Who wouldn’t want to emulate him?

This quarter’s study of 2 Samuel certainly reveals David’s successes; however, we’ll also discover that one of the Bible’s greatest heroes wasn’t without major flaws. David’s lust for Bathsheba led him to adultery, murder, and abuse of his monarchical authority. Yet, when God confronted this behavior, we witness David’s confession and sincere repentance. As a result, God’s gracious forgiveness—available to all who are willing to repent—is on full display.

Despite David’s human weaknesses, God worked through him to achieve the salvation of humanity by the promised Messiah, Jesus Christ.

While most of us will likely never become a heroic figure, by studying 2 Samuel we can still clearly relate to David. Even if we’re far from perfect and our flaws are often evident, we can continually strive toward David’s most positive attribute—possessing a deep and profound faith in God. Who knows, in the end perhaps God will use us to impact His kingdom in “larger-than-life” ways?

Jason K. Allen

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INTRODUCTION TO 2 SAMUEL

The Book of 2 Samuel continues the history we read in 1 Samuel. Together, the two books follow the history of the Hebrew people during the time of Samuel, Saul, and David.

» WHO WROTE THE BOOK OF 2 SAMUEL?

The Jewish people believed Samuel, the prophet, wrote most of the two books, and after he died, the prophets Nathan and Gad added to the book. Today Bible teachers believe Samuel, Nathan, and Gad wrote most, but a few other people also wrote some parts of the book.

» WHEN WAS THE BOOK OF 2 SAMUEL WRITTEN?

Clearly, if Samuel, Nathan, and Gad wrote parts of this book, they wrote the parts before they died. David died about 970 B.C. so a large part of 2 Samuel was written before or shortly after that date.

» TO WHOM WAS THE BOOK OF 2 SAMUEL WRITTEN?

The Book of 2 Samuel was written for the Hebrew people. It was written so they would not forget the important parts of their history.

» WHY WAS THE BOOK OF 2 SAMUEL WRITTEN?

When you read 1 and 2 Samuel, you will learn about times when God communicated with His people or when spiritual matters happened. The history in 2 Samuel includes more than this, but spiritual matters make up a lot of the story. Second Samuel is the story of what happened between God and His people. The book of 2 Samuel was written for the Hebrew people to know and remember what God had done.

» WHAT DO WE LEARN ABOUT GOD IN THE BOOK OF 2 SAMUEL?

The most important lessons in 2 Samuel are about God. In 2 Samuel we learn God is in control of history and that history has purpose. It flows toward God's desired end. Second, we learn God is involved in the lives of people. God did not make the world and then separate Himself from the world. Also, we learn God tells His people what is right and expects them to live in right ways. He holds His people accountable when they do not live right. We also learn God's plan did not end when His kings died. Throughout 2 Samuel we get hints God is doing a bigger thing. That bigger thing will be clear when Jesus comes into the world almost 1000 years after the events in 2 Samuel.

OUTLINE OF 2 SAMUEL

- I. David Reacts to Saul's Death (1:1–2:7)
- II. Conflict between David's and Saul's Households (2:8–4:12)
- III. David Brings Unity to the Throne (5:1–6:23)
- IV. David Receives a Promise (7:1-29)
- V. David Expands the Kingdom (8:1–10:19)
- VI. David's Great Sins (11:1–12:31)
- VII. Family Trouble (13:1–14:33)
- VIII. Absalom's Revolt (15:1–17:29)
- IX. David's Restoration (18:1–19:43)
- X. Sheba's Unsuccessful Revolt (20:1-26)
- XI. David's Response to Famine (21:1-22)
- XII. David's Testament (22:1–23:39)
- XIII. David's Census and Its Consequences (24:1-25)

WORD LIST

Abiathar—the eleventh high priest in succession from Aaron; high priest and chief counselor for David (1 Sam. 22:20); shared responsibility with Zadok of taking the ark to Jerusalem (2 Sam. 15:29); faithful to David during Absalom's rebellion (2 Sam. 15)

Abner—Saul's uncle and chief military officer (1 Sam. 14:50). At Saul's death, he supported Saul's son, Ish-bosheth (2 Sam. 2:8), until accused of treason for taking one of Saul's concubines (3:7-8); transferred his loyalty to David; was killed by Joab.

Amnon—David's first son (2 Sam. 3:2); raped his half-sister Tamar; killed by his brother Absalom (2 Sam. 13:1-20)

Ark of the covenant—a special gold covered box that contained the two tablets of the law, Aaron's rod that budded, and a jar of manna; for the Israelites it represented the presence of God.

Assyria—the ancient country where Iran is now located

Atonement—what God does to provide forgiveness for sin; made possible by Jesus dying on the cross for our sin

Babylon—the ancient country where Iraq is now located

Concubine —a woman in a king's harem but not a wife

Hebron—city in Judah about nineteen miles south of Jerusalem; David's capital for seven years (1 Kings 2:11)

Ish-bosheth—personal name meaning "man of shame"; Saul's son and successor for two years (2 Sam. 2:8-9; 4:1-7)

Joab—military commander during most of David's reign; killed Absalom against the clear orders of David (2 Sam. 18:14)

Mephibosheth [meh FIB oh sheth]—son of Jonathan who was granted special position and privilege in David's court (2 Sam. 9)

Michal [MIGH kuhl]—Daughter of Saul (1 Sam. 14:49) and wife of David (18:20-29)

Philistines—the people who lived on the coast of Israel; sometimes called the Sea Peoples

Redemption—when God does something to bring us back from sin

Righteousness—to be made right or in right relationship with God

Rizpah—Saul's concubine whom Abner took as wife (2 Sam. 3:7); kept faithful vigil over bodies of her executed sons (20:10-14)

Septuagint—greek translation of the Old Testament

Sheba—a Benjaminite who led a revolt against David (2 Sam. 20)

Tamar—David's daughter; raped by her half brother, Amnon (2 Sam. 13:14)

Threshing Floor—a place where a farmer separated wheat grain from the husk of the grain

Yahweh—the name the Hebrew people used for God; made up of four Hebrew consonants YHWH, usually translated in English as LORD.

Zadok—priest during the rule of David (2 Sam. 8:17); shared responsibility with Abiathar of taking the ark to Jerusalem (2 Sam. 15:29)

Ziba—Saul's servant whom David placed in charge of Mephibosheth's restored property (2 Sam. 9:1-13); falsely accused Mephibosheth of treason during Absalom's rebellion (16:1-4)

BIBLE READING PLAN

MONTH 1

- ☐ 1. 2 Samuel 1:1-10
- ☐ 2. 2 Samuel 1:11-16
- ☐ 3. 2 Samuel 1:17-27
- ☐ 4. 2 Samuel 2:1-7
- ☐ 5. 2 Samuel 2:8-16
- ☐ 6. 2 Samuel 2:17-32
- ☐ 7. 2 Samuel 3:1-11
- ☐ 8. 2 Samuel 3:12-16
- ☐ 9. 2 Samuel 3:17-23
- ☐ 10. 2 Samuel 3:24-30
- ☐ 11. 2 Samuel 3:31-39
- ☐ 12. 2 Samuel 4:1-8
- ☐ 13. 2 Samuel 4:9-12
- ☐ 14. 2 Samuel 5:1-8
- ☐ 15. 2 Samuel 5:9-16
- ☐ 16. 2 Samuel 5:17-25
- ☐ 17. 2 Samuel 6:1-11
- ☐ 18. 2 Samuel 6:12-22
- ☐ 19. 2 Samuel 7:1-7
- ☐ 20. 2 Samuel 7:8-17
- ☐ 21. 2 Samuel 7:18-21
- ☐ 22. 2 Samuel 7:22-24
- ☐ 23. 2 Samuel 7:25-29
- ☐ 24. 2 Samuel 8:1-6
- ☐ 25. 2 Samuel 8:7-13
- ☐ 26. 2 Samuel 9:1-6
- ☐ 27. 2 Samuel 9:7-13
- ☐ 28. 2 Samuel 10:1-6
- ☐ 29. 2 Samuel 10:7-12
- ☐ 30. 2 Samuel 10:13-19

MONTH 2

- ☐ 1. 2 Samuel 11:1-9
- ☐ 2. 2 Samuel 11:10-13
- ☐ 3. 2 Samuel 11:14-22
- ☐ 4. 2 Samuel 11:23-27
- ☐ 5. 2 Samuel 12:1-10
- ☐ 6. 2 Samuel 12:11-15
- ☐ 7. 2 Samuel 12:16-23
- ☐ 8. 2 Samuel 12:24-31
- ☐ 9. 2 Samuel 13:1-7
- ☐ 10. 2 Samuel 13:8-14
- ☐ 11. 2 Samuel 13:15-20
- ☐ 12. 2 Samuel 13:21-29
- ☐ 13. 2 Samuel 13:30-39
- ☐ 14. 2 Samuel 14:1-8
- ☐ 15. 2 Samuel 14:9-14
- ☐ 16. 2 Samuel 14:15-18
- ☐ 17. 2 Samuel 14:19-26
- ☐ 18. 2 Samuel 14:27-33
- ☐ 19. 2 Samuel 15:1-6
- ☐ 20. 2 Samuel 15:7-12
- ☐ 21. 2 Samuel 15:13-18
- ☐ 22. 2 Samuel 15:19-29
- ☐ 23. 2 Samuel 15:30-37
- ☐ 24. 2 Samuel 16:1-4
- ☐ 25. 2 Samuel 16:5-9
- ☐ 26. 2 Samuel 16:10-14
- ☐ 27. 2 Samuel 16:15-23
- ☐ 28. 2 Samuel 17:1-10
- ☐ 29. 2 Samuel 17:11-14
- ☐ 30. 2 Samuel 17:15-20
- ☐ 31. 2 Samuel 17:21-23

MONTH 3

- ☐ 1. 2 Samuel 17:24-29
- ☐ 2. 2 Samuel 18:1-8
- ☐ 3. 2 Samuel 18:9-13
- ☐ 4. 2 Samuel 18:14-18
- ☐ 5. 2 Samuel 18:19-23
- ☐ 6. 2 Samuel 18:24-28
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- ☐ 12. 2 Samuel 19:34-43
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- ☐ 14. 2 Samuel 20:7-13
- ☐ 15. 2 Samuel 20:14-26
- ☐ 16. 2 Samuel 21:1-9
- ☐ 17. 2 Samuel 21:10-14
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- ☐ 25. 2 Samuel 22:44-51
- ☐ 26. 2 Samuel 23:1-7
- ☐ 27. 2 Samuel 23:8-19
- ☐ 28. 2 Samuel 23:20-39
- ☐ 29. 2 Samuel 24:1-10
- ☐ 30. 2 Samuel 24:11-17
- ☐ 31. 2 Samuel 24:18-25

Session 1

RESPECTED

God calls some people to be leaders for His people. We should honor the leaders God calls.

2 SAMUEL 1:22-27, 2:1-7

God has given us leaders in every part of life. We have leaders in government, in our families, and in our churches. Today's session is about the actions of leaders and the need for God's people to honor and respect leaders. Leaders are not perfect. But God's people can help them as they follow Christ. We should learn how to show our leaders proper honor.

Today we learn about when David first became king. It was not an easy path. He struggled, especially with Saul. Saul was the king over all Israel before David (1 Samuel). The first chapter of 2 Samuel begins just after Saul died in a battle against the Philistines. Soon after Saul died, the people of Judah (not all Israel yet) made David their king. David became the new leader of the Hebrew people. It is a great story. It will help us know how to think about our leaders. It will help us understand how to honor the leaders God gives us in our churches.

2 SAMUEL 1:22-27,2:1-7

22 Jonathan's bow **A** did not fail to kill many soldiers. **Saul's sword** **B** did not fail to wound many strong men. **23** "We loved Saul and Jonathan and enjoyed them while they lived. **They are together even in death.** **C** They were faster than eagles. They were stronger than lions. **24** "You daughters of Israel, cry for Saul. Saul **clothed you with red dresses** **D** and put gold decorations on them. **25** "How the mighty have fallen in battle! Jonathan is dead on Gilboa's hills. **26** I cry for you, my brother Jonathan. I enjoyed **your friendship** **E** so much. Your love to me was wonderful, better than the love of women. **27** "How the mighty have fallen! The weapons of war are gone."

2:1 Later, David prayed to the LORD, saying, "Should I go up to any of the cities of Judah?" The LORD said to David, "Go." David asked, "Where should I go?" The LORD answered, **"To Hebron."** **F** **2** So David went up to Hebron with his two wives: Ahinoam from Jezreel and Abigail, the widow of Nabal from Carmel. **3** David also brought his men and their families, and they all made their homes in the cities of Hebron. **4** Then the men of Judah came to Hebron and **appointed David king over Judah.** **G** They told David that the men of **Jabesh Gilead had buried Saul.** **H** **5** So David sent messengers to the men of Jabesh Gilead and said to them, "The LORD bless you. You have shown loyalty to your master Saul by burying him. **6** May the LORD now be loyal and true to you. I will also treat you well because you have done this. **7** Now be strong and brave. Saul your master is dead, and the people of Judah have appointed me their king."

- a. Jonathan was Saul's son. He was very skilled using a bow and arrow.
- b. Saul was the king before David. He was a skilled leader of the army.
- c. Saul and Jonathan both died in battle against the Philistines on Mount Gilboa. Gilboa is a few miles south from the Sea of Galilee and west from the Jordan River.
- d. Under Saul's rule, Israel had more money than ever before. That is why the women could afford finer clothes and gold jewelry.
- e. Jonathan promised to be faithful to David in 1 Samuel 20.
- f. David was in Ziklag about twenty miles away from Hebron, an important city in Judah.
- g. All Israel was united under King Saul. At first, only the southern part of Israel, known as Judah, accepted David.
- h. Jabesh Gilead is a town located east of the Jordan river. When Saul was a new king in Israel he rescued the town. When the people of Jabesh Gilead buried Saul, they showed great honor to him.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. How can we honor the leaders God gives us in our churches?
2. Who were Saul and Jonathan and why are they important to this story?
3. What kind of relationship did David have with Saul and with Jonathan?
4. Why was David's reaction to the death of Saul, as written in his poem, a surprising reaction?
5. What was important about David's prayer and God's answer?
6. Why did the people of Judah select David to be their king?
7. How did the people of Jabesh Gilead show honor to Saul and Jonathan?
8. Why was David so kind in his words to the people of Jabesh Gilead?
9. What can we learn in today's story about giving proper honor to church leaders?

BIBLE SKILL: *Compare verses*

Read the verses listed below. What do you learn about the relationship of David and Saul?

1 Samuel 17:55-58 _____

1 Samuel 18:6-12 _____

1 Samuel 24 _____

1 Samuel 26:7-25 _____

IN MY CONTEXT

- Believers can be happy about the faithful service of God-called leaders and the friendships they have with those leaders.
- Believers must seek God and accept God's timing for when things happen.
- God gave leaders to His people in the past as He continues to do today. Believers need to honor the leaders God gives.

Discuss with your group the poem David wrote about Saul and Jonathan. What can you learn from David's poem about showing respect to people even when you disagree with them?

What are some good ways to find God's will for our lives? Why is God's time for doing things often different from our time? Why is it best to accept God's time?

How should God's people treat their leaders? Why is it important for us to show the right kind of honor for our church leaders?

MEMORY VERSE

I have found My servant David; I appointed him by pouring holy oil on him. – Psalm 89:20

DAY ONE

Read 2 Samuel 1:22-24.

From the Bible Skill, you learned David and Saul did not have a good relationship. Almost from the time of Goliath, Saul tried to kill David. David praised Saul in this poem. We may be surprised by David's words of praise for a man who tried to kill him. We are not surprised at the praise David gave to Jonathan, because they were good friends.

David always had respect for Saul as God's chosen king over Israel. That is why David praised Saul's good qualities in the poem. Saul led Israel in war against all their enemies, especially the Philistines. Saul was very successful in protecting Israel. In addition to being a great warrior king, Saul led Israel to a new wealth as a nation. Israel was not as wealthy as Egypt or Syria, but Israel had more financial stability after Saul became king.

Saul was not a perfect king, but Jonathan was an almost perfect friend. David's poem shows his great joy in the friendship he shared with Jonathan. What a blessing it is to have friends like Jonathan.

How can you show thanks to God for the leaders and the friends we have in our churches and in our lives?

DAY TWO

Read 2 Samuel 1:25-27.

David felt terrible grief over the death of his friend, Jonathan. In 1 Samuel 20 we find the story of the deep friendship between Jonathan and David. Jonathan was next in line to become king after Saul. David was a threat to Jonathan ever becoming king. Still, Jonathan considered David his best friend.

Friendship is a wonderful thing. I have some friends who live in the Deaf world like me. We love each other so much that even though we live far away from each other we work hard to get together every year and catch up on our friendship. It feels like nothing could ever break our friendship. That was the friendship between David and Jonathan.

Some people have read this story and thought David and Jonathan had a homosexual relationship. That is not true. If you ever had a friend you felt you would die for, then you understand the friendship these two men shared. True friendship is godly and faithful. Many people today think the only basis for a relationship is sex. This is false. Friendship can have more power than sex to join people in a lifelong bond. This was the kind of friendship David and Jonathan had.

Do you have any friendships like the one David and Jonathan had? What can you do to form friendships like theirs, especially in the church?

DAY THREE

Read 2 Samuel 2:1-4a.

While Saul and Jonathan were fighting and dying on Mount Gilboa, David and his family and followers were all in the town of Ziklag near Gaza (see 1 Samuel 29,30). He learned about the death of Saul and knew many Israelites would want to make him king. However, David did not rush to become king. He first asked for God's leadership. Moving from Ziklag to Hebron meant going from the land of the Philistines to the land of the Hebrews. David knew as soon as he moved some people would try to make him king. Moving to Judah and then becoming king must happen by God's plan, not David's. So, David waited for God's command.

One of the most important lessons for believers to learn is to wait on God. I know I often want to jump ahead of God. I have seen many Deaf friends do the same thing when deciding where to live, who to marry, what kind of job to have, where to go to school, or what church to join. These and so many more decisions need God's leadership and God's timing. Like David, we need to learn to follow God and not try to lead God. We need to learn to wait for His direction.

What direction do you need in your life and how can you find it? Why is it so hard to wait for God before we jump to a decision?

DAY FOUR

Read 2 Samuel 2:4b-6.

In the ancient world, it was always a dangerous time after the death of a king. It could be dangerous to show loyalty to the king who just died. The people of Jabesh Gilead took a risk when they took Saul and Jonathan's bodies from Beth-Shan (see 1 Samuel 31) and buried them at Jabesh Gilead. They may have thought David would be angry for their kindness to Saul. But David was not angry. He praised them for what they did. David promised he would honor them because of their kind act.

Why did David do this? Was David trying to do things to attract more people to his leadership? Was this only a political move on David's part? I don't think so. David knew Saul was good to many in Israel and he was especially good to Jabesh Gilead (see 1 Samuel 11). More importantly, Saul was king because God chose him. David did not praise Saul for being godly, but he did praise Saul for leading God's people. It is important for churches to learn how to honor pastors and leaders – not putting them above God, of course, but rightly honoring and respecting them.

How do God's people rightly honor their leaders?

KEY DOCTRINE: *Leadership in the Church*

Every church should be under the leadership of Jesus who is our Lord in all things. Baptist churches believe every member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Churches also have human leaders according to the Bible. The Bible talks about pastors and deacons and other leaders. Each Baptist church decides for itself who those leaders will be. However, those leaders should be of godly character so members of the church and the community see Christ in them. Then members will honor them as godly leaders.

DAY FIVE

Read 2 Samuel 2:7.

We do not know exactly where Jabesh Gilead was. We know it was on the east side of the Jordan River in the land of the half-tribe of Manasseh. That means Jabesh Gilead was in the northern part of Israel, not the southern part of Judah. It would have been easy for the people of Jabesh Gilead to oppose David and favor Saul's family. David helped solve future problems by his kindness to the people of Jabesh Gilead. He asked for their friendship. They would need to be strong and brave in the days ahead. A new king and a new time for all Israel would come soon.

In the same way, it is important for God's people to honor leaders; it is important for leaders to respect people. David knew he could not be mean to those who were kind to Saul. David showed respect and honor. This is how leaders build love, faithfulness, and loyalty. Leaders do not lead because they have power. Leaders can lead with mutual partnership and respect for those they lead. These are great lessons for Deaf churches and Deaf leaders to learn.

What lessons can leaders learn from the wise actions of David?

CONNECT AND SHARE

Think about what you have learned from 2 Samuel 1 and 2. Meet with one or two other members of your study group to find ways to live what you have learned.

Who are your godly leaders and friends? Why do you respect these people? How could you live more like these leaders and friends?

How are you depending on God's leadership in your life right now? How can you find His leadership? What are you doing to follow God's time and not your own time?

What could you do to show honor and kindness to the leaders in your life? Think about something you could do this week to show your respect for your pastor and church leaders.



CROWNED

God will honor leaders who are committed to His purposes.

2 SAMUEL 3:8-21

It is easy to think that our plans are more important than God's plans. We tend to do this often. The neighborhood around a church may change. New, and different, people move into the neighborhood. The church may decide it is not interested in reaching the new people. But clearly God is giving them a mission field.

In today's lesson, we see a story about Abner, a powerful man. Abner was not the opposing king, but he led the army that supported Ish-bosheth, son of Saul. Ish-bosheth was king over parts of Israel and was an enemy to David. Abner finally understood God planned to make David king of Israel. Abner decided to stop fighting David and join in God's plan. It was a brave decision that would eventually cost him his life. The next few steps toward David becoming king of all Israel were not easy. But in the end, Abner and the people of Israel followed God's plan.

2 SAMUEL 3:8-21

8 Abner ^A was very angry because of what **Ish-Bosheth** ^B said, and he replied, “I have been loyal to Saul and his family and friends! I didn’t hand you over to David. I am not a traitor working for Judah! But now **you are saying I did something wrong** ^C with this woman! **9** May God help me if I don’t join David! I will make sure that **what the LORD promised** ^D does happen! **10** I will take the kingdom from the family of Saul and make David king of Israel and Judah, from **Dan to Beersheba!**” ^E **11** Ish-Bosheth couldn’t say anything to Abner, because he was afraid of him. **12** Then Abner sent messengers to ask David, “Who is going to rule the land? Make an agreement with me, and I will help you unite all Israel.” **13** David answered, “Good! I will make an agreement with you, but I ask you one thing. I will not meet with you unless you bring **Saul’s daughter Michal to me.**” ^F **14** Then David sent messengers to Saul’s son Ish-Bosheth, saying, “Give me my wife Michal. She was promised to me, and I killed a hundred Philistines to get her.” **15** So Ish-Bosheth sent men to take Michal from her husband Paltiel son of Laish. **16** Michal’s husband went with her, crying as he followed her to Bahurim. But Abner said to Paltiel, “Go back home.” So he went home. **17** Abner sent this message to the **elders of Israel:** ^G “You have been wanting to make David your king. **18** Now do it! The LORD said of David, ‘Through my servant David, I will save my people Israel from the Philistines and all their enemies.’” **19** Abner also said these things to **the people of Benjamin.** ^H He then went to Hebron to tell David what the Benjaminites and Israel wanted to do. **20** Abner came with twenty men to David at Hebron. There David prepared a feast for them. **21** Abner said to David, “My master and king, I will go and bring all the Israelites to you. Then they will make an agreement with you so you will rule over all Israel as you wanted.” So David let Abner go, and he left in peace.

