

THE TUMULTUOUS REIGN OF KING DAVID – COMMENTARY ON THE BOOK OF 2 SAMUEL

by Paul G. Apple, June 2006 (rev 2/23/08)

GOD' POWER AND PROVIDENCE SUSTAIN HIS KINGDOM PROGRAM AMIDST THE CHALLENGES OF DAVID'S REIGN

*"And your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever;
your throne shall be established forever."
(2 Samuel 7:16)*

For each section in the Book of 2 Samuel:

- Thesis statement ... to focus on the big idea
- Analytical outline ... to guide the understanding
- Devotional questions ... to encourage life application
- Representative quotations ... to stimulate deeper insight

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BACKGROUND OF 2 SAMUEL

Mittelstaedt: The two books of Samuel really belong together as one. They appear that way in the original Hebrew Bible where they were copied onto a single scroll. But when the translators prepared the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament, they had to use two scrolls. The two scrolls came to be known as the first and second books of the Kingdom. The two books of Kings were then known as the third and fourth books of the Kingdom.

Davis: The book of II Samuel divides itself naturally in two sections: (1) David's rule over Judah (1:1 – 4:12) and (2) David's rule over all Israel (5:1 – 24:25). Some commentators have found it advantageous to divide the book on its spiritual content rather than historical. In this case the book would be divided as follows: (1) David's triumphs (1:1 – 12:31) and (2) David's troubles (13:1 – 24:25).

David had enjoyed moments of great success and yet, in spite of his wisdom and political genius, as a father he failed within his own household. . . The results of David's reign, however, were not all negative. It is very clear from a military and political point of view that David had fully established the kingdom of Israel. He had given its borders recognition and protection. He had achieved international respect and recognition for Israel in a very brief period of time. This great kingdom soon was to pass into the hands of Solomon, a young man with equal capabilities and gifts

Wiersbe: One of the major themes of 2 Samuel is *restoration* – the restoration of national unity, the restoration of David after he sinned, and the restoration of the throne after Absalom's rebellion. Intertwined with this theme is the emphasis on *power*, showing how God empowered David and his people to accomplish His will. Saul tore things apart, but God used David to start putting things back together again.

But alas, the events recorded here weren't always honoring to the Lord or beneficial to His people. Until the nation was united under David, political ambition and civil war led to the tragic deaths of too many people. As a consequence of David's sin with Bathsheba and his subsequent deception, David's own family was torn apart and the nation plunged into a second civil war. David didn't always have an easy time wearing the crown or wielding the sword, but the Lord was with His servant and ready to forgive when the king repented and confessed his sins. Then things began to heal up again.

Blackwood: Today we all feel concerned about the rebuilding of nations after World War II. As long as any present-day clergyman lives he will have to content with the aftereffects of that global strife. Without harping on "this war-torn world" or other outworn words, the parish interpreter must deal with the aftermath of blood and tears as it affects his friend in the pew. From this point of view, which is pastoral, to which part of the Bible shall the minister turn?

The twin books of Samuel lend themselves admirably to such use. No other portion of Holy Writ contains such a wealth and variety of preaching materials for days of reconstruction.

Laney:

- I. The Triumphs of David (1-10)
 - David's Lament for Saul and Jonathan (1:1-27)
 - David's Reign Over Judah at Hebron (2:1-4:12)
 - David's Reign over All Israel at Jerusalem (5:1-10:19)
- II. The Troubles of David (11-20)
 - David's Great Sin (11:1-12:31)
 - Absalom's Murder of Amnon (13:1-14:33)
 - Absalom's Rebellion (15:1-18:33)
 - David's Reinstatement as King (19:1-20:26)
- III. The Appendix to David's Career (21-24)
 - The Gibeonites Avenged for the Broken Treaty (21:1-14)
 - The Exploits of David and His Men (21:15-22)
 - The Psalm of Declarative Praise for Deliverance (22:1-51)
 - The Last Words of David (23:1-7)
 - The Roster of David's Mighty Men (23:8-39)
 - The Numbering of the People and the Pestilence (24:1-25)

