



**JUNE • JULY • AUGUST**  
**DAILY DEVOTIONS**

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Dear Family of Faith,

The books of Samuel (1 and 2 Samuel) introduce us to the period of the kings in Israel's history. In many ways, the themes contained within these books are the same themes we find in the books of our nation's history. Border wars with surrounding nations, internal power struggles, political maneuvering, natural disasters, national crises, and tales of glory and shame in battle—this is the substance that makes up the books of Samuel. But while the pages of our nation's history interpret these themes from a strictly human level, in the books of Samuel we get to see not only how God is involved in these things, but also how He is using these things to establish His eternal kingdom on earth through the rule and reign of the Lord Jesus Christ.

This quarter we will focus on 2 Samuel. Along with the above-mentioned themes, you will also be introduced to many characters. Apart from God, King David is the main character of 2 Samuel. He is the God-appointed king over Israel, with whom God makes an eternal covenant. In some very significant ways, King David ultimately points us to our eternal King, the Lord Jesus Christ. We encourage you, as you read about King David, to consider how his words and actions might foreshadow the person and work of Jesus Christ. At the same time, we encourage you to note how King David falls short where Christ ultimately prevails, for while Christ is sinless, David was a broken sinner in desperate need of grace, just like us. Moreover, as Peter pointed out in his sermon at Pentecost, King David remains in his tomb to this day, while our Lord Jesus Christ burst forth from the grave on the third day, showing Himself to be the true Lord and Christ.

Before you dive into 2 Samuel, it is important to recognize the kind of literature you are reading. Second Samuel is a historical narrative—in other words, it tells us a story that is historically accurate. There is a wrong way and a right way to read a historical narrative. Most of us are very comfortable reading *prescriptive* texts. For the most part, these are texts like the epistles, which tell us in plain language what to do and what not to do, how to think and how not to think. Prescriptive texts *prescribe* actions for us to take, and we read them faithfully by getting up and carrying out the action they prescribe. But a historical narrative, like 2 Samuel, is not prescriptive. Rather, it is *descriptive*. This means its main purpose is *description*; it tells a story. And the story it tells includes both commendable and condemnable actions, characters, and events. Instead of prescribing actions for us to take, a historical narrative *describes* who God is and how God has interacted with sinners in a sin-stricken world. The task of reading this kind of biblical literature is to draw from its pages a view of the character, nature, and concerns of God. Once we do this, we can then apply these truths to our hearts.

So as you dive into 2 Samuel, we encourage you to read faithfully, study diligently, and pray dependently. Take heart that your hard work and time in 2 Samuel will not be wasted, because in your study of 2 Samuel you will meet the King of the universe.

This God—His way is perfect;  
The word of the LORD proves true;  
He is a shield for all those who take refuge in Him (2 Samuel 22:31).

# List of Lessons

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Lesson Title</b>	<b>Scripture</b>
June 3	Respected	2 Samuel 1:22-27; 2:1-7
June 10	Crowned	2 Samuel 3:8-21
June 17	Celebrated	2 Samuel 5:9-12; 6:12-19
June 24	Established	2 Samuel 7:8-21
July 1	Valued	2 Samuel 9:1-13
July 8	Accountable	2 Samuel 12:1-14
July 15	Grieved	2 Samuel 13:15-20, 31-39
July 22	Deposed	2 Samuel 15:10-16, 24-30
July 29	Restored	2 Samuel 19:1-15
August 5	Compromised	2 Samuel 20:1-2, 14-21
August 12	Resolved	2 Samuel 21:1-6, 10-14
August 19	Thankful	2 Samuel 22:26-36, 50-51
August 26	Disciplined	2 Samuel 24:10-25

**WEEK OF**  
**MAY 28, 2018**

**WEEKLY MEMORY VERSE**

Now may the Lord show steadfast love and faithfulness to you. And I will do good to you because you have done this thing. Now therefore let your hands be strong, and be valiant, for Saul your lord is dead, and the house of Judah has anointed me king over them.

*2 Samuel 2:6-7*

**MONDAY**  
**MAY**  
**28**

2 Samuel 1:1 – 2:7

**MAIN IDEA**

While 1 Samuel covers the period of Saul's reign, 2 Samuel covers the period of David's reign.

As we dive into 2 Samuel, it is important to remember that this book of Scripture is part two of a royal saga that began in the book of 1 Samuel. First Samuel mainly covers the reign of David's predecessor, King Saul. In a manner of speaking, Saul was the people's choice for king. He had the stature of a king, the looks of a king, and the speech of a king. David, on the other hand, was young and ruddy. But one of the main lessons of 1 Samuel is that "the Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart" (1 Samuel 16:7). David was a man after God's own heart, and Saul was a man whose heart rebelled against God. And so 1 Samuel is the story of the dissolution of the kingship of mighty Saul in the dwarfing light of the coming kingship of the shepherd boy David. David is God's chosen seed, descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. In many ways, his kingship ultimately points to the kingship of Jesus Christ. First Samuel shows us how David came to be Saul's successor to the throne of Israel and Judah; 2 Samuel shows us how David ascended to that throne and conducted himself upon it. As we read devotionally through 2 Samuel, we will see just how David did this and how his finite reign ultimately points to the infinite reign of Christ.

- List some of the comparisons between King David and King Jesus that you have heard others mention. Do you see comparisons between these two kings?

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- Do you ever find yourself focusing on external things to the exclusion of the internal matters of the heart? How can the message of 1 Samuel be an instructive word for us?

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**PRAY**

Praise God for His grace in preserving the seed of Jesus Christ in the life of King David. Praise God also that He gave us such a fitting picture of the eternal reign of Christ in the finite reign of David. Spend some time in confession to God today—He does not look upon the external appearance of your life, but upon your very heart!



**MAIN IDEA**

David shows himself as the rightful king by honoring the Lord’s anointed.

Today’s passage contains some major plot twists. If you have ever been to the movies and seen a film with a major plot twist, there are generally one or two people who stand up in the middle of the movie theatre and yell out some variation of, “What just happened!?” Perhaps you felt that way when you read today’s passage. An Amalekite approaches David’s camp to deliver supposedly good news. He says to David, “Saul, the former king, is dead. I killed him. And now I have brought you his royal regalia because you are his rightful successor.” Enter plot twist: David, who has been fleeing for his life from Saul, begins to mourn! He tears his clothes and weeps and fasts. Moreover, he sentences the Amalekite messenger to death! What is up with that? In this passage, David shows himself to be the rightful king of Israel and Judah, because he displays the fact that true kingship is not the result of a man’s stature or merit, but of the Lord’s anointing. Though David did not trust Saul, and though Saul was continually trying to kill him, David respected and honored Saul because Saul was God’s anointed king. The Amalekite messenger completely missed this point and tragically misread his position. He intended to woo David with news of worldly advancement and perhaps find a comfortable place for himself in David’s kingdom as a result. Instead, he condemned himself by confessing to one of the greatest acts of treason possible: “I have killed the Lord’s anointed.”

- What was the mistake of the Amalekite messenger? What is commendable about David’s response to this messenger?

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- How might today’s passage be instructive to us as we think about honoring our King Jesus, who ultimately holds the position of the Lord’s Anointed?

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**PRAY**

Praise God today for King Jesus, the Lord’s Anointed. Pour out praise to Him for His rule over your life and your heart. Bow the knee to Him today in worship and confess your total submission to His will.

**MAIN IDEA**

David displays godly humility by lamenting the death of Saul and Jonathan.

“How the mighty have fallen.” More than likely, you have heard or read this phrase on numerous occasions; it is less likely, though, that when you heard or read it, you thought of King David’s lament over the death of Saul and Jonathan. Yet this phrase is a three-fold refrain that forms the core of David’s lament. In this phrase, and in the lament as a whole, David is doing at least two important things:

1. In his lament, David honors Saul and Jonathan for their great might. Truly, Saul and Jonathan were mighty men. Both were mighty warriors, but used their might in different ways. Saul oftentimes used his military might to seek his own purposes above those of the people of Israel; and, ultimately, he used his might to seek David’s life. Jonathan, on the other hand, used his might to help David fulfill his role as Saul’s successor, God’s chosen king. So while Saul used his might in pride, Jonathan used his might in humility.
2. In his lament, David displays the sorrow that Israel and Judah should feel for losing their king. The news of Saul’s death is sad news, for the glory of Israel has been slain. And so David exhorts the daughters of Israel to weep over Saul and mourn his death.

David’s lament displays a humility that each of us should strive for. While David and Jonathan were trusted allies, in many ways Saul was David’s enemy. Saul resisted God’s will for David to be king to such an extent that he persistently sought to kill David. But when we look back upon how David responded to Saul, we find a glorious example of the kind of person Jesus commanded us to be: “Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you” (Matthew 5:44). May we all strive for this humility in our own lives!

- What reasons might David have had to not lament Saul’s death? What was David’s relationship with Saul like? How did it differ from David’s relationship with Jonathan?

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- Is there anyone in your life who you would consider your enemy? How can this passage of lament, and the history of David’s relationship with Saul, inform the way that you relate to your enemies?

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**PRAY**

Praise God that we serve a humble King, our Lord Jesus Christ, who humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Ask God to instill such a humility in your heart as well. Spend some time confessing any pride that you find in your heart.

**MAIN IDEA**

David inquires of the Lord and obeys Him.

David continues to show himself to be a faithful king in ways that Saul was not. In 1 Samuel, Saul's reign was marked by disobedience and disconnection from the Lord. In today's passage, we see a picture of David's deep dependence on the Lord: "David inquired of the Lord" (2 Samuel 2:1). Instead of doing what he thought was best in his own eyes, he asked the Lord's help in making his decision. Moreover, when the Lord answered him and told him to "go up...to Hebron" (2 Samuel 2:1), he immediately "went up there" with all his family and his men (2 Samuel 2:2-3). In Deuteronomy 17:14-20, we find that one of the chief characteristics of God's chosen king is obedience to God's word. David fulfills this requirement in ways that Saul did not. May we strive to inquire of and obey God like David, not rebel against Him like Saul. While our salvation does not hinge on acts of obedience, but rather the grace of God poured into our lives through faith in Jesus Christ, the proper response of redeeming grace is a new heart that desires above all else to please and obey the Lord. May we walk in this newness of life today!

- What does David ask God? How does God answer? How does David respond to God's answer?

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- In what ways can today's passage teach us about the right way to relate to God?

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**PRAY**

Praise God today that though you could never obey Him perfectly, Christ did obey God perfectly and then died on the cross so that His perfect obedience would be counted for you. Ask God that your redemption would result in new desires to obey Him and bring Him pleasure.



**MAIN IDEA**

The people of Judah recognize David as the God-anointed king.

One of the major themes throughout 1 and 2 Samuel is that of “anointing.” First, the Lord “anoints” Saul as king in response to Israel’s demand for a king (1 Samuel 9:16; 10:1). Then, when the Lord rejects Saul as king over Israel because of his disobedience, He “anoints” David as king in Saul’s place (1 Samuel 16:12). Yet even after the Lord rejects Saul and anoints David, Saul clings to his power so that it is not until 2 Samuel 2:1-7 that the people of Judah recognize David as the God-chosen, anointed king (at this point in the narrative, Israel has yet to recognize David as the anointed king). As we can see, the idea of anointing is very important in 1 and 2 Samuel. In Hebrew, the word “anoint” comes from the same root word that we sometimes translate as “Messiah.” The picture we see in our text today is the people of Judah recognizing David as God’s anointed king. But this picture points beyond the history of Israel to another King, an eternal King, God’s Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ. As we read about David entering victoriously into Hebron and taking his rightful place on the throne of Judah’s kingdom, our thoughts should naturally shift to our Lord Jesus Christ, who has victoriously entered into heaven and taken his place at the right hand of the throne of the majesty on high, where He reigns over the heavens and the earth. May we bow down in submission to our eternal King today, and may we offer up to Him sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving.

- What is the importance of the theme of “anointing” in 1 and 2 Samuel? Can you think of any other places in Scripture where this theme is important?

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- In today’s passage, David bestows a royal blessing on the people of Jabesh-gilead because they honored his predecessor King Saul. What blessings does our King Jesus Christ bestow on us as His people?

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**PRAY**

Spend some time today pouring out your heart to God in worship. Focus specifically on Jesus as your eternal King. Thank God for His rule in your life; thank Him for His victory over sin, death, and Satan. Thank Him for including you in His Kingdom by His grace.

As you reflect on your personal study throughout the week, choose one verse or passage that particularly stood out to you.

- Why was this verse or passage so meaningful to you?

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- In what areas of your life do these truths apply?

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- In what ways do you plan to put the truths you've observed this week into practice?

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**Family Focus:** Now take the verse or passage that stood out to you and think about how you can share it with your family. How does it apply to your husband, wife, son, or daughter? For singles or students, think about how it applies to your friends or parents. Commit to share this passage with a family member or friend today.

Tomorrow our lesson is **Respected** from 2 Samuel 1:22-27; 2:1-7. Review these verses to prepare your heart and pray for your teacher.



SUNDAY SCHOOL GROUP NOTES \_\_\_\_\_

Lined area for writing notes

List 2-3 ways you plan to respond to the truths you have learned this week:

Lined area for writing responses

**WEEK OF**  
**JUNE 4, 2018**

**WEEKLY MEMORY VERSE**

And Abner conferred with the elders of Israel, saying, "For some time past you have been seeking David as king over you. Now then bring it about, for the Lord has promised David, saying, 'By the hand of my servant David I will save my people Israel from the hand of the Philistines, and from the hand of all their enemies.'"

*2 Samuel 3:17-18*

**MONDAY**  
**JUNE**  
**4**

2 Samuel 2:8-11

**MAIN IDEA**

Abner rebels against God by establishing Ish-bosheth as king over Israel.

Last week, we saw how the people of Judah recognized David as their God-anointed king. Perhaps it stuck out to you that the author specified that Judah did this, to the exclusion of Israel. While the kingdom was not officially divided between the tribes of Israel and Judah until roughly one hundred years after David's ascent to the throne, we begin to see the nascent stages of that division even here in 2 Samuel. Though Judah recognizes David as king, Israel makes Saul's son Ish-bosheth their king. The author of 2 Samuel makes this division explicit when he notes, "But the house of Judah followed David" (2 Samuel 2:10). This passage is a fitting example of the resistance of the world to the rule and reign of God, and the devastating effects of such rebellion. David was God's anointed king, and as such he represented God's rule and reign over the whole kingdom of Israel. Instead of submitting to this rule, however, Abner attempts to take matters into his own hands and continue Saul's kingdom through Saul's son Ish-bosheth. The name Ish-bosheth literally means "man of shame," and that is exactly how his illegitimate rule ends, since he only reigns for two years (2 Samuel 2:10). May we not follow the "man of shame" in rebellion against the Lord; rather, may we submit to God in humble obedience and experience the joy of our salvation that such obedience begets!

- What are some of the negative effects of sin that we see in this passage?

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- What negative consequences of sin have you experienced in your life? How might today's passage encourage us to renounce ungodliness and to embrace godliness?

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**PRAY**

Spend some time today confessing to God any ways that you have rebelled against Him lately. Then spend some time in thanksgiving, expressing your gratitude for the forgiveness and redemption that is yours through Christ.

**MAIN IDEA**

David defeats Ish-bosheth at Gibeon.

In yesterday’s reading, we saw how the kingdom of Israel was split between two kings—David as king of Judah and Ish-bosheth as king of Israel. In today’s reading we see both the devastating effects of this division and undeniable superiority of David’s kingship over Ish-bosheth. Abner, as the commander of Ish-bosheth’s army, goes out from Mahanaim into David’s territory at Gibeon. Joab, as commander of David’s army, goes from Hebron to meet Joab at Gibeon. Upon their meeting, the devastating effects of the division become immediately apparent: twelve members of David’s army go against twelve members of Ish-bosheth’s army, and each of the twelve kill one another. Our text shows us the fierceness and bloodiness of the ensuing battle. Yet amid this violent scene there is also hope: Judah has a victorious king, David triumphs over his enemies. While Ish-bosheth takes 19 of David’s men, David takes 360 of Ish-bosheth’s men. Much like the scene before us in today’s passage, we live on a battleground. Our fight, though, is not primarily “against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces in the heavenly places” (Ephesians 6:12). We fight the forces of sin, death, and Satan. But thanks be to God that we do not fight these forces alone. Just as Judah had a victorious king to fight their battles for them, so also we have a victorious King, who by His resurrection from the grave has ultimately won the battle for all who trust in Him.

