

Men's Sunday Night
A Study in the Life of David
A Man After God's Own Heart
Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Lesson</u>	<u>Scripture</u>
3/23	Potluck/ Review Intro	
3/30	1	1 Samuel 16
4/5	Men's Breakfast	
4/13	Resurrection Sunday	
4/20	Easter	
4/27	2	1 Samuel 17-21
5/4	Men's Steak & Study	
5/11	Mother's Day	
5/18	3	1 Samuel 22-25
5/25	Memorial Day Weekend	
6/1	4	1 Samuel 26-31
6/7	Men's Breakfast	
6/15	Father's Day	
6/22	5	2 Samuel 1-5
6/29	6	2 Samuel 6
7/6	Fourth of July Weekend	
7/13	7	2 Samuel 7
7/20	8	2 Samuel 8-9
7/27	9	2 Samuel 10-12
8/3	Men's Steak & Study	
8/10	10	2 Samuel 15-19
8/17	11	2 Samuel 20-24
8/24	12	1 Kings 1:1-2:11

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Introduction
1 & 2 Samuel

God Raises up a King

Christianity rests on actual events that happen to real people, whose experiences have been written down in a reliable document, the Bible. The books of 1 and 2 Samuel tell about one of the most important developments in the history of faith: the transition of ancient Israel into a kingdom and the installation of God's choice for the nations king, David.

These books show that God works through history. Today there is a tendency to see history as either unimportant, or as a random series of incidents. But these books remind us that God is and has been working out His purposes.

In ancient Israel, He raised up His kin for His people. In light of the years of decline seen in the book of Judges, this development might seem long overdue. But God carries out His plans in His time and in His way. He also works the choices of peoples and nations, allowing principles of cause and effect to weave the tapestry of time. David by no means was a perfect man. But despite his flaws, he kept turning toward the Lord for guidance, help, and forgiveness. He was God's choice to solidly establish a monarchy to last forever.

The Rise and Rule of David

The books of 1 and 2 Samuel were originally one book which gave an account in the transition between the period of the judges and the monarchy. 1 Samuel tells of the rise of David to the throne, and 2 Samuel deals with David's reign.

The demand for a king was based on the chronic moral and spiritual breakdowns that occurred under the Judges. As 1 Samuel opens, we find Israel once again drifting under ineffective leadership. Eventually disaster strikes as the ark is captured by the Philistines. God graciously brought the ark back to His people and raised up Samuel as their judge. But as Samuel grew older, a debate sprung up for and against a monarchy. Samuel sons were not worthy to succeed him, and there seemed to be no other leadership on the horizon. Consequently, the people insisted

on having a king and God finally granted the people's wish with Saul. Yet, Scripture says that this request was a "*great wickedness*" in that it was a denial of the Lord's right to rule over His people. The problem was not that Israel did not need a king, but that the Israelites were not willing to serve the king that they already had, the Lord. How then could they follow a human king who had faults and failures?

Ironically, God was already at work to produce a ruler of His own choosing when the people demanded a king. He allowed Saul to be anointed and reign temporarily, but His own plans called for David. 1 Samuel tells the story of how God brought David to the throne in spite of Saul's efforts to the contrary.

2 Samuel continues with the account of David's reign. At first, he was king over Judah only, which he ruled for seven and a half years. During much of this period, he fought a war with the successors of Saul, until he finally gained control over all Israel.

Personality Profile: David

Author and Setting: The author of 1 and 2 Samuel is unknown. The Judge Samuel, for whom these books are named may have written much of 1 Samuel. However, someone else must have completed the rest after Samuel's death. The events of these books take place in the land of Israel and various adjoining territories. The account begins with the birth of Samuel, the last of Israel's judges, probably around 1050 BC and ends late in David's life, around 970 BC.

Home: Bethlehem during his youth, Gibeah while he served Saul, Ziklag during much of the time while Saul pursued him, Hebron during the first seven years of his reign; Jerusalem during the rest of his reign.

Family: Was a son of Jesse, a descendant of Judah. He had seven brothers and two sisters. Married to numerous wives and concubines, including Saul's daughter, Abigail, and Bathsheba. Father of numerous sons and daughters, including Absalom and Solomon. An ancestor of Jesus.

Occupation: Shepherd, court musician, poet and military commander under Saul king of Israel.

Best Known Today As: The king under who the Israelite monarchy was firmly established. Known as “A man after God’s own heart.” Most significant ancestor of Jesus.

David the Man

The theme of David is summed up in, the only one in all scripture to be called “A man after God’s own heart.” This single individual is mentioned more than any other Old Testament character in the pages of the New Testament. Poet, musician, courageous warrior, and national statesmen, David distinguished himself as one of God’s greatest men. In battle he modeled invincible confidence. In decisions, he judged with wisdom. In loneliness, he wrote with transparency and quiet trust. In friendship he was loyal to the end. Whether a humble shepherd boy or a musician before King Saul, he remained faithful and trustworthy. Even in his position to the highest position in the land, David modeled integrity and humility. What a man of God!

But, as we shall see, he was anything but perfect. Having earned the public’s trust and respect, he forfeits it all in a brief season of sensual pleasure. Then, as the consequences kick in, we discover another side of the man's makeup, lustfulness as a husband, weakness as a father, and partiality as a leader is all there for us to learn, and preserved for all to remember. David was a great man, though far from perfect, nevertheless lived a life with strengths worth modeling. Since our world is desperately in need of models worth following, here is one deserving of our time and attention.

Men's Sunday Night
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Lesson 1 - 1 Samuel 16
The Humble Servant

We enter now into a study of the life of David, "*the man after God's own heart.*" As Saul is a picture of the carnal life, so David is a picture of the spiritual life of the believer who walks by faith in the Lord. It is true that David sinned. Unlike Saul, however, David confessed his sins and sought to restore his fellowship with God. We see in this chapter two scenes in David's early life.

The Obedient Son (16:1–13)

What a solemn statement: "*I have rejected Saul!*" This rejection was not yet known to the people, and Saul was still "putting on a front" as the king of the land. So dangerous was Saul that Samuel had to devise a plan to escape his wrath when visiting Bethlehem. When, at God's direction, Samuel arrived at the house of Jesse to invite them to the feast, David was not even there. He was in the fields caring for the sheep. Samuel was about to make the mistake of evaluating the men by their physical gifts when God reminded him that the heart was the important thing.

The Humble Servant (16:14–23)

What a tragic contrast: The Spirit came upon David, but departed from Saul! An evil spirit was permitted by God to afflict Saul and he became, at times, like a madman. True, the king might "feel better" afterward, but it would be a false peace. The servants should have prayed for Saul to get right with God. David came to court and immediately became a favorite. Of course, had Saul known that God had chosen David to be king, he would have immediately tried to kill the lad. When he did discover this, Saul began to persecute David and hunt him in the wilderness of Israel.

Read 1 Samuel 16:1-13 and answer the following questions:

1. What was Samuel doing when the Lord called him to anoint the next king? Why was Samuel afraid to carry out the Lord's instructions?

2. What did God promise to do when Samuel arrived at Jesse's house?

3. Why did Samuel think that Eliab might be the son God had chosen? What mattered to God in choosing the next king for Israel (16:7)?