- a. After Saul died Abner, Saul’s cousin, continued to lead the army of Saul to fight against David.
- b. Son of Saul and the next king in line after Saul’s death.
- c. Ish-Bosheth accused Abner of using a woman from Saul’s harem to try to become king of Israel himself.
- d. Through Samuel the prophet, God promised that the kingdom would be taken from Saul and given to another.
- e. Dan is the city at the far north of Israel. Beersheba is the city at the far south of Israel.
- f. Saul gave his daughter Michal to David to be his wife. However, Saul took her back and gave her to another man.
- g. David was king only over the people of Judah. The elders of Israel were the leaders of all the other tribes of the Hebrew people.
- h. Judah and Benjamin were the two southern tribes of the Hebrew people. Abner’s plan would bring Benjamin under David’s leadership.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Why are some people against God's plan? Why do others accept God's plan and give their lives to following Him?
2. Who was Abner and who was Ish-Bosheth? Why are they important to this story?
3. Why did Abner change his loyalty from Ish-Bosheth to David?
4. How are the actions of people and the promises of God related? Can a human make the promises of God happen? Explain.
5. What was the agreement that Abner wanted to make with David?
6. Why did David want to get his wife, Michal, back?
7. How can the wrong actions of people create pain for families? How is God able to work through the problems families have to do His will in the world?
8. Why was the kindness of David to Abner and his men unexpected? Why can kindness and love change the world better than anger and violence?
9. How can we use our influence on our friends and family to help the purposes of God happen on earth?

BIBLE SKILL: *Character Study*

Read the verses listed below. What do you learn about Michal, one of David's wives?

- 1 Samuel 14:49 _____
- 1 Samuel 18:20-28 _____
- 1 Samuel 19:11-17 _____
- 1 Samuel 25:44 _____
- 2 Samuel 3:13-14 _____
- 2 Samuel 6:16-23 _____

IN MY CONTEXT

- Believers can know for sure that the plans of God will always happen.
- When wrong things happen, believers must take actions that will bring righteousness again.
- Believers can use their influence to help other people follow God's plan.

Discuss as a group what happened between Ish-Bosheth and Abner. How did God work out His plan through people who fought against His plan?

What were the issues behind the story of Michal and David? How did this story show David doing righteous things?

How can believers use their influence to help people do the right things? How is Abner an example of this?

MEMORY VERSE

During the war between the supporters of Saul's family and the supporters of David's family, Abner made himself a main leader among the supporters of Saul. – 2 Samuel 3:6

DAY ONE

Read 2 Samuel 3:8-9.

When Saul was killed (1 Samuel 31), many people in Israel wanted David to be the next king. But some people did not. Ish-Bosheth, son of Saul, was one of these. Abner, the leader of Saul's army, was another. Abner led Ish-Bosheth's army. Ish-Bosheth was the king over part of Israel, but Abner was the real power in his kingdom.

Ish-Bosheth knew this. He watched Abner carefully. It seems a rumor spread that Abner slept with one of Saul's concubines. This would mean Abner wanted to take Saul's kingdom. Ish-Bosheth met with Abner and asked him about this. Abner was terribly angry when the king accused him. The rumor was not true.

Abner was so angry he decided to stop supporting Ish-Bosheth. He supported David instead. This was a big decision. Verse 9 shows an important fact: Abner knew God's plan all along. God promised the kingdom to David. Abner joined with God's plan.

Why do people resist God's plans?

How does God use the things that happen to us to change our minds about following His plans?

DAY TWO

Read 2 Samuel 3:10-11.

Abner was ready to give his full support to David. He supported David partly because he was angry at Ish-Bosheth. He supported David partly because he knew David would win. But the truth is, he supported David because he knew God was going to accomplish His purposes. It was God's plan for David to become king. If you read 1 Samuel 17 you will see Abner knew David from the time he killed Goliath. Abner knew that God had rejected Saul and would make David the leader of His people.

Dan was the city at the farthest north point of Israel. Beersheba was the city at the farthest south point of Israel. This was the land that God promised to Abraham. This was the kingdom that God promised to David. It seems Abner knew this, Ish-Bosheth knew this, most of the people of Israel knew this, and of course, David knew this. It would happen. No one could stop the movement of God.

What do believers need to do to submit to the will of God? Why do some people try to stop God's plan? How does your church follow God's purposes?

DAY THREE

Read 2 Samuel 3:12-16.

In the Bible Skill you learned about David's wife, Michal. Saul took her away from David and gave her to another man. At least two things happened in this passage. First, Saul's action was wrong. David wanted to fix that wrong action. But even worse, Saul's action made an unholy situation. Saul gave Michal to David in marriage, took her away from David, and then gave her to a different man.

David wanted to fix this unholy situation. So, he demanded to have Michal back as his wife. This meant David would be Saul's son-in-law again. This helped David's claim to be the next king.

Marriage is often a complicated thing. People get married for many reasons. In David's time, kings married for political reasons. Often they married to make peace between countries. A king married another king's daughter to avoid future war. In the Michal story, the reasons for marriage were even more complicated. David seems to have restored his marriage to Michal for reasons of holiness.

What positive and negative lessons about marriage can we learn from David? What can believers do to make their marriages holy?

DAY FOUR

Read 2 Samuel 3:17-18.

Abner was a very powerful man in Israel. He led the army. Abner led the army to oppose David. These verses show that Abner knew many of the people of Israel wanted David to be king. They would have made David king already, but Abner and the army prevented it. Abner now added his approval to their desire. He said, “Now do it.”

Verse 18 is a bit of a surprise. Abner knew all along what God had planned. When Abner resisted David, Abner really resisted God. God planned to save the Hebrew people from the Philistines and all other enemies through David. God chose David and now Abner accepted and followed God’s plan. Further, Abner moved out of God’s way and encouraged the people to submit to God’s plan too. Perhaps Abner’s reasons were not all good, but his action followed God’s plans – finally!

Why does it sometimes take a long time before God’s plan happens?

Can humans stop God’s plan forever? Why do you think this?

KEY DOCTRINE: *The Sovereign Purposes of God*

God is over all things and is sovereign in His control. We see this in the Bible in the doctrine of salvation. We also see this in the Bible in the movement of history. In His sovereign control God saves people and makes them holy. People are free to make choices and yet, in the end, God’s plan will happen. This shows God’s goodness and His unchangeable wisdom and holiness. People cannot stop God’s will and His plan.

DAY FIVE

Read 2 Samuel 3:19-21.

Abner was the main threat to David. Finally, David had his chance to get Abner out of the picture. David easily could have killed Abner and his men. There were times when David seemed to be a strict leader. But there were other times when David was very wise and gentle. This is one of those times.

David welcomed Abner and his men with kindness. He fed them and treated them well. This may have been a surprise for Abner. He might have expected death. But both men showed respect and honor to each other. When they did this, both men followed the plan of God.

Abner used his influence to do a good thing. He used his influence to bring the tribe of Benjamin and all of Israel under the leadership of David. Abner risked his life to do this. It is always right for the leaders of God's people to use their influence to accomplish God's plans.

How do the leaders of your church use their influence? How do you use yours?

CONNECT AND SHARE

Think about what you have learned from 2 Samuel 3. Meet with one or two other members of your study group to find ways to live what you have learned.

How have you and your friends seen the purposes of God fulfilled this week? How have you been a part of His plan?

What have you done this week that was hard but still the right thing to do? If you are married, what have you done to make your marriage stronger?

What can you do to influence other people to follow God's plans? Have you helped lead people to Jesus this week?



CELEBRATED

God's people should celebrate the works of God and the presence of God.

2 SAMUEL 5:9-12, 6:12-19

What do we do when clearly God is working among us? I remember a Deaf worship service in 1979 when many Deaf people decided to follow Christ. Many more rededicated their lives to Christ. It was a powerful night. I had a strong feeling God was moving among us. God changed many lives that night. He changed my life that night.

In today's session, we see how some people acted when they saw God working in David's life and in the kingdom of Israel. Hiram, the king to the north of Israel, sent workers and cedar poles to build David's house and the new city of Jerusalem. That is how one person responded to God's working. David and many Israelites danced and worshipped before the Lord when the ark of the covenant was moved to Jerusalem. This was an unusual response to the movement of God, but it is an important part of today's story. One of the best ways to respond to the working of God is to trust Him, love Him, and obey Him. I challenge you to do that today as God works in your life through this story.

2 SAMUEL 5:9-12,6:12-19

9 So David lived in the strong, walled city and called it the **City of David**. **A** David built more buildings around it, beginning where the land was filled in. He also built more buildings inside the city. **10** He became stronger and stronger, because the LORD God All-Powerful was with him. **11 Hiram king of the city of Tyre** **B** sent messengers to David, along with cedar logs, carpenters, and stonecutters. They built a palace for David. **12** Then David knew that the LORD really had made him king of Israel and that the LORD had made his kingdom great because the LORD loved His people Israel.

6:12 The people told David, “The LORD has blessed the family of **Obed-Edom** **C** and all that belongs to him, because the **Ark of God** **D** is there.” So David went and brought it up from Obed-Edom’s house to Jerusalem with joy. **13** When the men carrying the Ark of the LORD had walked six steps, **David sacrificed a bull** **E** and a fat calf. **14** Then David danced with all his might before the LORD. He had on a holy linen vest. **15** David and all the Israelites shouted with joy and blew the trumpets as they brought the Ark of the LORD to the city. **16** As the Ark of the LORD came into the city, Saul’s daughter **Michal** **F** looked out the window. When she saw David jumping and dancing in the presence of the LORD, she hated him. **17 David put up a tent for the Ark of the LORD**, **G** and then the Israelites put it in its place inside the tent. David offered whole burnt offerings and fellowship offerings before the LORD. **18** When David finished offering the whole burnt offerings and the fellowship offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD All-Powerful. **19 David gave a loaf of bread**, **H** a cake of dates, and a cake of raisins to every Israelite, both men and women. Then all the people went home.

- a. Another name for the city of Jerusalem. It was called the city of David because David captured it.
- b. Hiram was the king of Tyre, an important city about one-hundred miles north of Jerusalem. It is now in the country of Lebanon.
- c. The ark of the covenant had been left in the home of Obed-Edom after the tragic experience in 2 Samuel 6:6-8.
- d. Another name for the ark of the covenant.
- e. David was not a priest, but in this story he did many priestly duties like Melchizedek, the priest king (see Genesis 14).
- f. Michal was King Saul’s daughter and David’s first wife.
- g. No temple had been built yet for worship. Years later, the ark was placed in the temple Solomon built. For now, the ark remained in a tent.
- h. David gave food gifts to all the people present. This was a way to share the blessings of God during a wonderful day of worship.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. How do we know when God is present with us? How do we know when He is working among us?
2. David built the city of Jerusalem. How did that show God was with him? Does building new and larger church buildings prove that God is working among us? Why do you think this way?
3. Who was Hiram and why did he help David?
4. Why did God bless the family of Obed-Edom? Why was this important to David and the people of Jerusalem?
5. David was not a priest, but he did the work of a priest in this story. Why did David do this? Why did David sacrifice animals in this story?
6. What is the right way to worship God? Why did David and all Israel dance with joy before the Lord? How was this worship?
7. Why did Michal feel the way she did? Why was this feeling wrong?
8. Why was this such a special day for Israel? How did the actions of David and the Hebrew people honor God?
9. What are some ways God's people can celebrate the presence and work of God in our churches today?

BIBLE SKILL: *Study Verses*

Read the verses listed below. Write what you learn about the ark of the covenant, also called the ark of God.

Exodus 25:10-22 _____

Deuteronomy 31:24-26 _____

Jeremiah 3:14-18 _____

Hebrews 9:1-12 _____

Revelation 11:15-19 _____

IN MY CONTEXT

- God gives us what we need to be able to accomplish His plans.
- When believers obey God and worship Him, they also honor Him.
- God's followers should know when He is present and they should celebrate His presence.

Discuss as a group how the actions of King Hiram helped David know that God was with Him. How does God provide for us today?

What are some right ways to worship God today? What can we learn from David's actions when the ark was moved to Jerusalem?

How do we know that God is with us in our churches? What have you seen that helps you know God is working in your church? How does God work in your family and in your life?

MEMORY VERSE

David and all the Israelites shouted with joy and blew the trumpets as they brought the Ark of the LORD to the city. – 2 Samuel 6:15

DAY ONE

Read 2 Samuel 5:9-10.

When David first became king in Judah he ruled from Hebron. But Hebron was too far south and too hard to defend. Jerusalem would make a better capital. It was further north and it had a wall all around it for defense. The problem was the Jebusites controlled Jerusalem. The Jebusites were not Hebrews. David and his soldiers slipped into Jerusalem through the water tunnel under the city wall. David now controlled Jerusalem and he moved his people and family into this city.

How do we know that God is with us? Often this question is easy to answer. When revival breaks out and many people trust Christ we see the hand of God clearly. In this story though, David saw the hand of God in the capture and growth of the city of Jerusalem. At this early part of David's rule, having a stable place for his capital was very important. Jerusalem became that place. Much work had to be done to make it a strong city. David's workers moved huge amounts of dirt between valleys. He built new buildings for houses and government quarters. The city became strong and David's rule was stable. The Bible writer said it this way: "The Lord God all Powerful was with him." God's presence was important for David and still is for us.

How can a church know that God is with them?

How do you experience God's presence in your life?

DAY TWO

Read 2 Samuel 5:11-12.

King Hiram was the king over Tyre. Tyre was an important city about one-hundred miles north of Jerusalem. It was famous for business and shipping. When King Hiram heard that David was the king over all of Israel, Hiram sent materials to help David build the capital city of Jerusalem. Hiram also sent skilled workers to help build David's palace and other buildings in Jerusalem.

To David this was a sign. It was a sign that God was indeed with him and was helping him in his kingdom. David needed friends in other countries. David needed the people of Israel to support him. But David's greatest need was for God to be with him. When King Hiram recognized David as the true king and sent materials to help him, David knew God was supporting him. Yes, God truly loved His people.

What do you think about God's love? How do you know God loves you?

In what way is the cross of Jesus a sign to you of God's love?

DAY THREE

Read 2 Samuel 6:12-15.

The ark of the covenant was a gold covered box. But it was so much more than this. It represented the presence of God with His people, Israel. There was nothing in all Israel more important for the faith of Israel than this special box.

Moving the ark to Jerusalem was also important. If the ark was in Jerusalem it would show that God was with David in his capital city. That is why it was so important to David to move it to the City of David.

But it was not easy to do. The first try ended terribly (see 2 Samuel 6:1-11). David was afraid to touch the ark. But when the family keeping the ark experienced great blessings from God, David decided it was time to try again. Moving the ark to Jerusalem was a great religious celebration. Many people came together and worshiped God. David jumped and danced before the Lord. Everyone had great joy. Why? Because God's people honor God when we worship Him. David and the people of Israel worshiped God that day.

What is worship like in your church? How does your worship honor God? How does your experience of worship change you?

KEY DOCTRINE: *Worship and the Lord's Day*

It is right to worship God every day, and believers can worship God in any place. Worship on the first day of the week is special. Since early in Christian history the first day of the week was the day believers gathered to worship Jesus. They used this day because it was the day of Jesus' resurrection. Christians should find ways to participate in worship and spiritual devotions both privately and with other people. Christians should do activities on Sunday that honor God.

DAY FOUR

Read 2 Samuel 6:16.

Almost all of Jerusalem was full of joy on the day the ark of the covenant was moved to Jerusalem. One person was not. That person was Michal. We have seen stories about Michal before. Her life had much sadness. She was Saul's daughter. Saul gave her to David to be his wife. Then he took her back and gave her to someone else. Finally, David got Michal back to be his wife when he became king over all Israel. We know at the beginning she loved David, but by the time of this story her feelings changed.

In this story she was more interested in how things looked. She had become proud of the wrong things. Instead of being proud of God she was proud of appearances. When she saw David dancing before the Lord, Michal was embarrassed. Verse 16 says, "she hated him." Michal had the chance to be important in the Hebrew story. Instead of following God and her king, David, she lost everything. You can see that part of the story in verses 20-23.

Why is it so hard for some people to see the work of God?

How does pride get in the way of our worship and our love for God?

DAY FIVE

Read 2 Samuel 6:17-19.

Soon the crowd with the ark of the covenant arrived in Jerusalem. There was no temple for the ark so David put the ark in a tent. The ark of the covenant was in a tent most of the time since Exodus 40. David wanted to build a temple but God would not let him. David's son, Solomon, finally built the temple.

The place for worship is not the most important thing. God is most interested in our true worship. He wants us to truly believe in Him and to truly worship Him. He wants our worship of Him to change the way we live. If our worship of God does not change the way we live then our worship is false.

David ended this great day with a meal shared by all. The crowd must have been thousands of people. Giving food to everyone was expensive. But eating together was almost as important as worshiping together. The shared meal showed everyone was together in their worship. The meal on that day was not the same as the Lord's Supper for us. However, as we share the Lord's Supper we are joined together as a family of love and worship. Israel was joined together on that day in the same way.

How does your church celebrate the presence of God? What does His presence in your life mean to you?

CONNECT AND SHARE

Think about what you have learned from 2 Samuel 5 and 6. Meet with one or two other members of your study group to find ways to live what you have learned.

How have you and your friends seen God give all that was needed to accomplish His plans? How do you see God meeting the needs of your church?

When did you participate in worship this week? How did worship change your life? How did your worship honor God?

How is your worship different from the worship at David's time? How is your worship like the worship at David's time? When did you know God's presence during worship? Why was God there?

ESTABLISHED

God promised to make a person in the family line of David a leader of His people.

2 SAMUEL 7:8-21

Blessing is an interesting word. You know the sign. Two hands touch the mouth and open with palms down almost like laying hands on someone. It is possible to give a blessing and to receive a blessing. God gives blessings to His people for His own reasons. What blessings have you experienced from God?

Our lesson today talks about the blessings David received. God promised there would always be a descendent of David's ruling over Israel. In history there came a time when there was no king in Israel that came from David's family. But Christians find that God fulfilled His promise to David through God's Son, Jesus. Jesus is our King. And, as you already know, Jesus is in the family line of David. When God gave David His blessing it never stopped. The promise of God to David is still being fulfilled in Jesus who is the true King over the people of God forever.

2 SAMUEL 7:8-21

8 “You must tell **A** my servant David, “This is what the LORD All-Powerful says: I took you from the pasture and from tending the sheep and made you leader of My people Israel. **9** I have been with you everywhere you have gone and have defeated your enemies for you. I will make you as famous as any of the great people on the earth. **10** Also I will choose a place for My people Israel, and I will plant them so they can live in their own homes. They will not be bothered anymore. Wicked people will no longer bother them as they have in the past **11 when I chose judges** **B** for My people Israel. But I will give you peace from all your enemies. I also tell you that **I will make your descendants kings** **C** of Israel after you. **12** “When you die and join your ancestors, I will make one of your sons the next king, and I will set up his kingdom. **13 He will build a house for me,** **D** and I will let his kingdom rule always. **14** I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he sins, I will **use other people to punish him.** **E** They will be my whips. **15** I took away my love from Saul, whom I removed before you, but I will never stop loving your son. **16** But your family and your kingdom will continue always before me. **Your throne will last forever.”** **F** **17** Nathan told David everything God had said in this vision. **18** Then King David went in and **sat in front of the LORD.** **G** David said, “Lord GOD, who am I? What is my family? Why did You bring me to this point? **19** But even this is not enough for You, Lord GOD. You have also made promises about my future family. **This is extraordinary,** **H** Lord GOD. **20** “What more can I say to you, Lord GOD, since You know me, Your servant, so well! **21** You have done this great thing because You said You would and because You wanted to, and You have let me know about it.”

- a. David wanted to build a temple to God. God sent word through the prophet, Nathan, that David was not to build the temple. Instead, David’s son would do this.
- b. For several hundred years judges led the people of Israel. During that time Israel had no king.
- c. A descendent of David ruled Israel and then Judah from Solomon to Zedekiah in 586 BC.
- d. Solomon, son of David, dedicated the temple to Yahweh in 1 Kings 8.
- e. This came true over hundreds of years. When Israel sinned, God punished Israel through Assyria. When Judah sinned, God punished Israel through Babylon.
- f. This was not fulfilled in any earthly king but was fulfilled in Jesus who is the eternal King.
- g. David prayed to God in the tent where the ark of the covenant was set.
- h. David did not become full of pride because God chose him and his family. Instead David was humble before God.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. God made promises to David. How did God keep His promises to David?
How does God keep His promises to us today?
2. How did God guide David's life? How does God guide our lives?
3. What were the blessings that God gave to David? How do the blessings David received from God compare to the blessings we receive from God?
4. Why did God promise that David's descendants would rule over Israel?
How did God fulfill this promise?
5. How can we have God as our Father?
6. Why does God discipline His people? How do you think God disciplines His people today?
7. Why did Nathan tell David everything God had said? Why should we tell our friends what God has said to us through His word?
8. Why was it important for David to talk with God? How do you talk with God? Why is it important for you to talk with God?
9. How does Jesus fulfill the promises that God made to David?

BIBLE SKILL: *Match the Verses*

Read the verses listed below. What do you learn about the promises of God?
Match the verse with the promise.

Deuteronomy 31:6

God keeps His promises

Joshua 23:14

God remembers His promises

Psalms 105:8

God promised the Holy Spirit

Galatians 3:14

God promised eternal life

1 John 2:25

God will never leave us or forget us

IN MY CONTEXT

- When God works through the lives of believers they can later think about His work and be thankful.
- Jesus will rule as King forever.
- Believers should humbly thank God for His wonderful blessings. The greatest blessing is salvation from sin.

Discuss as a group how God has blessed you. How can members of your group rightly give thanks for these blessings?

How do you experience God's rule in your life today? How do you see His rule in your church?

How did you come to believe in Jesus? How do you give thanks for your salvation? How do you give thanks for all God's blessings?

MEMORY VERSE

I have been with you everywhere you have gone and have defeated your enemies for you. I will make you as famous as any of the great people on the earth. – 2 Samuel 7:9

DAY ONE

Read 2 Samuel 7:8-11a.

David felt humble. He heard from Nathan all God did for him. David knew it was true. God took David, a poor shepherd, and made him the king over all Israel. God blessed David and his whole family. Also, God blessed the nation of Israel. God took a weak nation whose neighbors bothered her constantly and began making Israel a strong nation. Israel would not need to fear the nations anymore.

When you think about David and Israel, you should also think about your own life and about the way God works around you. How has God blessed you? I can say God has blessed me in more ways than I can count. I am especially glad God put me into the Deaf world and He let me be a spiritual leader in that world. How is God working through you? I hope you can identify many ways that He is. Think about His blessings and His workings in your life.

How has God been working in your life?

Where do you see God working around you?