- In yesterday’s reading, we saw that Ish-bosheth means “man of shame.” In what ways does today’s passage show this to be a fitting moniker for the son of Saul?

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- What are your greatest battles? Specifically, what spiritual battles are you enduring? How might today’s passage help you in the midst of your spiritual warfare?

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**PRAY**

Ask God to be your refuge and strength amid the turbulent tide of the world. Thank Him for sending His Son Jesus Christ as a victorious King, who won the battle over sin, death, and Satan by His resurrection from the dead.

**MAIN IDEA**

Amid the corruption of Israel and Judah's kingdoms, God continues to be faithful to His promises.

We live in an age of deep skepticism concerning politics, politicians, and positions of power. Many of our modern movies, television shows, and novels assume that behind the closed doors of government life exist hubs of corruption. Interestingly, we find something uncannily similar to this modern depiction in 2 Samuel 3. In Deuteronomy 17:17, God left specific standards for the king of Israel: "He shall not acquire many wives for himself, lest his heart turn away, nor shall he acquire for himself excessive silver and gold." Yet when we look at this snapshot of royal life in 2 Samuel 3, we find many wives, royal concubines, intense power struggles, flipping allegiances, and much spoil. In other words, we find deeply corrupted governments. While we might have assumed to find these things in the courts of Ish-bosheth, the "man of shame," it comes as a surprise to find the same kinds of things going on in David's camp as well. Yet this snapshot of royal sin has a purpose for the church of God today, for it shows us with unequivocal clarity that God's promises to David (and by extension, God's promises to us) are not contingent upon our broken faithfulness to God, but His unailing faithfulness to us. Woven throughout this text is the recurring theme of God's promise to David. God promised David that He would "transfer the kingdom from the house of Saul and set up the throne of David over Israel and over Judah (2 Samuel 3:10). Again, He promised: "By the hand of my servant David I will save my people Israel from the hands of the Philistines, and from all their enemies" (2 Samuel 3:18). And indeed, amid David's unfaithfulness to God's standard for kingship, we find God faithfully making David "stronger and stronger," while the house of Saul becomes "weaker and weaker" (2 Samuel 3:1). This snapshot of man's unfaithfulness and God's faithfulness also reminds us that while David was a great king, we owe our allegiance to an infinitely greater and more righteous King, our Lord Jesus Christ.

- Look back to Deuteronomy 17:14-20. In what other ways does David succeed or fail to meet God's standard for kingship?

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- As you consider your own sin and unfaithfulness to the Lord, where do you find yourself getting overwhelmed? What would this passage of Scripture have us to do when we find ourselves in such a state? The advice of our culture would be, "Pull up your bootstraps and do better, be better." But how does this passage suggest we should respond?

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**PRAY**

Spend time today confessing to God your unfaithfulness to Him. Then, pour out your heart in worship and thanksgiving for His perfect faithfulness to you on the basis of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Ask Him to transform your heart and your mind, so that you may repent of sin and serve Him faithfully.

MAIN IDEA

David gains the trust of the people by mourning the death of Abner.

One of the hallmarks of American democracy is the peaceful transfer of power from one president to another. This institution of peaceful transference is by no means universal, especially when we peek into the annals of world history. As we have already seen, Israel was no exception to the norm of violent power transfers. When the lust of power and the pride of life enthrall mighty men, the ensuing scene is filled with death and sorrow. In today's passage, the trend continues with the death of Abner at the hand of Joab. Yet in the darkness of this moment we see a light shine, for King David, in humility and strength, rises above the enticements of power and mourns his fallen enemy, Abner. This really throws the people for a loop. They come to him and try to persuade him to eat, confused as to why he would mourn the death of the man who conspired against him and his kingdom. Yet David is resolute in his mourning: "God do so to me and more also, if I taste bread or anything else till the sun goes down" (2 Samuel 3:35) In God's eternal wisdom, this display of honor and humility from David is the catalyst by which he gains the trust and support of Israel: "And all the people took notice of it, and it pleased them, as everything that the king did pleased all the people" (2 Samuel 3:36). Once again, David's actions as king point us forward to the eternal King, our Lord Jesus Christ. He, much more than David, is a humble and meek King who commands His subjects to follow Him in loving their enemies.

- What instructions does David give to the people in today's reading?

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- As a Christian, we have enemies in our world and in our culture. How does this passage suggest that we should relate to our enemies?

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PRAY

Ask God to forgive you for any anger or violence that exists in your heart toward your enemies. Ask God to help you love your enemies and pray for them. Thank God for loving you even when you were His enemies, and even more for sending His Son to die for you, while you were yet a sinner.

**MAIN IDEA**

Ish-bosheth's life ends in shame, while David's life continues on in honor.

In today's reading, two of the themes that we have already visited come to a head in a climactic scene. First, we have noted several times already that the name Ish-bosheth literally means "man of shame," and we saw how in keeping with his name his life as king was filled with shame. Fittingly, his life also ends in shame. The text tells us that at the death of Abner, Ish-bosheth's "courage failed" (2 Samuel 4:1). Then, two of Ish-bosheth's captains, Rechab and Baanah, sneak into his room during his mid-day slumber, slay him, behead him, and take his head to King David. So Ish-bosheth not only lives in shame, but he also dies in shame at the hands of shameful men. Second, we have also noted several times David's honor in relation to the members of the house of Saul, even though they made themselves his enemy. This theme continues in today's text, as David dishonors the men who dishonorably murdered Ish-bosheth in his own bed by killing them, cutting off their hands and feet, and hanging them beside the pool at Hebron (2 Samuel 4:12). Here we have the final contrast between God's chosen seed—David—and the illegitimate king—Ish-bosheth. Since his entire kingship was built on rebellion against God, Ish-bosheth's life spirals downward in shame, ultimately leading to a shameful death. David, on the other hand, as the Lord's anointed, becomes greater as the prospect of being king over both Israel and Judah approaches rapidly. Amid this bloody text about kings and commanders there is a two-fold lesson for us: 1) when we rebel like Ish-bosheth, things don't go well; 2) when we submit to God's will and God's plan like David, we flourish in life and particularly in our relationship with God. May we take this lesson to heart as we seek to honor and obey the God of our salvation.

- Why would Rechab and Baanah bring Ish-bosheth's head to David? What was their motivation for doing this?

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- How might today's passage discourage you from rebellion and encourage you toward obedience and faithfulness?

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**PRAY**

Spend some time today confessing your rebellion against God. Ask Him to forgive your rebellion and to restore you to fellowship with Him. Thank God for the cross and the shed blood of Christ—because of what Christ has done for us, "when we confess our sins to God He is faithful and just to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). Ask God to help you live in obedience to His Word and to flourish in your relationship with Him as a result.



As you reflect on your personal study throughout the week, choose one verse or passage that particularly stood out to you.

- Why was this verse or passage so meaningful to you?

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- In what areas of your life do these truths apply?

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- In what ways do you plan to put the truths you've observed this week into practice?

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**Family Focus:** Now take the verse or passage that stood out to you and think about how you can share it with your family. How does it apply to your husband, wife, son, or daughter? For singles or students, think about how it applies to your friends or parents. Commit to share this passage with a family member or friend today.

Tomorrow our lesson is **Crowned** from 2 Samuel 3:8-21. Review these verses to prepare your heart and pray for your teacher.



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**WEEK OF**  
**JUNE 11, 2018**

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**WEEKLY MEMORY VERSE**

And David became greater and greater, for the Lord, the God of hosts, was with him.

*2 Samuel 5:10*



**MONDAY**  
**JUNE**  
**11**

2 Samuel 5:1-16

**MAIN IDEA**

David becomes greater and greater because God is with Him.

One of the major debates in the academic field of history revolves around the meaning of “greatness.” Some of the main questions asked in these debates are: What is greatness? Who or what makes a man great? Is a man an active agent in his own greatness or is he simply a product of his extraordinary circumstances? Or perhaps a blend of the two? In the popular movie *Night at the Museum*, the character portraying Teddy Roosevelt summed up the debate nicely when he said, “Some men are born great. Others have greatness thrust upon them.” Yet when we come to 2 Samuel 5:1-16 and see the increasing greatness of King David, we can only attribute it to one source. We find that source as we read verse 10 today. God was with him—this simple truth explains all of David’s success up to this point. It explains why, as a ruddy shepherd boy, he was able to defeat the mighty Philistine warrior Goliath. It explains why, though King Saul tried and tried, he couldn’t rid himself of his servant David. It explains why the people of Judah recognized David’s divinely appointed reign. It explains why Ish-bosheth, the “man of shame,” suffered a shameful defeat at the hands of David’s men. And finally, it explains why David was eventually recognized as the God-appointed king over all the house of Israel, and why his reign lasted a full forty years. If you are trusting in Jesus Christ today, then you can have assurance that God is with you, just as He was with David. Therefore, whatever it is that God is calling you to do, you can trust that He will give you the faith and the means to accomplish His divine will. So trust Him, serve Him, and live for His glory today!

- We saw today that God’s presence in David’s life led to his greatness. What else can we learn about God from this passage?

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- God has not called all people to greatness as He did King David. What do you feel that God has called you to? Why is God’s presence among His people important for us to successfully accomplish His will?

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**PRAY**

Confess to God that on your own merit you do not deserve to live in God’s presence. But also thank God that He sent Jesus to enter God’s presence on your behalf, so that you could have free access to God and to His throne of grace. Ask God to make His presence with you especially known today. Ask that His Holy Spirit would guide you in obedience to His Word and His Will today.

**MAIN IDEA**

David defeats the Philistines by trusting in God.

It is no wonder that when the Philistines heard David had been anointed king, they would have wanted to deal with him as swiftly and decisively as possible. Surely, many of the members of the Philistine army would have seen David, as a younger man, strike down their mightiest champion Goliath. Perhaps the chants still rang in their heads, "Saul has struck down his thousands, and David his ten thousands" (1 Samuel 18:7). Yet what the Philistines failed to understand then, just as they again fail to understand in today's passage, was that the source of David's strength, might, and military prowess was not David himself, but David's God. The Philistines failed to understand that the strength of man is counted as nothing compared to the infinite might of the Lord of Hosts. Today's passage showcases two beautiful truths: 1) the simple faith of David and 2) the majestic power of God. David simply inquires of the Lord what he should do, and faithfully obeys the Lord's instructions. God, on the other hand, uses David and his army as His instrument to decisively defeat an enemy to His people Israel. Let us walk away from today's Scripture reading all the more encouraged to place our faith in the Lord and to faithfully obey His Word, like children trusting and obeying their parents. God is sovereign, good, and wise. He knows exactly what we need and when we need it, and He has a perfect plan for how our lives will bring glory to His name. May we entrust our lives, our circumstances, and our hearts to Him today.

- What are some of the specific ways that we see David entrusting himself to the Lord in today's passage?

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- What is your experience with trust? Have you ever had someone violate your trust? Do you have healthy relationships of trust in your life or do you tend to be suspicious and cautious of those even closest to you? How can today's passage help us to gain assurance of God's faithfulness and to trust in Him day by day?

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**PRAY**

Spend some time today worshiping your Almighty God, the Lord of Hosts, the God of Heaven's Armies. Thank Him for His ultimate victory, achieved by our Lord Jesus Christ, over sin, death, and Satan. Ask God to help you have a simple, childlike faith in Him just as David displays in today's passage.

**MAIN IDEA**

David brings the ark of God back to Israel, but sins in the process.

As we read through 2 Samuel together, we will notice time and time again two very important truths about King David: 1) he is a foreshadowing or “type” of Christ but 2) he is not the Christ. Both of these truths arise from today’s reading. The passage revolves around the “ark of God,” which is strikingly described here as being “called by the name of the Lord of hosts who sits enthroned on the cherubim” (2 Samuel 6:2) The ark was the centerpiece of Israel’s worship, since it symbolized the presence of God and the rule of His Law among the people. Yet under Saul, the ark was tragically lost to the Philistines. In today’s passage we see a reversal of that great tragedy: King David restores the presence of God among God’s people by retrieving the ark. But unlike the ultimate restoration that will come on the day that Christ returns, this restoration also includes regression. David, if you will, takes two steps forward and one step back. Because, in returning the ark to Israel, he blatantly disobeys God’s law! God had given Israel a very specific command for how the ark was to be transported. It was to be carried by Levites on foot using poles placed through rings in the side of the ark (Exodus 25:14-15; Numbers 4:15; 7:9; Deuteronomy 10:8; 31:9, 25).<sup>1</sup> Yet instead of following these specific instructions, David decided to carry the ark back to Jerusalem on a “new cart” (2 Samuel 6:3). Notice that the word “new” is repeated—this emphasizes the fact that David did this in rebellion against God’s commands. As we read through 2 Samuel, we can find many ways in which David is a picture of the Christ to come. Yet let us never forget that Christ is infinitely better than David, for He is a perfectly righteous King who leads us in the way of righteousness.

- Why was the ark of God important to Israel?

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- What can you learn about obeying God from today’s passage? How might David’s rebellion be a negative example for us to learn from?

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**PRAY**

Praise God today for Jesus, the King of righteousness. Ask Him to forgive you for sinning just like David. Thank Him for being faithful and just to forgive your sins and to cleanse you from all unrighteousness. Ask Him to help you walk today as a child of the Kingdom.

MAIN IDEA

Uzzah rebels against God and faces the consequences of his rebellion.

There is a short axiom that fits nicely with the events of today's reading:

When we rebel,  
Things don't go well.

You should teach this axiom to your children, your friends, and all others who will listen. Examples of its veracity abound in God's Word. If you remember from yesterday, David rebelled against God by using a "new cart" to carry the ark rather than the specific way that God had commanded Israel. At the end of yesterday's reading, we read that "Uzzah and Ahio...were driving the new cart" (2 Samuel 6:5-15). So, one might ask, I see the "rebel" piece, now where is the "things don't go well" piece? This is where Uzzah comes in. As Uzzah and Ahio drive the cart that carries the ark of God, one of the oxen stumbles and the ark of God appears to be falling. Uzzah, no doubt thinking to save the ark of God from crashing to the ground, sticks out his hand to stabilize it. This in itself was rebellious because God commanded the ark-bearers not to touch the holy things (see the passages cited yesterday). Moreover, God also told the ark-bearers exactly what would happen to them if they did touch the holy things: they would be struck down by God immediately. Uzzah's fate is tragic, but it should not have been a surprise. He knew, just like every other Israelite, that God is holy and that man is not. He knew that God does not wink at sin and rebellion, but judges it with perfect righteousness and justice. Possibly Uzzah made the decision that his hands were cleaner than the dirt of the ground. If so, this is a decision each of us should take to heart. Our hands are in fact unclean, because they are stained with sin. There is only One who can wash this sin away, and His name is Jesus Christ. May we trust and obey Him today.

- Why did God strike Uzzah down? Why does David get angry with God for this?

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- Do you ever struggle with self-righteousness? How might today's passage help you to come to terms with your own fallenness?

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PRAY

Spend some time today confessing your sin to God. If you have rebelled against God like David and Uzzah, ask Him to forgive you. Thank God for taking His holiness seriously, and for being a God who loves righteousness. Ask Him to help you to walk in righteousness today.

**MAIN IDEA**

Though the Uzzah episode is tragic, it results in a beautiful scene of repentance.

The episode with Uzzah and the ark of God is a tragic one. It reminds us of our sinfulness and unworthiness to come into God's presence (which the ark of God represented). But there are also some redeeming aspects to this passage. C. S. Lewis said that "God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pain: it is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world."<sup>2</sup> This was certainly true of David as he witnessed the death of Uzzah. Through that painful experience his conscious was roused, and on that day he was "afraid of the Lord" (2 Samuel 6:9). And, as "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge" (Proverbs 1:7), so David's fear for the Lord brought him to a point of obedience. He disposed of the "new cart" and left the ark at the house of Obed-Edom for a time. Thereafter, he came back with the ark-bearers and carried the ark of God back to Jerusalem the way God had commanded. This episode, unlike the previous one with Uzzah, was filled with the Lord, with dancing and singing and shouting. Let us pray that God the Holy Spirit would convict us of our sin, just like He did David. Let us pray that our consciences would be roused and that we would bear fruit in keeping with repentance, so that we may experience the joy of the Lord and offer Him the worship and praise that He deserves.

- What is tragic about Uzzah's sin and fate? What are the redeeming aspects of Uzzah's sin and fate?

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- What is God convicting your heart of today? How might today's passage set out a model of repentance for you to follow today?

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**PRAY**

Pray that God the Holy Spirit would convict you of sin today. Ask that He would give you an acute awareness of your sinfulness, so that you may confess your sin to Him wholeheartedly and earnestly. Ask God to help you bear fruit in keeping with repentance, so that you may honor Him by turning away from sin and toward Him.