4. Why did Samuel ask Jesse if he had any other sons? When he learned of the existence of another son, what did Samuel command?

5. How is David described in his meeting with Samuel? What was the result of the anointing of David by Samuel (16:13)?

Read 1 Samuel 16:14-23 and answer the following questions:

6. What were two unfortunate characteristics of Saul's spiritual life after his disobedience (16:14)?

7. How did Saul's servant describe David (16:18)?

8. What message did Saul send to Jesse? How did Jesse respond to the king's request to send his youngest son (16:19-20)?

9. How did Saul respond to David when David joined Saul's court? What relationship developed between Saul and David (16:21-23)?

10. How do you imagine you would feel if, like Saul, you were first chosen by God and then rejected by God?

11. What step could you take this week to help assure that you do not become like Saul, from whom the Spirit of the Lord departed?

12. Using the example of the young David, how could you encourage a young person to develop into the person God wants him or her to be?

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Lesson 2 – 1 Samuel 17-21
The Victorious Solider

Chapter 17

The story of David and Goliath is familiar and carries with it many practical lessons for the Christian life. All of us face giants of one kind or another, but we may overcome them through the power of God. Goliath was probably ten feet tall, with armor weighing over 150 pounds. He was “the Philistine,” their great champion, and so terrifying was he that he threw the Jewish army into panic. Had Saul been a godly leader, he would have claimed Deuteronomy 20 and led his army to victory, but when people are out of fellowship with God, they can only lead others into defeat. David arrived with provisions for his brothers, and immediately he was interested in the challenge of the giant. David had proved the power of God privately in the fields caring for his sheep; now he would demonstrate this power publicly to the glory of God.

The practical lesson here is that God gives victory in response to our faith. God had tested David privately with a lion and a bear; now he was to test him openly with a giant. Too often God's people fail at the smallest test that comes their way, little realizing that the “little tests” are but preparation for the bigger battles that are sure to come.

There is also a typical lesson here, for David is a picture of Jesus Christ. David's name means “beloved,” and Christ is God's beloved Son. Both were born in Bethlehem. Both were rejected by their brethren. David was anointed king years before he was permitted to reign, just as Christ is King now but will not reign on earth until Satan is banished. King Saul typifies Satan in this present age; for Saul was rejected and defeated, yet permitted to reign until David came to the throne. Satan is permitted to persecute God's people, yet one day he will be defeated.

Chapter 18-21

These chapters form the transition between David's service in Saul's court and his exile as a fugitive. They explain how David was moved from being Saul's favorite to being Saul's enemy. The main issue here is David's faith, and we can see in

these chapters how this man of God all but lost his confidence in God because of the trials that came to his life. David's greatest test of faith was not when he faced Goliath; it was when he had to serve daily in Saul's court.

Read 1 Samuel 17:1-58 and answer the following questions:

1. What was happening just as David arrived where the army was camped? (17:20-23)

2. How confident was young David when he met the king? What was David's answer to the Philistine champion's boasting?

3. In the story of David and Goliath, what 'weapons' were the most powerful?

Read 1 Samuel 18:1-30 and answer the following questions:

4. How did the officers and people of Israel respond to David's successes and promotions? (18:5) What chorus was heard in the streets when Saul and David returned from the battle in which Goliath was slain? (18:7)

5. How did Saul feel about David's popularity? (18:8-9) What two facts irritated Saul most about David? (18:28)

6. Why was Saul afraid of David even though Saul was king? What were some evidences that "the Lord was with David"?

Read 1 Samuel 19:1-24 and answer the following questions:

7. What were some of Jonathan's reasons that Saul should not harm David? (19:4-5)

8. What incident occurred inside Saul's house? What plan did Saul set in motion when he was unable to kill David with his spear? (19:9-11)

9. Why did Saul want to murder a man who did him no wrong?

Read 1 Samuel 20:1-42 and answer the following questions:

10. What was the difference between David and Jonathan's perceptions of Saul's behavior? What situation did David and Jonathan set up to test Saul's intentions toward David?

11. What promise did Jonathan make to David before God? What promise did Jonathan ask David to make to him? (20:12-15)

12. What does it say about Jonathan that he chose to remain loyal to David, even to the point of working against his own father's commands?

Read 1 Samuel 21:1-15 and answer the following questions:

13. How did David explain the fact that he was alone?

14. How might the story have turned out differently if David had told the priest that he was fleeing from Saul?

15. Why was David's gimmick (pretending to be insane) effective in getting Achish to dismiss him as a threat?

The Value of Friendships Between Men

Many men today have numerous acquaintances but few real friends. As a result, a man can feel lonely, isolated, and misunderstood. Even if he is married to a supportive wife whom he has good communication, he can feel an emptiness inside, because no one knows his soul "man to man." David and Jonathan shared a rare and valuable friendship. Their bond serves as a model for men today who need and seek healthy relationships with other men. Perhaps the key, as with any relationship, is trust and loyalty. That was the basis of David and Jonathan's companionship. Why else would a child of royal privilege risk friendship with a rural shepherd boy who was an enemy of the family. Jonathan's family had experienced what today would be called severe dysfunction. Perhaps insecure and troubled he was drawn to David because he was recognized as someone who would be true and faithful. As the two young men got to know each other, they formalized their commitment to each other. If you are a man, are you prepared to enter into this kind of profound trust and loyalty with another man? It may mean sacrifice, just as Jonathan ultimately lost his relationship with his father Saul in order to fulfill his pledge to David. Some things are worth paying dearly for. A solid friendship that lasts through the years is one of them.

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Lesson 3 – 1 Samuel 22-25

Chapter 22

David is now completely separated from Saul's court and is considered an outlaw and a rebel. David assembled a rag-tag loyal band of followers at the cave of Adullam, a crowd of 400 men that eventually grew to 600. He would want to protect his brethren since Saul might want to slay them as well as David. Certainly this "motley crew" illustrates the kind of people who flee to Christ for refuge: people in distress or in debt, people discontented with life. This period of persecution in David's life was a part of the preparation for the throne. He was already a great soldier; now he needed to suffer in the wilderness to learn *not* to trust men but to trust the Lord. All of us need "wilderness testings" to bring us closer to the Lord and to make us better equipped to serve Him.

Chapter 23

It was important that David live, for it was he who would deliver Israel, establish the kingdom in glory, and become the father of Christ in the flesh. Satan used Saul to seek to kill David, but God was too strong for the enemy. As long as David sought the mind of the Lord, God gave him protection and victory.

The Philistines were David's enemy and the enemy of Israel, so it was right for him to fight them. When the child of God is in the will of God, he may expect the help of God. So intense was Saul's spiritual blindness, that he did not thank God for David's victory, but instead came to fight the victor himself. How wicked is the human heart untouched by the grace of God.

Chapter 24 -25

"He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city." God gave David the grace needed to show kindness to his enemy, and this is even greater than defeating the giant Goliath. Saul's men had been lying about David and telling Saul that David was trying to slay him. This experience gave David opportunity to prove to Saul and the leaders that he was not trying to slay Saul, but that he honored the king even though the king was out of the will of God.