DAY TWO

Read 2 Samuel 7:11b-13.

When David lived, most nations had kings that ruled over them. When one king died, the king's son would become the next king. Then his son would be king after him. This continued for years until some enemy took over the kingdom and started a new line of kings. The fact is, such overthrows happened often. It was unusual for the family of a king to rule for hundreds of years. Yet, in these verses God promised David that his family would rule forever.

God's promise came true in David's son, Solomon. Solomon was the king after David and he led all Israel for about forty years. The family line of David continued for many years. But around 586 BC the descendants of David stopped being rulers of Judah. How could God keep the promise He made in verse 13? The answer is Jesus. Read Luke 1:31-33. Jesus fulfilled the promise for an eternal king from the family of David. We know how Christ rules – He rules over the lives of all who surrender to Him as Lord.

Is Jesus the king of your life? How does your life show that He is your king and your Lord?

DAY THREE

Read 2 Samuel 7:14-17.

God made a wonderful and a terrible promise to David about what would happen in the future for the kings that would descend from David. The wonderful promise is that God would be a father to the future kings. Can you imagine having God for your father? You would certainly always get perfect advice, right?!

But this was a “terrible” promise too. God promised, like every good father, He would discipline His sons when they did wrong. But God would not discipline with a “time out” or even a “spanking.” God would use a whip made from the enemy countries that surrounded Israel. If you read through the history of Israel and Judah, you will see the great discipline God sent through Assyria and Babylon against His people in Israel and then later in Judah.

The wonderful promise and the terrible promise both come from God's love. Did you see that in verse 15? God would never take away His love. During good times God's love would carry Israel. During times of discipline God's love would try to draw Israel back from her sin.

Of course, God has not changed. He loves us with a never-ending love. He promises to be with us. He also promises to discipline us when we stray from Him to draw us back to Himself.

How do you see God's love in your life? Can you explain how God's blessing and His punishment both show His love for us?

DAY FOUR

Read 2 Samuel 7:18-19.

David listened to Nathan the prophet say all these things that we read from 2 Samuel 7:8-17. What do you think David did after he heard all these things? Verse 18 tells us David went into the presence of God and prayed. The presence of God was probably before the ark of the covenant. David sat there and prayed the wonderful words that go to verse 29.

In these verses we see a humble David, deeply moved by God's promises to him and to his family. David seemed overcome with gratefulness when he said: "Lord God, who am I?...Why did you bring me to this point?" David could not answer those questions, but he could be thankful.

We can be thankful too. Why God works in our lives and in our families in the way He does is a mystery. He is kind. He is gracious. When He should punish us for our sin He loves us without stopping. He is an amazing God. God is holy and righteous. He punishes sin and disciplines His sons and daughters. But I think most of you are like me. Throughout your life you have known God's great love and mercy. That should always make you thankful.

When have you been thankful to God?

How did you show your thanks to Him?

KEY DOCTRINE: *Salvation and Humility*

God's salvation for us does many things in our lives. When He saves us, He gives us new life. He also begins a process in us to make us grow to be like Christ. His salvation is not ours because we are good, but because He is good. Further, He is wise, holy, and unchangeable. When people come to know Christ in salvation those people find no reason to boast. They do find much to be humble about. Like David was humble before God, so is the Christian believer.

DAY FIVE

Read 2 Samuel 7:20-21.

Why did God love and bless David? Why does God love and bless us? We know He does not love and bless us because we are worthy of His love and blessings. David helped us understand when he said: “You have done this great thing because You said You would and because You wanted to...” God is kind to us because of who He is, not because of who we are. His love and faithfulness to us come from His character. It is God’s desire to show His love to us. The way He shows His love most clearly is through the salvation He gives to us in Jesus.

I have seen God’s love in my life in a million ways. You could probably say the same thing. How have you seen His love? Think about that for a minute. At the top of your list I hope you had this thought: But God shows His great love for us in this way: Christ died for us while we were still sinners (Rom. 5:8). At the top of your thankful list, be thankful for His salvation.

What is the greatest blessing that you have had from God? Why is salvation at the top of our thankful list?

CONNECT AND SHARE

Think about what you have learned from 2 Samuel 7. Meet with one or two other members of your study group to find ways to live what you have learned.

**How have you and your friends seen God working in your lives this week?
How can you rightly give God thanks for all you have seen Him do?**

In what ways do you see Jesus ruling in our world today? How are you and your friends submitting to the rule of Christ in your lives?

What has your attitude been before the Lord? Are you living in a humble and thankful way? How are you showing your thankfulness to God every day?



VALUED

When we are kind to other people we give honor to God.

2 SAMUEL 9:1-13

You probably know the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22 includes “kindness.” Kindness comes from the heart of God. It is a characteristic He wants in His people. Jesus taught kindness in the Golden Rule: “Do to others what you want them to do to you” (Matthew 7:12).

Our study today shows us an act of kindness David did for the grandson of his enemy, Saul. The grandson’s name was Mephibosheth. Mephibosheth was crippled in both feet. He could not walk right. Mephibosheth was also the son of Jonathan, David’s good friend and Saul’s son. David and Jonathan were the best of friends. David promised to be kind to Jonathan’s family. David kept his word by showing great kindness to Mephibosheth.

It is good to learn about the kind things David did. But it is not enough to see that a great man in the Bible was kind. The lesson forces us to look at our own lives. We must ask ourselves this question, “Do I show kindness to other people as God wants me to do?”

2 SAMUEL 9:1-13

1 David asked, “Is anyone still left in Saul’s family?

I want to **show kindness to that person for**

Jonathan’s sake!” Ⓐ 2 Now there was a servant

named Ziba from Saul’s family. So David’s servants

called Ziba to him. King David said to him, “Are you Ziba?” He answered, “Yes, I am your servant.”

3 The king asked, “Is anyone left in Saul’s family? I want to show God’s kindness to that person.” Ziba

answered the king, “Jonathan has a son still living who is **crippled in both feet.**” Ⓑ 4 The king asked

Ziba, “Where is this son?” Ziba answered, “He is at the house of Makir son of Ammiel in **Lo Debar.**” Ⓒ

5 Then King David had servants bring Jonathan’s son from the house of Makir son of Ammiel in Lo Debar.

6 **Mephibosheth,** Ⓓ Jonathan’s son, came before David and bowed facedown on the floor. David said,

“Mephibosheth!” Mephibosheth said, “I am your servant.” 7 David said to him, “Don’t be afraid. **I will**

be kind to you Ⓔ for your father Jonathan’s sake. I

will give you back all the land of your grandfather Saul, and you will always eat at my table.” 8 Mephibosheth

bowed to David again and said, “You are being very kind to me, your servant! And I am no better than a

dead dog!” 9 Then King David called Saul’s servant Ziba. David said to him, “I have given your master’s

grandson everything that belonged to Saul and his family. 10 You, your sons, and your servants will farm

the land and harvest the crops. Then your family will have food to eat. But Mephibosheth, your master’s

grandson, **will always eat at my table.**” Ⓕ (Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.) 11 **Ziba said to**

King David, “I, your servant, Ⓖ will do everything my master, the king, commands me.” So Mephibosheth

ate at David’s table as if he were one of the king’s

sons. 12 Mephibosheth had a young son named Mica.

Everyone in Ziba’s family became Mephibosheth’s

servants. 13 Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem, because he always ate at the king’s table. And he was crippled in

both feet.

a. David and Jonathan had promised kindness to each other’s families.

b. When Saul and Jonathan were killed, Mephibosheth’s nurse ran for safety but dropped Mephibosheth, crippling him in both feet.

c. A small, unimportant town about eighty miles northeast from Jerusalem.

d. If Saul and Jonathan had not been killed, Mephibosheth would have been in line to be king after Jonathan.

e. When David lived, the normal thing to do was to kill all the family of the previous king so no one would challenge David’s right to be king.

f. David protected Mephibosheth and honored him by keeping him with his own family.

g. David also showed great kindness to Ziba, Saul’s servant. David protected Ziba and gave him control over Mephibosheth’s farms.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. What does it mean to be kind? How has God shown kindness to you? How have you shown kindness to others?
2. Why did David want to show kindness to anyone left in Jonathan's family?
3. Why is it important to show kindness to people with special needs? How does your church minister to such people?
4. Why was Mephibosheth nervous to be before David? What did he expect David to do? Why didn't David kill Mephibosheth?
5. Why did Mephibosheth come before King David in such a humble way? Can we learn anything from Mephibosheth about how we approach God?
6. How does God show mercy and kindness to us?
7. In what way did David honor Mephibosheth?
8. How does David's action toward Mephibosheth remind you of how God adopts people into His family?

BIBLE SKILL: *Character Study*

Read the verses listed below. What do you learn about the life of Mephibosheth? Write what you learn beside the text.

2 Samuel 4:4 _____

2 Samuel 9:5-8 _____

2 Samuel 16: 3-4 _____

2 Samuel 19:24-29 _____

2 Samuel 21:7 _____

IN MY CONTEXT

- God expects us to keep our promises even if it is hard to do.
- Believers should come before God with humility because we know He shows us His mercy even though we are sinners.
- God adopts us as believers in Jesus into His family. That is something we should truly celebrate.

Discuss as a group what God expects from us concerning promises we make. Why should we keep our promises even if it is hard to do? What promises do you need to act on?

What lessons about humility do we learn from this story? Why should we come to God with humility?

In what way did God adopt us? How can believers celebrate their relationship with God?

MEMORY VERSE

I do not hide Your goodness in my heart; I speak about Your loyalty and salvation. I do not hide Your love and truth from the people in the great meeting. – Psalm 40:10

DAY ONE

Read 2 Samuel 9:1.

Jonathan was the son of Saul. Saul was king of Israel before David. Jonathan should have become the king after Saul died. However, God rejected Saul and his family. He chose David to be the next king. David and Jonathan should have been enemies but they were best friends.

Jonathan and Saul both died in the same battle. As you know, David became the next king over Israel. Most new kings would kill all the people in the old king's family so there would be no rival king. That is why verse 1 is such a surprise. Instead of searching for and killing all rivals, David wanted to be kind to Jonathan's children.

Maybe this is one of the reasons David was a man who had the heart of God (Acts 13:22, NIV). David usually did not do things like most people. He did things in a godly way.

What does it mean to do things in a godly way? Are you living in a godly way?

DAY TWO

Read 2 Samuel 9:2-5.

Mephibosheth was the son of Jonathan and the grandson of Saul. You can learn about Mephibosheth in the Bible Skill (p. 45). It is clear Mephibosheth was afraid for his life. He hid from David. David had to search for him through Saul's old servants.

It is possible Mephibosheth was afraid because he was crippled. The Bible says he was lame in both feet. When David lived, society usually pushed away people with disabilities. They often could not support themselves or their families. They had to beg to stay alive. Perhaps Mephibosheth feared David would feel contempt and kill him.

But David honored the promise he made to his friend, Jonathan. Even though Mephibosheth was a threat in some ways to the kingdom of David, David still honored his promises. Keeping promises is an important lesson to learn – especially keeping our promises to God.

How well do you keep the promises you make? Do you keep your promises to God?

DAY THREE

Read 2 Samuel 9:6-8.

Mephibosheth probably expected death but what he received was kindness. That must have been a great surprise to him. Did you see how humble Mephibosheth was in the text? He bowed before David and spoke respectfully. He even talked about himself as though he were a dog. Instead of treating Mephibosheth in a bad way David honored him. David gave Mephibosheth all the property that was Saul's in the past. David took Mephibosheth into his household and fed him at the king's table. No wonder Mephibosheth behaved with such deep humility.

Think about how God has treated us. God gave us so much more than we deserve. God saved us from sin through the death of His Son, Jesus. God lives in us through His Holy Spirit. God gave us a new family in the people of God. And God gave us real purpose in life. How should we respond to that? One of our responses should be humble thanksgiving to God for all His kindness to us.

How has God shown kindness to you?

In what ways does your life show humility before God?

KEY DOCTRINE: *God as Father*

God is like a father to all people. He is kind and loving. He rules over all the world that He created. He directs the movement of history as well. As Father over all He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ.

DAY FOUR

Read 2 Samuel 9:9-11a.

Mephibosheth was not the only one who experienced David's kindness. Ziba also received a great blessing from David. Ziba was an important servant for King Saul. Ziba likely expected punishment for his service to David's rival. However, David surprised everyone again. David placed Ziba on Saul's property and made Ziba and his family responsible to take care of all Saul's farms. Because Saul was the king over all of Israel his property was very large.

Of course, Ziba was ready to obey King David. But in 2 Samuel 16 you can read how Ziba paid David back for David's kindness. In chapter 16 David had great need and Ziba stepped in to help.

Often, kindness creates more kindness. Sometimes you can be kind to someone and they will be mean in return. But generally, when you show kindness you will receive kindness. No matter, if people are kind or not, our duty as believers is to give God's love away to everyone. We show His love in the kindness of our actions.

When have you shown kindness to others?

How can you be kind even when others are not kind to you?

DAY FIVE

Read 2 Samuel 9:11b-13.

No one in Israel had a better or an easier life than the king's sons. They lived in the king's palace. They ate the king's food. They had duties, true, but their lives were easy and blessed compared to the common Israelite. This was the life that David gave to Mephibosheth. This might be the biggest surprise of all in this story. David took Mephibosheth into his own household and treated him, in many ways, like a son.

Again, David's actions remind us of Jesus. In the same way David took in Mephibosheth, Jesus took us in. Because of our sin, we were not a part of God's family. But because of our faith in Jesus, God adopted us into His family. God treats us like sons and daughters. Yes, this love God poured on us makes us feel humble. But also, God's love gives us joy. One reason we celebrate in worship is because we have something we don't deserve – we have God as our Father.

How do you think Mephibosheth felt after his meeting with David? How do you feel now that you are a part of the family of God?

CONNECT AND SHARE

Think about what you have learned from 2 Samuel 9. Meet with one or two other members of your study group to find ways to live what you have learned.

How did you and your friends show kindness this week? How do your actions show that you are a follower of Jesus?

What is the right way for you to approach God? How do you show humility in your life?

What does it mean to be God's children? What are some ways your small group can celebrate the relationship you have with God?



ACCOUNTABLE

God holds all people accountable for their sins.

2 SAMUEL 12:1-14

Do you know the English word “accountable”? We sign it like “responsible.” Here is an example of being accountable: In your Bible study group you have two or three friends who check on each other each week and go over the “Connect and Share” questions. You are accountable to that small group of friends. If one of you sins, the others have a responsibility to talk with that friend and help bring her back into fellowship with Christ.

Our Bible story today is one of the best-known stories in the Old Testament. While David’s army was out fighting, David stayed at home and had an affair with Bathsheba. After that, he planned for her husband to die in battle. Then David took Bathsheba to be his wife.

Our session today looks at what happened after David sinned. We will see that God forgave David for this awful sin. But David had to live with the results. We are always accountable for the sin that is in our lives. Thank God that He is merciful and loving.

2 SAMUEL 12:1-14

1 The LORD sent **Nathan** ^A to David. When he came to David, **he said, “There were two men in a city.** ^B One was rich, but the other was poor. **2** The rich man had many sheep and cattle. **3** But the poor man had nothing except one little female lamb he had bought. The poor man fed the lamb, and it grew up with him and his children. It shared his food and drank from his cup and slept in his arms. The lamb was like a daughter to him. **4** “Then a traveler stopped to visit the rich man. The rich man wanted to feed the traveler, but he didn’t want to take one of his own sheep or cattle. Instead, he took the lamb from the poor man and cooked it for his visitor.” **5** David became very angry at the rich man. He said to Nathan, “As surely as the LORD lives, **the man who did this should die!** ^C **6** He must pay for the lamb four times for doing such a thing. **He had no mercy!”** ^D **7** Then Nathan said to David, “**You are the man!** ^E This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: **‘I appointed you king** ^F **of Israel and saved you from Saul. 8** I gave you his kingdom and his wives. And I made you king of Israel and Judah. And if that had not been enough, I would have given you even more. **9** So why did you ignore the LORD’s command? Why did you do what He says is wrong? You killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword of the Ammonites and took his wife to be your wife! **10** Now there will always be people in your family who will die by a sword, because **you did not respect Me;** ^G **you took the wife of Uriah the Hittite for yourself!’** **11** “This is what the LORD says: ‘I am bringing trouble to you from your own family. While you watch, I will take your wives from you and give them to someone who is very close to you. He will have sexual relations with your wives, and everyone will know it. **12** You had sexual relations with Bathsheba in secret, but I will do this so all the people of Israel can see it.” **13** Then David said to Nathan, “I have sinned against the LORD.” Nathan answered, “**The LORD has taken away your sin.** ^H You will not die. **14** But what you did caused the LORD’s enemies to lose all respect for Him. For this reason the son who was born to you will die.”

- a. Nathan was a prophet and the main spiritual advisor to David.
- b. David did not realize it, but Nathan told David a parable about the actions that he himself did.
- c. This would have been King David’s judgment if the story were a real event.
- d. David had no mercy on Uriah. David’s harsh judgment may have come from his own guilty conscience.
- e. Now the point of Nathan’s story comes clear: David, the rich and powerful king, took the one wife and life of Uriah.
- f. God made David king and gave him all the good things listed in the next few verses. But David was not satisfied with what God gave him.
- g. The beginning of all sin is when we do not respect God.
- h. David finally realized the evil of his actions and confessed his sin to God.
- i. Even with this great evil God forgave David.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. What does it mean that God holds all people accountable for their sins?
2. What was the story that Nathan told David and what did the story mean?
3. What punishment did David think the rich man in the story deserved? What punishment did David deserve for his sin?
4. How did Nathan know the sins David committed? What did God think about David's sin? What does God think about our sins?
5. Why did David ignore God's commands? Why do people ignore God's commands today?
6. How did David's sin affect the enemies of God? How does our sin bring disrespect to God in our time?
7. What kind of trouble would David have in his family because of his sin? How does God punish our sins today?
8. Why did David finally confess his sin? Why should believers confess their sins to God? When is it right to confess our sins to some other person?

BIBLE SKILL: *Search and Read Bible Verses*

Read the verses listed below. Notice the path of sin that David took. What can you learn about how sin develops?

- 2 Samuel 11:1 The place where sin begins
- 2 Samuel 11:2 Looking in the wrong places
- 2 Samuel 11:4 Going against God's plan
- 2 Samuel 11:6-13. . . Trying to cover it up
- 2 Samuel 11:14-17 . . Sin grows worse
- 2 Samuel 11:27. . . . David's final act

What did you learn about the path of sin from these verses?

IN MY CONTEXT

- Believers should expect God to confront them about sin.
- People know sin when they see it and they understand the judgment that comes because of sin.
- We know sin is never really secret and always has consequences.
- Believers must repent from sin. They must know God forgives sin and gives strength for the future.

Discuss as a group how God confronts us when we sin.

How do we know people really do understand what sin is and they know why sin brings judgment?

Discuss as a group the consequences that come because of sin.

Why is it important to confess our sins? How do you know God forgives us when we confess our sin? What strength does God give us for the future?

MEMORY VERSE

Create in me a pure heart, God, and make my spirit right again.
– Psalm 51:10

DAY ONE

Read 2 Samuel 12:1-4.

Stories have great power to communicate truth. That is why Jesus used so many stories. Think about the good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) or the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32). Those stories have changed many people over the years since Jesus told them.

David really sinned. He committed adultery, tried to cover it up, killed a man, and stole a wife. How could God break through to David's heart? How could God convince David he had done evil? Because David was willing to do all these evil things and hide his sin, breaking his heart over his sin would not be easy.

But Nathan's story had great power. David felt strongly about the poor man and the stolen sheep. He was ready to punish the rich man by having him killed. Soon David would know the point of this story. The point was David's sin. Read the story again. Can you find yourself in the story? Are you guilty of sin?

How does this story speak to you? What sin have you tried to hide?

DAY TWO

Read 2 Samuel 12:5-6.

All of us are guilty of trying to hide our sin like David did. Sometimes we even try to make excuses for our wrong actions. We often notice other people's sins easily, but we do not see our own.

Really, all of us know sin when we see it. We know it is wrong to steal. We know it is wrong to hurt other people. We know it is wrong to sin sexually. Even if we try to excuse ourselves in our hearts, we know what is right and what is wrong.

He tried to hide from his own guilt. But he quickly condemned the rich man in the story. This showed David really knew what was right and what was wrong. David also knew wrong actions should be punished. You and I do too. We may try to hide, but we can't.

Why do people try to hide from the truth? Where can we find the truth about what is right and what is wrong?

DAY THREE

Read 2 Samuel 12:7-10.

“You are the man!” That is what Nathan the prophet said to King David. The story about the sheep was really a story about David. All of David’s sins were listed in these verses. It was terrible that David killed, lied, and stole. But you can see in these verses the main problem: David ignored God’s commands and David did not respect the Lord. I believe Nathan’s words finally got through to David’s heart and broke it.

These words force us to think about our own lives. Just like David, God has blessed us in so many ways. I hope that you have responded to God’s blessings by living faithfully for Him. But I know how easy it is for me to ignore God’s blessings and break God’s heart. What about you? Has He blessed you but you have hurt Him?

In what ways has God blessed you?

In what ways have you hurt God? What should you do about it?

DAY FOUR

Read 2 Samuel 12:11-12.

What happens after we sin? Most of the time we get caught, don't we? Often someone sees our action and catches us "red-handed." Sometimes only God catches us. God surely caught David. God knew everything that David did. After sin came the consequences.

For David, the consequences would be somewhat like the sins he did. He caused trouble in a family – his family would have trouble. He stole another man's wife – someone would take his wives. His sin was sexual – sexual sin would happen in his family. Some of these verses are not easy to understand. Why did God punish David this way? God always does what is right, so this was the correct punishment. The truth to remember is this – every sin has consequences. These consequences hurt our lives and damage our relationships with God and others.

Why does sin have consequences?

Why do people insist on sinning against God even when they know there will be consequences?

KEY DOCTRINE: *Repentance*

In some ways coming to Christ is very easy. In some ways it is hard. Many people find it hard to turn away from sin. Coming to Christ only happens by the work of the Holy Spirit. He convicts us of sin. The sinner, though, must turn from sin. That is what repentance means. Those who come to Christ must respond to God in repentance and go to God in faith. Repentance and faith cannot be separated in our experience of God's grace.

DAY FIVE

Read 2 Samuel 12:13-14.

Finally, David did something right. For two chapters in 2 Samuel David did evil and ran from his evil. At last, in verse 13, David confessed. He had to face and deal with his sin.

Confession is a hard thing to do. We learn in the Bible that even after we become believers we can do wrong things. First John 1:9 tells us if we confess our sin, God is faithful and He will forgive us our sins. That is what David experienced. His confession did not take away the consequences. His family still suffered, and the child still died. But God forgave David, and his relationship with God was made new again. If you want to see how David confessed, read Psalm 51 to see David's prayer of confession and renewal.

Why is it right to confess our sins? Why are Christians slow to confess? How can you encourage others to confess their sins?

CONNECT AND SHARE

Think about what you have learned from 2 Samuel 12. Meet with one or two other members of your study group to find ways to live what you have learned.

How did God confront you and your friends this week concerning sin in your lives?