As you reflect on your personal study throughout the week, choose one verse or passage that particularly stood out to you.

- Why was this verse or passage so meaningful to you?

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- In what areas of your life do these truths apply?

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- In what ways do you plan to put the truths you've observed this week into practice?

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**Family Focus:** Now take the verse or passage that stood out to you and think about how you can share it with your family. How does it apply to your husband, wife, son, or daughter? For singles or students, think about how it applies to your friends or parents. Commit to share this passage with a family member or friend today.

Tomorrow our lesson is **Celebrated** from 2 Samuel 5:9-12; 6:12-19. Review these verses to prepare your heart and pray for your teacher.





## CELEBRATED

### SUNDAY SCHOOL GROUP NOTES \_\_\_\_\_

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List 2-3 ways you plan to respond to the truths you have learned this week:

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**WEEK OF**  
**JUNE 18, 2018**

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**WEEKLY MEMORY VERSE**

Therefore You are great, O Lord God. For there is none like You, and there is no God besides You, according to all that we have heard with our ears.

*2 Samuel 7:22*

**MONDAY**  
**JUNE**  
**18**

2 Samuel 6:16-23

**MAIN IDEA**

Pride leads to brokenness in David's relationship with Michal.

There is perhaps nothing more central to the nature of sin than pride. C. S. Lewis identifies this when, in his classic work *Mere Christianity*, he titles his chapter on pride “The Great Sin.”<sup>3</sup> It is worth a read for believers who wish to conquer pride in their lives. Lewis says that pride “is the complete anti-God state of mind” and that it is “essentially competitive.” The great test of pride in your heart, Lewis says, is how much you are bothered by pride in others. Since pride is essentially competitive, the really proud person can’t stand it when other people attempt to steal the praise they are angling for. The simple truth is that pride destroys our relationships, not only with one another but also with God. In today’s reading, we see the devastating effects of “the great sin” at work in the lives of David and Michal. Was David’s “leaping and dancing” a pure expression of worship before the Lord (2 Samuel 6:16), or was it a ploy to “honor himself” as Michal suggests (2 Samuel 6:20)? Or, was it a mixture of both motives? Until the day of glory, we may never know. But one thing we can know about this passage is that the pride of Michal, which drove her to speak harshly toward David, led their marriage to a point of desperate brokenness. In fact, the passage ends by observing that “Michal the daughter of Saul had no child to the day of her death” (2 Samuel 6:23). This, of course, only implies one thing: David and Michal were never intimate again from this point forward. We end today’s devotion in a dark place, but tomorrow we will see the glorious light of humility in the Christian life.

- In what way does pride lead to brokenness in David and Michal’s relationship?

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- Do you struggle with pride? How has pride affected your life and your relationships? How might today’s passage influence the way you think about pride?

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**PRAY**

Cry out to God today and ask Him to forgive you for pride in your life. Pray that He would, by the power of the Holy Spirit, turn your eyes away from yourself and the praise of others, so that you may see Him in all of His glory and beauty. Pray that you would lose sight of yourself in the glorious light of God’s splendor.

**MAIN IDEA**

Our Lord Jesus Christ is our ultimate example of humility.

Yesterday’s devotion ended on a negative note. Today, we will look at one of the most glorious passages in Scripture—a passage that centers on the Christian virtue of humility. At the end of C. S. Lewis’s chapter on pride in *Mere Christianity*, he says that “to get even near [humility], even for a moment, is like a drink of cold water to a man in a desert.”<sup>4</sup> The sinful human heart is so wired for pride, that to experience humility is a phenomenon both miraculous and glorious. In Philippians 2, we learn that only the person who has the mind of Christ can truly experience humility, for Jesus Himself is the ultimate example of humility. Jesus is the God who created the universe and upholds it by the word of His power. He is God of gods, Light of lights. He is the King of kings and the Lord of lords. Yet Philippians 2 tells us that He did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but rather emptied Himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men, and becoming obedient even to the point of death on a cross. If our Lord humbled Himself in this way for us, how can we not respond to His call to humility with glad and receptive hearts? Brothers and sisters, may we do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others as more important than ourselves.

- What is the ultimate source of Christian humility?

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- How might today’s passage help you to become a more humble person?

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**PRAY**

Praise God today for your Lord Jesus Christ—who humbled Himself on your behalf to save you from your sins. Pray that He would give you a humble heart today.

**MAIN IDEA**

God, being all sufficient in Himself, does not need David to build Him a house, but will rather build David a house.

In A.W.Tozer's classic work, *The Knowledge of the Holy*, he said the following regarding God's self-sufficiency: "To admit the existence of a need in God is to admit incompleteness in the divine Being. Need is a creature-word and cannot be spoken of the Creator."<sup>5</sup> This is a lesson in theology that David learns first-hand from God in today's reading. At face value, David's line of thinking makes sense: "I live in a house of cedar," he says, "but God lives in a tent." Perhaps he thought, "This doesn't seem right—I should build God a house like mine so that He doesn't have to live in a tent anymore." If so, not even Nathan the prophet, God's mouthpiece during that time in Israel, saw the theological error in David's thinking. But God in His grace does not allow David to build Him a house, but establishes the basis of His glorious covenant with David. The basis is this: God is in fact God, and therefore He didn't need David to build Him a house. The apostle Paul makes the same point in Acts 17:24-25. God does not need a house, but David does. God is God, and David is not God but rather God's chosen king over Israel through whom God will usher in His eternal Kingdom. This is the foundation of God's covenant with David that we will look at in tomorrow's devotion.

- Why does God correct David when David offers to build Him a house?

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- Do you ever feel insufficient in life? How can this passage about God's all-sufficient nature help you to gain encouragement and strength?

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**PRAY**

Cry out today in worship of your all-sufficient God, who needs nothing from you but desires you to depend wholly on Him. Ask God to help you humbly submit to the lordship of Jesus Christ today.

MAIN IDEA

Jesus Christ ultimately fulfills God's promises in the Davidic Covenant.

Yesterday we looked at David's desire to build God a house, but really it was God who would build David a house. This passage comprises what biblical scholars call the Davidic Covenant. God's promise to David in the Davidic Covenant contains at least three elements:

1. God promises David a great name.
2. God promises David a great kingdom.
3. God promises David that one of his offspring will be an eternal king, who will build a house for the name of God.

In one sense, a good portion of this promise is fulfilled in Solomon, the son of David. He makes the name of the house of David great and expands the greatness of David's kingdom. He also builds the temple, which becomes Israel's center for the worship of God. Yet in another sense the promises contained in the Davidic Covenant transcend any human king. God promises that one of David's offspring will be His son, and He his Father. God promises that this offspring's throne and kingdom will be established forever. When we start putting the pieces together, it becomes quite clear that the offspring God refers to here is none other than our Lord Jesus Christ. He is the true seed of David who has inaugurated God's kingdom on earth and in heaven, and will one day return to ultimately establish His universal and eternal rule. May we bow down before our King Jesus today and worship Him as our eternal God and King.

- In what ways does the promised King of the Davidic Covenant point to Jesus?

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- Do you often struggle with feeling that God is not in charge in our fallen world? How might today's passage give you a greater assurance of God's sovereignty over world events and history? How might today's passage give you a greater assurance of God's sovereignty over the particulars of your life?

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PRAY

Praise God that He has established our Lord Jesus Christ as the sovereign King over the entire universe. Pray that He would help you to bow the knee to your King Jesus today and worship Him in spirit and truth.

**MAIN IDEA**

David humbles himself before God and glorifies His name.

In the Davidic Covenant, God made great and lofty promises to David. How should David respond to such marvelous promises from God? Better yet, how should we respond when we see the wondrous works of God in fulfilling His promises to David through the life, death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and future glory of our Lord Jesus Christ? In this regard, David's response is instructive for us:

1. David responds by saying, "Who am I, O Lord God?" (2 Samuel 7:18) In other words, David confesses his own minuteness in light of the weighty glory of God on high. He cries out to God in utter amazement that the God of the universe would condescend so low to share His plans of salvation with a man like him. He stands in awe of God's care for him and the glory of the great promises God has given him.
2. David responds by directing all the glory to God. He says, "Therefore You are great, O Lord God. For there is none like You, and there is no God besides You" (2 Samuel 7:22). David understands his own finite nature, but He also understands just how great God is and how marvelous His works are toward man.

When it comes to how we should respond to the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ, which God set into motion so long ago in the Davidic Covenant, we should model David. We should confess to God that apart from Christ we are nothing, that we had nothing in ourselves worthy of salvation. But we shouldn't stop there. We should also lift up our hands in praise to a glorious God who set the plan of salvation into motion before the foundation of the earth and who sacrificially gave His only Son to die so that we might have eternal life. Humble yourselves before Him today, brothers and sisters. Exalt Him for His name's sake!

- How does King David respond to the marvelous promises of God in the Davidic Covenant?

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- On a daily basis, how often to you think about the good news of the gospel? How often do you respond to God in light of this good news? How might today's passage help to shape your response to God in light of the good news?

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**PRAY**

Cry out to God today and confess your own poor state before Him—that you were once dead in your trespasses and sins, utterly unable to be right with Him on your own merit. Then lift up your soul in praise to God for providing you a way out of your poor state through the death, burial, and resurrection of your Lord Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins.

As you reflect on your personal study throughout the week, choose one verse or passage that particularly stood out to you.

- Why was this verse or passage so meaningful to you?

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- In what areas of your life do these truths apply?

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- In what ways do you plan to put the truths you've observed this week into practice?

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**Family Focus:** Now take the verse or passage that stood out to you and think about how you can share it with your family. How does it apply to your husband, wife, son, or daughter? For singles or students, think about how it applies to your friends or parents. Commit to share this passage with a family member or friend today.

Tomorrow our lesson is **Established** from 2 Samuel 7:8-21. Review these verses to prepare your heart and pray for your teacher.



SUNDAY SCHOOL GROUP NOTES \_\_\_\_\_

Lined area for taking notes, consisting of 17 horizontal lines.

List 2-3 ways you plan to respond to the truths you have learned this week:

Lined area for writing responses, consisting of 5 horizontal lines.



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**WEEK OF**  
**JUNE 25, 2018**

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**WEEKLY MEMORY VERSE**

So David reigned over all Israel. And David administered justice and equity to all his people.  
*2 Samuel 8:15*



**MONDAY**  
**JUNE**  
**25**

2 Samuel 8:1-14

**MAIN IDEA**

The Lord gave victory to David wherever he went.

Not many hymns in Christian history have drawn inspiration from the books of Samuel. Yet Robert Robinson has memorialized the words of 1 Samuel 7:12 in his beloved hymn, “Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing”:

Here I raise mine Ebenezer,  
Hither by Thine help I’m come.  
And I hope by Thy good pleasure,  
Safely to arrive at home.<sup>6</sup>

*Ebenezer* literally means “stone of help,” and it is what Samuel called the stone he set up between Mizpah and Shen to memorialize God’s faithfulness to help him in his times of greatest need (1 Samuel 7). When we come to today’s reading, we come to another *Ebenezer* kind of moment—we find a catalogue of David’s victories over his enemies. But one sentence in this lengthy catalogue stands out above the rest: “And the Lord gave victory to David wherever he went” (2 Samuel 8:6, 14). The most important truth of this text is that God gives the victory, and He does it for His own glory. What are the *Ebenezers* of your life? Where have you seen God give you victory or sustain you in marvelous ways for His own glory? Meditate on those times today, and so incline your heart toward your God and your King in thanksgiving.

- What is the central refrain of this passage that continues to be repeated? Why is it important to recognize this refrain?

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- What difficulties are you currently experiencing in life? Has God provided for you or been faithful toward you in the past in similar situations? How might meditating on God’s past faithfulness give you strength to trust Him in your present circumstances?

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**PRAY**

Praise God for being a very present help in a time of trouble. Thank Him for helping us in our most helpless state, when we were dead in our trespasses and sins and completely separated from His goodness. Thank Him for Jesus, through whom we have unfettered access to God’s throne of grace, where we can find grace and mercy to help in a time of need. Spend focused time thanking God for His past faithfulness in your life.

**MAIN IDEA**

David ruled over Israel with justice and equity.

Who was the 12th President of the United States of America? A few of you history buffs got the answer without using Google: that's right, Zachary Taylor. Who was Zachary Taylor's Vice President? Perhaps a few less of you got it: Millard Fillmore. Who was Zachary Taylor's Secretary of State? Did any of you get it? The answer is John Clayton. You're probably thinking: "That sure was a useless exercise in trivia!" But in today's reading, we find a very similar roll call of political figures in David's government. Just like most would agree it is important to know who Zachary Taylor was, most of us understand the importance of King David. But what of Joab son of Zeruiah? Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud? Zadok the son of Ahitub? Ahimelech son of Abiathar? Seraiah or Benaiah? It's easy to think: "What is the use of introducing us to these people? Why do these names appear in Holy Scripture? Is this trivia hour?" But the author of 2 Samuel is communicating something very important here: David's kingdom was a kingdom of order, unlike the kingdom of chaos that preceded his reign. "David administered justice and equity to all his people" (2 Samuel 8:15), and this justice and equity began at the very top of his government. In Isaiah we read of another King whose rule was marked by justice and equity:

Of the increase of His government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore (Isaiah 9:7).

This King is, of course, our Lord Jesus Christ. The justice and equity of David's reign ultimately points to the greater David's eternal reign, our Lord Jesus Christ.

- What is the author's purpose in listing out the key members of David's government?

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- How might today's passage, about a reign of peace, justice, and equity, be an encouragement to us who live in a chaotic and disorderly world?

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**PRAY**

Praise God today for sending His only beloved Son to not only die for us and then be raised from the dead, but also to be exalted over us as our Lord and King. Thank Him that His eternal reign is one of righteousness and justice, unlike so many of the kingdoms of our world. Ask Him that He would use you in His kingdom today for His glory.

**MAIN IDEA**

David displays godly kindness to Mephibosheth.

What does maturity look like in the Christian life? Some of us may say, “Well, it means reading your Bible every day, praying regularly, and never missing a church service.” Certainly, these activities may be part of the lives of those who are maturing in Christ. But the apostle Paul gives a different answer to this question. He says, “Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love” (1 Corinthians 16:13-14). To be a man, to be strong, to be one who is firm in the faith, is to be the kind of person who does everything in a spirit of love. The mature Christian is this kind of Christian. What a wonderful picture of kindness we see in 2 Samuel 9:1-13. David—Saul’s sworn enemy—takes Mephibosheth, Saul’s grandson and Jonathan’s son, into his own care and invites him to eat at the king’s table like one of his sons. Mephibosheth describes himself as a “dead dog” who is lame in both his feet. Yet King David kindly sets his affection on Mephibosheth and treats him as his very own son. May we strive to emulate this type of kindness in our own relationships. Even more, may we see in this finite kindness of David a tiny picture of the infinite kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ. To this far greater kindness we turn tomorrow.

- In what ways did King David show kindness to Mephibosheth?

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- In what ways can you do a better job at displaying kindness in your own life?

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**PRAY**

Praise God today for the kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ. Ask God to help you be a kind person, and thereby be a loving person. Ask that He would help you to grow in Christlikeness on a daily basis.

**MAIN IDEA**

The kindness of King David ultimately points to the kindness of Christ.

Who do you most identify with in this passage? Perhaps you are a head of household or the leader of a successful business, and you identify with King David. Perhaps you are a faithful, yet quiet and average employee, and you identify with Ziba, Saul's servant. Have you considered your similarities to Mephibosheth? Not many of us are crippled in both feet; still fewer of us are grandsons of some powerful but deceased and disgraced leader like Saul. Really, what do we have in common with Mephibosheth? The text repeatedly emphasizes two details about Mephibosheth: 1) he was lame in both feet and 2) he ate at the king's table like a son. In one sense, this makes us a lot like Mephibosheth. While not many of us are physically lame, we were once very much spiritually lame! In Ephesians, Paul says that we were once "dead in our trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1). Our spiritual lameness separated us from God and we had no hope of ever knowing Him or experiencing His goodness. Yet Christ died for us and He made us alive. And because of what Christ did for us, God adopted us as sons and made us co-heirs with Christ. There will come a day when we, though once lame just like Mephibosheth, will dine with the King of kings and Lord of lords as His adopted sons, just like Mephibosheth dined with King David as his son. We have a lot in common with Mephibosheth, and praise God that we do! Mephibosheth looked to David as his redeemer, and he enjoyed a fulfilling life as the son of the king. Yet we look to One who is infinitely greater as our Redeemer, and as His adopted sons we will find in Him fullness of joy and pleasures forevermore (Psalm 16:11)!