Read 1 Samuel 22 and answer the following questions:

1. With what reasoning did Saul appeal to his officials to support him rather than David? What accusation did Saul make against the priests at Nob? (22:7-13)
2. On what grounds did Ahimelech maintain that he was innocent of aiding rebellion against Saul? (22:14)
3. Why, according to Ahimelech, did he not suspect that David was at odds with Saul? Why did David find himself in a dangerous situation in the very place he had sought refuge from Saul? (22:15)

Read 1 Samuel 23 and answer the following questions:

4. What was David's first response to the news that an Israelite town was being attacked by an enemy? Why were David's men hesitant to follow him into battle?
5. How did God reassure David when he came the second time for guidance? What was good about the way David made his decisions?
6. How would you compare the way Saul and David arrived at their respective decisions about what to do next?

7. Why do you think Saul continued to try to kill David, although he knew David was God's anointed?

Read 1 Samuel 24 and answer the following questions:

8. What did David's men tell him when they discovered Saul alone in the cave? What arguments did David give to prove that he was not conspiring against the king? (24:9-11)

9. For David, what was the authoritative proof that he was not an evil man? On what terms did Saul and David part after their meeting in the cave? (24:13-22)

10. What was the single most important reason David had for not harming Saul? When does restraint speak more loudly than action?

Read 1 Samuel 25 and answer the following questions:

11. What favor did David ask of Nabal through his representatives? How did David react to the message from Nabal?

12. What action did Abigail take when she heard about Nabal's blunder? How did David view the fact that Abigail came out to meet him?

13. How can we use the wisdom of Abigail in our present day living when dealing with difficult situations with people? How does 1 Samuel 25 reinforce the idea that our choices have consequences?

Pledging Allegiance 1 Samuel 24:5-6

David spared Saul's life twice. Once in the cave at En Gedi, and again in the wilderness of Ziph. Even though Saul was demented, unfit for office, and bent on destroying David, he refused to take his life because Saul was the Lord's anointed. In fact, David was troubled for having violated even the garment that Saul was wearing. It's similar to the way Americans "pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States, and to the republic for which it stands." To David, the robe of Saul represented the king.

David's respect for Saul's position serves as a model for the high respect that God's people today should have for the government and its officials. Like David, we may not care for the people in office or their actions, but we can at least respect the position since government is ordained by God. In fact, all officeholders, whether or not they are Christians or even God-fearing people, deserve our respect and prayers. A governmental position invested by the prayers of God's people, anointed by God's representative, and confirmed by an oath of office invoking God's help is an office undeniably God-ordained.

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Lesson 4 - 1 Samuel 26-31

We come now to the tragic end of Saul's life. *The man who "stood higher than any of the people"* now falls to the earth in a witch's house and then falls dead on the battlefield. Perhaps the best way to study these sad events is to notice the obvious contrasts between David and Saul.

Why David returned to the wilderness of Ziph when he had experienced trouble there before is difficult to understand. Perhaps it's just an illustration that he, like all men of clay, made mistakes. David's message to Saul was actually a plea for him to return to the Lord. We play the fool when we run ahead of the Lord when we fail to obey completely, when we turn our back on our godly friends, when we seek guidance from the devil, and when we refuse to repent even when we know we are wrong. *"Be sure your sins will find you out!"*

Chapters 27, 29, 30 deal with David's victories as he sought the mind of the Lord, while chapter 28 pictures Saul's terrible defeat as he sought aid in a witch's house. Of course, David was not always walking in the will of the Lord, for it seems that his faith failed him when he went back to Gath to live under the protection of the enemy. He had gotten into trouble there before, but now he was the leader of a strong band of 600 men and his reception was much better. When we lean on the wisdom of the flesh, we always end up in trouble. The contrast between chapters 28 and 30 is striking: Saul had departed from the Lord and therefore had no divine guidance, while David looked to the Lord for courage and direction. *"Seek the Lord while He may be found"* was a warning Saul did not heed.

It is quite another picture when we look at Saul's midnight visit to the witch's house. Samuel was dead, but even when he was alive; his ministry was not really appreciated by Saul. How sad when people discover their real friends too late. Saul's only recourse was to visit a witch, and this was prohibited by the Law. It is alarming to what ends people will go when they have turned their back on the Lord. There have been endless debates over the matter of Samuel's appearance at the call of the witch. It seems likely that: First, Samuel's coming was of the Lord and not because of the witch's art. Second, the witch was surprised when Samuel appeared, and Third, Samuel came because he had a special message for the king from the Lord. The witch could not have impersonated Samuel since she did not know Saul was coming, nor, is it possible that Satan could have accomplished this feat, since God would not allow Satan to deliver such a heavy message, or would the Lord put His approval on a practice His Word condemned. The witch becomes a mere spectator once Samuel is on the scene. It is likely that Saul heard Samuel's words but did not see Samuel's form.

While David was sending gifts to his friends, Saul and his family were being stripped on the battlefield! *"To be carnally minded is death."* Gilboa had been the scene of some great victories in the days of Deborah and Gideon, but this day it would be the scene of a tragic defeat. God had abandoned Saul, and the only thing left for the rebellious king was death. How sad that his innocent son, Jonathan, had to suffer because of the father's sins.

Read 1 Samuel 26:1-25 and answer the following questions:

1. How did David manage to avoid falling into the trap Saul set for him?
2. Where did David and Abishai find Saul? What did Abishai assume when he realized that Saul was sleeping and vulnerable? Why did David prevent Abishai from killing Saul? (26:6-9)
3. When David penetrated Saul's camp at night, what was his mission?

Read 1 Samuel 27:1-12 and answer the following questions:

4. Where did David and his men settle when they left Israel? What request did David make of Achish, king of Gath? (27:2-5)
5. What was David's reason for killing all the people wherever he raided? (27:11)
6. What was Achish's primary reason for trusting David? (27:12)

Read 1 Samuel 28:1-25 and answer the following questions:

7. What was the status of mediums and those that consulted the spirits of the dead in Israel during the days of Samuel and Saul? Where did Saul turn for guidance when he got no word from God? (28:3-8)

8. What was Samuel's reply to Saul about his future in the battle to come? (28:16-19)

9. What did Saul reveal about himself when he chose to consult a medium?

Read 1 Samuel 29:1-11 and answer the following questions:

10. Where did David and his men find themselves as the Philistines lined up against Israel? (29:2)

11. What was the fear of the other commanders about David's presence at the front? What was Achish's final decision about David's involvement in the battle? (29:4-10)

12. Why didn't David's presence among their troops make sense to the Philistine generals?

Read 1 Samuel 30:1-31 and answer the following questions:

13. What was the reaction of David and his troops to the destruction of their city?
What was the attitude of the troops toward David when they returned to find their families gone?
(30:4-6)

14. What did some of David's men want to do about the 200 troops who had not gone into battle?
What was David's perspective on the sharing of the spoils of war? (30:22-25)

15. To what extent was God's word to David fulfilled in the course of this story?

Read 1 Samuel 31:1-13 and answer the following questions:

16. What happened to Saul and his sons in the fierce battle with the Philistines? (31:2-3)

17. Why did Saul ask his armorbearer to finish him off with his sword? What did Saul do when his armorbearer refused to kill him?