How are you able to recognize sin when you see it? Discuss with your small group how God judges sin in the right way.

Why can sin never truly be secret? What consequences from sin did you and your friends see this week?

Why do believers need to confess sin and repent from sin? What proof of repentance can you see in your life this week?

GRIEVED

God's plan is for families to have loving relationships. Sin destroys these relationships.

2 SAMUEL 13:15-20,31-39

Most of you reading this will remember what happened in the David and Bathsheba story. David sinned terribly. God forgave David. But God also told David the results of his sins would hit his family hard. In our session today we start to see how David's sin impacted his family.

God loves families. The Bible teaches God created the family. It was always God's plan for families to know love and joy. When families live the way God wants, they find all the blessings God planned. Families will always have struggles. Families will experience hard times of death and disease. Families will have the challenge of raising children and all the stress from that part of life.

But when families do not follow God's plan they experience even worse problems. Christian families face difficulties, but non-believing families cannot know the joy of living in the center of God's will. They do not have God's comfort and guidance during difficult times.

2 SAMUEL 13:15-20, 31-39

15 After that, **Amnon hated Tamar.** **A** He **hated her** **B** more than he had loved her before. Amnon said to her, “Get up and leave!” **16** Tamar said to him, “No! **Sending me away would be worse** **C** than what you’ve already done!” But he refused to listen to her. **17** He called his young servant back in and said, “Get this woman out of here and away from me! Lock the door after her.” **18** So his servant led her out of the room and bolted the door after her. Tamar was wearing a special robe with long sleeves, because the king’s virgin daughters wore this kind of robe. **19** To show how upset she was, **Tamar put ashes on her head and tore her special robe** **D** and put her hand on her head. Then she went away, crying loudly. **20** Absalom, Tamar’s brother, said to her, “Has Amnon, your brother, forced you to have sexual relations with him? For now, sister, be quiet. He is your half-brother. Don’t let this upset you so much!” So Tamar lived in her brother Absalom’s house and was sad and lonely...**31 King David tore his clothes** **E** and lay on the ground to show his sadness. All his servants standing nearby tore their clothes also. **32** Jonadab son of Shimeah, David’s brother, said to David, “Don’t think all the young men, your sons, are killed. No, only Amnon is dead! Absalom has planned this ever since Amnon forced his sister Tamar to have sexual relations with him. **33** My master and king, don’t think that all of the king’s sons are dead. Only Amnon is dead!” **34** In the meantime **Absalom had run away.** **F** A guard standing on the city wall saw many people coming from the other side of the hill. **35** So Jonadab said to King David, “Look, I was right! The king’s sons are coming!” **36** As soon as Jonadab had said this, the king’s sons arrived, crying loudly. David and all his servants began crying also. **37 David cried for his son every day.** **G** But Absalom ran away to Talmai son of Ammihud, the king of **Geshur.** **H** **38** After Absalom ran away to Geshur, he stayed there for three years. **39** When King David got over Amnon’s death, he missed Absalom greatly.

- a. Amnon was David’s oldest son and the son of David’s wife Ahinoam. Tamar was the daughter of David’s wife Maacah.
- b. Even though Amnon and Tamar were half-siblings, Amnon loved her. After he raped her he hated her. He only wanted her sexually.
- c. Culturally, marriage between half-siblings was permitted for the king’s family. Amnon’s rejection added even more shame for Tamar.
- d. A cultural way to show sadness and sorrow.
- e. When David heard Amnon was dead, he showed signs of deep sadness. At this point in the story David thought Absalom killed all his sons.
- f. After killing his brother, Amnon, Absalom ran for his life.
- g. David continued to mourn for his dead son, Amnon, for a long time after Absalom killed him.
- h. Geshur is on the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee. This was almost as far away as Absalom could run to get away from David’s territory.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Why did God create families? What does sin do to families?
2. Why did Amnon change from loving Tamar to hating Tamar?
3. How does violence destroy families? How can families be more like God wants them to be?
4. When David lived, why did people tear their clothes and put ashes on their head? How do people show great sadness today?
5. Why did Absalom tell Tamar to be quiet? How should believers respond to rape today? How should believers respond to domestic violence today?
6. What was Absalom's plan for Amnon? When is revenge right?
7. Why does violence increase (one act of violence leads to more violence)?
8. Why was David so sad about the death of Amnon? Why was David so sad that Absalom had run away?
9. When does sin bring blessings and joy into a family? Why do families continue to sin even though they know it will damage the family? How can families follow the Lord better?

BIBLE SKILL: *Study Bible Verses on Families*

Read the verses listed below. What do you learn about families? Make a few short notes by each verse.

Genesis 1:27-28 _____

Genesis 9:1 _____

Exodus 20:12 _____

Deuteronomy 6:6-7 _____

Colossians 3:18-21 _____

Ephesians 6:1-4 _____

IN MY CONTEXT

- Sin looks good, but it cannot satisfy us. Sin leads us to grief.
- People often want to get revenge when they feel hurt. But revenge only leads to more sin and conflict.
- Sin divides families and people.

Discuss as a group why sin does not satisfy our deep needs and only leads us to grief.

Why do even Christian people sometimes want revenge? How does revenge lead to more sin and conflict?

Why is sin so hurtful to family relationships? How can your church help families?

MEMORY VERSE

“Now I say, ‘May the words of my master the king give me rest. Like an angel of God, you know what is good and what is bad. May the LORD your God be with you!’” – 2 Samuel 14:17

DAY ONE

Read 2 Samuel 13:15-18a.

Amnon thought he loved Tamar. He really didn't. He only wanted her sexually. As soon as he raped her he hated her and pushed her away. It is not easy for us to understand the culture of that world long ago. The truth is Tamar tried to do the right thing. She tried to respect her culture and honor God. This story was not about love. It was about evil and violence.

Our world is much the same as the world of Amnon and Tamar. Sexual evil is still around us everywhere. Acts of domestic violence and rape tear apart many families. It breaks my heart to even write about this, but it is all true. A Deaf friend of mine was raped as a girl by her brother. No one in her family believed her story. She has lived a life of pain. It is time for godly families to stand up for what is right and holy. They must keep their families pure and healthy.

Why is this story so sad? How does it remind you of some families today?

How can families get help to prevent violence and sexual sin?

DAY TWO

Read 2 Samuel 13:18b-20.

It always amazes me how one sin often leads to the next sin and the next sin after that. Tamar was terribly sad and hurt. She showed her suffering by tearing her clothes and putting ashes on her head. That was the way people showed their grief back in that day.

Absalom was Tamar's brother. He saw her in this sad condition. Absalom felt sorry for Tamar. It is clear he loved his sister. Later we will learn how Absalom planned revenge against his half-brother, Amnon, for what he did to Tamar.

After Amnon's sin, Absalom tried to 'cover up' the sin. He did not confront the problem or take it to his father, the king. He encouraged his sister to keep things quiet. Families must not hide sexual sin. They must confront and stop the sin before greater sin occurs. Christ can heal families.

Why do people try to cover up sexual sin?

How can families find help and healing for the great problems that they face?

KEY DOCTRINE: *Sin*

Every person is a sinner. Sin began for humans with Adam and Eve. Every person through all the years also chose to sin. Sin only grows worse. Humankind is not getting better. Because we sin we damage our families, our world, and our own lives. Only God's grace can bring people back into right relationship with God and with people.

DAY THREE

Read 2 Samuel 13:31.

Again in this story we see the tearing of clothes to show sadness. King David was sad because of what Absalom did to get revenge on his half-brother, Amnon. At this point in the story David thought Absalom brought his brothers into a trap and killed them all. As we will see, Absalom did not kill them all. He only killed Amnon.

This is the path of sin. We saw this before in other stories, but it is clear here as well. Amnon started the chain of evil events, but Absalom added to them. Instead of seeking healing for his family, he wanted revenge for his sister. His revenge caused the murder of his brother, Amnon, and terrible sorrow for his father, David.

Revenge did not accomplish the purposes of Absalom in this story. Revenge, getting even, does not accomplish good things today. God is never pleased with it (see Romans 12:19).

Why do people want revenge?

Where does revenge lead?

When would revenge be right for believers?

DAY FOUR

Read 2 Samuel 13:32-36.

Families work as a unit. What I mean is when something happens to one member of a family, it touches all the members of the family. When David sinned with Bathsheba (2 Sam. 11), he never imagined the consequences that would happen in his family. In chapter 13 we really start to see the consequences.

Amnon raped his half-sister, Tamar (2 Sam. 18). I believe when Amnon saw what his father did, he thought he could take what he wanted too. Sexual violence in a family eats at a family like cancer eats at a body. So Absalom started planning revenge from that moment. Jonadab, David's cousin, seemed to know all about this but did not protect his family. It seems Absalom planned to kill all his brothers and make himself king. Finally, Absalom ran off to save his life. All David's family was broken hearted. At many times on this path of sin, someone could have stopped it. But no one had the courage or the faith in God to stop it.

How can we help our Christian families to take real steps to stop evil before it happens?

DAY FIVE

Read 2 Samuel 13:37-39.

We are not surprised by what we see at this point in the story. The sins of David, Amnon, and Absalom divided the family of David. Here at the end, Amnon was dead and Absalom ran as far away as he could go. In addition to these sad things, David and his household mourned for the death of Amnon. David was in deep sadness because Absalom was gone.

Sin divides people, friends, and families. That was true in ancient days and it is true today. A Deaf pastor and his family broke up because the pastor had an affair. The Deaf pastor told people he was like an Old Testament leader and he could have more than one wife. He did not have many wives but he did have affairs with women in his church. Many of the church people left. The Deaf people eventually moved to a different church. The pastor's family never came together again. Sin can divide a family. So we must protect our families from sin.

Why does sin divide families? What steps can believers take to protect our families from division?

CONNECT AND SHARE

Think about what you have learned from 2 Samuel 13. Meet with one or two other members of your study group to find ways to live what you have learned.

How does sin draw us into its trap? How did God convict you this week about sin?

Have you or anyone in your small group been thinking about getting even with someone? What does God think about revenge?

How can you and your friends help each other to protect your families from division?



OVERTHROWN

When we have selfish ambition, we dishonor God and cause fear in other people.

2 SAMUEL 15:10-16,24-30

There are two kinds of ambition. One kind of ambition is mostly good. It is the ambition to do one's best. My friend had an ambition to serve the Deaf community. He became a great superintendent for the Deaf school in my state. The other kind of ambition is dangerous. This ambition will lead a person to do anything to get what he wants. People with selfish ambition will hurt others to get success.

We saw how David's sin damaged his family. The damage was not finished. David's son, Absalom, had a secret ambition to become king. He planned and schemed and did secret things to make this happen. In today's story, Absalom proceeded with his plans to overthrow his father. Can you imagine? Absalom was willing to kill his own father. He wanted to be king no matter what. But before you get upset with Absalom, remember many people today have this same kind of ambition. They want what they want now – no matter the cost!

2 SAMUEL 15:10-16,24-30

10 But he sent secret messengers through all the tribes of Israel. They told the people, “When you hear the trumpets, say this: **‘Absalom is the king at Hebron!’**” **A** **11** Absalom had invited two hundred men to go with him. So they went from Jerusalem with him, but they didn’t know what he was planning. **12** While Absalom was **offering sacrifices**, **B** he sent for **Ahithophel**, **C** one of the people who advised David, to come from his hometown of Giloh. So Absalom’s plans were working very well. More and more people began to support him. **13** A messenger came to David, saying, “The Israelites are giving their loyalty to Absalom.” **14** Then David said to all his officers who were with him in Jerusalem, **“We must leave quickly!”** **D** If we don’t, we won’t be able to get away from Absalom. We must hurry before he catches us and destroys us and kills the people of Jerusalem.” **15** The king’s officers said to him, “We will do anything you say.” **16** The king set out with everyone in his house, **but he left ten slave women** **E** to take care of the palace...**24** **Zadok and all the Levites with him carried the Ark of the Agreement with God. They set it down, and Abiathar offered sacrifices** **F** until all the people had left the city. **25** The king said to Zadok, “Take the Ark of God back into the city. If the LORD is pleased with me, He will bring me back and will let me see both it and Jerusalem again. **26** But if the LORD says He is not pleased with me, I am ready. He can do what He wants with me.” **27** The king also said to Zadok the priest, “Aren’t you a seer? Go back to the city in peace and take your son Ahimaaz and Abiathar’s son Jonathan with you. **28** **I will wait near the crossings into the desert until I hear from you.**” **G** **29** So Zadok and Abiathar took the Ark of God back to Jerusalem and stayed there. **30** David went up the **Mount of Olives**, **H** crying as he went. He covered his head and went barefoot. All the people with David covered their heads also and cried as they went.

- a. Absalom planned to start his rebellion against his father in Hebron and then include all of Israel.
- b. Absalom wanted God’s approval on his rebellion. That is the point of the sacrifices.
- c. Ahithophel was David’s advisor. However, he quickly shifted his support to Absalom.
- d. David knew that his life was in danger in Jerusalem. His only choice was to run for his life.
- e. The ten slave women were concubines. They were not wives but were part of David’s sexual harem.
- f. Zadok and Abiathar were priests. They made sacrifices to protect David’s escape.
- g. Zadok and Abiathar would be spies for David. The crossings was likely near Jericho on the west side of the Jordan River.
- h. David’s path of escape was out the eastern wall of Jerusalem, across the Kidron Valley, up the west side of the Mount of Olives and then east down to Jericho and the Jordan River.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. What is selfish ambition and why does it dishonor God?
2. What was Absalom's plan to overthrow his father, King David?
3. How did Absalom win the support of so many of the Israelites? How did the ambition of Absalom lead him to do these evil deeds?
4. Why did David feel that he must escape from Jerusalem? Why didn't David stay and fight?
5. Why did David's officers stay loyal to him? Was being loyal to David equal to being loyal to God? Explain.
6. What was the purpose of the ten slave women staying in the palace?
7. Why did the priests offer sacrifices while the people escaped? Was this an act of worship? How was it worship?
8. How did David show submission to God's will? What can believers today learn from David about submission to God?
9. Why did David leave the ark? How did leaving the ark of the covenant show that David was trusting God? How do we show our trust in God?

BIBLE SKILL: *Reading Bible Verses*

Read the verses listed below. Write a few notes about how the Israelites showed their sadness and grief. How does our way of showing grief compare with the people of the Old Testament?

Genesis 37:33-35 _____

2 Samuel 1:11-12 _____

Job 1:20-21 _____

Isaiah 15:2-3 _____

Ezekiel 27:30-32 _____

IN MY CONTEXT

- Selfish ambition leads a person to think too highly of her own abilities and too highly of what he deserves in life.
- Sometimes when people are against us we learn who our true friends are.
- Believers understand that life has many threats and risks. Believers trust God in the middle of those threats and risks.

Discuss as a group how selfish ambition can lead a person to think and act in ways that are wrong and hurtful to others.

Why is it our true friends show up when others are against us? How can you be a true friend to someone who faces enemies?

Discuss as a group the threats and risks that we face in life. Why is it important to trust God when facing threats and risks?

MEMORY VERSE

LORD, my heart is not proud; I don't look down on others.
I don't do great things, and I can't do miracles. – Psalm 131:1

DAY ONE

Read 2 Samuel 15:10-12.

Selfish ambition often leads to secret plans. Absalom could not do his plans in the open because all his plans were sinful. His final goal was to overthrow his father as king, kill his father and most of his family, and then become king himself. That is why all his plans were secret. Absalom acted behind his father's back. He worked to do evil against his father. He planned to become king. Absalom was willing to hurt others to make his plan succeed.

None of these things sound like Jesus, do they? Jesus taught us to think of others as more important than ourselves. In Philippians 2:3 Paul said, "When you do things, do not let selfishness or pride be your guide. Instead, be humble and give more honor to others than to yourselves." That is the mind of Christ for us. In Absalom's actions we see nothing like the mind of Christ. His actions were opposite of Christ's. Absalom offered sacrifices in verse 12, but his actions were not godly.

How can Christians sometimes show up for worship but continue to act in very ungodly ways?

DAY TWO

Read 2 Samuel 15:13-14.

We know David was not a perfect man. But these verses give us a quick picture of the difference between David's actions and Absalom's plans. Absalom started his plan here. He gathered many people to support him. Apparently, he was at that moment getting close to Jerusalem to claim the kingdom and take the city. Absalom was ready to do anything he must to take the kingdom. He was ready to kill his own father and the people of Jerusalem.

David, on the other hand, thought about the people of Jerusalem. Surely David also thought about how he could save his own life. He even said, "before he catches us and destroys us..." But verse 14 shows

his concern for the people. David knew if he stayed in Jerusalem and defended himself, Absalom would break into the city and kill everyone living there. Selfish ambition will not stop. But when we follow God, we will put others first.

Compare the actions of David and Absalom. What can Christians learn from these two men about how God wants us to live?

KEY DOCTRINE: *Peace and War*

Every Christian must seek peace and by the power of Christ work toward the end of war. The only real solution for war is the gospel of Jesus Christ. When people everywhere come to Christ and follow His teachings war should be no more. Christian people all over the world should pray for peace and for Christ to rule the world.

DAY THREE

Read 2 Samuel 15:15-16.

Who are your real friends? Sometimes when hard times come into our lives we learn who our real friends are. I often do research about the Deaf missionary John W. Michaels. Michaels taught at the school for the Deaf in Arkansas. At that time, the school was beginning to hire many hearing people to teach oral education. The new teachers tried to get rid of the Deaf teachers. Edward Gallaudet, first president of the National Deaf-Mute College (later Gallaudet University), awarded Michaels a Bachelor of Pedagogy degree so Michaels could keep his job. In hard times Gallaudet was a true friend.

Verses 15-16 show two groups of true friends for David. The officers promised to do anything David led them to do. They knew they were risking their lives but they were willing. The slave women (or concubines) were a special group. They were not wives for David but they were in his harem. They bore children for him.

Maybe the concubines stayed because they were forced to stay. Likely they were willing because they were loyal to David. They were willing to risk their own lives. True friends, especially true Christian friends, stand with you in the hardest of times.

How can Christians know who their true friends are?

What can you do to be a true friend to the people around you?

DAY FOUR

Read 2 Samuel 15:24-26.

The ark of the covenant was a special box covered with gold. For the Israelites it represented the presence of God. In this story David was running for his life and those people who were loyal to him were running with him. Still, David took time to seek the Lord's presence and blessing. The point of taking the ark and making sacrifices was to seek the Lord's presence and care through this terrible experience.

But then David did a strange thing. He sent the ark back into Jerusalem. The act of sending the Ark back and the statements that follow show David's deep trust in God for the future. David did not know what would happen. But David trusted God's plan. If God wanted David to lose his kingdom then that is what would happen. If God wanted David to see the ark and Jerusalem again then God would bring David back to his place as king. As David trusted God in this terrible time so we must trust God even during terrible times.

How can believers show their trust in God?

How do difficult times test our faith?

DAY FIVE

Read 2 Samuel 15:27-30.

All of David's life he faced danger. When he was a shepherd he faced a bear and a lion. As a young man he faced Goliath and the anger of King Saul. When he became king, he faced rebellion by his sons Amnon and then Absalom. David knew immediately he must escape from Jerusalem. This would save his life and his city. He also knew immediately whom he could trust and whom he could not trust. The priests were his friends. He trusted them to help him overcome the threat to his kingdom that came from Absalom.

Even though he was good at facing danger, David was still an emotional person. In verse 28 he is the king thinking through what he must do next. In verse 30 he is the father in deep pain over the rebellion of his son. David left Jerusalem running for his life. But he also left Jerusalem trusting God. If God wanted him to be king God would make a way. Every believer must learn to trust God. If you are strong you must trust God. If you are weak, like David was at this moment, you must trust God.

How can you show trust in God whether in good times or in hard times?

CONNECT AND SHARE

Think about what you have learned from 2 Samuel 13. Meet with one or two other members of your study group to find ways to live what you have learned.

How does ambition influence your life? How does Christ influence your ambition?

How do you know who your true friends really are? In what ways are you being a true friend to the people around you?

How are you trusting God this week? How can you help other people to trust God even when life is hard?



RESTORED

When opportunities come for trust to grow between leaders and God's people, leaders must use those opportunities wisely.

2 SAMUEL 19:1-15

God chooses people to become leaders. However, that does not mean all leaders are godly. Many times leaders fail God and disappoint people. This is true in governments and in churches. It is not easy to lead God's people. Church leaders have many challenges. Being godly is the first big challenge. The second big challenge is getting God's people to follow. God's leaders need much wisdom. They must depend on the Holy Spirit fully.

In our last study, we saw Absalom lead a rebellion against his father, King David. Absalom almost succeeded. You can read the story in 2 Samuel 15-19. Absalom failed and was killed. But after his rebellion, it was not clear what would happen next. It was David's duty to carefully lead the people to take him back as their king. When you study this session, you will learn about being a leader.

2 SAMUEL 19:1-15

1 People told Joab, “Look, **the king is sad and crying** ^A because of Absalom.” **2** David’s army had won the battle that day. But it became a very sad day for all the people, because they heard that the king was very sad for his son. **3** The people came into the city quietly that day. They were like an army that had been defeated in battle and had run away. **4** The king covered his face and cried loudly, “My son Absalom! Absalom, my son, my son!” **5** Joab went into the king’s house and said, “Today you have shamed all your men. They saved your life and the lives of your sons, daughters, wives, and slave women. **6** You have shamed them because you love those who hate you, and you hate those who love you. Today you have made it clear that your commanders and men mean nothing to you. What if Absalom had lived and all of us were dead? I can see you would be pleased. **7** Now go out and encourage your servants. I swear by the LORD that if you don’t go out, **no man will be left with you by tonight!** ^B That will be worse than all the troubles you have had from your youth until today.” **8** So the king **went to the city gate.** ^C When the news spread that the king was at the gate, everyone came to see him. All the Israelites who had followed Absalom had run away to their homes. **9** People in all the tribes of **Israel began to argue,** ^D saying, “The king saved us from the Philistines and our other enemies, but he left the country because of Absalom. **10** We appointed Absalom to rule us, but now he has died in battle. We should make David the king again.” **11** King David sent a message to **Zadok and Abiathar,** ^E the priests, that said, “Speak to the elders of Judah. Say, ‘Even in my house I have heard what all the Israelites are saying. So why are you the last tribe to bring the king back to his palace? **12** You are my brothers, my own family. Why are you the last tribe to bring back the king?’ **13** And say to **Amasa,** ^F ‘You are part of my own family. May God punish me terribly if I don’t make you commander of the army in Joab’s place!’” **14** David touched the hearts of all the people of Judah at once. They sent a message to the king that said, “Return with all your men.” **15** Then the king returned as far as the Jordan River. The men of Judah came to Gilgal to meet him and to bring him across the Jordan.