- In what ways does David resemble Christ in this passage? In what ways do we resemble Mephibosheth in this passage?

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- Do you ever feel crippled in your relationship with the Lord, just like Mephibosheth was crippled? How might today's passage be a source of encouragement to you?

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**PRAY**

Cry out today in thanksgiving to your Lord Jesus Christ, who ultimately showed the kindness of His love to you by suffering on the cross and dying in your place. Ask Him today that He would help you trust in Him as your redeemer, and that He would help you experience the joy of being called a son of the Most High God.

## MAIN IDEA

David defeats the Ammonites and Syrians after they shame his servants.

Have you ever been put to shame? Perhaps you have been defeated badly in a sport, or called out in public for something about which you are embarrassed. Generally, we do everything in our power to avoid shame. In today's reading, some of David's servants are put to great shame. They approach the Ammonites in good faith to deal loyally with them, but instead the Ammonites shave their beards and disrobe them, both symbols of the deepest shame in Ancient Near Eastern culture. David's response to the shaming of his servants is the centerpiece of this text. David responds by taking away their shame. He allows the servants to stay behind for their beards to grow back, and he goes with his army and defeats the Ammonites and the Syrians, avenging the shame of his servants. David once again shows himself to be an honorable king who fights on behalf of his people. But the beauty of this passage is that it points far beyond David to our eternal King, our Lord Jesus Christ. He is our ultimate champion, who takes away our shame by bearing it Himself upon the cross. Paul tells us, "Everyone who believes in Him will not be put to shame" (Romans 10:11; cf. Isaiah 28:16). Our Lord Jesus Christ endured the shame of the cross so that we wouldn't have to. Let us now not be ashamed of the good news that He has entrusted us with, but rather get up from our devotions and proclaim the gospel to a lost and dying world.

- How does David respond to the Ammonites when they shame his servants?

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- What are you ashamed of? What sins exist in your life that you are ashamed to confess to anyone? How might the truth that Jesus has ultimately borne your shame on the cross help you come out of the dark place of shame in your life?

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## PRAY

Cry out to your Lord Jesus Christ today in thanksgiving. Thank Him for bearing your shame upon the cross and for making you free from shame each and every day. Ask that He would give you confidence—that you would not be ashamed of the gospel but that you would preach it boldly day-by-day.

As you reflect on your personal study throughout the week, choose one verse or passage that particularly stood out to you.

- Why was this verse or passage so meaningful to you?

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- In what areas of your life do these truths apply?

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- In what ways do you plan to put the truths you've observed this week into practice?

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**Family Focus:** Now take the verse or passage that stood out to you and think about how you can share it with your family. How does it apply to your husband, wife, son, or daughter? For singles or students, think about how it applies to your friends or parents. Commit to share this passage with a family member or friend today.

Tomorrow our lesson is **Valued** from 2 Samuel 9:1-13. Review these verses to prepare your heart and pray for your teacher.



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**WEEK OF**  
**JULY 2, 2018**

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**WEEKLY MEMORY VERSE**

David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord." And Nathan said to David, "The Lord also has put away your sin; you shall not die."

*2 Samuel 12:13*

**MONDAY**  
**JULY**  
**2**

2 Samuel 11:1-27

**MAIN IDEA**

David commits adultery and murder.

Earlier in 2 Samuel we read David's solemn lament of Saul, "Oh, how the mighty have fallen." We might now lament David in the same manner. We have dwelt much on how David was a man after God's own heart and how his reign was marked by justice and righteousness, in contrast to the unjust and unrighteous reign of Saul. But now, at the end of today's passage, we read that "the thing that David had done displeased the Lord." What is striking about this episode of David and Bathsheba is the way sin gradually, inch by inch, deteriorates David's integrity. The enemy did not blast David's armor of righteousness into a million pieces in one blow, but rather steadily compromised its integrity, chink by chink, crack by crack. The substance of a person's plunge into sin is not one major sin, but multiple sins of varying degrees. Notice how David begins with the sin of idleness—while all his army is out to war, he is rising late from his couch and taking a stroll on his roof. This laziness creates the context in which his next sin—the lust of the eyes—occurs. From his roof he looks on Bathsheba in her nakedness, but he does not turn away; he looks, and keeps looking. He goes still further—he not only looks, but he also acts. He inquires after Bathsheba, sends for her, and sleeps with her. Sin then multiplies upon sin: Bathsheba conceives, and David devises and carries out a plan to have her husband, Uriah, murdered. So what began as the sin of idleness gradually led to the sins of adultery and murder. Brothers and sisters, this is how the enemy destroys testimonies, marriages, ministries, friendships, and so much more. May we determine today to kill sin in our hearts and lives today, to kill it swiftly and to kill it thoroughly. As John Owen famously said, "Be killing sin, or it will be killing you."

- What is the progression of sin in this passage? How does David end up where he does?

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- What sins are you struggling with right now? How did you end up where you are? How might today's passage, and the insight into the way sin progressively destroys us, help you to fight sin in your life?

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**PRAY**

Cry out today in confession to God for the sin in your life. Ask that God would deliver you from temptation and keep you from evil. Ask that He would help you kill sin in your life. Cry out in thanksgiving for your Lord Jesus Christ, who came to take away the sins of the world. Ask that God would help you to be more satisfied in Christ than you are in your sin.





**MAIN IDEA**

David's sin is exposed by the prophet Nathan.

“Truth will out.”<sup>7</sup> Here is a Shakespearean phrase that has stood the test of time. Its basic meaning is that the truth will always prevail; what is hidden in the dark will always come to light. This is certainly true of David’s sin. God graciously uses Nathan in David’s life to expose his sin and call him to repentance. There is much for us to learn from this episode. First, it is never right for us to keep our sin hidden in the shadows. God knows our sin, and He desires for us to confess it. Second, it is vitally important for each of us to have a brother or sister in Christ (of the same gender) to keep us accountable. As a prophet, Nathan had the right to speak into David’s life and call out his sin. Who do you have in your life that you have given permission to call out your sin? Finally, when we confess our sin, God is faithful and just to put our sins away. He is able to do this because of what Christ has done for us. Christ died on the cross to take all our sin—past, present, and future—upon Himself and in exchange to give us His perfect righteousness. When Satan tempts us to despair over our sin, we must look upward and see our risen Lord and Savior, who made an end to all our sin upon the cross. As we contemplate our own sin and our desperate need for forgiveness, may we run quickly to the foot of the cross and find there all our sins nailed, paid for, and put away for good.

- How did God use Nathan in the life of David?

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- Do you have a brother or sister in Christ who you walk with and who keeps you accountable? What does today’s passage suggest about the importance of discipleship in your life?

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**PRAY**

Cry out today in confession to God for the sin in your life. Ask that God would deliver you from temptation and keep you from evil. Ask that He would help you kill sin in your life. Cry out in thanksgiving for your Lord Jesus Christ, who came to take away the sins of the world. Ask that God would help you to be more satisfied in Christ than you are in your sin.



**MAIN IDEA**

David faces the consequences of his sin: his child dies.

Today’s reading confronts us with a hard truth: though through Christ our sins are forgiven, there remains earthly consequences for sin. Sometimes, those consequences are devastating. Most scholars agree that the circumstances of 2 Samuel 12 inspired David’s writing of Psalm 51. For today’s devotion, let us enter the grief, the conviction, and the joy of David as he confesses his sin and finds comfort and forgiveness in the Lord. Turn now in your Bible to Psalm 51: Spend the remainder of your time reading this psalm and praying its words back to the Lord in the context of your own sin.

- Why did David’s child die? How does David respond to this devastating event?

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- What can the heartbreaking episode of 2 Samuel 12 teach us about the evil of sin and the glory of Christ’s victory over sin?

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**PRAY**

Spend your time in prayer by praying Psalm 51 back to God.

**MAIN IDEA**

Bathsheba bears David another son, Solomon.

God often works in marvelous ways amid our grief. The structure of 2 Samuel 12 is absolutely beautiful: it moves from death (2 Samuel 12:15b-23) to life (2 Samuel 12:24-25), from the death of David's unnamed child to the birth of Solomon, the child of promise. In no way does the birth of Solomon lighten the weight of grief David must have experienced over the death of a child, but it does remind us of the brilliant light of God's grace and mercy, even amid a dark hour. Solomon is the immediate fulfillment of God's covenant with David: he is the son of David, heir to the throne of Israel, beloved of God, who will build the temple of God in Jerusalem. This shows us that God remains faithful to His promises despite David's sin. Though David's sin is great, God's grace is even greater. He will fulfill His promises; and, ultimately, He has fulfilled His promises by sending Christ, the true seed of David and the true Davidic King who sits upon the throne of heaven for all of eternity. We, like David, have sinned greatly. Thanks be to God that despite our sin God remains faithful to us. Our sin is great, but God's grace is infinitely greater. May we praise Him, thank Him, and worship Him for this today.

- What is significant about the birth of Solomon?

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- Are you in a season of grief? What light or encouragement can you draw from today's passage?

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**PRAY**

Cast all your care and burdens upon the Lord today. Ask Him to hear your cries for grace and mercy. Thank Him for being a God who not only hears our prayers, but acts upon them and provides us with just what we need just when we need it. Thank God for all the blessings He has given you, primarily for the blessing of eternal salvation through Christ Jesus our Lord.

## MAIN IDEA

David shows evidence of repentance by going to Rabbah with his army.

From the perspective of literature, 2 Samuel 12 is a mixture between comedy and tragedy. Of course, in our modern understanding of comedy, there is nothing comic about 2 Samuel 12. It explores the tragic horrors of sin and death, and there is nothing light or funny about that. But in literary terms, this chapter of Scripture has a comedic structure. In Shakespearean comedy, for instance, the protagonist enters a setting of alternate reality, experiences a series of life or perspective changing events, and then enters back into the real world a changed person. In a sense, this is what we find in 2 Samuel 12. From the beginning, David's rightful place was on the battlefield of Rabbah, with his army. Yet we find him at home in Jerusalem, where he experiences the tragedy of sin and death, followed by the glory of the birth of Solomon. These events effect change in David's life: he confesses sin, he experiences the consequences of sin, and he experiences the grace of God. Thereafter, the story comes full circle and he joins his army at Rabbah, bringing him back to his rightful place and signaling his repentance from his original sin of laziness. Though David is the one responsible for his sin, it is good to keep in mind that God allowed David to sin so that through confession and repentance he would be changed. The fact that David went to Rabbah with his army shows that God accomplished His purposes. God too allows us to go through things in life so that He might change us. The next time the going gets tough, remember that for those who love God and are called according to His purpose, all things work together for good. And ultimately, the good that God is working in our lives is Christlikeness (Romans 8:28-29)!

- What good purposes do you see God accomplishing in the events of 2 Samuel 12?

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- In 2 Samuel 12 we learn that God accomplishes good purposes through very difficult circumstances. How might this knowledge help you have joy in life, even when the going gets tough?

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## PRAY

Commit yourself to the Lord today—tell Him that you trust Him with your life and with all the circumstances of your life. If you are going through a difficult time, ask God to make it clear to you what good He is doing amidst the difficulty.

As you reflect on your personal study throughout the week, choose one verse or passage that particularly stood out to you.

- Why was this verse or passage so meaningful to you?

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- In what areas of your life do these truths apply?

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- In what ways do you plan to put the truths you've observed this week into practice?

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**Family Focus:** Now take the verse or passage that stood out to you and think about how you can share it with your family. How does it apply to your husband, wife, son, or daughter? For singles or students, think about how it applies to your friends or parents. Commit to share this passage with a family member or friend today.

Tomorrow our lesson is **Accountable** from 2 Samuel 12:1-14. Review these verses to prepare your heart and pray for your teacher.



SUNDAY SCHOOL GROUP NOTES \_\_\_\_\_

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List 2-3 ways you plan to respond to the truths you have learned this week:

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**WEEK OF**  
**JULY 9, 2018**

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**WEEKLY MEMORY VERSE**

We must all die; we are like water spilled on the ground. God will not take away life, and He devises means so that the banished will not remain an outcast.

*2 Samuel 14:14*

**MONDAY**  
**JULY**  
**9**

2 Samuel 13:1-22

**MAIN IDEA**

Amnon commits sexual sin against Tamar.

Our culture has fallen for a great lie that can be summed up in three words: “Love is love.” The lie is really an entire worldview of which the center is a very particular notion of “love.” This “love” is far removed from the Christian virtue of love. It primarily denotes a feeling, rather than an action. It is a feeling that comes and goes, and that moves from person to person. It is no respecter of the boundaries of marriage or even gender; it does not understand commitment or sacrifice. This is the notion of “free love” that our culture has so eagerly embraced. This “free love” gives a single woman the license to love as many as she pleases. It gives a married man the license to leave his wife for another woman, with whom he has “fallen in love.” It is this same notion of “free love” that we find at work in today’s reading. If Amnon desires Tamar, if he has this deep yearning for her, if he has “fallen in love” with her, why should he not have her? Why shouldn’t love prevail? Why shouldn’t the desire of his heart be realized? In a culture of “free love,” these questions are difficult to answer. But in today’s reading the Bible confronts us strikingly with the vivid truth lurking beneath the lie of “free love.” The truth is this: all sexual immorality is an expression of hate, not love. Amnon commits a sexual sin against Tamar, and his immediate emotional response is not love, but hate—“great hatred,” our passage says (2 Samuel 13:15). We were not made for “free love” in this sense, but rather for sacrificial, life-giving love. And the reason we were made for this kind of love is because this is the kind of love that has been shown to us. Christ came, He bled and died, He was buried, and He was raised on the third day so that we could love others in the same way that He has loved us. May we rise from our studies this morning and love the way that Christ loves, for the glory of God and for the good of mankind. Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 to see how God’s Word outlines the attributes of true love.

- What is the relationship between Amnon’s sexual immorality and his hatred of Tamar?

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- Do you struggle with sexual sin? What effect does knowing that at the heart of sexual sin is hatred have on your fight against it? How might meditating on the perfect love of Christ for you help in your battle against sexual sin?

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**PRAY**

Praise God today that God is a God of love, not hate. Praise God that Christ showed His love for us by sacrificially laying down His life for us. Ask that God would help you to love the way that Christ loves.



**MAIN IDEA**

**Absalom murders Amnon.**

Yesterday’s passage confronted us with a hard truth about sexual sin: It is, at its core, an expression of hate, not love. Today we are confronted with another hard truth: When we sin, it does not just affect us and those directly against whom we sin; rather, the effects of sin stretch wide and far into the lives of those around us. See here how the sin of Amnon (the rape of Tamar) provides occasion for the sin of Absalom. Absalom detests his brother for what he did to Tamar, and so he tricks him and murders him. There are several different responses that we could have to a passage such as this. We could turn our noses up at this dysfunctional royal family and imagine we are nothing like them. We could think of people in our lives that possess similar vices and imagine we are nothing like them. Or, we could recognize that the same sin that exists in Amnon, Absalom, and the entire Davidic royal family exists in some fashion in us as well. A passage like this one should drive us to despise sin. It should drive us to want to kill sin even more than Absalom wanted to kill Amnon. Yet we must also recognize that in and of ourselves, we do not have the power to kill the sin within us. We need help, and we need Divine help. May we go to Jesus today and cry, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world!” It is for wretched sinners like Amnon and Absalom, like you and me, that Christ came to die. So, brothers and sisters, run to Him today, and run swiftly.

- Why does Absalom murder Amnon? What effects of Amnon’s prior sin do you see in this passage?  
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- How might today’s passage awake in you a passion to kill sin in your own life? What negative effects of sin do you see in this passage? How about in your life?  
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**PRAY**

Cry out to God today and ask for specific forgiveness: Confess to Him the ways in which your sin has harmed not only you, but also those around you. Now ask for specific mercy: Place yourself under the blood of Jesus Christ, rejoice in the redemption that is yours in Him, and ask God to redeem all of the negative effects your sin has had on you and those around you.



**MAIN IDEA**

Absalom flees because of his great sin.