18. What did the valiant men of Jabesh Gilead do in response to the Philistines' treatment of their leaders' bodies? (31:11-13)

**The Seduction of Spirits
1 Samuel 28:7**

By consulting a medium Saul not only made a poor choice, but got bad advice. His use of witchcraft was a violation of the law and ultimately led to his death. Scripture is clear that God's people are to have nothing to do with mediums, oracles, soothsayers, or other elements of witchcraft. God has spoken clearly against seeking spirituality and guidance apart from Him. We need not resort to witchcraft or other occult practices, as He has given us His Word to guide us and His Spirit to help us. He also gives us the counsel of wise friends in the faith.

For us today, God does not resort to magic and other occult practices to make His will known or to exercise His power. His people have no reason to resort to any sort of magic, witchcraft, astrology, horoscopes, Ouija boards, tarot cards, mediums, seances, fortune cards, spiritual advisors, crystals, potions, drugs, or any element of the occult. If we want to engage in true spirituality we can find it clearly presented through the Scriptures and ultimately in the person of Jesus, who is God among us "*God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.*" We should be aware of spiritual evil but not seduced by it.

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Lesson 5 – 2 Samuel 1-5

These chapters describe the events leading up to David's coronation as king of Israel. A lesser saint would have rejoiced that his enemy was slain, but David was a man after God's own heart and felt keenly the tragedy of Saul's sin. Of course, David's dear friend Jonathan was also dead; the sin of a disobedient father had brought judgment upon innocent people. Note that an Amalekite brought the news and claimed to be the one who finally took Saul's life. Had Saul obeyed the Lord in 1 Samuel 15 and slain all of the Amalekites, this would not have happened. The sin we fail to slay is the one that slays us.

Joab, Abishai, and Asahel were all sons of David's half-sister Zeruiah. Thus, they were David's nephews as well as valued men in his army. David first reigned over Judah, his own tribe, with his headquarters at Hebron. However, Abner, the commander of Saul's army, had made Saul's son Ishbosheth the king over the other tribes. He relocated the capital over the Jordan River in Mahanaim to protect himself and the new king from David's men.

This was the turning point: when Ishbosheth died, the way was wide open for David to rule over the entire nation. However, it must be noted that David did not approve of the method the sons of Rimmon used, and he had the murderers slain because of their crime. David knew that God was able to elevate him to the throne; he would not do evil that good might come from it. These three murders are evidence that David's road to the throne was a bloody one. God had made it very clear that David alone was to rule Israel. Perhaps Christians today are like the Jews of that day: we permit our King to reign over only a part of our lives, and the result is conflict and sorrow.

David had reigned seven years in Hebron over the tribe of Judah; now he was to reign over the entire nation for thirty-three years, making a total of forty years. This was David's third anointing. Samuel had anointed him at home in Bethlehem, and the men of Judah had anointed him at Hebron. The king now needed a capital city, and he chose Jerusalem. This stronghold had not been captured previously and the Jebusites were arrogant and defied David to attack. 1 Chronicles 11:5-8 tells us that Joab was the man God used to open the city. No sooner was David established in his own city than the old enemy, the Philistines, returned. How true this is in our personal lives: Satan waits for the "peace after the storm" to attack us again. David knew that the Lord's will was the only way to victory, so he immediately consulted Him.

Certainly, it was God's will that David reign over the entire nation, just as it is His will that Christ be Lord over all of our lives. Any part that is left outside His will is going to rebel and cause trouble. We are "*bone of His bone, and flesh of His flesh,*" and we ought to invite Him to reign over us. Only then will we have complete peace and victory. David's road to the throne covered many years and many trials, but throughout that journey he put God first and never sought vengeance or retaliation against Saul. God saw to it that David was protected and promoted according to His time and plan. He will do the same for us if we will but trust Him.

Read 2 Samuel 1:1-27 and answer the following questions:

1. According to the messenger, what was his own role in Saul's demise? How did David and his men react to the messenger's story?

2. What reaction did the messenger expect when he came to David with the news of Saul's death?

3. What figures of speech did David use to describe Saul and Jonathan's valor in battle? (1:22) What advantage was there in David's memorializing only Saul's good qualities?

Read 2 Samuel 2:1-32 and answer the following questions:

4. What two specific questions did David ask of the Lord following Saul's death?

5. What message did David send to the men of Jabesh Gilead? What message did David want the men of Jabesh Gilead to hear from him directly? (2:5-7)

6. Why did Joab decide to call off his pursuit of Abner and his men? Even when the answer seems obvious, why should we seek God's guidance? (2:27-28)

Read 2 Samuel 3:1-39 and answer the following questions:

7. What gradually happened in the war between the rival kings David and Ishbosheth? (3:1)

8. What did Abner urge the elders of Israel to do? What was the most persuasive argument for the people of Israel to declare David their king?

9. How did David react to the news of Abner's death? How did the people of Judah who followed David react to Abner's death? Why were the people watching to see if David's grief over Abner was sincere?

Read 2 Samuel 4:1-12 and answer the following questions:

10. How did Recab and Baanah manage to murder Ishbosheth without being detected? What did Recab and Baanah expect when they went directly to David with the head of Saul's son? (4:5-8)

11. Why is Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, introduced in this chapter?

12. What can we learn about the characteristics of a godly leader from David's response of Ishbosheth? How can the principles of righteous leadership as displayed by David be applied in today's world?

Read 2 Samuel 5:1-25 and answer the following questions:

13. How did the attitudes of the people of Israel toward David change throughout the course of his life, and what were the factors that led to these changes?

14. What are the important elements of David's character that allowed him to unite the tribes of Israel? How can these traits be applied to our lives today?

15. Why do you think David's victories over the Philistines were so crucial to his reign? How do victories over enemies or obstacles serve to confirm our faith? In our lives, we often face "Philistines" problems or adversaries that seem overwhelming. What practical steps can we take to seek God's guidance in such situations?

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A Man After God's Own Heart
Lesson 6 – 2 Samuel 6

David's first act as king over all of Israel was to move to Jerusalem and set it up as his capital. His next major move was even more significant, as he "arose and went with all the people who were with him to Kirjath Jearim, to bring up from there the ark of God." David was a very wise leader, realizing quickly that the basis of his rule must not be political only but, more importantly, centered in the worship of and obedience to the Lord. David's mistake was to ignore God's Word. Instead of asking the Levites to bear the ark on their shoulders, he followed the worldly example of the Philistines and put the ark on a new cart. This mistake cost Uzzah his life.

It is obvious that David's "dancing" before the Lord was a spontaneous expression of his joy that the ark of God was restored to the people. Was it undignified for David to act in this way? Certainly not! While his actions are not given as examples for us to follow, we dare not go to the other extreme and rule out all outward expressions of joy and praise in our worship of God! David blessed the people and gave them gifts to celebrate the return of the ark.

We have noted before that Michal, Saul's daughter, was never a suitable wife for David. She belonged to Saul's family and never really exhibited any faith in the God of Israel. First Samuel 19:13 indicates that she worshiped idols. David did not take her as his wife because of the leading of the Lord; he "won her" by slaying Goliath and by fulfilling Saul's murderous requirements.