- a. Absalom was killed in battle. Everyone expected David to rejoice in the victory, but he grieved for his dead son. Because David was weeping, the army did not celebrate.
- b. Because of his grieving, David was about to lose the support of the army who fought for him. Joab said this to make David see his wrong action.
- c. David was at the city of Mahanaim, east of the Jordan River. In David’s time, the city gate was the place where business and government happened.
- d. The people of Israel were not sure if they wanted David back as king. They argued about this.
- e. Zadok and Abiathar were leading priests. They were also loyal to David and helped him become king again.
- f. Amasa was Joab’s first cousin. David planned to replace Joab with Amasa.
- g. It was an important step to come across the Jordan. It caused the people to remember when Joshua led Israel across the Jordan. It was a symbol of David being the rightful leader of all Israel.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. What can Christian leaders do to help their people trust them more?
2. Why was David so sad even though his army won the battle?
3. Why was the morale of David's army so low? Why is the influence of Christian leaders so important for the morale of the people they lead?
4. What was wise about Joab's counsel to David? When is it right for believers to correct the actions of church leaders?
5. Why did David follow Joab's advice?
6. Why is it so important for church leaders to show appreciation to those who work with them and who follow them?
7. Why did the people of Israel argue about reinstating David as king? What are some things David did to rebuild unity among his people?
8. What kind of attitude did David have toward the people of Israel? What can church leaders learn from David's actions?
9. Why should Christians be willing to follow godly church leaders?

BIBLE SKILL: *Bible Search*

Who were the greatest leaders in the Bible? Use a Bible dictionary or look up these Bible leaders online. Why were these people great leaders?

Abraham _____

Moses _____

Deborah _____

Daniel _____

Nehemiah _____

Peter _____

Paul _____

IN MY CONTEXT

- People must be aware of how their emotions affect the emotions of other people in their lives.
- Even when believers feel disappointment, they can still show thanks and appreciation to other people.
- When people trust God and His leaders, they can experience unity.

Discuss as a group how our emotions can affect the emotions of the people around us.

Why is it important for believers to show appreciation to other people even when they experience disappointment and loss?

Why does trusting God and godly leaders build unity among believers?

MEMORY VERSE

Trust the LORD and do good. Live in the land and feed on truth.
– Psalm 37:3

DAY ONE

Read 2 Samuel 19:1-4.

David's army had a great victory on that day. Absalom, David's son, rebelled and tried to overthrow David. But God gave David victory. The army fought hard and stopped the rebellion. But the army did not feel like they won a victory. They felt like they had lost. David's actions made them feel defeated. David did not congratulate his army. He did not show them support. David wept in his house for Absalom.

Absalom was David's son and he was now dead. Of course this was painful for David. But all of us must be sensitive to the needs of people around us. Leaders must be especially sensitive. David showed no sensitivity to the needs of his army. He only thought about his own grief. He did not think about his position as king.

This is a hard lesson to learn. Most people think their emotions just belong to themselves. Most people feel they should be allowed to express their emotions any way they want. But we must let Christ control our emotions. David's grief was not wrong. But it was wrong for David to ignore the needs of his men.

Why should we be concerned about the people around us?

Why should we be willing to control our own emotions when needed?

DAY TWO

Read 2 Samuel 19:5-7.

David was full of sorrow. Somehow everyone learned about his grieving. David's grief broke the hearts of his people. They wanted David to be proud they saved him. In truth, David owed this to his people. He was so deep in pain that he did not see how he influenced his people.

Fortunately, David had a wise counselor, Joab. Joab was David's army general. He led the army in battle and he killed Absalom. He was also loyal to David. He confronted David. He helped David focus on others and not himself. Much of what Joab said was not true. David was not glad that his men lost. He did care about his army. But he was putting his kingdom at risk. Joab was probably right when he said, "No man will be left with you by tonight." David was learning the hard lesson of being thankful.

How can Christians show thanks to others for what they do?

DAY THREE

Read 2 Samuel 19:8.

David knew Joab was right. So David went to the city gate to greet his army and congratulate them on their victory. The city gate was a special place in David's time. Many things happened at the gate. People bought and sold things at the gate. Elders gathered at the gate to act as judges for their people and to make decisions for the city. The gate was the major gathering place.

David finally showed his appreciation for what the people and the army did. It is a big lesson to show appreciation. When we learn to show our appreciation, we stop being selfish and start thinking about the needs of others. We also show other people they are important in our lives. All of us, but especially leaders, must learn to show appreciation. Even if we feel bad or disappointed, we should take time to thank others for their goodness to us.

Why is it important for all people to show appreciation?

How do you express your thanks to others for what they do for you?

DAY FOUR

Read 2 Samuel 19:9-13.

David was not finished grieving for Absalom. But at least he thought again about the needs of his kingdom and his people. David started doing things to bring the people back to himself. He knew some of the people were ready to welcome him back as king. Others needed some encouragement. David worked with the priests to help draw the people of Judah back to himself. David approached the people as brothers. It is also why David promised to make Amasa general over his armies. Some of David's thinking is hard for us to understand. But David did all these things to build unity and help the people want him as king.

A leader must have some unity among the people who follow. David knew this and so do wise church leaders today. Did you see David's words of unity? He called the people "brothers," "family," and "tribe." These are words of unity. There are many things that leaders can do to create problems and conflict. But a major step for leaders to create unity is to trust God and draw people together into a family of love.

What can Christians do to create unity in their churches?

How can we create a "family of love"?

KEY DOCTRINE: *The Center of Christian Unity*

The Bible is totally true. We can trust it completely. It shows us the truth and leads us to Christ. In addition to these great truths, Scripture is the true center of Christian union. We can find unity when we obey the Word of God. Without the Bible, God's word, Christians will never find unity.

DAY FIVE

Read 2 Samuel 19:14-15.

Finally things changed for David. The people of Judah sent a message for David to return as king again. It seems that the people of the northern tribes already made this decision. There was unity in the land to take David back as king. That is why David was on the banks of the Jordan River ready to cross back into Israel.

Standing on the shore of the river ready to cross back into Israel had great meaning. A long time before, Joshua stood with Israel in almost the same place. He led the Israelites into Palestine and took possession of the land. Now David was ready to do the same thing. You can see in verse 14 David “touched the hearts of all Judah...” David trusted God and God blessed him and his people with unity.

What do you learn from the way David developed unity in Israel by trusting God? How can these lessons be used in the church?

CONNECT AND SHARE

Think about what you have learned from 2 Samuel 19. Meet with one or two other members of your study group to find ways to live what you have learned.

How would you describe your emotions? When your emotions have a negative impact on others, what can you and your small group do to help each other?

Why is it important for Christians to show appreciation to others? How can you and your friends show your thanks to others this week?

In what ways are you trusting God? How can trusting God lead believers to unity?



COMPROMISE

God uses the skills people have to accomplish His purposes.

2 SAMUEL 20:1-2,14-21

Some of the stories in 2 Samuel are hard stories. In chapter 20 we see stories of rebellion, murder, and politics. But even in a chapter with so many hard pieces, some powerful bits of truth appear. For example, this story tells us about a woman so wise she saved her whole city. Wisdom is a gift from God. This story tells us about the importance of listening when wise people speak. When we do listen, we make better decisions. This story teaches us that many times we can compromise on our plans so all sides win.

These are truths Christians still must learn. Today we need to know sin always leads to wrong places. Today we need people with godly wisdom who can give us advice. Today we need to learn how to compromise our plans (not our faith) so the outcome can be better.

2 SAMUEL 20:1-2,14-21

1 It happened that a troublemaker named **Sheba son of Bicri** ^A from the tribe of Benjamin was there. He blew the trumpet and said: **“We have no share in David!”** ^B We have no part in the son of Jesse! People of Israel, let’s go home!” **2** So all the Israelites left David and followed Sheba son of Bicri. But the people of **Judah stayed with their king** ^C all the way from the Jordan River to Jerusalem...**14** Sheba went through all the tribes of Israel to **Abel Beth Maacah**. ^D All the Berites also came together and followed him. **15** So Joab and his men came to Abel Beth Maacah and surrounded it. They piled dirt up against the city wall, and they began hacking at the walls to bring them down. **16** But a wise woman shouted out from the city, “Listen! Listen! Tell Joab to come here. I want to talk to him!” **17** So Joab came near her. She asked him, “Are you Joab?” He answered, “Yes, I am.” Then she said, “Listen to what I say.” Joab said, “I’m listening.” **18** Then the woman said, “In the past people would say, **‘Ask for advice at Abel,’** ^E and the problem would be solved. **19** I am one of the peaceful, loyal people of Israel. You are trying to destroy an important city of Israel. Why must you destroy what belongs to the LORD?” **20** Joab answered, “I would prefer not to destroy or ruin anything! **21** That is not what I want. But there is a man here from the **mountains of Ephraim**, ^G who is named Sheba son of Bicri. He has turned against King David. If you bring him to me, I will leave the city alone.” The woman said to Joab, **“His head will be thrown over the wall** ^H to you.”

- a. Sheba, the man who led this rebellion, only shows up here in the Bible.
- b. There was often tension between the northern tribes of Israel and the southern tribe of Judah. The two areas divided after the time of King Solomon around 930 BC.
- c. The men of Judah went with David from the Jordan River up to Jerusalem to make him king again.
- d. Abel Beth Maacah was a walled city on the northern edge of Israel, about five miles west of Dan.
- e. David tried to replace Joab, but Joab killed Amasa and took control of David’s army.
- f. The words “ask for advice at Abel” were an old proverb. However, Bible teachers today do not know where this proverb came from.
- g. The mountains of Ephraim are the hill country north of Jerusalem that go to the Jezreel Valley.
- h. The people of Able Beth Maacah saved their lives and their city by killing Sheba.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. What are ways God uses the skills of His people to accomplish His plan?
2. How was Sheba able to lead the people of Israel away from King David?
3. In what ways can sin harm the work of God's people and God's leaders?
4. Who was the wise woman of Abel? What did she do to save her city?
5. What was so wise about the advice of the wise woman?
6. What does it mean to compromise? How were the actions at Abel a compromise for Joab?
7. When is it right for believers to compromise and when is it wrong to compromise?
8. How did this story end? Why was this a good ending for all of Israel?
9. How did God use Joab? How did God use the wise woman? How does God use believers today to bring unity?

BIBLE SKILL: *Look up verses*

Look up the verses below to read about the life of Joab.

- 1 Chronicles 2:13-17 – Joab was part of David's family. He was a nephew.
- 2 Samuel 3:26-27 – Joab killed Abner to avenge the death of his brother.
- 2 Samuel 3:28-30 – David put a curse on Joab to always have illness in his family.
- 2 Samuel 11:14-17 – Joab cooperated with David to kill Uriah.
- 2 Samuel 18:14 – Joab killed Absalom.
- 2 Samuel 19:5-7 – Joab confronted David over his wrong actions.
- 2 Samuel 24:3 – Joab advised David not to make the census.
- 1 Kings 2:5-6 – David told his son, Solomon, to put Joab to death after David was dead.

IN MY CONTEXT

- Sin will lead people to turn from God and from God's leaders.
- When believers face hard times, they should always look for wisdom from God and from His wise people.
- Believers can work with others to find ways to solve problems that will help everyone.

Discuss as a group how sin can turn God's people away from God and away from God's leaders.

Why is it important for believers to look for wisdom from God and from His wise people? When have you found wisdom from God's wise people?

Discuss as a group about times members found godly ways to solve problems and help everyone involved.

MEMORY VERSE

Stop doing evil and do good. Look for peace and work for it.
– Psalm 34:14

DAY ONE

Read 2 Samuel 20:1-2.

Through most of David's reign as king there was trouble between the southern part of the nation and the northern part. Many years after David was dead the nation of Israel divided. The north became Israel and the south became Judah. At this time in 2 Samuel, there was already tension between the north and the south.

Just shortly before chapter 20 Israel was ready to take David back as king. But the nation split over a simple thing. They argued about who gave the right kind of welcome to David as he returned to Jerusalem (read 2 Samuel 19:41-43). The rebellion started with the call of Sheba, but the northern people left suddenly because of deeper reasons.

David was God's anointed king. He was not just a warrior who fought his way to the top. He was king because of God's will. When Sheba and the northern tribes rebelled against David they really rebelled against God. When we fight against God's plan we should expect trouble.

Why does sin lead us away from God's plan and away from God's leaders?

KEY DOCTRINE: *The Kingdom of God*

In the Bible we see stories about kingdoms. We also read about the Kingdom of God. Earthly kingdoms and God's Kingdom are not the same. In the Kingdom of God, God rules over all things. He especially is the ruler over salvation. Jesus taught us to pray that God's Kingdom would come on earth. The final Kingdom of God awaits the return of Jesus.

DAY TWO

Read 2 Samuel 20:14-15.

Joab was a great general and he was always loyal to David. Some people saw him as the real power behind the throne of David. However, Joab was often mean. Joab killed Amasa cruelly (see verses 9-10) even though David wanted to keep Amasa as an army leader. If Joab was this cruel, imagine what he planned to do to Sheba and the people of Abel Beth Maacah.

Sheba fled north to the far upper part of the nation of Israel. You can find the town on a Bible map. Abel was a city with a strong wall all the way around it. Joab thought the city welcomed Sheba and supported him in his rebellion. Joab was ready to destroy the city. He surrounded the city with his soldiers and began the attack. He piled dirt up the wall to give his soldiers a way to get over it. There is no doubt, the end of this battle would be bloody.

How can God use a person like Joab with all his imperfections?

How does God use a person like you with all your imperfections?

DAY THREE

Read 2 Samuel 20:16.

Things looked bad for Abel Beth Maacah until suddenly a person with wisdom showed up. We do not know the name of the woman who appeared and changed the outcome of this story. We only know she was a wise woman. Some of you reading this session may be surprised that the person with wisdom was a woman. In the ancient world most leaders were men. But God chooses godly women to lead as well. Deborah, in the time of the Judges, is a good example (see Judges chapters 4-5). Now the wise woman of Abel appeared at the wall and gave Joab, the cruel general, wise advice.

We will see what the woman said soon. At this point, though, we want to stop and think about listening to wisdom. Many times you and I hurry into something. We do not stop to think and listen to wise counsel. The wisest people of God are always ready to listen to the wisdom of others. Church leaders can learn a great lesson from the wise woman of Abel and Joab.

Why is it important for believers to stop and listen to the advice of people with wisdom? What have you done in the past that showed you were ready to listen to the wisdom of others?

DAY FOUR

Read 2 Samuel 20:17-19.

Today we know very little about the city of Abel Beth Maacah. We know it was near the northern city of Dan. It seems this city was known as a place of wise people. Apparently the people in David's time knew the proverb "ask for advice at Abel." The city had a reputation of being important for Israel. Joab, in his usual warlike way, seemed ready to destroy the city. He didn't know if the city itself was against David. He didn't know if the city was innocently the hiding place for Sheba.

Here is the question that changed everything: "Why must you destroy what belongs to the Lord?" Abel was not part of the rebellion. Abel was faithful to God and, as we will see, loyal to David. Joab was ready to destroy a city and people who were innocent. Joab did not have a sensitive spirit, but the wise woman's words changed his actions. She saved the day. Even though we do not even know her name she is the hero of this story. She acted with wisdom.

Why is wisdom often more successful than power?

How have you seen this truth in your own life?

DAY FIVE

Read 2 Samuel 20:20-21.

The end of this story is not pleasant. The people of the city found Sheba, killed him, and threw his head over the wall to Joab. The people of Abel Beth Maacah were not part of the rebellion. They were innocent. They did punish a guilty person and saved their city.

This story teaches us the value of wisdom and the importance of compromise. When we compromise we give up part of our plan because of the needs of other people. We must be clear that we do not compromise on the truth of the gospel nor on God's Word. But we can often compromise on our plans. In this story Joab changed his plan to destroy the city. He got what he needed, the leader of the rebellion. So Joab did not hurt the city.

It takes great wisdom to know when to compromise and when not to compromise. Wise Christians talk through plans and listen to all sides. Wise churches find ways through problems and disagreements. They listen to wisdom and compromise in ways that help everyone in the end.

What do you learn from this story of the wise woman and Joab? What compromises do people in your church need to make?

CONNECT AND SHARE

Think about what you have learned from 2 Samuel 20. Meet with one or two other members of your study group to find ways to live what you have learned.

Think about how sin leads people into rebellion and away from God's chosen leaders. How can you and your friends help lead people to God and not away from God?

Why is it important for Christians to seek God's wisdom? Where can we find wisdom today? How do you and your friends show godly wisdom?

What are the things in your life that cannot be compromised? What are some things that can? How do you know the difference?



RESOLVED

When God's people face hard times, God will lead them and give them strength.

2 SAMUEL 21:1-6,10-14

Second Samuel 21 is another one of the hard stories in this book. Today people might think killing seven men to stop a famine is a terrible thing. Part of our struggle with this story is we do not know all the details of the story. Another part of our struggle is we have the New Testament and the life of Christ to guide our actions and decisions.

There was a famine in Israel for three years. David looked for a spiritual reason for the famine. God communicated with David and showed him a horrible crime from the past. The crime was this – Joshua made a promise to protect the people in Gibeon. Hundreds of years later, Saul broke this promise. The famine came because of Saul's crime against these people. David made decisions and punished Saul's family for this crime. This action stopped the famine.

2 SAMUEL 21:1-6,10-14

1 During the time David was king, there was a **shortage of food that lasted for three years.** **A** So David prayed to the LORD. The LORD answered, “Saul and his family of murderers are the reason for this shortage, because he killed the Gibeonites.” **2** (Now the Gibeonites were not Israelites; they were a group of Amorites who were left alive. The Israelites had **promised not to hurt the Gibeonites,** **B** but **Saul had tried to kill them,** **C** because he was eager to help the people of Israel and Judah.) King David called the Gibeonites together and spoke to them. **3** He asked, “What can I do for you? How can I make up for the harm done so you can bless the LORD’s people?” **4** The Gibeonites said to David, “We cannot demand silver or gold from Saul or his family. And we don’t have the right to kill anyone in Israel.” Then David asked, “What do you want me to do for you?” **5** The Gibeonites said, “Saul made plans against us and tried to destroy all our people who are left in the land of Israel. **6** So **bring seven of his sons to us.** **D** Then we will kill them and hang them on stakes in the presence of the LORD at Gibeah, the hometown of Saul, the LORD’s chosen king.” The king said, “I will give them to you.” ... **10** Aiah’s daughter **Rizpah** **E** took the rough cloth that was worn to show sadness and put it on a rock for herself. She stayed there from the **beginning of the harvest until the rain fell** **F** on her sons’ bodies. During the day she did not let the birds of the sky touch her sons’ bodies, and during the night she did not let the wild animals touch them. **11** People told David what Aiah’s daughter Rizpah, Saul’s slave woman, was doing. **12** Then David took the **bones of Saul and Jonathan** **G** from the men of Jabesh Gilead. (The Philistines had hung the bodies of Saul and Jonathan in the public square of Beth Shan after they had killed Saul at Gilboa. Later the men of Jabesh Gilead had secretly taken them from there.) **13** David brought the bones of Saul and his son Jonathan from Gilead. Then the people **gathered the bodies** of Saul’s seven sons who were hanged on stakes. **14** The people buried the bones of Saul and his son Jonathan at Zela in Benjamin in the tomb of Saul’s father Kish. The people did everything the king commanded. Then God answered the prayers for the land.

- a. Famine came to Israel when the annual rains did not fall for three years. Many people would starve.
- b. The Hebrew people made a promise before God not to hurt the Gibeonites. To break it would be sinful. (See Joshua 9.)
- c. The Bible does not have the story of Saul’s attempt to destroy the Gibeonites.
- d. David understood Saul sinned by killing the Gibeonites. Seven executions would be justice to heal the land from its guilt.
- e. Rizpah was one of Saul’s concubines. Two of the seven men executed were her sons.
- f. From April to the Fall season.
- g. Saul and Jonathan were buried in the nearby town of Jabesh-Gilead.
- h. The bones of the seven sons of Saul were outside in the open. This was a great shame and a warning to others not to break the promise Joshua made to the Gibeonites.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. What does God do for His people when they face hard times?
2. How was rain and famine connected in Israel?
3. Why did David go to the Lord for answers about the cause of the famine?
4. What agreement did Israel make with the Gibeonites? Why was it sin for King Saul to break this agreement? What does God think about promises?
5. How can God use our hard times to make us better Christians?
6. Why did the Gibeonites ask for the death of seven of Saul's sons?
7. What does this story teach us about God's justice?
8. Rizpah acted to protect her son's bodies. Why was this an honorable thing to do?
9. Why did David bury Saul and Jonathan and the seven sons of Saul?
10. How did God answer the prayers of the people? What does our prayer do to God? How does prayer help us live through difficult times?

BIBLE SKILL: *Bible search*

Look up Jabesh-Gilead online or in a Bible dictionary. Below are some verses that connect Saul and Jabesh-Gilead. Read the verses and write a few words about each one.

1 Samuel 11:6-11 _____

1 Samuel 31:11-13 _____

2 Samuel 2:4-6 _____

2 Samuel 21:14 _____

IN MY CONTEXT

- God disciplines His people. The goal of discipline is salvation.
- Believers should expect God to act with justice toward all people.
- Prayer gives God's people the ability to make it through the most difficult of times.

Discuss as a group how God's discipline saves His people.

What does God's justice look like today? How can you know that God acts with justice toward all people?

Why do you think prayer gives God's people the ability to make it through even the worst of times?

MEMORY VERSE

The LORD loves justice and will not leave those who worship Him.
He will always protect them, but the children of the wicked will die.
– Psalm 37:28

DAY ONE

Read 2 Samuel 21:1-2a.

When Joshua and the Israelites first fought to win Palestine the Gibeonites already lived there. To take the land God promised, Israel needed to fight and beat them. Joshua should have fought the Gibeonites. Instead, the Gibeonites tricked Joshua into making an agreement with them for protection. The agreement was a serious promise made before God. It was a promise Israel agreed never to break (see Joshua 9).

But Saul did not care much about promises. Neither did he listen carefully to God. While Saul was king he tried to destroy every Gibeonite. It was an evil action on Saul's part and a crime that needed justice.

Today if there were a famine, most people would not look for a spiritual cause for the famine. But David felt the three-year famine was God's discipline. David was right. Saul's crime was not a secret. The people knew there could be a connection between the crime and the famine. God had a plan to move Israel toward justice and healing for a great crime.

Why does God discipline His people today? Does God still want justice for all people?

What does justice look like now that we have Jesus?

DAY TWO

Read 2 Samuel 21:2b-3.

When King David learned how Saul's crime caused the famine, he tried to make things right. There are several Old Testament laws that applied to this crime such as Leviticus 24:20 and Exodus 21:14. Read these two verses. Remember the people of Israel followed the laws of Moses.

Justice required punishment to remove guilt. This was the law and it was the culture. The Hebrew people knew this and so did the Gibeonites.

David asked the question in verse 3 to learn the price for justice. What did the Gibeonites want David to do?

Today, because of Jesus, we think about crime and punishment differently. However, we still understand what justice is and we want it. God still moves us toward justice. Civil rights today is about having justice in the land. God still wants justice for all people. Justice is not about revenge. Justice is about payment for evil.

What did Jesus do to redeem the evil of the world?

How can you help bring justice to the place where you live?

DAY THREE

Read 2 Samuel 21:4-6.