How many law enforcement movies have you seen in which the theme “Only the guilty run” plays some part? It is a very common theme in the law enforcement genre, and it is certainly true in the case of Absalom. The essential truth behind this theme is in fact a biblical one: The world loves the darkness and hates the light, because in the obscurity of the darkness our sin is somewhat concealed, while in the light all its horror and ugliness are on display. So often, the tell-tale sign that our hearts are falling in love with sin is that we will retreat from the people of God, we will flee just as Absalom fled. For not only did Absalom flee, but he fled from Israel back to Geshur, the Gentile homeland of his mother. Often when we fall into sin, we flee from the light back to the dark, back to our old ways and habits. The result of Absalom’s fleeing was heartbreak: “The king’s sons came and lifted up their voice and wept. And the king also and all his servants wept very bitterly” (2 Samuel 13:36). So too, when we pursue sin and flee our brothers and sisters, the church suffers and weeps bitterly on our behalf. Jesus came that we might have life, and life abundantly. The life He purchased for us by His death, burial, and resurrection is a life of holiness, separated from sin and united with Him and His people. When we feel the enticements of sin, may we not flee into the darkness like Absalom, but rather may we confess our sin, bring it into the light, and kill it. Brothers and sisters, if we would see Jesus, this is the way forward!

- Where does Absalom flee and why is it important? Why does he flee?

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- When you sin, do you become an isolationist? Does sin curb your desire to fellowship with God’s people? How might understanding this about yourself help you to be more aware of sin in your life?

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**PRAY**

Praise Jesus today, who is the light of the world. Praise Him that He has transferred us from the kingdom of darkness into His glorious kingdom of light. Ask that He would help you battle sin day-by-day. Ask that He would empower the church to fight sin together, in fellowship and union with one another.

**MAIN IDEA**

David and Absalom reunite.

In today's reading, Joab devises a plan to reunite David and Absalom. Of course, there were major barriers in their relationship: Absalom killed his half-brother, Amnon, out of spite for Amnon raping Absalom's sister Tamar, Amnon's half-sister. Because of these events, Absalom fled and lived as an outcast for three years. The details of David and Absalom's relationship is the stuff of a great drama: David longs to see Absalom but refuses to let him back in because of what he has done. Absalom likewise desires to see his father, David. Joab knows this and devises a wise plan to open David's heart to inviting his son back into Jerusalem. The plan works and David lets Absalom back in. But there is a twist: Even though Absalom is allowed back in Jerusalem, David refuses to see him for two more years! Absalom lives separated from his father until one day he gets fed up with it. He sets fire to one of Joab's fields and forces Joab to set up a meeting between him and David. Joab succeeds, father and son reunite, and the narrative ends with David giving Absalom a fatherly kiss. What a wonderful narrative of restoration! In this passage, Joab is the mastermind of reconciliation. But there is a clue in this narrative that points us beyond Joab. Right in the middle of the passage, the woman of Tekoa, whom Joab sent to convince David to reconcile with Absalom, says the following: "God will not take away life, and He devises means so that the banished will not remain an outcast" (2 Samuel 14:14). What a significant truth about God this woman teaches us! God is a God of reconciliation and restoration, not banishment. Did you know that you were once an outcast, banished from the presence of God? But by His grace God devised a means for you to be reconciled with Him! To this great truth we will turn tomorrow.

- What was the conflict that separated David and Absalom? How did they resolve that conflict?

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- Have you ever been in a major conflict with someone? Have you ever effectively banished someone from your life? What does today's passage teach us about the importance of reconciliation?

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**PRAY**

Thank God today that He is a God who cares deeply for the outcast and downtrodden. Praise Him that even though you were once an outcast, through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ you have been brought near to God, and adopted into His family as a child and an heir. Ask that God would help you to reflect on the reconciliation you have experienced with Him in the relationships in your life.

**MAIN IDEA**

God rejoices when lost sinners are reconciled to Him.

Have you ever noticed that the three parables you read today all teach us the same thing about God? The point is this: God, and all of heaven, rejoices when sinners are reconciled to Him. Just as a shepherd rejoices when he finds a lost sheep, or a woman when she finds a lost coin, or a father when he finds a lost son, so God rejoices when sinners return to Him in repentance. Yesterday we learned that God devises means for the one who is banished to be restored. Today we learn that it makes God exceedingly happy when the outcast is restored. We can easily find ourselves in Luke 15 and 2 Samuel 14. We too were once lost, banished, cast out from the presence of God because of our sin. Yet since God devises plans to bring back the banished, since He rejoices in reconciling lost sinners to Himself, He sent Christ to die on the cross and pay for our sins. Because of what Christ has done, all those who trust in Him are reconciled to God! This glorious restoration was God's plan from the beginning, and it brings Him much joy. Our response to this rich gospel truth should be threefold: 1) We should rejoice along with God that we have been reconciled to Him, and we should rejoice when others are reconciled to Him. We should not be like Jonah, or the Pharisees, and grumble when God redeems lost sinners. 2) We should strive with everything that we have to be ambassadors for Christ; we should be the ones through whom God is making His appeal of reconciliation to a lost and dying world. 3) If we find ourselves in a situation of conflict, we should strive to resolve that conflict and pursue reconciliation. As Christians, we can rest knowing that we have been reconciled to God through Christ Jesus. May we reflect this wondrous truth in the way we live our lives.

- What do the three parables you read today all have in common?

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- Have you felt distant from God lately? Have you had a lack of passion for evangelism? Have you experienced conflict with other people? How can today's passage inform the way we respond to all these issues?

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**PRAY**

Praise God for being a God who rejoices when lost sinners are reconciled to Him. Rejoice along with Him that you have been reconciled. Pray earnestly that your unbelieving friends, co-workers, colleagues, and acquaintances would be reconciled to Him. If you are experiencing relational conflict, ask that God would bring reconciliation.

As you reflect on your personal study throughout the week, choose one verse or passage that particularly stood out to you.

- Why was this verse or passage so meaningful to you?

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- In what areas of your life do these truths apply?

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- In what ways do you plan to put the truths you've observed this week into practice?

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**Family Focus:** Now take the verse or passage that stood out to you and think about how you can share it with your family. How does it apply to your husband, wife, son, or daughter? For singles or students, think about how it applies to your friends or parents. Commit to share this passage with a family member or friend today.

Tomorrow our lesson is **Grieved** from 2 Samuel 13:15-20, 31-39. Review these verses to prepare your heart and pray for your teacher.



SUNDAY SCHOOL GROUP NOTES \_\_\_\_\_

Lined area for group notes

List 2-3 ways you plan to respond to the truths you have learned this week:

Lined area for response list

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**WEEK OF**  
**JULY 16, 2018**

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**WEEKLY MEMORY VERSE**

It may be that the Lord will look on the wrong done to me, and that the Lord will repay me with good for his cursing today.

*2 Samuel 16:12*

**MONDAY**  
**JULY**  
**16**

2 Samuel 15:1-12

**MAIN IDEA**

Absalom devises a plan to overthrow his father David.

Have you ever held a grudge? Oftentimes, grudges are something that no one else sees; they like to hide behind fake smiles and pleasant conversations, sometimes for years and years. In today's passage, it becomes clear that Absalom still holds a grudge against his father David, even after we saw their reconciliation last week. Absalom, whose name ironically means "father of peace," gives birth to a plot to oust his father from the throne and take his place. It appears, too, that his plan will be successful: "And the conspiracy grew strong, and the people with Absalom kept increasing" (2 Samuel 15:12). After the climactic scene of restoration between David and Absalom we witnessed last week, today's reading may come as a discouragement to you. How should we respond to this disappointing display of sinful human nature? Surely, we shouldn't just close our Bibles and walk away with our heads down. Rather, we should turn our eyes away from sinful man to gaze upon the beauty of our King Jesus. Unlike Absalom, when Christ returns He will establish an eternal kingdom of peace that is unstained by things like conspiracy and father-son disputes. In the new heaven and new earth, we as the church of God will live in perfect unity with one another. There will be no pain or tears or selfish spats; rather, with one voice we will praise our King Jesus for all of eternity. Brothers and sisters, why not begin to live this way now?

- What is Absalom's plan to overthrow David? Why does Absalom do this?

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- Are you a grudge-holding kind of person? How might meditating on the future reality of the new heaven and new earth help you in this struggle?

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**PRAY**

Praise your King Jesus for ushering in a kingdom of peace, not division. Ask that He would help you to live in unity with your brothers and sisters in Christ today. Ask that He would give you a taste of the glory of the new heaven and the new earth even now, while you live in this world.



**MAIN IDEA**

David flees Jerusalem as Absalom closes in.

Yesterday we saw Absalom devise a plan to take his father David’s throne, and we saw that plan gaining strength. Today, we see that the plan succeeds: David receives a message that Absalom is closing in on Jerusalem, and he decides to flee with his entire house, save Zadok, Abiathar, and Hushai. This must have been one of the worst moments in David’s life: Not only had he lost the throne that God had established for him, but he had lost it because of his own son’s conspiracy. Yet amid this traumatic event, David displays an incredibly humble submission to and trust in the Lord. Here is his thought process when he decides to leave the Ark of the Covenant behind: “If I find favor in the eyes of the Lord, He will bring me back and let me see [the ark] and its dwelling place. But if He says, ‘I have no pleasure in you,’ behold, here I am, let him do to me what seems good to him” (2 Samuel 15:25-26). Again, when Shimei of the house of Saul curses David on his journey out of Jerusalem and David’s men rise up to stop Shimei, David says, “If he is cursing because the Lord has said to him, ‘Curse David,’ who then shall say, ‘Why have you done so?’ ... Leave him alone and let him curse, for the Lord has told him to. It may be that the Lord will look down on the wrong done to me, and that the Lord will repay me with good for his cursing today” (2 Samuel 16:10-12). What David shows here is an implicit trust that the Lord is doing something good with his bad circumstances. Brothers and sisters, God is doing something in your trials—you can take that truth to the bank. And because God is sovereign and good and wise, you can know that whatever He is doing in your trials is ultimately for your eternal good. May we rest in this biblical truth today.

- Why does David flee Jerusalem? How does David respond to his circumstances?

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- When you are faced with trials, how do you typically process those trials? How might David’s response to his circumstances be instructive for you?

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**PRAY**

Praise God today that He is sovereign, good, and wise. Rest in the fact that whatever He is doing in your life must be for your ultimate, eternal good. Ask that He would help you to submit to His will and trust Him implicitly amid whatever you are going through right now.

**MAIN IDEA**

David’s friend Hushai acts as a double agent in Jerusalem.

Movies or stories that feature a double agent tend to be very popular. For instance, this is the premise upon which the entire *James Bond* saga has been built. Today’s reading features a kind of double agent in Israel: Hushai. Yesterday we read that at the bequest of King David, Hushai stayed behind in Jerusalem to pledge his allegiance to Absalom, so that he could secretly pass along all that Absalom said and planned to King David. In this endeavor, Hushai finds himself up against some serious odds: Not only is Absalom a powerful and bold usurper, but he also has a wise counselor in his corner: Ahithophel. How can Hushai prevail against the power of Absalom and the wisdom of Ahithophel? Only with the Lord’s help. To wrap up the week, we will see how Hushai, with the Lord’s help, saves his beloved King David. Back in 2 Samuel 15, the author makes it a point to say that Hushai was David’s “friend.” Though Hushai does take on the role of a double agent, even more so he takes on the role of a friend. He places himself in the way of danger, truly laying down his life, so that he might be of some service to his friend David. May we look to emulate this kind of friendship in our own lives. And may we look to Jesus, our truest Friend, who actually did lay down His life for us, so that we could have abundant life both now and in eternity.

- In what way does Hushai act as a double agent?

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- What kind of friend are you? Are you the kind of friend that takes more or gives more? How might today’s reading be instructive for you as you strive to be a better friend?

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**PRAY**

Today praise God for His Son Jesus Christ, the Friend of tax collectors and sinners. Ask God that He would help you to display true friendship by laying down your preferences, comforts, and even life for your brothers and sisters in Christ.



**MAIN IDEA**

Hushai intercedes for David and saves him.

Today's reading shows a picture, albeit a broken picture, of intercession. The picture is broken because it is shrouded in deceit—Hushai is working as a double agent, speaking in the interest of Absalom while truly angling in the interest of David. Yet, once we grant the deceitfulness of his actions, we see that Hushai was truly interceding on behalf of his king, David. Hushai's actions, though tainted with sin, lead to the preservation of David's life and ultimately the preservation of the line of Christ, who is our true Intercessor and whose actions are not stained with the brokenness of sin. Just as David had an intercessor who rose up to speak on his behalf when his enemies plotted against him, so also we have a Divine Intercessor who intercedes for us when Satan accuses us. Revelation 12:10 tells us as much: "Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before God." As you close down your devotion today, meditate on these marvelous lyrics from the classic hymn, "Before the Throne of God Above":

When Satan tempts me to despair,  
 And tells me of the guilt within,  
 Upward I look and see Him there,  
 Who made an end of all my sin.  
 Because the sinless Savior died,  
 My sinful soul is counted free.  
 For God the Just is satisfied,  
 To look on Him and pardon me.

- In what way is God acting in this passage? Where does He show up and what is He doing?

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- How might the knowledge that you have an Intercessor, who is always speaking on your behalf to God against the accusations of the enemy, change the way you respond to guilt in your life?

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**PRAY**

Thank God for your Intercessor, your Lord Jesus Christ. Thank Him that since He is the one who justifies, there is none who can condemn. Thank Him for conquering Satan, your ultimate accuser, so that all of his accusations are powerless in your life. Ask that God would free you from a sense of guilt and that you would worship and serve Him wholeheartedly.



**FRIDAY  
JULY  
20**

2 Samuel 17:1-29

**MAIN IDEA**

Ahithophel betrays David and pays the consequences for his actions.

There is no more tragic case in 2 Samuel than that of Ahithophel. In many ways, his story bears resemblance to the story of Judas Iscariot. Both men were servants of the king, yet both men plotted and schemed for their own interest, not that of their king. Both Judas and Ahithophel betrayed their king in order to seek their heart's desire. Yet in both cases their betrayal led to their ruin: Ahithophel ended up on the wrong side of a royal power struggle and ended his own life; Judas was the material cause for the death of our Lord, and the shame of his actions led him to suicide. The lives of both of these men testify to us that it is folly to betray our King. God created us to serve Him and love Him and honor Him; we experience maximum joy in this world and in the world to come when we are faithful to our King Jesus. May we not be like Ahithophel or Judas; rather, may we honor and obey our Lord Jesus Christ today, and experience the wonders of His kingdom for all of eternity.

- What similarities exist between Judas Iscariot and Ahithophel?

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- Have you ever thought about abandoning your faith and your Lord? How might today's reading help you to be more fervently faithful to your King Jesus?

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**PRAY**

Bow down in worship of your King Jesus today. He is gracious and good and kind, but He does not give His glory to another. Humbly submit yourself to Him and to His will today. Ask Him to help you experience the glory of His kingdom today.

As you reflect on your personal study throughout the week, choose one verse or passage that particularly stood out to you.

- Why was this verse or passage so meaningful to you?

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- In what areas of your life do these truths apply?

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- In what ways do you plan to put the truths you've observed this week into practice?

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**Family Focus:** Now take the verse or passage that stood out to you and think about how you can share it with your family. How does it apply to your husband, wife, son, or daughter? For singles or students, think about how it applies to your friends or parents. Commit to share this passage with a family member or friend today.

Tomorrow our lesson is **Deposed** from 2 Samuel 15:10-16, 24-30. Review these verses to prepare your heart and pray for your teacher.



SUNDAY SCHOOL GROUP NOTES \_\_\_\_\_

Lined area for taking notes, consisting of 20 horizontal lines.

List 2-3 ways you plan to respond to the truths you have learned this week:

Lined area for writing responses, consisting of 6 horizontal lines.

**WEEK OF**  
**JULY 23, 2018**

**WEEKLY MEMORY VERSE**

And the king said to Shimei, "You shall not die." And the king gave him his oath.

*2 Samuel 19:23*

**MONDAY**  
**JULY**  
**23**

2 Samuel 18:1-18

**MAIN IDEA**

Absalom dies a cursed death.

"Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree" (Galatians 3:13). A cursed death—this is the way that Absalom's life ends. He goes out as a mighty king, with a monument set up in his name in the Valley of the Kings and with a kingdom under his rule, to battle against his father David. He leaves the battle as a cursed man who dies on a tree and is buried in a pit underneath a pile of stones. The imagery of this passage is striking because of the similar imagery we find elsewhere in the Bible. For we find that Absalom is not the only person in the Bible who hanged on a tree; Christ also hanged on a tree. And we find that Absalom is not the only person who was buried in a pit underneath stones; Christ was buried in a borrowed tomb behind a mighty stone. Yet there is a key difference in the two cursed man narratives. While Absalom's body remains underneath those stones to this day, Christ broke free from the grave, the stone was rolled away, and He lives. Absalom was cursed because of his own actions; Christ was cursed because of our actions, our sins. Absalom's body remained in the grave; Christ rose from the grave, accomplished our salvation once and for all, and ascended into heaven where He sits even now at the Father's right hand, interceding on our behalf. Jesus is the greater King, the ultimate King, the King of the universe. And He has shown it by what He has done for us. May we pledge our allegiance to Him, and to Him alone, today.