It takes little imagination to see why Michal despised her husband. Certainly, her sinful attitude had been growing within for years. She resented being married to her father's armor bearer as the "prize" for victory. She resented the fact that David had other wives, all of whom were chosen after her marriage to David. Her father had died shamefully, and his enemy now reigned victoriously over all Israel. Of course, beneath all these reasons lay the basic reason: she was an unbeliever who did not understand or appreciate the things of the Lord. She wanted David to display his royal power in great pomp and ceremony; he preferred to take his place with the common people and glorify the Lord. Her harsh words to David after a great time of praise must have cut him deeply. It is usually true that Satan has a "Michal" to meet us whenever we have been rejoicing in the Lord and seeking to glorify Him. Her wicked words revealed a wicked heart, and David knew that she must be dealt with.

Read 2 Samuel 6:1-5 and answer the following questions:

1. What was the mission on which David and his men went to Baale Judah?
2. Who transported the ark, and how did they do it?
3. How did the people react to this event?

Read 2 Samuel 6:6-11 and answer the following questions:

4. As the ark was moving, what happened, and what were the consequence?
5. What prompted Uzzah to reach out and hold onto the ark? How did God judge Uzzah's action of reaching out for the ark? What was David's emotional reaction to the death of Uzzah?
6. What concerns did David have in 6:9? What did David do next with the ark?

Read 2 Samuel 6:12-15 and answer the following questions:

7. What persuaded David to go back for the ark after three months? (6:12)

8. How was the public procession the second time handled differently? What was the mood of David and the people as they transported the ark? (6:13-15)

9. What else did David do this time that showed his desire to move forward in God's way?

Read 2 Samuel 6:16-23 and answer the following questions:

10. How did Michal react when she saw David dancing before the Lord? Why do you believe that Michal was just an on-looker rather than a participant in this occasion? What might this indicate about her regard for spiritual things?

11. What was David's attitude about the way in which he had worshiped God? (6:21-22)

12. What became of Michal after this incident in which she "despised" David? (6:23) Why was Michal so upset by David's behavior in the procession?

From Morning to Dancing 2 Samuel 6:6

The journey of the ark to Jerusalem was delayed three months by the tragedy at Nachon's threshing floor. But mourning for Uzzah finally gave way to dancing as the ark entered the City of David.

David may have composed Psalm 30 before this occasion, praising the Lord by writing. Note this Spirit filled praise session between David and his Lord.

Psalm 30:1-12

I will extol You, O LORD, for You have lifted me up, And have not let my foes rejoice over me. ²O LORD my God, I cried out to You, And You healed me. ³O LORD, You brought my soul up from the grave; You have kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit. ⁴Sing praise to the LORD, you saints of His, And give thanks at the remembrance of His holy name. ⁵For His anger is but for a moment, His favor is for life, Weeping may endure for a night, But joy comes in the morning. ⁶Now in my prosperity I said, "I shall never be moved." ⁷LORD, by Your favor You have made my mountain stand strong; You hid Your face, and I was troubled. ⁸I cried out to You, O LORD, And to the LORD I made supplication: ⁹"What profit is there in my blood. When I go down to the pit? Will the dust praise You? Will it declare Your truth? ¹⁰Hear, O LORD, and have mercy on me, LORD, be my helper!" ¹¹You have turned for me my mourning into dancing, You have put off my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness, ¹²To the end that my glory may sing praise to You and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give thanks to You forever.

Men's Sunday Night
A Study in the Life of David
A Man After God's Own Heart
Lesson 7 – 2 Samuel 7

Two phrases in this chapter summarize the main lesson: “*your seed*” (vs. 12) and “*your throne*” (vs. 16). In His covenant with Abraham, God had promised a seed, a land, and a blessing to all nations through Israel. In this covenant, God reveals that the promised Messiah would come through David’s line and would rule from David’s throne over the promised messianic kingdom. The days of exile and danger are over, and David is enjoying rest and blessing in his own house. He truly was “a man after God’s own heart,” for he had the Word of God and the house of God uppermost in his heart.

The terms of this covenant are important because they involve the purposes of God in sending Jesus Christ to the world. We must note, first, that some of this covenant was fulfilled in Solomon, David’s successor on the throne. God did put Solomon on the throne, in spite of the wicked plots of others in the family, and God did enable Solomon to build the beautiful temple. When Solomon and his descendants sinned, God kept His promise and chastened them. The ultimate fulfillment of these promises is in Jesus Christ.

David received a message from Nathan, then went in to pray, asking God to fulfill His Word. How much more we would receive from lessons and sermons if only we spent time with God afterward and “prayed the message in.” God enjoys giving His children “*exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.*” David had asked permission to build an earthly temple, God responded by promising him an eternal kingdom. This tremendous act of grace left David humbled before the Lord, and in his prayer, the king praises the greatness of the Lord. He realized the privileged position of Israel. Oh, that God’s people today would understand how great God is and what great things He has done for His own. Yet David’s concern was not that his name be praised, but that the name of the Lord be magnified.

Was David disappointed because God would not permit him to build the house? Perhaps, however, it was not important to him who built it but that God’s will be done and God’s name be glorified.

Read 2 Samuel 7:1-17 and answer the following questions:

1. What two things are we told about David as we begin our study? In his newly acquired state of rest and prosperity, what is it that David has noticed and what is his desire to do?

2. What was Nathan's initial reaction to David's instinct to build a house for the ark of God? (7:3)

3. In verse 5, Nathan was told to go and speak God's word to David. What question does the Lord ask David in this verse? According to the word Nathan received from the Lord, how did God feel about the fact that no permanent house of worship had been built? (7:5-7)

4. What promise did God make concerning His people, Israel? What was God's covenant with the house of David? (7:10-12, 16)

5. What does it mean that God will establish a "*house of David*"?

6. How long did God promise to establish the throne of David? What relationship did God promise to have with David's son and his descendants?

Read 2 Samuel 7:18-29 and answer the following questions:

7. After David heard Nathan's word from God, what did he do? What was David's attitude toward the blessings he was currently enjoying? (7:18)

8. In verse 20, David acknowledges that God knows him completely. How does knowing that God understands you fully affect your relationship with Him and your openness in prayer?

9. Why did David find himself almost speechless before God? What attributes of God did David begin to praise? (7:20-22)

10. According to David, where did he find the courage to pray to God? (7:27)

11. How did David demonstrate his confidence in God and His word? (7:28-29)

12. How can you apply David's humility and obedience to God's will in your own life?

God's Steadfast Mercy **2 Samuel 7:15**

God's covenant with David was based on His steadfast mercy, which He promised to continue with David's son Solomon. By mercy, He was speaking of His commitment and devotion to His Word, even though Solomon eventually turned away from the Lord. God judged him for his sin in a way that preserved His agreement with David.

Scripture shows the Lord to be a God of mercy. But what exactly does it mean by "mercy"? The Hebrew word for mercy (*chesed*) described not simply the emotion of pity, much less the ignoring, excusing, or indulging of wrongdoing. It implied that one could be counted on to faithfully carry out the promises made in a covenant or agreement. In the same way, God calls those who fear Him to show mercy in their dealings with others.

Men's Sunday Night
A Study in the Life of David
A Man After God's Own Heart
Lesson 8 – 2 Samuel 8-9

Chapter 8

David made a name for himself in the Valley of Salt, probably the wasteland plain southwest of the Dead Sea. But while his exploits greatly increased his reputation among his people, they were sowing lasting bitterness elsewhere that would come back to haunt his son Solomon. Years later after David had died and his son Solomon had turned away from the Lord, God allowed a man named Hadad to come back to Palestine, where he became a continual thorn in Solomon's side.