Justice means doing the right thing for all people. Often it is hard to know what justice looks like. What is even harder is doing the just thing when you know what it is. So, what does justice look like? Our country is still trying to understand racial justice. Understanding is one thing; doing racial justice is even harder.

Doing justice in David's time was hard too. Saul did a terrible crime against the Gibeonites. The Gibeonites had no power in Israel. They were more like servants and slaves than free citizens. They could not demand money. They could not take someone to court. Only David could give them justice. Their demand for justice was the execution of seven sons of Saul. This seems strange to us, but David knew (in his world 3,000 years ago) it was the right thing to do. God wants justice for all people. Believers should work for justice even when it is hard.

What does justice look like in our world today? How can we work toward justice for Deaf people in America?

DAY FOUR

Read 2 Samuel 21:10-11.

The Gibeonites killed seven men to pay for Saul's crime. He murdered hundreds of the Gibeonites. David and the Hebrew people believed this was the right thing to do. But these seven men had families. Rizpah was the mother of two of the men. She grieved at the loss of her sons.

She did more than grieve. She worked hard to protect the dead bodies of her sons and the other executed men. In the ancient world, exposing a body after execution showed shame on the dead person. This mother did all she could to lessen the shame. She chased off the birds during the day and the wild animals at night. She did this for months. This sacrifice from Rizpah caused David and all the people to respect her. Her work of love caused David to bury the men in a proper way.

The execution of the seven men was done to satisfy justice. But the love of a mother brought about mercy. Both justice and mercy are in the heart of God.

How can the people of God show both justice and mercy?

How do we experience God's mercy today?

KEY DOCTRINE: *Prayer*

God's people have always been a people of prayer. In both the Old Testament and the New Testament believers prayed. Jesus gave us the best example of a person who prayed. He prayed even though He was God the Son. In Matthew 6:9-13 Jesus taught us the importance of prayer for all believers.

DAY FIVE

Read 2 Samuel 21:12-14.

It was time for healing. The Gibeonites received justice. And David, touched by the goodness of Rizpah, took action to end old pains. David gathered the bones of Saul and Jonathan and the bodies of the seven sons of Saul who had been executed. He honored them in a family burial. The old problems were now in the past.

Healing also came to the land. Famine came to Israel because the rains stopped. The main rains in Israel fall in the winter and prepare the ground for crops. No rain meant no crops. In verse 10 we see that the rains came. God sent rain again. The famine would end. This was a sign to David that his actions were right. His actions brought justice and healing to the land.

Verse 14 tells us all these strange things had spiritual meaning. At the end of the story God answered prayers for the land. Many people today do not think about the land much. In David's time the land meant life. When rain came, the land grew crops and the people lived. David learned God's will through prayer. Prayer by the people restored the land. Prayer always has been important to God's people.

Why is it important for us to pray today?

CONNECT AND SHARE

Think about what you have learned from 2 Samuel 21. Meet with one or two other members of your study group to find ways to live what you have learned.

How does God's discipline make people more like Jesus? How has Jesus disciplined you to shape your life?

Why is justice so important? How is God using you to bring justice into your community?

Spend time with your small group praying for God's will to come on earth like it is in heaven. How does prayer help you in difficult times?



THANKFUL

We should give praise and thanks to God for the way He takes care of our needs. God is worthy of our praise and thanks.

2 SAMUEL 22:26-36,50-51

Our session today comes from a poem that is in 2 Samuel 22. David wrote this poem. A similar poem is in Psalm 18. Poems today use language that creates pictures. Poems in the Hebrew Bible also used language that created pictures.

Verse 1 is not in our lesson but it is helpful for us to understand this poem. Many of the verses in the poem are about David beating his enemies. David sang this song to celebrate how God saved him from King Saul and all his enemies.

The main idea of the poem is not David beating enemies. The main idea is giving praise and thanks to God for the way He helps us in life. David could never overcome King Saul and all his enemies without God's help. If we are wise we can see how God helps us in life. We will praise Him and give Him thanks for what He does.

2 SAMUEL 22:26-36,50-51

26 “LORD, ^A You are loyal to those who are loyal, and You are good to those who are good. **27** You are pure to those who are pure, but You are against those who are evil. **28 You save the humble,** ^B but You bring down those who are proud. **29 LORD, You give light to my lamp. The LORD brightens the darkness around me.** ^C **30** With Your help I can attack an army. With God’s help I can jump over a wall. **31** “The ways of God are without fault; the LORD’s words are pure. He is a shield to those who trust Him. **32 Who is God? Only the LORD.** ^D Who is the Rock? Only our God. **33** God is my protection. He makes my way free from fault. **34** He makes me like a deer that does not stumble; He helps me stand on the steep mountains. **35** He trains my hands for battle so my arms can **bend a bronze bow.** ^E **36** You protect me with Your saving shield. **You have stooped to make me great.** ^F

50 So I will praise you, LORD, among the nations. **I will sing praises to Your name.** ^G **51** The LORD gives great victories to His king. He is loyal to His appointed king, to **David and his descendants forever.”** ^H

- a. When you see the word LORD spelled in all capital letters but the “ORD” in short letters, it means the word “Yahweh” in the Hebrew Bible text.
- b. God is against the proud. This is a common idea in the Bible. (See James 4:6.)
- c. When the Hebrew people wrote poetry they did not rhyme the sounds of words, but often wrote two or more lines that had the same idea. This is called Hebrew parallelism.
- d. David believed there was only one living God – the God of the Hebrew people revealed in Exodus 3:14.
- e. This is poetry language. David saw God as being so strong He could make even a bronze bow a weapon.
- f. David remembered he was king only because God took a humble shepherd and chose him to become king.
- g. The point of this poem was to praise God. But the poem was written for people to sing.
- h. Jesus was the eternal king in David’s family line (descendants).

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Why should God's people give praise and thanksgiving to God?
2. To whom is God loyal, good, and pure? On the other side, who is God against?
3. What does it mean that God gives light and brightens darkness? How does God brighten darkness for Christians today?
4. David knew that God could help him attack an army and jump a wall. Are these the ways God helps His people now? In what ways do you see God help His people?
5. What are some gods that people worship today? Why do Christians believe that only the God in the Bible is the true God?
6. In verses 33-36 there are several ways David used poetic words to describe the help he got from God. How can believers today describe God's help in poetic ASL?
7. What would lead you to give praise to God among the nations or wherever you may go?
8. How does Jesus fulfill the words of verse 51? How can Jesus be your appointed King forever?

BIBLE SKILL: *Explore Scripture*

There are many verses in the Bible that show God saves the humble but brings down the proud. Below are a few of them. Read these verses and write what you learn.

Psalms 138:6 _____

Proverbs 3:34 _____

Proverbs 29:23 _____

Matthew 23:12 _____

Luke 1:52 _____

IN MY CONTEXT

- All people should expect God to be true to His own holy character.
- Salvation comes from God and God alone.
- Believers should give praise to God for His salvation that comes through His Son, Jesus.

Discuss with your group God's holy character. Why do Christians believe that God will always be true to His own holy character?

Discuss with your group the fact that salvation comes only from God. What does this mean for believers?

What are the best ways to offer praise to God for His salvation we have through Jesus His Son?

MEMORY VERSE

The ways of God are without fault; the LORD's words are pure.
He is a shield to those who trust Him. – 2 Samuel 22:31

DAY ONE

Read 2 Samuel 22:26-28.

Do you think the world would like to know who God is for and who God is against? If we knew these things we could make a simple decision to be in the “for” or “against” crowd. From verses 26-28 we can learn some answers to that question. Those verses say God supports those who are loyal, good, and pure. If you are not sure what those words mean discuss it in your class or small group.

The group God is against is even easier to identify than the group He is for. He is against the people who are evil. Can you tell the difference between being loyal, good, and pure and being evil? So can most of the people of the world. Another look at the same question shows God in support of the humble but against the proud. It is pretty easy to see those two groups. Which group are you in? Why are you in that group?

What is God like? What does God want us to be like?

DAY TWO

Read 2 Samuel 22:29.

Almost every culture uses the ideas of darkness and light to talk about the ideas of good and evil. People almost always think of darkness as a symbol of evil and sin. They almost always think of light as a symbol of goodness and right behavior. In verse 29 David uses the words dark and light in just this way. He wrote about God lighting his lamp and using light to get rid of the darkness. When God lights a lamp, He brings truth and goodness into one's life. When God gets rid of darkness, He takes away sin and evil.

This verse forces us to think about our own lives. Are you living in God's light or are you still living in darkness. First John 1:5-7 is one of the best passages in the Bible to show this truth. Read it for yourself. What did you find? Jesus is the light and when we live in Him we live in goodness and truth. When we do not live in Jesus we are in darkness – we are living in sin and evil.

Why is it we are truly in the light only when we live in a relationship with Jesus Christ?

DAY THREE

Read 2 Samuel 22:30-33.

One of the most important questions people have asked from the beginning of time is, “Who is God?” There have been many answers to that question but only one of those answers is right. David had the right answer. None of the gods humans invented are real. They are false. They are idols. The only true God in all the universe is the God who revealed Himself to Moses at the burning bush (see Exodus 3). God led the Hebrew people to call Him Yahweh in the Hebrew language. Yahweh basically means, “I am.”

Once you know the one true God, you find in Him the help you need in life. David needed special kinds of help to be the king and to lead the armies of Israel. Most of us do not need help to be king. But we need help to live right. We need help to guide our families. We need help to face the hard places of life. We need help to make godly decisions. In all these things and so many more God is our help.

How does God help His people today?

How does He lead us to have godly lives?

KEY DOCTRINE: *The Nature of God*

There is only one God who is true and who is living. All other gods are not living. They are false. The true God is Spirit and we can know Him as one person knows another person. God is in control over all the universe and is the only Creator and Redeemer. God has no limit on what He can do. In every way He is perfect and holy. We can know what God is like through the Bible and especially through His Son, Jesus Christ.

DAY FOUR

Read 2 Samuel 22:34-36.

I have seen great Deaf poets like Bernard Bragg and Patrick Graybill perform beautiful ASL poetry. David was skilled at poetry. Look at these verses. You find great sentences like: “He makes me like a deer,” “He trains my hands for battle,” and “Protect me with your saving shield.” This is great poetry. But what does it mean?

The meaning is this – God works in our lives in such a way that He protects us, He shapes our lives, and He saves us from sin and wrong. These are the things God did for David. It is also what God does for us. This does not mean that we never face problems in life. Even Jesus, who followed God perfectly, faced problems in life. It does mean in every part of life God is with us and He is bringing us through life in the right ways.

What is God doing in the lives of believers today?

What is God doing in your life today?

How does He save you?

DAY FIVE

Read 2 Samuel 22:50-51.

In verses 1-49 David looked at the many ways God was with him and the many things God did for him. In verse 50, David responds to all he said before. David summarized it this way – “So I will praise you, LORD, among the nations.” David might have been specially placed to do just this. As the king of a great and growing nation he must have met other great kings of his time. David was not afraid to speak about the Hebrew God to all the important people of the world.

I may not meet the kings or the important people of the world, but I know what God has done for me. I especially know the salvation I have in Jesus, the eternal King. David wrote about Him in verse 51. Many of you reading this lesson also know this Jesus. Will you praise Him among the nations? Will you gladly tell your friends and family about the life you have in Christ? In every situation, I encourage you to offer praise to God for what He has given you in Jesus our Lord.

For what do you give thanks to God? How do you show your praise and thanksgiving to God for what He has done for you?

CONNECT AND SHARE

Think about what you have learned from 2 Samuel 22. Meet with one or two other members of your study group to find ways to live what you have learned.

What do you know about God’s character? How do you see God acting in your life in a way that is the same as His character?

How can people know God’s salvation? How have you come to know salvation in Jesus Christ?

How have you given praise to God this week? What are you doing to help other people come to Christ so they can rightly praise Him too?



Session 13

DISCIPLINED

God disciplines people. His discipline helps people repent from sin.

2 SAMUEL 24:10-25

We all know about David's sin with Bathsheba. However, most of us do not know today's story. In this story David sinned by counting the men in Israel and Judah who could fight.

In this story we see that sin brought terrible consequences. Sin always does. In this case, 70,000 people died because of David's sin. The people of Israel paid the cost for David's sin. Sin is not a private matter. Sin hurts me and it hurts the people around me. In the end, David offered his own life to be taken to fix the wrong he did. Instead, God led David to sacrifice and worship. It was a hard lesson for David to learn. Discipline from God is still a hard thing. But God uses discipline to make us godly. To be godly is worth the price.

2 SAMUEL 24:10-25

10 David felt ashamed after he had **counted the people**. **A** He said to the LORD, **“I have sinned** **B** greatly by what I have done. LORD, I beg you to forgive me, Your servant, because I have been very foolish.” **11** When David got up in the morning, the LORD spoke His word to **Gad**, **C** who was a prophet and David’s seer. **12** The LORD told Gad, “Go and tell David, “This is what the LORD says: **I offer you three choices**. **D** Choose one of them and I will do it to you.” **13** So Gad went to David and said to him, “Should three years of hunger come to you and your land? Or should your enemies chase you for three months? Or should there be three days of disease in your land? Think about it. Then decide which of these things I should tell the LORD who sent me.” **14** David said to Gad, “I am in great trouble. Let the LORD punish us, because the LORD is very merciful. Don’t let my punishment come from human beings!” **15** So the LORD sent a terrible disease on Israel. It began in the morning and continued until the chosen time to stop. From **Dan to Beersheba** **E** seventy thousand people died. **16** When the angel raised his arm toward Jerusalem to destroy it, the LORD felt very sorry about the terrible things that had happened. He said to the angel who was destroying the people, “That is enough! Put down your arm!” The angel of the LORD was then by the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite. **17** When David saw the angel that killed the people, he said to the LORD, “I am the one who sinned and did wrong. These people only followed me like sheep. They did nothing wrong. Please punish me and my family.” **18** That day Gad came to David and said, “Go and build an altar to the LORD on the **threshing floor of Araunah** **F** the Jebusite.” **19** So David did what Gad told him to do, just as the LORD commanded. **20** Araunah looked and saw the king and his servants coming to him. So he went out and bowed facedown on the ground before the king. **21** He said, “Why has my master the king come to me?” David answered, “To buy the threshing floor from you so I can build an altar to the LORD. Then the terrible disease will stop.” **22** Araunah said to David, “My master and king, you may take anything you want for a sacrifice. Here are some oxen for the whole burnt offering and the threshing boards and the yokes for the wood. **23** My king, I give everything to you.” Araunah also said to the king, “May the LORD your God be pleased with you.” **24** But the king answered Araunah, “No, I will pay you for the land. I won’t offer to the LORD my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing.” So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for one and one-fourth pounds of silver. **25** He built an altar to the LORD there and offered whole burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. Then the LORD answered his prayer for the country, and the disease in Israel stopped.

- a. David counted the fighting men of Israel and Judah (see 2 Samuel 24:2).
- b. Counting the fighting men showed David’s trust in the armies to defend Israel and was a sin. David did the right thing and confessed his sin.
- c. Gad was a prophet who lived and worked during the time of David.
- d. David chose disease. He knew that option would put the punishment fully in God’s hands and not human hands. God would have greater mercy than humans.
- e. Dan was the city farthest north in Israel and Beersheba was farthest south.
- f. Many Bible teachers think this is where Solomon built the temple. It is the location of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem today.
- g. David knew a sacrifice that cost nothing was worth nothing. God was not interested in the ritual but in the attitude of David’s heart. A sacrifice must indeed be a costly gift.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. What is discipline and how does God's discipline lead people to repentance?
2. Why did David count the fighting men? Why was this wrong?
3. What does the word "repent" mean and why do Christians need to repent today?
4. Why did David choose three days of disease as the punishment?
5. How does God show His mercy to us today?
6. David's sin lead to the death of 70,000 people. Why does our personal sin hurt other people?
7. How does David's prayer for the punishment of the sin to fall only on him and his family remind you of Jesus?
8. Why was it important for David to offer sacrifices?
9. Why was it important for the sacrifice of David to cost him something?
10. Why should Christians pray? Why is a right heart important for prayer? How is prayer and a right heart connected?

BIBLE SKILL: *Confession and Repentance*

Read these verses. Write what you learn about confession and repentance.

Psalms 51 _____

Luke 15:11-32 _____

2 Chronicles 7:14 _____

1 John 1:9 _____

IN MY CONTEXT

- When believers become aware of their sin they should confess it immediately.
- Sin always has consequences.
- Believers should feel humble when they experience God's grace.
- Believers need to give their best to God because God gave His Son for us.

Discuss with your group why believers should be willing to confess their sin.

Why does sin always have consequences? How can Christians change the consequences of sin?

What must people do before they can experience God's grace? How can you introduce others to the grace of God?

Why do we give our best to God? How will you know when you have given God your best?

MEMORY VERSE

But the king answered Araunah, "No, I will pay you for the land. I won't offer to the LORD my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing." So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for one and one-fourth pounds of silver. – 2 Samuel 24:24

DAY ONE

Read 2 Samuel 24:10.

Some people read this story and get stuck wondering why counting the people was a sin. That is really the devil's trick. The first lesson to learn from this story is the importance of repentance. This verse teaches us the repentance lesson.

We should not be surprised there were sinful actions 3000 years ago that are not clear in our time. David's time and culture were different from ours. In David's time and culture, counting the fighting men was a great crime.

So learn the lesson of repentance. When you see you have sinned, confess it to God and ask for forgiveness. What is the sin you struggle with? Most of us have one or more. Maybe pride? Maybe lust? Maybe gossip? Maybe laziness? You know what it is because you have struggled with it for a long time. Confess and repent! That's what we learn today.

What sin is God showing you?

What can you do to confess that sin and truly repent from that sin?

KEY DOCTRINE: *Sin*

Sin is anything a person does that is a rebellion against God. Sin is a free choice that each person makes. Satan is our enemy. He tempts people to sin. But people are responsible for the sin they choose to do. Because Adam and Eve sinned, everyone since has been born with a nature to sin. When someone reaches the age of moral decision they will decide to sin and will need a Savior.

DAY TWO

Read 2 Samuel 24:11-15.

Consequences is an important word in this lesson. Here are examples of consequences: 1) If you lay in the sun too long you will get sunburned; 2) If you speed in your car you will get a ticket; 3) If you sin against God, He will discipline you. Do you get the idea of consequences?

David sinned. But all the people felt the consequences. Sin works that way. We often think sin is private and only affects us. But that is false. My sin touches all the people around me and they get hurt too. In this story we see that 70,000 people died because of David's sin.

David had the choice of punishment that would come from his sin. I cannot think of another story in the Bible quite like this. David chose the option that threw himself and his people on God's mercy. This was a wise choice. Always trust God. Even in times of discipline and punishment, God will do what is right.

Why does God discipline His people?

Why is it important for us to trust God when He disciplines us?

DAY THREE

Read 2 Samuel 24:16-17.

There are many questions someone might ask after reading this section. For example: who was the angel that brought the disease on the people? What is meant by "the Lord felt sorry?" Why bring Araunah the Jebusite into the story? Sometimes the Bible surprises us. And there are times we have many questions and few answers. When I run into questions that are hard to answer I remember the Bible writers were interested in some things different than me.

In this story, the Bible writer knew God always does right. So the Bible writer was mostly interested in David's action. David knew he was guilty; not the people. David, therefore, asked God to punish him and not the people (see verse 17). Does that remind you of Jesus? Jesus was not

guilty, of course. But Jesus was ready to die to bring salvation to people. So was David. Most people would have thought first about themselves. David thought about others. This is the kind of heart God wants us to have.

What in the action of David reminds you of Jesus?

When is it right to think first about others?

DAY FOUR

Read 2 Samuel 24:18-23.

I wonder what Araunah thought when he saw David and his servants walking toward him. Araunah was a Jebusite. The Jebusites were the people who controlled Jerusalem before David captured it. Araunah may have felt he was in trouble. He likely thought King David planned to kill him and take his land. No wonder Araunah bowed before David and offered David everything he had for free. Araunah wanted to save his own life.

David knew he failed God by counting the fighting men. He did not want to fail God again. God commanded David to worship and sacrifice at Araunah's threshing floor. David likely did not know exactly why, but he was determined to obey.

The threshing floor of Araunah would later become the place where the temple was built. The sacrifice and worship David gave to God at this place prepared the way for the sacrifices and worship thousands of people would offer to God at the same place.

When is it right to worship God?

How and where do you worship God each week?

DAY FIVE

Read 2 Samuel 24:24-25.

One of the most important parts of this whole story happens in these verses. David would not accept the land, the ox, and the wood for free. Instead, he paid a generous price of one and a half pounds of silver. Here is the reason: “I won’t offer to the LORD my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing.”

A gift you give to God that does not come from a heart of sacrifice means nothing. God is not interested in the things we do for show. God is interested in our hearts. When our hearts are broken before God we offer our lives and all we have to Him. That is God’s goal for us. David knew he must give God a true sacrifice. And that is what he did. You might notice when David did this, God removed the guilt of his sin and answered his prayer.

Why must a gift to God cost me something? What is God’s goal for your life?

CONNECT AND SHARE

Think about what you have learned from 2 Samuel 24. Meet with one or two other members of your study group to find ways to live what you have learned.

**What sin is in your life? When is it right to confess this to God?
When is it right to confess this to your small group?**

What are the consequences that you see from your own sin?

**When would you be ready to give up your life for someone else?
Would you lay your life down for the Lord’s sake?**

How have you offered your best to the Lord this week? How can you give thanks for God’s gift to you in Christ Jesus?

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18:24-2 Kings
9:17
18:33 ch. 19:4
19:3 ver. 32
19:4 ch. 19:30
ch. 18:33

31 And, behold, Cu'-shi came; and Cu'-shi
said, Tidings, my lord the king: for the Lord
hath avenged thee this day of all them that
rose up against thee.

32 And the king said unto Cu'-shi, Is the
young man Ab'-sa-lom safe? And Cu'-shi an-
swered, The enemies of my lord the king, and
all that rise against thee to do thee hurt, be-
cause that young man is.

33 ¶ And the king was much moved, and
went up to the chamber over the gate, and
wept: and as he went, thus he said, O my son
Ab'-sa-lom, my son, my son Ab'-sa-lom! would
God I had died for thee, O Ab'-sa-lom, my son!
my son!

Victory Turned to Mourning

19 And it was told Jo'-ab, Behold, the king
weepeth and mourneth for Ab'-sa-lom.

2 And the victory that day was turned into
mourning unto all the people: for the people
heard say that day how the king was grieved
for his son.

3 And the people gat them by stealth that
day into the city, as people being ashamed
steal away when they flee in battle.

4 But the king covered his face, and the
king cried with a loud voice, O my son Ab'-
sa-lom, O Ab'-sa-lom, my son, my son!

5 And Jo'-ab came into the house to the
king, and said, Thou hast shamed this day the
faces of all thy servants, which this day I have
saved thy life, and the lives of thy sons and of
thy daughters, and the lives of thy wives, and
the lives of the people.



LEADER HELPS

As the leader of the group, you can build disciples through the group Bible study time, encouraging daily Bible engagement, and by facilitating smaller groups.