- What is the significance of Absalom dying on a tree?

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- How does today's reading connect to Jesus? In what ways are we just like Absalom? How does the good news of the gospel solve the issue of our being worthy of a curse just like Absalom?

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**PRAY**

Praise God today for Christ—that He was cursed on your behalf by hanging on a tree. Confess to God all your sin and that you deserve to be cursed for every bit of it. Ask that He would help you look to Christ and experience the joy of your salvation today.



**MAIN IDEA**

David grieves over the death of Absalom.

One of the things we have been observing in our study of 2 Samuel is the way sin introduces confusion and chaos into our lives. The sin of David with Bathsheba led David down a path to become a murderer. The sin of Amnon against Tamar led to hatred between brothers and sisters and fathers and sons, and it ultimately led to Absalom’s rebellion. In one sense, today we come to a point of consummation for this cycle of sin. And the road ends, as we might expect, with incalculable grief. Absalom is dead because of both David’s sin with Bathsheba (cf. Nathan’s prophecy, 2 Samuel 12: 10-11) and Amnon’s sin (which led to Absalom’s rebellion). And the only response that David can have is to cry out: “O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would I had died instead of you, O Absalom, my son, my son” (2 Samuel 18:33). Proverbs tells us that “there is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death” (Proverbs 14:12). The way of sin leads only to grief and, ultimately, to death. Brothers and sisters, turn from this way today. Don’t walk down this path a moment longer. Turn around, repent, turn to Jesus, the Founder and Perfecter of your faith, and find in Him ultimate restoration and forgiveness of sin.

- How do the consequences of sin in the lives of David and his sons come to fruition in this passage?

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- How might today’s passage be helpful for you in your own personal fight against sin?

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**PRAY**

Cry out to God today and ask Him to forgive you for your sin. Ask that He would help you to repent—to turn from your sin and to embrace Jesus as your Lord. Thank Him that Christ died on the cross so that you would never have to experience the ultimate consequence for your sin—eternal grief and death.

MAIN IDEA

Joab rebukes David for abandoning his royal duties in his grief.

“In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent His only Son in to the world, so that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins” (1 John 4:9-10). King David wins the victory over his usurpers and regains control of his kingdom, but he does so at a terrible price: the life of his beloved son Absalom. For the kingdom of Israel, the day should have been a day of great rejoicing, for the defeat of Absalom and his death in battle meant salvation for each family in Israel. Yet David, overwhelmed with grief, abandons his responsibility as king to lead his people in rejoicing and thanksgiving to God for victory in battle. Rather, he hides his face and continues to mourn for his son. This is Joab’s main exhortation of David. In one sense, of course, how could we not sympathize with David, who just lost his beloved son? In another sense, though, Joab is right: by hiding his face David is letting his people down. Whatever we think about David’s response, this passage gives us a vivid picture of a king seeing his son killed for the sake of his people. This picture is, of course, familiar to us. We see a similar picture in the Gospels and at the cross. David unwillingly saw the death of his son for the sake of his kingdom, but God willingly sent His only beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to die in our place. While Absalom died because of the heinousness of his actions, Christ never sinned and did not deserve death; rather, He died for the heinousness of our actions.

How deep the Father’s love for us,  
How vast beyond all measure,  
That He should give His only Son,  
To make a wretch His treasure.<sup>8</sup>

- What was wrong with the way that David grieved the death of his son?

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- What does today’s devotion teach us about the nature of sacrificial love? What are some ways you can display this kind of love in your life?

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PRAY

Pour out your heart to God today in thanksgiving for the great love with which He has loved you. Ask that you would in turn love others the way that He has loved you.

**MAIN IDEA**

David returns to Jerusalem to rule on the throne.

Now reinstated as king over Israel, David must fight to reunite and regain control over his kingdom. While the official splitting of the kingdom into Israel and Judah does not occur until later in Israel's history, the rumblings of it are beginning even as David re-ascends to the throne. Israel has embraced David as their king, but there is a faction in Judah that is more reluctant. To sway them in his favor, David offers to replace Joab, the commander of his army, with Amasa, a general from the Judean camp. This seems like a foolish move after Joab just won David a great victory, but there are several possible reasons David would take it: 1) Joab directly disobeyed David's order by killing Absalom. If Joab thought it was necessary to kill Absalom to save David's kingdom, perhaps it was necessary to demote Joab to reunite the kingdom. 2) Perhaps David deemed this choice a wise and necessary one as a means to bring the Judean faction back on his side and under his file. Oftentimes amid conflict sacrificial compromise is necessary—this may have been such a case. In any case, David successfully negotiates with this Judean faction and returns to Jerusalem to continue his rule over Israel. When reading a passage like this, it is often helpful to take a step back and think about what God is doing in the big picture. Through political negotiations, demotions of commanders and promotions of generals, etc., God is preserving a line, the line of David, which would one day produce our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Stand in awe today of the meticulous sovereignty of our God, who knew everything that David would go through and exactly how to bring him through it, just as He does in our lives today.

- How did David negotiate with the Judean faction mentioned in this passage?

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- Where is God in this passage? What is He doing? How can thinking about God's activity in this passage help us to understand His activity in our lives?

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**PRAY**

Thank God today that He is sovereign and wise—that He knows the beginning from the end and has ordained it all for His glory and our good. Ask that He would help you to trust in Him today, no matter the circumstances you face.





**FRIDAY  
JULY  
27**

2 Samuel 19:16-43

**MAIN IDEA**

David pardons his enemies.

One of the great benefits and responsibilities of being the President of the United States of America is the power of the presidential pardon. Interestingly, U.S. Presidents receive thousands of pardon applications during their terms, and usually grant hundreds by the end of their terms.<sup>9</sup> The ability to pardon is an emblem of authority and power. In today's passage we see David graciously exercising this power with those who opposed him in the Absalom rebellion. Though by the laws of Israel these people deserved death, David operated in mercy, pardoned them, and allowed them to live. In the Gospels, we see this same right of power being wielded by Pontius Pilate, who would grant pardon to one criminal per year. Pardoning someone who has broken the laws of the land from the legal consequences of that land is quite something, and it requires the kind of power one only receives when one rules that land. Yet pardoning someone from the constructs of manmade law and pardoning someone from the requirements and consequences of God's law are two quite different things. In all of Scripture, and in all of history, there is only One who can truly pardon sins, and that is God Himself. As king of the land, David had the power to pardon the sins of his subjects. As King of the universe, God has the power to pardon the sins of the world. And praise be to God that He has done so through the death, burial, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, since He Himself is God, wields the authority to pardon our sins (Matthew 9:5; Luke 7:48).

- How was David able to pardon his enemies? What gave him the right to do so?

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- What impact does the truth that Jesus has the power and authority to pardon your sins have on your life? How does it change the way you think about God? Yourself? How does it change the way that you approach your day?

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**PRAY**

Confess to God today that you are a sinner and you need a Divine Pardon. Praise God that He has provided that pardon for you through the cross of Jesus Christ. Ask that He would help you to live faithfully and righteously as a result of the grace that has been poured out on you.

As you reflect on your personal study throughout the week, choose one verse or passage that particularly stood out to you.

- Why was this verse or passage so meaningful to you?

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- In what areas of your life do these truths apply?

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- In what ways do you plan to put the truths you've observed this week into practice?

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**Family Focus:** Now take the verse or passage that stood out to you and think about how you can share it with your family. How does it apply to your husband, wife, son, or daughter? For singles or students, think about how it applies to your friends or parents. Commit to share this passage with a family member or friend today.

Tomorrow our lesson is **Restored** from 2 Samuel 19:1-15. Review these verses to prepare your heart and pray for your teacher.



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**WEEK OF**  
**JULY 30, 2018**

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**WEEKLY MEMORY VERSE**

The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever.  
*Isaiah 40:8*

**MONDAY**  
**JULY**  
**30**

2 Samuel 20

**MAIN IDEA**

The Bible is clear in its message and infinite in its depth.

It is said that the Bible is simple enough for a lamb to swim in, but deep enough for an elephant to drown in.<sup>10</sup> This is an amazing statement. The Bible is so simple that a child can understand it, but it is so deep that the most brilliant theologian in all the world cannot fully plumb its depths. This means that we can come to the Bible, having never read it before, or having no particular skill in literary interpretation or theology, and be transformed by the simple message that it teaches us. On the other hand, it means that we can spend the rest of eternity studying one passage of Scripture without ever exhausting the benefits of that passage for our souls. This week, we are going to slow down and focus on the same passage of Scripture for four days in a row. Tomorrow, we will look at the grammatical and historical context of the passage. Then, for each following day we will ask one of the following three questions: 1) What does this passage tell me about God? 2) What does this passage tell me about man? 3) How can I apply this passage to my life? As we dig down deep into this text, may we be transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit through the clear testimony of God's Word.

- What are some reasons why the Word of God is so clear in its meaning yet so inexhaustible in its depth?

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- Have you ever taken a whole week to do a focused study on one passage of Scripture? How might knowing that the Bible is both undeniably clear and infinitely deep help you in your study? What role does the Holy Spirit play in your study of the Bible?

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**PRAY**

Pray to God and ask Him to grant you grace and wisdom as you study His Word this week. Ask that the Holy Spirit would illuminate the meaning of the text for you to understand. Ask that this week wouldn't just be an intellectual exercise, but that you would be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

**MAIN IDEA**

Today we will take a look at the grammatical-historical context of 2 Samuel 20.

Today we are focusing on the grammatical-historical context of 2 Samuel 20. Basically, this just means we are going to look at the grammatical structure and think about the historical backdrop of this passage. In terms of grammatical structure, it is important to note that 2 Samuel 20 is a narrative, and all narratives have common elements. These include characters, plot structure, protagonists and antagonists, an introduction, rising action, climax, falling action, conclusion, imagery, etc. As you read through 2 Samuel 20, pick out as many of these literary/grammatical elements as you can. Ask yourself, how do they contribute to the meaning of the passage? Why did the author choose to use them? Why are they important? For instance, this passage has a very clean narrative structure that helps us to understand what happens to those who rebel against the king. It begins with the rebellion of Sheba and Amasa, the action rises as Joab searches for them, and it reaches a climax when they are killed. When we think about the historical context of the passage, we are thinking about how historical events going on underneath the surface or around the text contribute to the meaning of the text. The most important event that helps us understand this passage is the division of the kingdom of Israel described in 2 Samuel 19:41-43. The people of Israel and the people of Judah were deeply divided, and this context of division led to the circumstances in which Sheba's rebellion was possible. Yet in the defeat of Sheba, who was using the division to gain power for his own benefit, we see that division only leads to heartache, pain, and ultimately death.

- What does it mean to look at the grammatical-historical context of a passage? Why is it important to do so?

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- Today's devotion was certainly focused more toward the activity of the mind, not the heart or hands. How does studying the grammatical-historical context of a passage of Scripture help us to grow in our walk with the Lord and live in a way that is pleasing to Him?

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**PRAY**

Thank God today for your mind. Thank Him even more that He has given you the Holy Spirit to illuminate your mind when you read His Word in faith. Ask that God would help you to think well as you read His Word, so that you can rightly understand what He has so graciously communicated to you in it.

**MAIN IDEA**

This passage teaches us that God always remains faithful to His promises.

Today's question is this: What does this passage tell me about God? A few of you may have caught on to the irony of such a question in relation to this passage, because this passage doesn't explicitly say much about God! His name is only used once, and it is in the "genitive" or possessive case, when the wise woman refers to the "heritage of the Lord" (2 Samuel 20:19). So, what can we learn about God in a passage that really doesn't mention Him? Even though the activity of God is not explicitly mentioned in the passage, His fingerprints are all over it. For instance, we know that Israel is God's chosen people—God chose them out of all the nations to represent Him and to be like a son to Him. We also know that King David was God's chosen king—just as Israel was to represent God to the nations, so David was supposed to represent God's rule among His people Israel. In this passage, we find both of these God-chosen agents in deep jeopardy. The nation of Israel is on the verge of a major split, between Israel and Judah. King David is on the verge of losing his throne again, this time to Sheba. Yet when we read this passage with the eyes of faith, we see that God allows events to occur to preserve His people and to preserve His king. God chose Israel and He chose David, and He made promises to them. We see here that God makes good on His promises; He always remains faithful!

- What else does this passage teach us about God?

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- How does the teaching about God that this passage contains impact your relationship with God?

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**PRAY**

Thank God for His faithfulness. Thank Him that He is faithful even when we are faithless. Praise Him that He was faithful to us, and that in His faithfulness He sent Christ to die for us.



**MAIN IDEA**

Man is sinful and is in desperate need of a Savior.

Today’s question is this: What does this passage tell me about man? While explicit information about God is sparse in this passage, there is much here for us to learn about human nature. For instance, the division of Israel and Judah—Israel going with Sheba and Judah staying with David—reflects the state of division we as humans experience in our own hearts and relationships. One primary function of sin is that it divides. Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden, and immediately they were divided from one another. They then knew that they were naked and they put forth effort to cover themselves. They played the blame game when God confronted them in their sin. Moreover, sin not only divides us from one another, but it also divides us from God. We see this once again in the Garden, when Adam and Eve are exiled and expelled from the Garden. On an eternal scale, apart from the saving grace of our Lord Jesus Christ we would be separated from God for all of eternity because of our sin. So, certainly, the division we see in 2 Samuel 20 and the pursuant calamity teaches us about a specific time in history and a specific political and national crisis. Yet it also teaches us something much more, much deeper than that. It teaches us that the same sin that affected David and Sheba and Amasa and Joab also affects us. We are riddled with it, and apart from Christ it will lead us to calamity. In short, this passage teaches us that man is sinful and in desperate need of a Savior. May we look to our King Jesus today, who came into this world to save wretched sinners like us.

- What else does this passage teach us about man?

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- Why is it important to ask what a Bible passage teaches about man? How might asking this question help us to love Jesus more and better understand God’s Word?

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**PRAY**

Ask God to forgive you for your sin. If you are currently living in disunity with a brother or sister in Christ, confess this to God and ask Him to help you resolve that conflict. Praise God today that Christ came to bridge the gap between us and God and to bring us into union with Him.



**MAIN IDEA**

The fate of Sheba should drive us to obey our King Jesus.

Today’s question is this: How can I apply this passage? When reading Old Testament narrative, this question can get us into a lot of trouble. A simple experiment will show this. Let’s take a sentence from this passage and see what it says: “And they cut off the head of Sheba the son of Bichri and threw it out to Joab” (2 Samuel 20:22). Now, were you aware that decapitation “is in the Bible”? Since “it’s in the Bible,” does that make it commendable or moral? The answer, of course, is no! Generally, it is not a good thing to decapitate a person, like the people of Abel did to Sheba. What this little experiment brings out is that there is a difference between a *descriptive* text and a *prescriptive* text. A *descriptive* text, such as the narrative we are studying, merely describes events that are taking place, without necessarily assigning them a moral value. A *prescriptive* text, on the other hand, tells us precisely what to do, so that it would be sinful not to do it. So, when we come to a *descriptive* text like 2 Samuel 20, how do we arrive at the proper application? Oftentimes, narratives have one overarching main point, one takeaway. In this passage, the main takeaway is that rebelling against the king, and causing division in his kingdom, will ultimately lead to calamity and death. So, then, this passage should drive us to obedience to our King Jesus Christ. Just as Sheba faced terrible consequences for his rebellion, so those who rebel against King Jesus face eternal consequences. May we bow the knee to Him today and obey Him for the rest of our days!

- What other points of application arise from this passage?

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- Why is it important to not just understand a passage of Scripture, but also to apply it?

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**PRAY**

Thank God today for the transforming power of His Word. Pray that as you continue to study the Bible it would not just be an intellectual exercise, but that it would be a transformative experience. Pray that as you study Scripture you would get more of Jesus, and that as you get more of Jesus you begin to look more like Jesus.





As you reflect on your personal study throughout the week, choose one verse or passage that particularly stood out to you.

- Why was this verse or passage so meaningful to you?

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- In what areas of your life do these truths apply?

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- In what ways do you plan to put the truths you've observed this week into practice?

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**Family Focus:** Now take the verse or passage that stood out to you and think about how you can share it with your family. How does it apply to your husband, wife, son, or daughter? For singles or students, think about how it applies to your friends or parents. Commit to share this passage with a family member or friend today.