Chapter 9

Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan was a member of a rejected family. He was a son of a prince, yet was living in dependence on others away from the city of Jerusalem. He was lame in both his feet and thus could not walk. We would never have heard of Mephibosheth were it not for the gracious steps David took to save him. This grew out of the loving covenant that David had made with Jonathan years before. David had never seen Mephibosheth, yet he loved him for Jonathan's sake. "*Fear not!*" were David's words of grace to the trembling crippled man; and "*Fear not!*" is what Christ says to every believing sinner.

The contrast for Mephibosheth was between death and life. It is the same for us. Born in Adam only, we are sentenced to death. Born again in Christ, we are given life. You and I have done nothing to earn the grace, which has been given to us by God, through Christ. We are like Mephibosheth, born into a family which, without grace would be condemned to die. How truly surprised he must have been when he realized that, not only was he not going to be killed, but even more amazing he was going to be loved and blessed. Not because of anything he had done, but because of the grace of David, and his love for his father Jonathan. So, we too have been "*accepted in the beloved,*" blessed by the grace of God because of His love for His Son Jesus.

Read 2 Samuel 8:1-8 and answer the following questions:

1. How did David do in his battles with Israel's traditional enemies? Who did he defeat? What was the result?

2. What unusual step did David take when he captured a thousand chariot horses? (See 8:4)

3. Describe the spoils that David took.

Read 2 Samuel 8:9-18 and answer the following questions:

4. Who acted peaceably towards David? What did he do? (See 8:9-10)

5. What did David do with the valuable articles and precious metals he captured in his campaigns? (See 8:11-12) What can we learn from this about David?

6. What did the Lord do for David wherever he went? Why? (See 8:6, 14)

Read 2 Samuel 9:1-8 and answer the following questions:

7. What commitment did David remember when he was established in the kingship of Israel? What do you believe was his reasoning for honoring this commitment?

8. Verse 3 describes Jonathan's son, Mephibosheth, as being crippled in both feet. Why do you think Mephibosheth's nurse fled with him at the news of Saul's death? (For a comparable story see 2 Kings 11:1-3)

9. What promises did David make to Mephibosheth? How did he expect to be treated by David? Why did Mephibosheth have reason to be afraid of David?

Read 2 Samuel 9:9-13 and answer the following questions:

10. What commands did David give to Ziba concerning Mephibosheth? (9:9-10)

11. Why did Mephibosheth live in Jerusalem from this time onward although his family's lands were elsewhere? What special provision did David make because of Mephibosheth's disability? (See 9:13)

12. In what ways is the grace shown by David a reminder of God's grace toward us?

A Day of Worship

Psalm 96:8-9

For most Christians, Sunday is a day for going to church. However, once an hour or two of formal church attendance is over, Sunday often becomes little more than a day off from the routine of the week. People use it for recreation and entertainment, or to catch up on chores and errands. Is that what it means to “give to the LORD the glory due His name,” and to “worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness” (Ps. 96:8–9)?

True worship means focusing on the Lord rather than ourselves. The Israelites were commanded to devote one day out of seven to focus on God (Ex. 20:8–11). To do that, they were told to cease from their normal labors, just as God ceased, or paused, from His work of creation on the seventh day.

Christians are not bound to keep the Sabbath, but they are commanded to worship the Lord together, and traditionally this has occurred on the first day of the week. The point of making Sunday an anchor in the weekly rhythm is to remind us of who we are in relation to God. Worship and stopping from labor help to redirect our focus from ourselves to God. Used for these purposes, Sunday reminds us of our dependence on God for the gift of life, the skills by which we work and live, and the privilege of using all that God has given us as resources on loan. Practically speaking, we can use Sunday for its intended purpose by:

1. Ceasing from our work and getting away from the routines of labor.
2. Pausing to reflect on what has happened during the previous week, and interpreting our experience through the eyes of faith.
3. Engaging in activities that help to restore and nurture our inner life.
4. Praying through the many areas of our life, focusing on God rather than just on ourselves, by making extensive use of scripture as we form our prayers.
5. Joining together with other believers to worship the Lord, praise His name, and celebrate life together.

Men's Sunday Night Live
A Study in the Life of David
A Man after God's Heart
Lesson 9 - 2 Samuel 10-12

The Bible honestly records the sins of God's people, but never in such a way that sin is made acceptable. Unlike many so-called "true-to-life" books today, the Bible states the facts and draws out the lessons, but allows nothing for the imagination to dwell on.

Chapter 10

This chapter ends with unfinished business at Rabbah. The Ammonite enemy were still in the city when Joab returned to Jerusalem. In the spring David would once again send Joab and his army out to deal with Rabbah.

Chapter 11

Many know about David's sin with Bathsheba, and how it happened when he waited in Jerusalem when he should have been leading the battle with his men. It was not a passionate youth who deliberately walked into this sin, but a man of God who had now reached middle age. It is easy to see how David got into this sin: 1. He was self-confident, after enjoying victories and prosperity; 2. He was disobedient, staying home when he should have been on the battlefield; 3. He was idle, lying in bed in the evening; 4. He was self-indulgent, giving freedom to his desires when he should have been disciplining himself; 5. He was careless, allowing his eyes to wander and yielding to the "*lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes.*" David's downfall didn't end here. In an attempt to cover his sin, he decided to have Bathsheba's husband Uriah murdered and then to take his wife. Joab was more than willing to cooperate, since this would give him opportunity later to take advantage of the king. Uriah carried his own death warrant to the battlefield that day. The plan worked and the brave soldier was killed in battle.

Chapter 12

At least a year passed, during which time David covered his sins. God gave David plenty of time to make things right, but he persisted in hiding his sins. Had he come to the Lord on his own, in sincere repentance, things might have been different later on. Finally, God sent Nathan, not with a message of blessing as in chapter 7, but with a message of conviction. This tragic episode began with David pampering himself at home, but it ends with him taking his rightful place on the battlefield and leading the nation to an important victory. It is encouraging to see that God was willing to use David again in spite of his sins. He had confessed his

sins; God had forgiven him; now he could fight for the Lord again. This event in David's life ought to be a warning to all Christians to "*take heed lest we fall.*"

Read 2 Samuel 10:1-19 and answer the following questions:

1. Why did David send a delegation to Hanun, king of the Ammonites? Why did David want to show kindness to Hanun?
2. What suspicion was planted in Hanun's mind by his nobles? What did Hanun do to the men David had sent to him? (10:3-4)
3. From 2 Samuel 10:1-19 briefly describe the battle plan that was made against these enemy forces.
4. How can knowledge of God's character make us more courageous in the challenges we face?

Read 2 Samuel 11:1-27 and answer the following questions:

5. Where was David while the Israelite army was engaged in battle against the Ammonites? Why do you believe he stayed back?

6. What inquiry did David make and what answer was he given? What should this information have led him to do?

7. What excuse did David use in trying to get Uriah to go home to his wife? How did one sin lead to another and another in David's case? (11:13)

8. Why do you suppose Joab put a whole group of men in jeopardy instead of following David's suggestion about abandoning Uriah? What can we learn about the character of Joab?