Building Disciples through the Group Time

Each week, you will introduce the group to the Bible passage, study the key message in that passage, and challenge the group to act on that passage. Doing so requires preparation. Here is a way to prepare that gives you enough time to study the lesson and will make the session fresh in your own life.

Early in the Week (Sunday or Monday)

- Ask God to open your mind and heart to His Word as you study.
- Study the Bible passage.
- Pay careful attention to the Apply the Text section for that session, looking for ways you need to apply the Bible in your own life.

Through the Week

- Ask God to direct your creation of the group plan.

- Create a group plan, adapting the group plans to fit the needs of your group. (Consult QuickSource and the weekly Extra post for additional ideas Blog.LifeWay.com/ExploretheBible/Adults/LeaderExtras).
- Complete the Daily Exploration activities in the days leading up to the group time.
- Meet with a group of three to four other teachers to share and pray for each other. Use Connect and Share to start your conversation.
- Pull needed posters from the Explore the Bible: Leader Pack (or create your own using Visual Ideas on pages 160–161).

The Day of the Group Study Time

- Arrive early.
- Pray for the study and the group members.
- Lead the study, adjusting as you go.

After the Group Study Time

- Contact all group members, encouraging them to complete the Daily Readings and share gathered prayer requests.
- Record insights gained about teaching, group members, and Scripture.

Building Disciples by Encouraging Daily Bible Engagement

- Encourage everyone on your ministry list (class roll, membership list, etc.) to engage daily in Bible study. Here are some ways to encourage your group to engage with the Bible daily:
 - Ask them. Learn to comfortably ask if group members are studying the Bible. You may want to use a statement such as, “I hope you took a look at the Day 3 activity for this week.”
 - Tell them. Let them know that you are using the Daily Exploration section as well. Set the standard.
 - Show them. Point to the Daily Readings section at the conclusion of the group study. Occasionally demonstrate how to use the section, guiding them through Day 1 as a group.
 - Invite them. Call on volunteers to share what they are learning and how they use the Daily Exploration section.

Building Disciples through Smaller Groups

At the end of every session, you will find a section entitled Connect and Share. This section is designed for smaller groups of three to four people to meet weekly, holding each other accountable for living a Christ-honoring life.

Create smaller groups:

- Allow group members to form their own initial groups of three by gender (men's smaller groups and women's smaller groups)
- Allow groups to add one person from the names on the ministry list of people who are not present.
- You may want to encourage the groups to form based on neighborhoods or proximity to work.
- Make sure some of the groups have extra space for new group members and guests.
- As the Bible study group grows, you may need to reorganize the smaller groups, but try not to regroup too often so that trust can be built within each smaller group.

Support the smaller groups:

- Provide opportunities for the members of the smaller groups to pray with each other during the group time.
- Make study assignments in the weekly group time based on the smaller groups.
- Pre-enlist a volunteer to share with the larger group how participation in the smaller group is impacting his or her life.
- Periodically organize fellowship events built around the smaller groups. The smaller groups could be the basis for teams during the event.
- Be in a smaller group as well. You may even want to host a smaller group for guests and new group members.



RESPECTED

2 Samuel 1:22-27; 2:1-7

PLAN AHEAD

Pray for members to learn how to show respect for their leaders.

Ask two volunteers to lead small group discussions. They can prepare by reading the Bible Skill passages.

Read and practice signing the story from 1 Samuel 16:1-13.

Prepare to discuss answers to questions members might have from their study last week.

FOCUS ATTENTION

ASK: *What makes a person a good leader?* Highlight responses about respect. Explain that during today's study, we will look at David and His respect for Saul.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Commemoration (2 Samuel 1:22-27)

SAY: *When David learned about the deaths of Saul and Jonathan, he expressed his feelings through a poem. In his poem David told of his respect for Saul as king and his love for his best friend, Jonathan. Sign verses 22-27. Discuss the first four questions from Explore the Text.*

2. Coronation (2 Samuel 2:1-4a)

ASK: *Who was the first king of Israel?* **EXPLAIN:** *Saul disobeyed God (see 1 Samuel 15). So God chose David to be the next king. Sign verses 2:1-4a (...over the house of Judah). Discuss the next two questions from Explore the Text. Ask members to find Genesis 49:9-10 in their Bibles. EXPLAIN: David was from the tribe of Judah. Jacob said these verses many years before David was born. God had a plan long before David became king. David was careful to follow God's plan and God's timing. In ancient times men fought and killed kings to take over kingdoms. David waited for God's time. He respected Saul as king until Saul died. Share the story about how Samuel anointed David as*

king of Israel (1 Samuel 16:1-13). **EXPLAIN:** *David did not become king quickly. He became king fifteen or twenty years later. Many things happened to David between the time Samuel anointed him and the time he became king.*

3. Commendation (2 Samuel 2:4b-7)

Sign verses 2:4b-7. **EXPLAIN:** *Saul and Jonathan were killed in the war. Their bodies were out in the open on the ground. This was shameful for bodies to be unburied. The men from Jabesh Gilead showed their respect for Saul and Jonathan. They took their bodies and buried them. Saul had been good to the people of Jabesh Gilead.*

Divide the group into two smaller groups. The two volunteers will lead the discussion for the groups. Ask one group to look up the first two passages of Scripture from the Bible Skill. Ask the second group to look up the last two passages from the Bible Skill. Allow a few minutes for them to discuss the stories in the verses.

Bring the two groups back together. Let each group share what they learned. **ASK:** *How did Saul feel about David? What did you learn about David's respect for Saul? Why did David respect Saul?*

Discuss the last three questions from Explore the Text.

IN MY CONTEXT

SAY: *David respected Saul as king, even though Saul tried to kill David. David knew God chose Saul to be king and honored him as God's anointed.*

Discuss the questions from In My Context for this session (p. 14). **ASK:** *How can we respect leaders today? Ask members to find 1 Timothy 2:1-4 and Romans 13:1-7 in their Bibles. Sign the verses or ask members to sign them. **ASK:** In what ways can we pray for people in authority? Why is it important for us to pray for our leaders?*

Close with prayer. Ask God to bless and guide our church leaders and leaders in our government.

Remind members to do the daily readings to learn more about David.



CROWNED

2 Samuel 3:8-21

PLAN AHEAD

Pray for group members to find and follow God's plan for their lives.

Ask three volunteers to prepare to summarize information from the following: 1) 1 Samuel 18:17-29, 2) 1 Samuel 19:11-17, and 3) 1 Samuel 25:44. They will present the information to the group.

Find a member who is willing to share his testimony related to following God's plan. If no one is willing, share about a time you knew you followed His plan for you.

Be prepared to answer questions from last week's readings.

FOCUS ATTENTION

Show a set of instructions, emphasizing the importance of following the instructions. State that today's lesson focuses on the importance of following God's plans.

EXPLAIN: *David became king over Judah. Abner was the commander of Saul's army. Second Samuel 2:8 tells us Abner made Saul's son, Ish-Bosheth, king over the other tribes in Israel. This shows Abner was a strong leader. He had more power than Ish-Bosheth. He wanted Saul's family to keep control of Israel. Abner led Israel's army in war against David's army. But one day that changed.*

Ish-Bosheth accused Abner of sleeping with one of Saul's concubines. If Abner actually did this, it would mean he wanted to become king. Abner became very angry. He worked hard for Saul and for Israel. He was loyal to Saul and Saul's family. Now Ish-Bosheth accused him of a terrible thing.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. A New Ally (2 Samuel 3:8-11)

Sign 2 Samuel 3:8-11. **EXPLAIN:** *It is clear Abner knew David would become king. Remember, Samuel anointed David to become the next king several years before.* **ASK:** *If Abner knew David should be king, why did he lead Israel to war*

against David? Why did he stay with Saul and later make Ish-Bosheth king?

ASK: Do you know people today who know what God wants but they don't do it? Why do you think people don't follow His plan?

2. A Restored Relationship (2 Samuel 3:12-16)

EXPLAIN: At this point David had six other wives (see 2 Samuel 3:2-5). But Michal was his first wife. Michal was Saul's daughter. Ask the three volunteers to share their information from the verses.

Sign 2 Samuel 3:12-16. **ASK:** Why do you think David wanted Michal back? Saul was wrong to give Michal to another man. Saul made many mistakes. David's action to get his wife was one step to make things right in the land again.

3. A Consolidated Kingdom (2 Samuel 3:17-21)

Sign 2 Samuel 3:17-21. Abner knew God's plan for David (see verse 18). Abner had much influence in Israel. He used his influence to bring the nation to agreement. The nation would come together and make David king.

ASK: How can believers use their influence for God's purposes?

IN MY CONTEXT

Ask the member to share his testimony (or you can share yours). **ASK:** How do you know you are following God's plan? **EXPLAIN:** We may not know exactly where God will lead us like David did. But, we do know many of the things He wants us to do. Ask members to give examples. Examples could include: pray, be kind to others, serve others, worship Him, read our Bibles, etc. As we do the things we know God wants, we will understand His plan more and more.

ASK: How can believers encourage others to follow God's plan? Discuss. Close with prayer. Ask God to help us boldly follow Him. Encourage the group to do the daily readings this week.

CELEBRATED

2 Samuel 5:9-12;6:12-19

PLAN AHEAD

Pray for group members. Ask God to help all of us worship Him in ways that make Him happy.

Ask a volunteer to prepare to tell the story in 2 Samuel 6:2-8. This is the story about David's first attempt to bring the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem.

Ask another volunteer to be prepared to sign Romans 12:1.

Prepare to answer questions from the readings for last week.

FOCUS ATTENTION

Lead the group to list events a person may celebrate. Suggest things common to each celebration listed. Explain that some of these same things will be found as the people celebrated a new king.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

EXPLAIN: *After the events we studied last week, several things happened. Joab, the commander of David's army, killed Abner. Then Ish-Bosheth was killed. David took Jerusalem to be the capital city for the kingdom. David knew God was with him. God gave him success. In today's session we will see how David and the people responded to God's work in their lives.*

1. The People Recognize David as King (2 Samuel 5:9-12)

Sign 2 Samuel 5:9-12. **EXPLAIN:** *David had waited a long time to become king of all Israel. Now the time had finally arrived. All Israel recognized him as their king.*

Discuss the first three questions from Explore the Text. Note that Hiram was king of Tyre, a city on the coast. Tyre got food from Israel and used roads in Israel to buy things the city needed. They also used the roads to carry goods to sell. Building a good relationship with David and Israel helped Hiram and his city.

2. The People Honor God (2 Samuel 6:12-16)

David wanted to bring the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem. Remember, the ark was a symbol of God's presence. It was important to have it in the capital city. The first time David tried to bring the ark to Jerusalem it did not go well.

Ask the volunteer to share the story from 2 Samuel 6:2-8. **ASK:** *Why did God kill Uzzah? Touching the ark did not show respect for the ark. Also, David and the men did not follow God's instructions from Exodus. The Levites were supposed to carry the ark on their shoulders.*

Sign 2 Samuel 6:12-16. **ASK:** *What did the men do differently from the last time? Discuss the next four to seven questions from Explore the Text. Note that Michal missed the joy of the celebration because she was embarrassed by David's action. **ASK:** Do we miss out on celebrating God and His work because we focus on others? How can we focus on God more instead of others?*

3. The People Celebrate (2 Samuel 6:17-19)

Sign 2 Samuel 6:17-19. Discuss the last two questions from Explore the Text. Make a list on the board of ways we can celebrate God's presence and work in our lives.

Acts 2:42 tells us the early church spent time together sharing a meal. Does your group fellowship through meals together? If not, plan a time for them to meet and eat together. Spend time sharing how God works in their lives.

IN MY CONTEXT

We call our Sunday service a 'worship' service. **ASK:** *How do we worship God during that time? (Answers could include: worship through giving, worship through singing, worship through fellowship, and through attention to the Word.) Ask the volunteer to sign Romans 12:1. **ASK:** How can we worship God at other times? Note that our acts of service are a way to worship God.*

Discuss the questions from In My Context (p. 30). Close with prayer. Ask God to help us recognize and celebrate His work in our lives.

Remind members to do the daily readings for the week.

ESTABLISHED

2 Samuel 7:8-21

PLAN AHEAD

Pray for members to have a humble attitude before God like David did.

Ask 2-3 volunteers to lead small groups in sharing their testimonies about their salvation experiences.

Find a picture of the ark of the covenant. Some study Bibles have drawings or pictures of the ark. You may also find a picture or drawing online. We have an idea of what the ark looked like because of the description in Exodus 25:10-22. Bring the picture to show the group.

Prepare to answer questions members might have about the readings from last week.

FOCUS ATTENTION

Ask members to share some promises from the Bible. Highlight promises about God's presence. List the Scripture references on the board as members share.

Show the picture of the ark to the class. Ask them what it is. **ASK:** *Was God in the ark? Why was the ark so important?*

EXPLAIN: *God did not live in the ark. But it represented God's presence so it was holy. It helped the Israelites remember God was with them. The ark was in a tent. David thought the ark should be in a better place. David told Nathan, the prophet, he wanted to build a house for the ark. At first, Nathan encouraged David to do it. Nathan knew God was with David but he did not ask God first. That night God spoke to Nathan and gave him a message for David. Today we will learn about the wonderful message.*

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Rest (2 Samuel 7:8-11a)

Sign 2 Samuel 7:8-11a (...peace from all your enemies) or ask one of the group members to sign the verses.

Discuss the first three questions from Explore the Text.

Remind the group of the promises listed at the beginning of class. **ASK:** *Why are these promises important to you? How do these promises from God make you feel? How do you think David felt as Nathan shared the message from God?*

2. Rule (2 Samuel 7:11b-17)

Sign 2 Samuel 7:11b-17. **EXPLAIN:** *David wanted to build a house for God. But God promised to build a house for David. In the CSB Bible verse 11b says, “The LORD Himself will make a house for you.” This was another way of saying, “I will make your descendants kings of Israel after you” (NCV).*

In verse 14, God says He will be a father to David’s son. **ASK:** *What do you think a good father does? What is his character like? (Answers could include: He is loving, kind, forgiving. A father teaches, helps, and disciplines.)*
ASK: *How is God a good father? How does God show His love? How does He discipline us?*

Discuss questions four, five, and six from Explore the Text.

3. Rejoice Over (2 Samuel 7:18-21)

Sign 2 Samuel 7:18-21. **EXPLAIN:** *David probably went to the tent with the ark of the covenant. There he prayed to God.* **ASK:** *What was David’s attitude? What does it mean to be humble? David was not proud of himself. He knew God was the one who made him king.*

Ask members to read Ephesians 2:8-10. **ASK:** *How did God work in our salvation? Can we do anything to earn our salvation? Why or why not?*

Discuss the last two questions from Explore the Text.

IN MY CONTEXT

Divide members into smaller groups. Put one of the volunteers in each group. Ask the members to share their testimonies about their salvation experience.

Close by signing this verse as a prayer to God, “You are great, Lord God! There is no one like you. There is no God except you” (2 Samuel 7:22).

Encourage members to do the daily readings this week.

VALUED

2 Samuel 9:1-13

PLAN AHEAD

Pray for members to show kindness to others.

Ask 2-3 volunteers to be prepared to lead small groups in planning a skit to perform for the larger group. They will act out examples of showing kindness.

Practice signing the story from 2 Samuel 9:1-13. Practice so you can sign the story without looking at the text.

Prepare to answer questions members might have about the readings for last week.

FOCUS ATTENTION

Divide the group into smaller groups to work on skits. Ask each small group to make up a skit showing examples of kindness. After they have had time to develop their skits, bring all the members back together. After they perform the skits, ask members to share other examples of kindness.

EXPLAIN: *In today's session we will see an example of following through with a promise. We will also see an example of kindness. King David's kindness is unusual because most kings were not kind to others. You may remember how Saul tried to kill David. He did this because he was afraid David would become king. Abimelech killed seventy of his own brothers so he could be king alone (Judg. 9:1-6).*

Second Samuel 8:15 tells us "David did what was fair and right for all his people." Today we will see David was also kind.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Searched (2 Samuel 9:1-5)

At this time David had been king for several years. He and the armies of Israel defeated many enemies. Now David remembered his promise to Jonathan (1 Samuel 20:15).

Sign the whole story from 2 Samuel 9:1-13. **ASK:** *Does anyone know why Mephibosheth was lame in his feet? If no one remembers, ask the group to find 2 Samuel 4:4 in their Bibles. **EXPLAIN:** Mephibosheth was five when Jonathan died. Mephibosheth was grown and had a son of his own. He was hiding.*

Discuss the first three questions from Explore the Text.

2. Extended (2 Samuel 9:6-8)

Discuss questions four and five from Explore the Text. You may need to sign this part of the story again. **ASK:** *Why did Mephibosheth call himself a 'dead dog'? Remember, Mephibosheth was Jonathan's son and Saul's grandson. He was in line to become king before Saul and Jonathan died. Maybe he thought David planned to kill him and get rid of all Saul's family. He was probably very surprised at David's offer of kindness.*

ASK: *Has anyone surprised you with kindness? How did you respond?*

3. Planned (2 Samuel 9:9-13)

Discuss the last three questions from Explore the Text. Sign the last part of the story again if needed.

ASK: *How do we become part of God's family? It is a wonderful mystery how God could love us so much. John 3:16 reminds us how much God loves us so much that He sent His Son to die for us.*

ASK: *How can we show our love to God? He loves us so much, we should respond with love for Him.*

IN MY CONTEXT

Discuss the questions from In My Context. Ask members to share ideas they have for sharing with others the good news from John 3:16. This would be the kindest thing to do for others.

Close with prayer. Remind members to do the daily readings for this week.

ACCOUNTABLE

2 Samuel 12:1-14

PLAN AHEAD

Pray that members will be sensitive to the Holy Spirit and follow as the Spirit leads.

Ask a volunteer to prepare to sign the story of David and Bathsheba from 2 Samuel 11.

Ask another volunteer to prepare to sign the story of Saul and Samuel from 1 Samuel 15:1-3,7-11,13-15,19-21.

Be prepared to answer questions about the readings from last week.

FOCUS ATTENTION

There is a famous story in the Bible about David and his affair with Bathsheba. Ask how many members have heard this story before. Ask the volunteer to sign the story for the group.

ASK: *Are you surprised David sinned in this way? Why or why not?*

EXPLAIN: *Today we will learn how David reacted when Nathan confronted him with his sin. We will also see how sin has consequences.*

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Nathan Confronts (2 Samuel 12:1-4)

Sign 2 Samuel 12:1-4. Remember, Nathan is the prophet who told David about God's promise to make his descendants kings. As a prophet, it is likely God told Nathan about everything David did. It is also likely many people in the nation knew much of what happened. People enjoy spreading gossip.

It is interesting Nathan chose to tell a story. The story helped David see his sin. **ASK:** *How did the actions in the story match David's actions?*

2. David Judges (2 Samuel 12:5-6)

Sign verses 5-6. David thought Nathan's story was a true story. He acted as judge and made a decision about the man in the story. **ASK:** *Why did David think the rich man should die?*

ASK: *What about us? Do we deserve death because of our sin?* Romans 6:23 says we should die for our sin. But God gives us the free gift of eternal life.

3. God Punishes (2 Samuel 12:7-12)

Sign verses 7-12. Nathan said David ignored God's commands. **ASK:** *How do you see people ignore God's commands today? What does the world think when they see believers ignore God's commands?*

Nathan told David terrible things would happen in his family. These things are consequences. We might think of them as a way we pay for wrong actions. Some actions have natural consequences. For example, if we stay in the sun too long we will become sunburned. Some actions bring punishment as a consequence. For example, if we steal something, we will pay a fine or spend time in jail.

4. David Responds (2 Samuel 12:13-14)

Sign verses 13-14. **ASK:** *How did David respond to Nathan? Did he admit his wrong, or did he give excuses?* **ASK:** *God forgave David. Why did he still have consequences for his sin? Why do we have consequences for sin today?*

Ask members to give examples of actions that have consequences.

IN MY CONTEXT

David did a terrible sin, but he had a heart for God. When Nathan confronted David about his sin, he quickly confessed his sin. Ask the volunteer to sign the story of Samuel and Saul. Ask members to watch for Saul's response after Samuel confronted him. After the story, **ASK:** *How did Saul respond? (With excuses, Saul didn't think he did wrong.)* **ASK:** *Who do we want to be like? David or Saul?*

EXPLAIN: *Psalm 51 is David's prayer of repentance after his sin with Bathsheba.* Ask members to find Psalm 51 in their Bibles. Sign verses 1-10 as a prayer to God.

Encourage members to do the daily readings and the Bible Skill (p. 53) for this week.

GRIEVED

2 Samuel 13:15-20, 31-39

PLAN AHEAD

Pray for members and their families. Ask God to help them look to Him for strength to do right.

Ask a volunteer to prepare to sign 2 Samuel 13:1-14 for the group.

Ask another volunteer to prepare to sign 2 Samuel 13:23-30.

Be prepared to answer questions about the readings for last week.

Research agencies in your area that help victims of domestic violence. Some of the members in your group may have problems in their families. Be prepared to give them some resources to help their situation.

FOCUS ATTENTION

Ask the group to list things that could cause grief in a family. Explain that we will see some of these things happen in David's family.

Ask members to share information they remember from last week's session. **ASK:** *Do you remember what Nathan said would happen in David's family? (Nathan said there would be violence and sexual sin in David's family.)*

David and Bathsheba's son died. Nathan had told David this would happen because of his sin. In today's session we will see more consequences of David's sin. Ask the volunteer to sign 2 Samuel 13:1-14. This is the background story for the session.

EXPLAIN: *Tamar tried to do the right thing. She told Amnon to ask David to let them marry. This seems strange in our time. It is against the law for half-brothers and sisters to marry. But, remember the culture of that time was very different from ours.*

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Shattered (2 Samuel 13:15-20)

Sign 2 Samuel 13:15-20. **ASK:** *Why do you think Amnon hated Tamar? How did his 'love' turn to hate so quickly? Often, we tell ourselves that sin will make us happy. In our minds, we think sin might help us. **ASK:** Where do we see examples of this idea?*

EXPLAIN: Verse 21 says David was angry about what Amnon did. **ASK:** *Why do you think David didn't do anything about this? (Perhaps he felt he had no right. He sinned sexually with Bathsheba. Everyone knew about this. It is possible David's sin influenced his sons to sin.)*

Ask the volunteer to tell the story about what happened next (2 Samuel 13:22-30).

2. Devastated (2 Samuel 13:31-36)

Sign 2 Samuel 13:31-36. **ASK:** *How did David and his sons feel? How would you describe the feeling of grief?*

Absalom decided to punish Amnon for his sin. Absalom wanted revenge. And with Amnon dead, Absalom was next in line to become king.

Ask members to find Romans 12:19 in their Bibles. **ASK:** *Is it our right to punish others? What is the right way to confront sin? We see from David's family how revenge leads to more sin and more problems.*

3. Separated (2 Samuel 13:37-39)

Sign 2 Samuel 13:37-39. Sin causes separation. It can cause separation between family members, friends, and church members. **ASK:** *How did David feel about the separation? What could he do to help the situation?*

IN MY CONTEXT

Discuss the questions from In My Context (p. 62). Matthew 18:15-16 explains how to confront sin with our fellow believers.