Tomorrow our lesson is **Compromised** from 2 Samuel 20:1-2, 14-21. Review these verses to prepare your heart and pray for your teacher.



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**WEEK OF**  
**AUGUST 6, 2018**

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**WEEKLY MEMORY VERSE**

Now there was a famine in the days of David for three years, year after year.  
And David sought the face of the Lord.  
*2 Samuel 21:1a-b*

**MONDAY**  
**AUGUST**  
**6**

2 Samuel 21:1-14

**MAIN IDEA**

David seeks the face of God, and God instructs Him to right one of Saul's wrongs.

Did you know that the way you live your life will either hinder or benefit your prayer life? Peter tells us this when he exhorts men to show "honor to the woman as the weaker vessel...so that your prayers may not be hindered" (1 Peter 3:7). In today's passage, we see David's prayers being hindered not because of his personal sin, but because of the sin Saul committed in his role as the representative of Israel. A great famine had come over the land of Israel, and David was seeking God's face. Yet because there was bloodguilt on Saul and his house for breaking Israel's oath with Gibeon and slaughtering them, God would not answer David's prayers. Yet we see here not only God's disdain for Saul's sin, but also His grace in giving David the opportunity to rectify Saul's sin, which is exactly what David does. Do you have a guilty conscience? Has the Spirit placed a conviction of sin on your heart for a comment you made or action you took? When you next go to the Lord in prayer, confess your sin, ask for forgiveness, and go and be reconciled with anyone who you have wronged. Then, by the grace of God, what was said of Israel will also be said of you: "And after that God responded to [their] plea" (2 Samuel 21:14).

- Why does God accuse Saul (and Israel) of blood guiltiness concerning the Gibeonites? For further research, read Joshua 9.

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- What shows you the effectiveness of your prayer life? Understanding that God is under no obligation to grant us what we request when we pray, what steps can you take to grow your effectiveness in prayer?

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**PRAY**

Go to God today and confess your sin, ask Him to forgive you, and cling to the blood of Jesus Christ. And through the blood of Jesus Christ, enter God's throne room, approach His throne of grace, and find mercy to help in a time of need.

**MAIN IDEA**

David rectifies the blood guiltiness of Israel by avenging the Gibeonites.

So why was it such a big deal that Saul put some of the Gibeonites to death? Surely, in the conquests of Joshua, the period of the Judges, and the era of the kings, plenty of hostile nations would suffer death at the hands of Israel. What was so different about the Gibeonites? In Joshua 9, we find the answer to that question. There we find how the Gibeonites tricked the Israelites into swearing an oath guaranteeing their safety in the land (Joshua 9:15). If we think back on the history of Israel, it will not take long to remember the great faithfulness of the God of Israel. God promised Abraham offspring, a nation, and land, and He delivered on those promises faithfully; in fact, in one sense the entire storyline of the Old Testament is a presentation of the evidence that God has delivered, and is delivering, on His promises to Abraham. For God, faithfulness is a big deal. God swears an oath and keeps it; this is a truth that never fails. So, then, when Saul showed unfaithfulness to the Gibeonites, to whom Israel swore an oath, God placed the burden of guilt on Israel for their blood. This was a sin that had to be dealt with. And so, He used His servant David to take away the blood guiltiness of Israel. Now, in one sense, we know that the actions of David, a mere man, could never truly atone for sins. But, in another sense, we know that the actions of King David point to the actions of a King infinitely greater than David—our Lord Jesus Christ. Through His death, burial, and resurrection, He has taken away the blood guiltiness of all those who trust in Him. While David had to send the sons of Saul to hang for the sins of Israel, Jesus Christ Himself hung on a tree for the sins of the world. May we trust in Him and rejoice in Him today.

- Why is the concept of faithfulness so important in this text? Why was it so important for the Israelites to make right the oath they made to the Gibeonites?

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- How does your life show you to be a trustworthy faithful person? What steps can you take in your life to improve your trustworthiness and faithfulness?

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**PRAY**

Praise God together for His unchanging and unwavering faithfulness. Thank Him for the ultimate display of faithfulness He has given to us: the cross of Jesus Christ. Thank Him that Christ died for God to make good on His promises of salvation to us.

MAIN IDEA

David triumphs over his enemies.

Today's passage is all about David's triumph over his enemies. The celebration of triumph is something that we know much about. When our favorite sports team wins, or when we watch a superhero movie, we join them in exultation as they triumph over their enemies. In the same way, this passage is meant to invite the reader into the glory of David's victorious reign. Even more, however, it is meant to point us to the victorious reign of Jesus. For while David did triumph over his enemies, his reign is finite and bound by time, while Christ's is infinite and eternal. In this passage we see some key ways that David is like Christ, and some key ways that he is not. We will look at the ways in which he is not tomorrow. For today, let us note that David and his army are triumphant. He goes to war with his enemies and he returns home the victor. Even though his enemies are giants, he shines forth as the "lamp of Israel" and defeats them (2 Samuel 21:17). This, of course, is a clear picture of Christ, who has ultimately defeated our greatest enemies: sin, death, and Satan. As you finish your devotion today, meditate on the following verse about Jesus: "The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 15:56).

- In what ways is David shown to be triumphant in this passage?

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- How does the truth that Jesus will ultimately give you the victory over sin, death, and Satan impact the way that you live today?

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PRAY

Thank God for Jesus, your ultimate victor. Thank Him that He has given you victory over sin, death, and Satan. Ask that He would help you today to live in a way that is consistent with the reality of your salvation and that you would live in obedience to Him, free from the stain of sin.

**MAIN IDEA**

David becomes weary in the battle against his enemies.

There is at least one way in this passage that David does not point to Jesus. While David is triumphant, and while this triumph is a clear picture of the ultimately victorious Christ, David also grew weary. Now, in Jesus' life and ministry, He certainly grew weary (John 4:6). But the difference between Jesus and David is that David's weariness overcame him and took him out of the battle, while Jesus' weariness was an integral piece of God's plan to win the battle. We see that David's men were so concerned about his weariness that they swore to him that he would not go out to battle with them anymore (2 Samuel 21:17). But Jesus' weariness occurred so that He could ultimately win the battle against sin and death. For Jesus to be our ultimate High Priest, He had to sympathize with our weaknesses. To stand in our place, to be the propitiation for our sins, He had to share in our humanity. Jesus' weariness, then, and the humanity that it reveals, does not disqualify Him from His battle against sin, death, and Satan; rather, it is a weapon in His arsenal against sin, death, and Satan. Because Jesus, as a man, became weary, He can now say to us: "Come to Me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). Because of His propitiatory death, and in His office as our great High Priest, He offers us eternal rest from our sins, and therefore freedom from eternal death. Praise be to God that Jesus did not become weary in the same way that David became weary!

- What is the difference between the weariness of David and the weariness of Jesus?

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- Do you feel that you have answered Jesus's call to come to Him and find rest? In what ways will you intentionally rest your soul in Christ today?

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**PRAY**

Praise God today for the weariness of Christ. Thank Him that He did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but rather emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, and being born in the likeness of men. Praise Him that He humbled Himself in order to free you from your sin. Pray a prayer of exaltation to Him today, for to Him one day every knee shall bow in heaven and on earth, and every tongue shall confess, "Jesus Christ is Lord," to the glory of God the Father.



**MAIN IDEA**

Jesus is the ultimate triumphant King.

As we wrap up this week of devotions, in which we have looked closely at King David as the triumphant king, it is worth reminding ourselves once more of the ultimate fulfillment of this passage. Though David was a triumphant king, his victorious reign ultimately points us to the reign of Jesus Christ, in whom God ultimately fulfills His great covenant promises to David. Jesus's first words in His public ministry were, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 3:2). His last words struck a similar note: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me" (Matthew 28:18). Put these two passages together, and the implication is clear: Jesus is the eternal King, descended from David, and promised by God almost a thousand years before His birth (2 Samuel 7). As His ministry began, Jesus' message was striking: "I command you to repent, because I am ushering in the eternal reign of God on earth." After His death, burial, and resurrection, His message is the same: "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth by My Father; I am the King of the universe and none can frustrate my reign." Our King has come, and His kingdom is here. He has triumphed over all His enemies: sin has been defeated, death has no sting, and Satan has no power over us. And one day, He will come again to judge the living and the dead. And on that day we will not only see our King face-to-face, but we will experience the goodness and glory of His kingdom for all of eternity.

- What other passages in the New Testament point to the eternal kingship of Jesus?

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- How does the knowledge that Jesus is the eternal King of the universe impact the way you live your life? If Jesus is your Lord, how does that change who you are and what you do?

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**PRAY**

Praise God today for His faithfulness. Long ago, He made a promise to King David that one of his sons would rule on the throne of Israel for all of eternity. That promise was perfectly fulfilled in the person and work of Christ. Pledge your allegiance to your God and your King today.



SATURDAY  
AUGUST  
11

As you reflect on your personal study throughout the week, choose one verse or passage that particularly stood out to you.

- Why was this verse or passage so meaningful to you?

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- In what areas of your life do these truths apply?

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- In what ways do you plan to put the truths you've observed this week into practice?

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**Family Focus:** Now take the verse or passage that stood out to you and think about how you can share it with your family. How does it apply to your husband, wife, son, or daughter? For singles or students, think about how it applies to your friends or parents. Commit to share this passage with a family member or friend today.

Tomorrow our lesson is **Resolved** from 2 Samuel 21:1-6, 10-14. Review these verses to prepare your heart and pray for your teacher.





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**WEEK OF**  
**AUGUST 13, 2018**

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**WEEKLY MEMORY VERSE**

This God—His way is perfect; the word of the Lord proves true; He is a shield  
for all those who take refuge in Him.  
*2 Samuel 22:31*

**MONDAY**  
**AUGUST**  
**13**

2 Samuel 22:1-51

**MAIN IDEA**

David praises God as his salvation.

David's great song of deliverance is the apex of 1 and 2 Samuel. It brings together in climactic poetic language everything that the narrative has shown us and led us toward. David is God's chosen king, who God delivered from his enemies and blessed beyond expression. One of the key metaphors David uses for God through the song of deliverance is that God is his "rock" (2 Samuel 22:2, 3, 32, 47). Close synonyms also appear, such as "fortress," "deliverer," "shield," and "refuge." In short, David is saying that God is his salvation. He provides David the protective strength of a rock or a shield; David can hide in God like a soldier in a fortress; he has confidence that God will deliver him from his trials and from his enemies, because God has done it again and again. Brothers and sisters, can we not sing the same mighty song of our Lord Jesus Christ? Christ is our rock and our shield—He protects from the sting of sin and the fiery arrows of the enemy. Christ is our fortress—our lives are hidden with Christ in God. Christ is our deliverance—we were once slaves, but now we are free. In David's song of deliverance, he pours out his heart to the God of his salvation. Brothers and sisters, won't you likewise praise Him today?

- What other imagery does David use to speak of God in this passage?

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- Have you ever thought about Jesus as your rock, shield, stronghold, or deliverer? How do these biblical metaphors open up new avenues for you to worship Jesus?

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**PRAY**

Pour out your heart today in praise to your Lord Jesus Christ, who is your rock, your shield, your stronghold, and your deliverer. Ask Him to grow your affections for Him as you continue to worship Him.

**MAIN IDEA**

God is perfectly faithful.

Another one of the key themes of David's song of deliverance is the faithfulness of God. First, we see the reliability of His character. David emphasizes that because of who God is, He is always there for David when he needs Him (2 Samuel 22:4, 7, 19, 47-49, 51). When David's enemies surrounded him to destroy him, he cried out to God and God answered. When David was under deep distress, he called out to the Lord, who heard his voice and responded. God deals with David according to His faithful, steadfast love. Second, we see the uprightness of His judgments (2 Samuel 22:21-28). Unlike Saul, David was a man after God's own heart. Certainly, David sinned greatly. But at the same time, he had a mighty faith in God and an uprightness unmatched by his predecessor, Saul. Therefore, God dealt with David according to his uprightness. And, in general, God gives to men what they deserve: to the merciful He gives mercy, to the blameless He shows Himself blameless, to the purified He deals purely, and to the crooked He makes Himself seem torturous. God is perfectly faithful in His judgments; He never acts in an underhanded or duplicitous manner. Third, we see the dependability of God's Word. "The word of the Lord proves true" (2 Samuel 22:31). Because God is faithful, because His character is dependable, and because He deals with us justly, when He speaks to us we know that we can trust Him. His Word proves true every single time, it never fails, because it comes from the mouth of a perfectly faithful God. Brothers and sisters, these verses boast of a mighty God, in whom we can have mighty faith. May we trust our faithful God today.

- What other evidences of God's faithfulness appear in this passage?

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- On a scale of 1 to 10, how confident are you in the Word of God? What changes can you make in your life that would better reflect your confidence in the Word of God?

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**PRAY**

Praise God today for His faithfulness. Thank Him for His ultimate display of faithfulness, the cross of Jesus Christ. Ask that He would help you to trust Him today.

**MAIN IDEA**

David speaks his last words.

Isn't it humbling to think that we will all have last words on this earth? What a wonderful blessing to the church that the last words of King David are recorded for us here in 2 Samuel 23. This passage is broken up into two sections: 1) The identity of David and 2) the identity of David's God. David was a man from humble beginnings—he was “the son of Jesse” (2 Samuel 23:1). He grew up as a shepherd boy, the least in stature of all his brothers. Yet David's humble beginnings gave way to a meteoric rise to greatness. He was “raised on high” as “the anointed of the God of Jacob” (2 Samuel 23:1). It is not that David was born into his reign, or that he maneuvered his way into it; rather, it is a complete testimony to God's sovereign grace. Finally, David was the “sweet psalmist of Israel” (2 Samuel 23:1). Even though David's last words are recorded here in this passage, his voice speaks on, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, in the words of his psalms. That's who David was. Now who is David's God? First, He is the speaking God. Not only does He speak to David (2 Samuel 23:3), but His Spirit speaks through David in the words of Scripture (2 Samuel 23:2). Second, He is the faithful God. He has made an everlasting covenant with David that will never fail or fall short. So confident is David in His covenant-keeping, faithful God, that he can say that all of reality bends to God's covenantal will (2 Samuel 23:5). David is completely secure in His God. As David reflects on his life and speaks in the shadow of his death, he emphasizes who God is and what God has done for him. Brothers and sisters, may these great themes comprise the content of our thoughts, words, and prayers as well.

- What are the key themes of the last words of David?

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- If you could choose your last words, what would you say? How might the key themes of David's last words help to shape the way that you talk and think?

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**PRAY**

Praise God today for the testimony of King David, the son of Jesse, the anointed of God, the sweet psalmist of Israel. Moreover, praise God for your ultimate King Jesus, who humbled Himself for your sake and then was exalted in His resurrection. Pray that your thoughts, words, and actions would be constrained by the love of Jesus Christ.

**MAIN IDEA**

David’s mighty men ultimately brought glory to God.

Great nations and great victories are built on the shoulders of great leaders. For instance, when we think about World War II era Great Britain, our minds immediately gravitate toward Winston Churchill. But what oftentimes is lost in this view of nations and history is a consideration of the countless individuals who work under and support the great leader. This was certainly true of World War II era Great Britain, and it was also true for King David. While David alone was God’s anointed king over Israel, he did not bear the burden of the kingdom alone. Today’s passage comprises the list of David’s mighty men—37 named men who walked, ran, toiled, and fought for and with King David. But when we look deeper into this passage, we find that it is about something infinitely greater than a group of men who fought alongside the king of Israel. For though this passage honors these men of Israel, the real hero of the passage is the God of Israel. These are the men who fought and won battles for David, but what we find in this passage is that ultimately “the Lord brought about a great victory” (2 Samuel 23:10), “the Lord worked a great victory” (2 Samuel 23:12). The purpose of these men’s lives was to magnify the glory of God by acting as His agents to bring about victory to Israel. Brothers and sisters, we might not be “mighty men” or mighty women in the way that David’s company was. Nevertheless, the purpose of our lives is the same as the purpose of their lives. We exist to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. May we live this purpose today.

- Who were David’s mighty men? What did they do? What kind of relationship did they have with David? How did God use them?

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- Did you know that your purpose in life is to glorify God? How can you live out this purpose today?

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**PRAY**

Ask God today that He would help you glorify Him with your life. Pray that you would do so with joy, not out of a sense of duty or drudgery. Thank God that He loved you so much to reveal His glory to you, so that you could enjoy the perfections of His character forever.



**MAIN IDEA**

The relationship between David and his mighty men was essentially a discipleship relationship.