Read 2 Samuel 12:1-31 and answer the following questions:

9. How did David react to Nathan's story? How did Nathan use the story to convict David? What judgment did God pronounce on David through Nathan? (12:5-10)

10. How did God say He would bring David's secret sin into the open? Why was the parable Nathan told to David so effective? (12:11-12)

11. What did David admit after Nathan had spoken? According to Nathan, what would be the consequences of David's sin? (12:13-14)

12. What was the outcome of David's battle against Rabbah? (12:29-31)

Psalm 139
Our Maker knows us well

Perhaps no other portion of Scripture describes with such precision and beauty God's intimate knowledge of an individual as does Psalm 139. This Psalm reminds us that although God rules over nations and peoples, He also deals with us as persons whom He has known from the womb.

The poetry of Psalm 139 celebrates the fact that God is present wherever David goes, or ever imagined going. Then, he looks east toward "*the wings of the morning,*" and west towards the Mediterranean Sea (Psalm 139:9), wherever David thinks of going, he has the certainty that God will be with him in that place.

Are you comforted, as David was, by the presence of God? As you look around, do you consciously think about the Lord being there, right where you are?

Men's Sunday Night
A Study in the Life of David
A Man After God's Own Heart
Lesson 10 - 2 Samuel 15-19

Chapter 15

Absalom wasted little time in building a loyal group of followers. He openly criticized his father's administration and secretly stole the hearts of the people. It looked as though Absalom would be successful and steal the crown from his father. While David was reigning in power, his real enemies would not dare to oppose him, but Absalom's revolt gave them what appeared to be a wonderful opportunity to resist the king and get away with it. It was a time of sifting the true from the false.

Chapter 16

Times of rebellion are times of revelation; you see what people really believe and where they stand. Ziba lied to David about Mephibosheth and David was too quick to pass judgment. Today, our Lord Jesus is despised and rejected of men, just as was David during the rebellion. It takes courage for men and women today to remain loyal to the King, but we can be sure that God will reward such loyalty when Jesus returns.

Chapter 17

God permitted this rebellion as a part of the price David was to pay for the sins he committed in connection with Uriah and Bathsheba. God also overruled the events so as to purge David's kingdom and separate the loyal from the disloyal. A day of reckoning finally arrived. Sometimes God's judgments fall swiftly, while at other times He waits and acts slowly.

Chapter 18

This entire episode of David's rejection and return certainly illustrates the attitudes people today have toward Christ. There are the loyal few that stand by their absent King, and there are the selfish majority who prefer to rebel. Proverbs 16:18 tells us, "*Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.*" Absalom caught his head and long hair in a branch and could not get down. Joab and his ten young men that bore his armor surrounded Absalom struck and killed him.

Chapter 19

Many a rebel will try to “change his tune” when the King comes back! David was trying to gather together the fragments of his kingdom, so he could not afford to alienate any of the tribes, but later on, Solomon gave Shimei what he deserved.

Read 2 Samuel 15:1-37 and answer the following questions:

1. What symbols of status and power did Absalom acquire? How did Absalom flatter the people he met at the gate? How did the Israelites react to Absalom? (15:1-6)

2. What discouraging message came to David in Jerusalem? Why did David feel it was necessary to leave the city? How did the king’s officials respond to David’s orders? (15:13-15)

3. What did David do at the top of the mountain? Who met David there? What did David advise him to do? (15:32-34)

Read 2 Samuel 16:1-23 and answer the following questions:

4. What did Shimei son of Gera do when David’s entourage passed his way? Why was Shimei so bitter against David? What accusations did he make against David? (16:5-8)

5. Why is it not wise to take one person’s version of events at face value without hearing the other side? What character traits did David exhibit through his reaction to Shimei?

6. What reasons did Hushai give to convince Absalom that he would change his loyalties? What was Ahithophel's advice on how Absalom should proceed in his bid to become king instead of David? (16:18-22)

Read 2 Samuel 17:1-29 and answer the following questions:

7. What plan of attack did Ahithophel recommend to Absalom? What was Hushai's reasoning to convince Absalom that Ahithophel's plan was not good? (17:1-10)

8. How did Ahithophel take the news that his advice had not been followed? (17:23)

9. Who led the armies of Absalom to Gilead in pursuit of David? Who came to David's aid, and what did they supply? (17:24-29)

Read 2 Samuel 18:1-33 and answer the following questions:

10. What plan of David did the people oppose? What command did all the troops hear David giving his commanders as they left the city? (18:1-5)

11. Why do you suppose Joab chose to ignore David's plea and killed Absalom himself? In what sense was Absalom's death good news for Israel and Judah?

12. What was David's response to the news of the death of his son? Why was Joab hesitant to send the son of a priest to David with bad news? (18:33)

Read 2 Samuel 19:1-43 and answer the following questions:

13. What did Joab tell David to do, and what would happen if he did not? What did David end up doing, and what did the people do?

14. What other decision did David make? What reason did he give? How did the man of Judah respond to his message? (19:13-15)

15. What challenges faced David as he resumed the kingship of both Israel and Judah?

**A Gracious King
2 Samuel 19:22-23**

David's treatment of Shimei showed that Israel's new king was a man of grace. Rather than animosity. David had every right to call for Shimei's death. Shimei had cursed the king during the latter flight from Absalom, but when Shimei admitted his wrong and pleaded his forgiveness, David graciously pardoned him and swore he would not die. In doing so, he mirrored God's grace toward sinners who confess their sins to Him.

Men's Sunday Night
A Study in the Life of David
A Man After God's Own Heart
Lesson 11 – 2 Samuel 20-24

Chapter 20

David probably had many enemies among the people of Benjamin, which was Saul's tribe. That could be why Sheba had little difficulty in stirring up opposition to the king. Perhaps David had an associate of Sheba in mind when he composed Psalm 7, which was written in response to a man named Cush, a Benjamite.

Chapter 21

The three-year famine in the days of David was the result of Saul's violation of the standing peace treaty that Israel had with the Gibeonites. This suggests two things: 1. Political commitments, such as peace treaties, have spiritual implications. God takes people's words, including the words of governments seriously and expects people to honor their commitments. 2. Natural events sometimes have spiritual causes. Famines, floods, diseases, pestilence, and other destructive phenomena of nature can be shown to have natural cause

Chapter 22

In 2 Samuel 22 we have a celebration of the peace that God brought to David and the people of Israel. It affirms that the defense of the nation rested not in military might, but in the Lord. David praised the Lord for showing mercy to him and his royal descendants. However, by using the word for "mercy" David was speaking of something that had more to do with loyalty than compassion.

Chapter 23

David's rise to power was assured from the outset by the promises of God. Nevertheless, the journey from the pastures near Bethlehem to the palace in Jerusalem was long and difficult. Along the way, David attracted a growing movement of loyal supporters who helped him attain the throne. Some of the most important of these followers were known as "mighty men." These mighty men became the nucleus of a very powerful army

Chapter 24

What lay behind David's desire for a national census? Probably it was pride. He had won a number of great victories and perhaps wanted to bask in the glory of success. There was certainly nothing wrong with a census, since the people had often been numbered during their national history, but we must keep in mind that a census that praised men would never glorify God.