Ask members to find Colossians 3:18-21 and Ephesians 6:1-4 in their Bibles. Ask volunteers to sign the verses. These verses teach God's plan for families. Discuss ways we can help families follow God's plan.

Close with prayer asking God to help families depend on Him and His ways. Encourage members to do the daily readings for the week.



DEPOSED

2 Samuel 15:10-16, 24-30

PLAN AHEAD

Pray for members. Ask God to help us see if we have selfish ambition in our hearts.

Ask a volunteer to prepare to summarize the story from 2 Samuel 15:1-9. They will share this information with the group during the session. The information will help members understand how Absalom got support for his rebellion.

Be ready to answer questions members might have from last week's readings.

FOCUS ATTENTION

Write the word 'ambition' on the board. **ASK:** *What does this word mean?* Discuss ways to sign this idea. Signs could include: goal, eager, initiative, aggressive. **ASK:** *How can ambition be good? How can it be bad?*

EXPLAIN: *From last week's session we know Absalom killed his brother for revenge. From today's session we will see he probably had another reason for killing Amnon. Amnon was David's oldest son. He would have become king after David's death. Absalom had ambition, but it was not the good kind. Absalom had selfish ambition. He wanted to be king quickly. He did not care if he hurt other people in the process. He was even willing to kill his own father.*

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Entitlement (2 Samuel 15:10-12)

Ask the volunteer to share the story from 2 Samuel 15:1-9. Remind members David first became king of Judah in Hebron. He later moved the capital to Jerusalem. Perhaps Absalom thought the people in Hebron wanted to have the king back in Hebron. Maybe they would support his rebellion.

Sign 2 Samuel 15:10-12. Note David trusted Ahithophel as an advisor.

Ahithophel was also Bathsheba's grandfather. Some Bible teachers think David talked about Ahithophel in the Psalms. He said, "My best and truest friend, who ate at my table, has even turned against me" (Ps. 41:9).

The two hundred men with Absalom did not know about his plans. **ASK:** *Why do you think they went with him? How do you think David felt when his friends left him?*

2. Fright (2 Samuel 15:13-16)

Ask a volunteer to sign 2 Samuel 15:13-16. **ASK:** *How were Absalom and David different?* Look at the last part of verse 14 again. David was concerned about the people in Jerusalem. He knew if he stayed in Jerusalem, Absalom would start a war. He would kill David and all the people loyal to David. Absalom was not concerned about the people. He was thinking only of himself.

Ask members to find Philippians 2:3-4. **ASK:** *How can we show our concern for others? How can we give others more honor than we give ourselves?*

3. Flight (2 Samuel 15:24-30)

Sign 2 Samuel 15:24-30.

The ark was important to the Israelites. David understood the ark represented God. He knew God was with him even if the ark was not. He did not trust the ark. David trusted God. Sign verses 25-26 again. **ASK:** *How can we trust God in the same way David did?*

ASK: *What are some characteristics of God?* Examples include: He knows all things, He is love, He has all power, etc. List the characteristics on the board. **ASK:** *Why can we trust God? How does His character help you trust Him?*

IN MY CONTEXT

There are several important lessons in the story today. Read the main points of the session in In My Context (p. 70). Discuss the questions.

Close with prayer. Ask God to help us trust Him more. Ask Him to help us be loyal friends even in hard times.

Encourage members to do the daily readings this week.



RESTORED

2 Samuel 19:1-15

PLAN AHEAD

Pray for members. Ask God to give them strength to make good choices in their actions.

Ask a volunteer to prepare to summarize the story from 2 Samuel 18:4-17,33.

Be ready to answer questions members might have about last week's daily readings.

FOCUS ATTENTION

EXPLAIN: *We experience many emotions. We experience happiness, sadness, anger, grief and more. At times our emotions influence our actions in a negative way. However, with God's help we can respond to our emotions in positive ways.*

Share this example: *There was a godly couple. They loved each other very much. They were married over fifty years when the husband died. The funeral was beautiful. Many friends traveled to the funeral. Some traveled long distances to show their respects. At the end of the funeral, the wife stood by her husband's casket as friends and family walked by. She greeted them and thanked each one for coming. Someone asked her how she was able to act in such a gracious way. They knew she was very sad and grieved. She explained, "I did not plan to do that, but God gave me the strength. Everyone showed me their love by coming. I wanted to show my appreciation to them."*

EXPLAIN: *Today we will see how David learned a lesson in appreciation and leadership.*

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Mourning (2 Samuel 19:1-4)

Remind the group about what happened in last week's session. Explain that David's army fought against Absalom's army.

Ask the volunteer to sign the story from 2 Samuel 18:4-17 and 33, or you can summarize it.

ASK: *David's army won the war. How do you think they felt when they won?*
Sign 2 Samuel 19:1-4.

ASK: *How did David's feelings influence the people? How do leaders influence the feelings of people today?*

2. Celebration (2 Samuel 19:5-8)

Sign 2 Samuel 19:5-8. **ASK:** *Why was Joab so brave to tell David what to do? Do we need friends like him? How can we help each other do the right things?*

EXPLAIN: *Emotions are not wrong. God made us with feelings. However, our emotions should not control our actions. We can depend on the Holy Spirit to help us act in correct ways even when we don't feel like it. We can choose to honor God with our actions. Ask members to give examples of times they (or someone they know) felt sad or grieved but chose to act in a kind or loving way to others.*

3. Restoration (2 Samuel 19:9-15)

Sign 2 Samuel 19:9-15. David followed Joab's advice. He encouraged the people. Now the people in Israel decided to make David king again. Then David encouraged Judah to do the same. Ask members to look at verse 13 again. **EXPLAIN:** *This statement, "May God punish me terribly..." was a strong way of saying he would do something. David meant if he did not do what he said, God could punish him. David did not know Joab killed Absalom, but Joab did other wrong acts. David did not want Joab to command the army anymore. That is the reason he promised Amasa the position.*

Choose some of the questions from Explore the Text to discuss with the group.

IN MY CONTEXT

It is important for people to trust their leaders.

ASK: *What can leaders do to help their people trust them? How can they help people become unified? List answers on the board.* **ASK:** *How can leaders in the church do these actions? How can people help their leaders?*

Close with prayer asking God to help church members build trust and unity.

Encourage members to do the daily readings this week.



COMPROMISE

2 Samuel 20:1-2,14-21

PLAN AHEAD

Pray for members. Ask God to give us wisdom to know when compromise is the right action.

Read 2 Samuel 19:40-43. Be ready to summarize these verses.

Ask 2-3 volunteers to be ready to lead smaller groups during the session. They will help the groups discuss examples of compromise.

Be prepared to sign 2 Samuel 20:14-22. Practice so you can make it an interesting story without looking at the text.

Be ready to answer questions from the daily readings from last week.

FOCUS ATTENTION

Write the word compromise on the board. Ask members to share their ideas about what compromise means. **EXPLAIN:** *Often people disagree about ideas or plans. These people may even have the same goal, but their ideas about achieving the goal may be different. When this happens, a compromise may help. Usually in a compromise, everyone gets something they want. But, everyone also gives up something.*

Divide the group into two or three smaller groups. Ask the group leaders to guide the smaller groups in a discussion of the idea of compromise. Each group should think of an example of a conflict and a compromise to solve the conflict. After the groups have had time to think of an example, let the groups share their examples with the larger group.

EXPLAIN: *Today we will see an example of compromise that saved many lives.*

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Division (2 Samuel 20:1-2)

Summarize the events from 2 Samuel 19:40-43. Then sign 2 Samuel 20:1-2. **ASK:** *Why was Sheba able to start trouble?* (The men from Israel were

already angry. They were jealous because the men of Judah took David back to Jerusalem to take over as king again.)

2. Civil War (2 Samuel 20:14-16)

Sign the story from 2 Samuel 20:14-22. **ASK:** *Why did Joab want to stop Sheba's rebellion? The fighting just ended between David's army and Absalom's army. Now the men of Israel would fight the men of Judah. Also, Joab likely wanted David to keep him as the commander of the army. In last week's session we saw David wanted to make Amasa the new commander.*

3. Wisdom Wins (2 Samuel 20:17-21)

Discuss the following questions: *What was the wise woman's idea? How did she convince Joab to let the people in the city live? What did Joab give up in the compromise? What did he get? What did the woman and the city do? What did they get?*

Our lives today are very different from David's time. We will probably never be in a situation like the wise woman of Abel Beth Maacah. But, we do need wisdom for our lives each day. Ask members to find James 1:5 in their Bibles. **ASK:** *How can we get wisdom to do the right thing?* We should ask God. We can also listen to advice from godly people.

IN MY CONTEXT

Discuss as a group about times members found godly ways to solve problems and help everyone involved. Do we sometimes need to make compromises when making plans in our church?

Remind members, we should never compromise on our faith or beliefs. This means we should not give up our ideas of right and wrong to follow the world's ideas.

Close in prayer asking God for strength to stand strong in our beliefs and faith. Ask for wisdom to compromise our plans when it is right.

Encourage members to do the daily readings this week.



RESOLVED

2 Samuel 21:1-6,10-14

PLAN AHEAD

Pray for members to understand how God feels about promises and justice.

Ask a volunteer to prepare to sign the story from Joshua 9:3-27. This gives the background for the session today. If you cannot find a volunteer, be prepared to sign the story yourself.

Be prepared to answer questions from the daily readings this week.

FOCUS ATTENTION

EXPLAIN: *Today's story is a strange one. It is hard to imagine the events from this story happening today. We must remember David's time was different from today. It was almost 3000 years ago. But, God's character is the same. He is still just and He wants us to honor our promises.*

There is a story we need to know so we can understand the session for today. Ask the volunteer to sign the story from Joshua 9:3-27. After the story, **ASK:** *How do we know keeping promises is important to God?* In today's Scripture we will see an example of how important it is to Him.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. The Cause (2 Samuel 21:1-3)

Sign 2 Samuel 21:1-3. The shortage of food (NCV) is also called famine.

ASK: *Why do you think David waited so long to ask God about the reason for the famine?*

When believers have problems, do we ask God what we can learn from the problems? Perhaps God uses some problems we face as a way to discipline us. Ask members to find Hebrews 12:10-11 in their Bibles.

ASK: *Why does God discipline His people?* Remember, God always wants the best for His children.

EXPLAIN: *We do not know how Saul tried to kill all the Gibeonites. That story is not in the Bible. The important thing is Saul broke the promise the Israelites made to the Gibeonites. The whole country was suffering the consequences.*

2. The Request (2 Samuel 21:4-6)

Sign 2 Samuel 21:4-6. Ask questions six and seven under Explore the Text (p. 93). **ASK:** *Why did the Gibeonites ask David to kill Saul's sons? It is possible the Gibeonites felt Saul's family was still a danger to them. Or maybe they wanted revenge. Whatever their reason, they needed justice (see Psalm 103:6).*

3. The Resolution (2 Samuel 21:10-14)

EXPLAIN: *David found two of Saul's sons (Rizpah was their mother) and five of his grandsons. He gave them to the Gibeonites and they killed them. They put them on stakes on a hill.*

Sign 2 Samuel 21:10-14. Other passages in Scripture show how the Israelites felt about dead bodies. In their culture it was a terrible shame for bodies to be out in the open. That is the reason the men from Jabesh Gilead took Saul and Jonathan's bodies from the Philistines (verse 12).

ASK: *How did David honor the dead men? How did God answer the prayers for the land? (He sent the rain.)*

IN MY CONTEXT

God still wants us to look to Him in difficult times. We need to talk with Him and ask for His guidance. Ask the last three questions under Explore the Text.

Ask members to share their experience with prayer during hard times. Prayer helps us stay close to our Father. We can also find answers when we pray. The Holy Spirit can lead us to understand God's desire for us through reading God's Word and through prayer.

Close with prayer asking God to give us wisdom as we live in challenging times. Encourage members to do the daily readings this week.



THANKFUL

2 Samuel 22:26-36, 50-51

PLAN AHEAD

Pray for members to understand God's holy character and express thanks to Him.

Ask three volunteers to each sign one portion of the Scripture for today's session.

Be prepared to answer questions from the daily readings for this week.

FOCUS ATTENTION

Write on the board, "we can trust God to be true to His character."

ASK: *What does this mean?* It means He will always be who He has always been. He does not change. Hebrews 13:8 says, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever."

Also, God's character determines His actions. He is love, so His actions reflect His love. He is just and fair, so His actions will be right. God will not act in any way that conflicts with His character. Ask members to share other characteristics and actions of God.

Samuel 22 is a song David wrote for God. This is David's response to God for God's actions in his life. In the song David praised God and thanked Him. We have learned some of the things God did for David.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Holy (2 Samuel 22:26-29)

Ask one of the volunteers to sign 2 Samuel 22:26-29. Discuss the first three questions from Explore the Text. Then guide members to take turns signing the verses from the Bible Skill. God wants His people to be humble. He is against those who are proud. Discuss the difference between humble and proud. Humble people know they need God and His help. Proud people feel they don't need Him. They want to make all their own decisions without God's help.

2. Shield (2 Samuel 22:30-36)

Ask another volunteer to sign 2 Samuel 22:30-36. David's language in his song helps us see pictures in our minds. Discuss some of these pictures.

ASK: *How are God's words a shield? How is God like a rock? How can God's followers be like a deer? What does it mean that David felt he could use a bronze bow?*

David clearly believes God is the only God. David knows his salvation is from God. Christians also believe salvation comes from God alone through His Son, Jesus. Ask question five under Explore the Text.

3. Eternal (2 Samuel 22:50-51)

Ask the third volunteer to sign 2 Samuel 22:50-51. **ASK:** *How can we praise God among the nations? We can talk about Him every place we go. Some Christians go on mission trips. Some move to other countries to teach others about Jesus and the good news.*

Discuss the last question from Explore the Text.

IN MY CONTEXT

Paul wrote to believers and said we should be thankful in all things (1 Thess. 5:18). It is easy to thank God when things are going well and when we have plenty. How can we thank God in difficult times? We can always thank God for who He is. We can focus on His character and praise Him at all times.

Divide the group into smaller groups of two or three. Ask the groups to create an ASL song of praise and thanksgiving to God. After the groups have had time to complete their songs, bring the large group back together. Let each small group sign their song for the whole group.

Close with prayer. Encourage members to do the readings for this week.

DISCIPLINED

2 Samuel 24:10-25

PLAN AHEAD

Pray for members to understand how God's discipline is good. Pray for those who may not be believers. Pray they will make a choice to follow Christ.

Prepare to answer any questions members might have from the daily readings for the week.

FOCUS ATTENTION

ASK: *Have you ever done something you thought was a good idea, but later knew it was wrong? How did it feel to know you sinned? David knew he sinned and he knew there would be consequences.*

In today's session we will learn again how sin has consequences. David wanted to count the men in the kingdom who could fight. The Bible does not tell us why David wanted to count them. Some Bible teachers think David was proud of his kingdom. He wanted to know how big his army could be. Counting the men could also mean David trusted his army more than he trusted God.

David told Joab to count the men. It took over nine months for Joab to travel through the kingdom and count the men. Whatever David's reason for counting the men, when it was done he knew he had sinned.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Confession (2 Samuel 24:10)

Sign 2 Samuel 24:10. In Psalm 32:3-5 David described how it feels to hold sin inside. When he recognized his sin in counting the men, he confessed it quickly. Ask question three under Explore the Text (p.109). Direct members to find and read 1 John 1:9 in their Bibles. **ASK:** *Why is it important to confess our sin?*

2. Consequences (2 Samuel 24:11-15)

Sign 2 Samuel 24:11-15. **ASK:** *What choices did David have for the consequences of his sin? Which one did he choose? Why do you think he chose as he did?*

Sometimes when we choose to sin, we think no one else will be affected by our sin. But truly, our sin can affect others. Ask question six under Explore the Text.

3. Compassion (2 Samuel 24:16-17)

Sign 2 Samuel 24:16-17. David was wise to choose to be in God's hands for his punishment. He knew God would be merciful. At this point in the story God stopped the angel from killing anymore. **ASK:** *How did David feel? What did he ask God to do?*

4. Contrition (2 Samuel 24:18-25)

Sign 2 Samuel 24:18-25. Ask questions seven through nine under Explore the Text. David offered to take all the punishment from God on himself. He accepted all the responsibility. In Old Testament times the people made sacrifices to cover their sins. David made a sacrifice to show God covered his sin.

ASK: *Why is it important for believers to give gifts to God today? What kind of gifts can we give?* We do not give things to God to buy His forgiveness. Jesus already made the sacrifice for us. He offers us the gift of salvation.

IN MY CONTEXT

We know all people are sinners (Rom. 3:23). We all deserve the punishment of death, but God offers us eternal life (Rom. 6:23). God showed His love for us by sending His Son to die in our place (Rom. 5:8). We only need to believe in Him (Rom. 10:9-10,13). As we follow Jesus, our desires change to His desires (Luke 9:23).

If anyone in your group has not made a decision to follow Christ before, invite them to talk with you.

Close in prayer. Encourage members to do the daily readings for this week.

LEADER PACK

PACK ITEM 1 *Map: David's Rise to Power*

Sessions 1,3,5,7,10 Use the map on page 155 or locate a map in a Bible atlas that shows the missionary journeys of Paul.

PACK ITEM 2 *Outline of 2 Samuel*

Sessions 1,2,5,6,11,13 Refer to the outline printed on page 12.

PACK ITEM 3 *Poster: Plan of Salvation*

Sessions 6,11 If you would like to have salvation in Jesus Christ, sincerely pray a prayer like this one: "Dear God, I confess to You my sin and need for salvation. I turn away from my sin and place my faith in Jesus as my Savior and Lord. Amen."

PACK ITEM 4 *Poster: The Ark of the Covenant*

Sessions 3,8 Create a poster that lists the following information:

The ark of the covenant contained the Ten Commandments and was the central symbol of God's presence with the people of Israel. Moses followed God's instructions as he constructed the ark of the covenant at the base of Mount Sinai (Ex. 19–30). Located inside the holy of holies in its permanent location at Shiloh, the ark of the covenant had a room to itself. The box was made of acacia wood with gold overlays. It was about four feet long, two and a half feet wide and deep. The ornate lid was called the "mercy seat," where the High Priest would make atonement for all of Israel (Lev. 16:17).

PACK ITEM 5 *Map: David's Jerusalem*

Sessions 3,8 Use a Bible atlas to locate Jerusalem during King David's reign, paying particular attention to the location of the ark of the covenant.

PACK ITEM 6 *Key Verse: 2 Samuel 7:16*

Sessions 4,6,10,12 Display 2 Samuel 7:16 on a whiteboard or large sheet of paper.

PACK ITEM 7 *Handout: 2 Samuel Time Line*

Sessions 1,3,10 Locate a study Bible with a time line of the major people and events in 1 and 2 Samuel (from 1200–900 BC). Use it as a reference during this study.

PACK ITEM 8 *Handout: Memory Verses Bookmark*

Sessions 1,4,6,9,11 Distribute memory verse bookmark to your group.

PACK ITEM 9 *Handout: Direct Descendants*

Sessions 4,7,9 Use a Bible dictionary or commentary to explain create a poster of David's family tree, leading to Jesus Christ.

PACK ITEM 10 *Handout: 2 Samuel and the Psalms*

Sessions 2,3,8,12 More than 70 psalms are attributed to David. Many of them can be attributed to events in David's life that led him into a greater relationship with God. Use a Bible commentary to create a handout of the psalms known to have been written by David and the circumstances of each writing.

PACK ITEM 11 *Handout: Key Leaders in David's Kingdom*

Sessions 2,6,9,10,13

Use a Bible dictionary to create a list of background information on the people who influenced David's life.

PACK ITEM 12 *Handout: Movement/Location of the Ark*

Sessions 3,8

Create a handout using the following Scriptures, noting the movement of the ark in each: Joshua 3-6; Deuteronomy 11:26-32; 27:1-26; Joshua 8:30-35; Judges 20:26; 1 Samuel 1:9; 3:3; 4; 5:1-6:12; 6:21-7:2; 2 Samuel 6; 1 Kings 8; 2 Chronicles 5:1

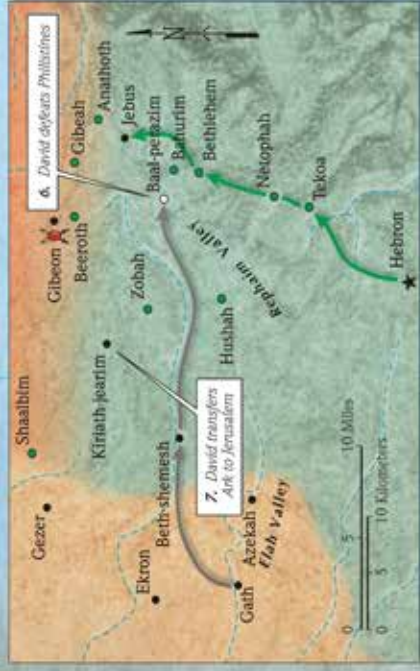
PACK ITEM 13 *Handout: Israel's Counterparts in 1–2 Samuel*

Sessions 1-13

Use a Bible dictionary to create a handout describing the fathers, locations, and battles of these counterparts of Israel:

Moab/Moabites, Ammon/Ammonites, Edom/Edomites, Kings of Zobah, Philistia/Philistines, Amalek/Amalekites

David's Rise to Power



2 Samuel

We love our heroes, flaws and all. In the pages of the Old Testament, King David stands tall as one of its greatest heroes. But he was no flawless angel. His faults are well documented in the pages of Scripture, as we will see in this quarter's study. Yet this "man after God's own heart" is one of the Bible's most beloved figures. The Book of 2 Samuel is about David and his reign over Israel. But really, it's not. Second Samuel is ultimately about God's sovereign reign over people and events and rulers and kingdoms. Second Samuel shows how God worked through David to provide for the salvation of humanity through the promised Messiah, the Son of David, the eternal King, Jesus Christ. May these studies from this book point us to Jesus, our Savior and Lord.



Let the Word dwell in you.

The Promise of a

18 But with thee I will make it, and thou shalt be fruitful, and thou shalt have many sons, and thy sons shall be with thee.

19 And of every living creature of every sort shalt thou keep them alive with thee, and female.

20 Of fowls after their kind, of every beast after their kind, of every creeping thing after its kind, and of every beast of the earth after his kind, shall come unto thee, to keep thee.

here, and its meaning is often unclear. Some translations include "roof" or "inches over the sides of the boat," then it refers to a four-sided boat from 6:17. Only after He commanded God tell him why it was a flood—a term used only in Genesis 6-8 most nations covered the entire globe. This (2 Pet. 2:5; 3:6). The dominant Christian understanding remains so today. Defenders of the flood's impact also tackle questions required to flood the entire pre-flood geography, scientists have needed four times the flood to cover the hills. In this light some defend geology that pre-flood geography. Specifically, the flood was in the pre-flood world and that the world's geographical and geological features were largely the same. A smaller quantity of water, perhaps by an unknown mechanism, was greatly diminished at 6:18. The term covenant is used between two parties.