Though the chief theme of 2 Samuel 23:8-39 is how David’s mighty men fought for him and brought glory to God, there are also major implications that we can draw from this passage concerning Christian discipleship. In the New Testament, discipleship is defined as a passing on of the Christian faith to the next spiritual generation: “What you heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also” (2 Timothy 2:2). And to that end, discipleship is about sharing our lives with others: “So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you had become very dear to us” (1 Thessalonians 2:8). In short, discipleship is about helping others obey the command of Jesus, “Follow Me.” In one sense, this is the kind of relationship David had with his mighty men. They were the ones who were with him through thick and thin. They rejoiced alongside him as he praised God for a victory (2 Samuel 23:10, 12) They heard his prayers and saw his character in the face of formidable trials (2 Samuel 23:13-17). In short, they followed David as David followed his God. Whom are you discipling? To whom are you entrusting your faith? With whom are you sharing your life? May we rise from our devotions today, step into this world, and help someone follow Jesus.

- Based on this passage, what was the relationship like between David and his mighty men?

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- Are you discipling someone? How can you begin or grow in helping others follow Jesus today?

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**PRAY**

Thank God for His wisdom today. Thank Him that, in His wisdom, He has commanded us to help one another follow Jesus. Ask God that He would equip you and motivate you to be a disciple-maker today.



**SATURDAY  
AUGUST  
18**

As you reflect on your personal study throughout the week, choose one verse or passage that particularly stood out to you.

- Why was this verse or passage so meaningful to you?

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- In what areas of your life do these truths apply?

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- In what ways do you plan to put the truths you've observed this week into practice?

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**Family Focus:** Now take the verse or passage that stood out to you and think about how you can share it with your family. How does it apply to your husband, wife, son, or daughter? For singles or students, think about how it applies to your friends or parents. Commit to share this passage with a family member or friend today.

Tomorrow our lesson is **Thankful** from 2 Samuel 22:26-36, 50-51. Review these verses to prepare your heart and pray for your teacher.





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## WEEK OF AUGUST 20, 2018

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### WEEKLY MEMORY VERSE

And when the angel stretched out his hand toward Jerusalem to destroy it, the Lord relented from the calamity and said to the angel who was working destruction among the people, "It is enough; now stay your hand." And the angel of the Lord was by the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.

*2 Samuel 24:16*

MONDAY  
AUGUST  
20

2 Samuel 24:1-9

### MAIN IDEA

Under God's sovereign rule, David sins by taking a census of Israel and Judah.

The account of David's census is one of the most interesting and most difficult to understand accounts in Scripture. In the context of 2 Samuel 24, we find that it was sinful for David to take the census. It was a display of distrust in God, because instead of trusting God with the capacity of his military, David took this responsibility into his own hands. But verse 1 of 2 Samuel 24 tells us this: "Again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he incited David against them, saying, 'Go, number Israel and Judah.'" So even though taking the census was a sin, God "incited" David to do it. Moreover, the parallel passage in 1 Chronicles 21:1 tells us that "Satan... incited David" to take the census. So, was it God or Satan? And how do we understand God's involvement in this sinful act committed by David? Right up front, we need to remember some bedrock biblical truths: 1) God is holy, and in no way, shape, or form has He, is He, or will He ever be the responsible agent of sin. Sin is a creature word, and it does not apply to God. 2) At the same time, though, God is sovereign, which means that when sinful events do occur they occur under His sovereign rule. 3) God is all wise, which means that whatever He does is right and good and true. With the information we have from 2 Samuel 24 and 1 Chronicles 21, and the bedrock biblical truths we affirm about God, we can come to the proper understanding of David's census: God used Satan and David's human sinful nature to incite David to sin by taking the census, and God sovereignly did this for His own good and wise purposes. We have seen God do this before, haven't we? This is precisely the way He operated in Job and Exodus. In Job, God allows Satan to tempt Job, which leads to Job's repentance and to his glorious vision of God. In Exodus, God's hardening of Pharaoh's heart leads to the liberation of Israel from Egypt and to the beginning of their journey to the Promised Land. As we continue on in 2 Samuel 24 this week, let us seek the good purposes of God amid the sinful actions of David.

- Why was it sinful for David to take the census?

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- How might today's devotion be a source of comfort when you are experiencing difficult circumstances in life? What comfort can be drawn from the truth that God is completely sovereign over all things and that He has sovereign purposes for even the bad things in your life?

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### PRAY

Praise God today for His total sovereignty over all things. Thank Him that He has ultimately defeated evil and sin by sending His own Son to the cross to die in your place. Ask that He would help you to trust in Him amid all of life's circumstances.

**MAIN IDEA**

God disciplines David because of his sin.

If you are a parent, then you know that one of the most important lessons you can impart to your children is that actions have consequences. In many ways the direction of our lives is a sum of the choices we make. Though this is a lesson we teach our children, it is also a lesson we continue to learn day-by-day. This is also a biblical lesson: sin has consequences, and this is especially true for the children of God. In 2 Samuel 24:10-17, David learns this lesson. He sins against God by taking the census, and God disciplines him for it. There are things in this passage that don't directly correlate with our lives: God doesn't usually let us choose the consequences of our sin, and our sin rarely affects an entire kingdom of people. Nevertheless, we see here a truth that affects us all: there are consequences for sin, even (and especially) for the children of God. When God disciplines us, it is actually evidence of the fact He is our Father and that He loves us (Hebrews 12:7-11). Moreover, 2 Samuel 24:10-17 reminds us that the discipline we receive from God is infinitely less than what we actually deserve from Him. Jerusalem deserved to be destroyed by the angel of the Lord (2 Samuel 24:16), and so do we. But just as God said to the angel, "It is enough, now stay your hand" (2 Samuel 24:16), so also He looks at us, His children, and stays His hand. Brothers and sisters, the only reason why God can look to us and say, "It is enough," is because two thousand years ago our Lord Jesus Christ hung on the cross and said, "It is finished." Instead of destroying us for our sin, God poured out His wrath on His beloved Son. This is why we receive the discipline of the Lord as legitimate children, instead of the wrath of God as His enemies. May we offer our hearts and our lives in thanksgiving to Him today, and may we receive His Fatherly discipline with gladness.

- How does God discipline David?

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- How does the Bible's teaching about the Lord's discipline affect the way that you respond to the consequences of sin in your life?

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**PRAY**

Thank God today for His discipline. Thank Him that He loves you so much that He would be concerned with your holiness. Pour out your heart in thanksgiving to your Lord Jesus Christ, who bled and died so that you would receive the discipline of the Lord, not His wrath.

MAIN IDEA

King David asks God to punish him instead of his people.

The Impressionist movement is one of the most interesting periods of art history. Born out of the ashes of the Neo-Classical era, the impressionists countered the neo-classicist occupation with grandeur, historical accuracy, and realism with a plainer, more abstract, and less scientific approach. In terms of technique, the impressionists found their inspiration from the “impressions” of the Neo-Classical era. Basically, before a neo-classical painter would begin his work, he would create multiple “impressions,” or rough sketches of the subject he wanted to paint. Though in Neo-Classicism the “impressions” would be forgotten in the wake of the final work, the impressionists saw the “impressions” as a beautiful work of art in themselves and based the style of the movement after them. In 2 Samuel 24:17, we find a kind of “impression” that ultimately points us to the final portrait of the Lord Jesus Christ. David sees the people of Israel paying for his sin, and he cries out to God, asking God to spare the people and punish him alone. Is this gesture by David not a rough sketch, a foreshadowing, of what Christ has done for us? Surely it is only a sketch or a shadow, for the details are not exact: David asks to pay for his own sin, while Christ is sinless and pays for our sins alone. Nevertheless, it is difficult to look at this picture of David and not be reminded of the infinitely greater portrait of Christ. Just as David stands in the place of his sheep in the sight of God, so Christ becomes the sacrificial Lamb of God so that His sheep would not be slaughtered by the wrath of God. May this “impression” in 2 Samuel 24:17 ultimately point us to our Lord Jesus Christ. And once we are before Him, may we pour our hearts out in thanksgiving and praise, for He truly is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world.

- How does the gesture of David in 2 Samuel 24:17 ultimately point us to the person and work of Christ?

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- How often do you think about the sacrifice that Christ made for your sin? When you sin, do you consider that Christ experienced God’s wrath for that sin? How might this mindset help you to fight sin in the future?

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PRAY

Praise Jesus today for coming to us as the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. Thank Him for redeeming you from sin. Ask Him to help you walk in a manner that is worthy of the gospel by which you have been saved.

**MAIN IDEA**

David buys Araunah's threshing floor to build an altar to God.

Imagine that one day, as you were mowing your lawn or cooking dinner, the President of the United States showed up at your house, approached you, and asked you to sell a portion of it to him. What would go through your mind? What would you say? How would you respond? If you can imagine that scene and imagine how you would feel in that situation, you can get close to what Araunah must have felt. Why did God specifically tell David to go to the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite? On this side of heaven, we may never know. But we can know how Araunah responded when David came knocking, and it is a glorious account. First, Araunah paid honor and respect to his king, whom God had appointed over him. Then, when David asked to buy his threshing floor to avert the disaster falling on Israel, Araunah was willing to give it all away for nothing. At a moment's notice, without any time to think or pray about, Araunah was willing to give up his livelihood for the sake of the Lord and for the sake of His people. What a glorious response! May we seek to imitate it! Compared to David, Araunah didn't have much to give, just a plot of land he used as a threshing floor. But we never know what wondrous works God might produce out of our meager offerings. Little did Araunah or David know that even then, God was planning to one day put it into the heart of David's son, Solomon, to build his great, majestic Temple on this very same plot of land.

- What did God want David to do with the plot of land he bought from Araunah? How was that land used?

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- If God asked you to give away everything for Him right now, how would you respond? How might the knowledge of what God did with Araunah's meager offering help you to trust God as you make sacrifices for Him?

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**PRAY**

Praise God today for His infinite wisdom. He does nothing without purpose, and He wastes nothing that we offer unto Him. Ask that He would give you the grace and strength you need to offer up your life as an acceptable offering of worship to Him today.



**MAIN IDEA**

David insists on paying for Araunah’s threshing floor.

Yesterday we took note of Araunah’s glorious response to David, and how he was willing to give up his livelihood for the sake of the Lord and His people. Yet David responds in a way that is equally as glorious: “But the king said to Araunah, ‘No, but I will buy it from you for a price. I will not offer burnt offerings to the Lord my God that cost me nothing’” (2 Samuel 24:24). In other words, David asserts that there is a cost to true worship. In the New Testament, Jesus makes a similar claim to those who want to be His disciples: “Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple... So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be My disciple” (Luke 14:27, 33). True discipleship involves entrusting our whole selves, our whole lives, to the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no nook or cranny of our hearts and lives that does not belong to the Lord Jesus Christ. Discipleship involves willingly giving these things over to Him. While this may seem like a burdensome task, when we realize who Jesus is we realize that He was not lying when He said that His yoke is easy. Jesus doesn’t want every bit of us so that He can lead us into misery. Rather, Jesus takes all the broken pieces of our lives and reorients them into a wholehearted passion for and joy in God. Psalm 16:11 tells us that in God there is fullness of joy and at His right hand are pleasures forevermore. As we conclude our study of 2 Samuel, let us be reminded of the supreme folly of rebelling against the Lord, and the supreme wisdom of trusting and obeying Him. For those who rebel, there only remains eternal misery. But for those who give themselves over to Him as His disciples, there remains only infinite joy and eternal pleasure in Christ. So as we close this book of Scripture and open a new one next week, may we cling to Him, trust in Him, and follow Him for the rest of our days!

- Why did David insist on paying Araunah for his threshing floor?

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- What does it mean to be a true disciple of Christ? Do nooks and crannies exist in your heart and life that you are withholding from the Lord? What will it take for you to give those over to Him?

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**PRAY**

Praise God today for the supreme joy and pleasure that consist in Him. Ask Him to help you experience the joy of your salvation by turning to Him and entrusting all that you are and have to Him.



SATURDAY  
AUGUST  
25

As you reflect on your personal study throughout the week, choose one verse or passage that particularly stood out to you.

- Why was this verse or passage so meaningful to you?

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- In what areas of your life do these truths apply?

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- In what ways do you plan to put the truths you've observed this week into practice?

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**Family Focus:** Now take the verse or passage that stood out to you and think about how you can share it with your family. How does it apply to your husband, wife, son, or daughter? For singles or students, think about how it applies to your friends or parents. Commit to share this passage with a family member or friend today.

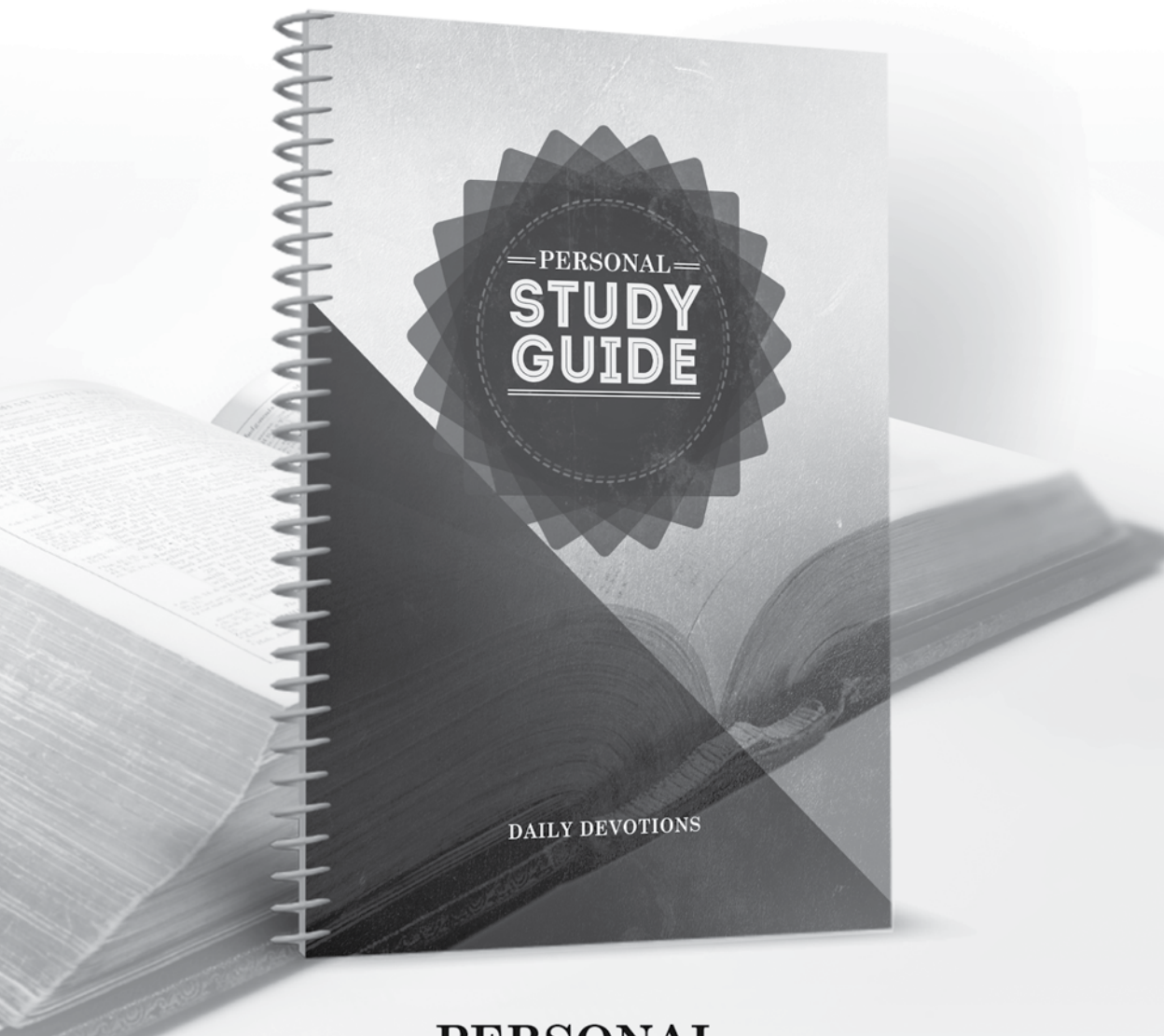
Tomorrow our lesson is **Disciplined** from 2 Samuel 24:10-25. Review these verses to prepare your heart and pray for your teacher.



# CITATIONS

1. **Page 21 - Wednesday, June 13**  
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2. **Page 23 - Friday, June 15**  
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3. **Page 26 - Monday, June 18**  
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