We may not think that pride and rebellion against God's Word are serious sins, but in David's life they produced greater sorrow and tragedy than did his adultery. We must beware of sins "*of the flesh and of the spirit.*"

Read 2 Samuel 20:1-26 and answer the following questions:

1. What instruction did David give to Amasa? How did he fail? What concerns did David have next?

2. What message did a wise woman in the city have for Joab? How did one woman save the city of Abel of Beth Maachah from attack? (20:16-22)

3. Why were the people of Abel of Beth Maachah unwilling to defend Sheba? Why was it in the best interests of David and Joab to let the rest of the troops go home once Sheba was dead?

Read 2 Samuel 21:1-22 and answer the following questions:

4. Who were the Gibeonites, and what error had Saul committed regarding them? What did the Gibeonites say they did not want? (21:2-4)

5. How did the mother of two of the slain Israelites demonstrate her devotion and grief for the dead? What gesture of respect did David make toward Saul's family in response to Rizpah's devotion? (21:10-14)

6. How did Israel fare against the giant Philistine warriors, descendants of Rapha? (21:18-22)

Read 2 Samuel 22:1-51 and answer the following questions:

7. What events prompted David to compose this song of praise? (22:1)

8. How did David describe God's actions on his behalf? What aspect of God's nature does He make available to His people? (22:17-33)

9. What are the reasons for David's resounding song of praise to God? What aspects of God's character became the subject of David's song of praise? (22:47-51)

Read 2 Samuel 23:1-39 and answer the following questions:

10. To what did David compare a righteous ruler? (23:3-4) In contrast to a good ruler, how does David describe a rebel in 23:6-7?

11. What story was circulated about Eleazar son of Dodai's endurance in battle? Which of the mighty men fought alone when everyone else fled? What qualities did all of these people have in common that made them valuable to David?

12. What wish did David express in 23:15? What did these three mighty men do for David? What did David do with the water, and what explanation did he give?

Read 2 Samuel 24:1-25 and answer the following questions:

13. How did God use David to punish Israel? Who objected to David's plan and tried to discourage him? (24:1-3)

14. How long did it take for the commanders to go throughout the land counting the fighting men? Why was it wrong for David to want to count his fighting men? What was David's prayer when he realized his error?

15. What punishment did David choose from the three options God put before him? How many people died in the plague?

Here's Some Practical Lessons From This Chapter:

We never outgrow temptation: David was not an inexperienced youth when he committed this sin! Had he been "*watching and praying*" he would not have entered into temptation and sin so easily.

God graciously gives time to repent: He gave David more than nine months to deal with his sins and make matters right. "*Seek the Lord while He may be found.*"

Sins of the spirit do great damage: All sin is wicked and should be avoided, to be sure, but we must realize that the Bible repeatedly condemns stubborn pride. Once David got on his evil course, he was too proud to turn around. His predecessor, King Saul, made the same mistake. We may not be guilty of adultery and murder, but a hard heart and a proud look will lead to perhaps greater evils.

Our sins affects others: Seventy thousand people died because David disobeyed the Lord.

True confession is a costly thing: Do we realize the high cost of sinning? A true confession is more than a quick prayer and a quoting of 1 John 1:9! True confession involves facing sin honestly and obeying God's Word regardless of the price we must pay.

God will forgive and bring blessing: Let us put ourselves into the hands of the Lord, for great are His mercies toward us!

Men's Sunday Night
A Study in the Life of David
A Man After God's Own Heart
Lesson 12 – 1 Kings 1:1-2:12

Chapter 1:1-53

The Books of Kings continue the narrative that was begun in the Books of Samuel. In this first chapter David is a senile old man. One of his sons, Adonijah, attempts to seize the throne. David, aroused by Nathan and Bathsheba, orders another son, Solomon, anointed as king of Israel.

In David we have a type of Christ in His humiliation, exile, and rejection; but in Solomon we see the “Prince of Peace” reigning in glory and splendor over His people. David made the conquests that enabled Solomon to live and reign in peace and prosperity.

David was now unable to carry on his royal duties, so his son Adonijah took advantage of the situation and proclaimed himself king of Israel. “I will be king!” he announced, all the while realizing that God had appointed Solomon to succeed David. The treacherous prince followed the example of Absalom by preparing chariots and seeking to impress the people. Eventually, this rebellious prince ran to God's altar for protection and Solomon promised not to kill him. Too often wicked people flee to God for help without really repenting in their hearts.

Chapter 2:1-12

This chapter records David's final instructions to Solomon before his death and Solomon's wise execution of David's wishes. David urges Solomon to stay close to the Lord and to the Word of God. His advice to this young man is very important. There is very little attention ever given to David's legacy to Solomon. What David left to him enabled him to become one of the great kings of the earth. In fact, Solomon is probably one of the best-known kings who have ever lived.

At the time of David's death, Israel was second to none in power and military ability, and the people had a large measure of peace and freedom, as every man “sat under his own vine and fig tree.” The peace that Solomon enjoyed during his reign was a peace that had been made by David during his reign.

Read 1 Kings 1-27 and answer the following questions:

1. What was one of the practical provisions made for David in his old age? With David in a weakened condition, what did Adonijah decide to do?
2. What did Adonijah do in order to establish his influence and build support for his succession? (1:7-10)
3. What warning did Nathan the prophet carry to Bathsheba, Solomon's mother? Why is it important to the rest of the passage to understand how old and frail David was?
4. What promise did Bathsheba remind David of? What action did Bathsheba urge David to take before the decision was out of his hands? (1:17-20)
5. What question did Nathan ask of the king in light of what had transpired in the kingdom? (1:24-27)

Read 1 Kings 1:28-53 and answer the following questions:

6. What important ceremony was performed for Solomon that had not been done for the rebel, Adonijah? What circumstances made David's provision for the succession more authoritative and final? (1:38-48)

7. What did Adonijah's guests do when they heard the news of Solomon's coronation? How did David demonstrate his kingly skills by the way he handled the dispute between Adonijah and Solomon?

8. What traditional elements of the coronation of a king of Israel were present in Solomon's coronation?

Read 1 Kings 2:1-12 and answer the following questions:

9. What did David feel it was important to do before he died? With what words of encouragement did David begin his charge to Solomon? (2:1-3)

10. What actions from the past did David hold against Joab? What did David tell Solomon to do with regard to Joab? (2:5-6)

11. According to David, what must Solomon do as king in order to prosper? What condition had God built into His covenant with the house of David?

12. What wrong that David suffered did he want Solomon to settle after his death? (2:8-9)

13. What personal “vote of confidence” did David repeat twice in his charge to Solomon?

A Father’s Final Charge

A farewell charge like the one that David gave to Solomon was a fairly common way for the fathers in the ancient world to pass on a legacy to their successors. David’s last words provide a useful model for parents today to give final instructions to their children. David’s charge contained several elements:

1. A blunt recognition and acceptance of death (2:2)
2. A challenge to Solomon to act responsibly (2:2)
3. A review of God’s covenant with the nation of Israel and with the house of David (2:3-4)
4. Instructions about serving justice and honoring David’s commitments (2:5-9)

If you are a parent, what charge would you want to leave your children before you die? What challenges would you want to set before them? What aspects of God’s nature and character would you want to fix in their memory? Is there unfinished business that you need to ask them to complete? Are there promises you have made that you want them to honor?