Jensen: David, son of Jesse, was a man after God's heart, and in a life-span of some seventy years "served his own generation by the will of God" (Acts 13:36). David "stood out as a bright and shining light for the God of Israel. His accomplishments were many and varied; man of action, poet, tender lover, generous foe, stern dispenser of justice, loyal friend, he was all that men find wholesome and admirable in man, and this by the will of God, who made him and shaped him for his destiny." (J. D. Douglas)

David was not perfect, and the recording of his sins in the Bible should serve as warning to us to guard against the subtle temptations of Satan. Included is a comparative study of the two controls in David's life. (J. Barton Payne)

When God's Spirit was in control:

- He had men's devotion (1 Chron. 12:18) and women's (1 Sam. 19:12-13).
- He cared for the helpless (II Sam. 9:1).
- He confessed his own sins (Ps. 51) and his enemies' nobility (II Sam. 1:23).
- His piety was shameless (II Sam. 6:21).
- His faith was radiant (Ps. 23).

When selfish desires were in control:

- He failed to restrain Joab (II Sam. 3:39) and his own family (II Sam. 13:21).
- He was brutal with captives (II Sam. 8:2).
- He would not admit error (II Sam. 19:29) and repudiated former pardons (I Kings 2:8).
- He practiced deception (I Sam. 21:2).
- His sin was heinous (II Sam. 11).

Simpson: At last David comes, God's true king. And the story of his rejection, exile, and final triumph vividly foreshadows the conflicts and victories that are to usher in the reign of our Lord, and "make Jesus King."

Kaynor: David became the standard for all future kings. Forty years from the date of our text, he would leave a strong, efficient government. He did not inherit such a government from Saul. In fact, he was handed a difficult set of circumstances when he took over. David had seen the loose government – the narrow, sectional approach of Saul – and he wanted no part of that. He carried into his government an elite six hundred (1 Sam. 27:2; 30:9) that never lost a battle. The worst they suffered was one strategic withdrawal.

David would reorganize the priesthood, and it would flourish in his era. So many priests would serve that they would have to be organized into "*courses*." . . . The priesthood became respected under David, whereas a whole priestly community had been annihilated by Saul. David also upgraded the levitical choir to a level of high honor. In short, David was a great king, to be exceeded only by the King of Kings, the Lord Jesus Christ. David inherited a war-torn, feudal collection of people and left his son a strong, cultured, godly empire. This was the golden age of Israel. Things would never be better for the average Israelite citizen.

Malick:

THE LORD'S ESTABLISHMENT, UPHEAVAL, AND CONTINUANCE OF THE UNITED KINGDOM UNDER DAVID IS WORKED OUT IN CORRESPONDENCE WITH DAVID'S EXPRESSIONS OF COVENANT LOYALTY AND HIS (AND OTHERS') EXPRESSIONS OF COVENANT DISLOYALTY, AS WELL AS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LORD'S GRACIOUS PROVISION

http://www.bible.org/page.asp?page_id=954

J. Sidlow Baxter:

TRIUMPHS TURNED TO TROUBLES THROUGH SIN

I. DAVID'S TRIUMPHS (i.-xii.).

i.-iv. – King over Judah only, at Hebron
(Civil War Period – 7 years)

v.-xii. – King of All Israel at Jerusalem
(Conquest Period – 13 Years)

II. DAVID'S TROUBLES (xiii.-xxiv.)

xiii.-xviii. -- David's Troubles in His Family
(Ammon Sin to Absalom Revolt)

xix.-xxiv. – David's Troubles in the Nation
(Sheba Revolt to Pestilence)

Second Samuel emphasises that all sin, whether in king or commoner, whether in high or low, whether in the godly or the godless, certainly brings its bitter fruitage. Sin is the destroyer of prosperity.

Ryrie:

I. David's Coronation over the Kingdom (1:1 – 5:6)

- II. David's Consolidation of the Kingdom (5:7 – 6:23)
- III. David's Covenant Concerning the Kingdom (7:1-29)
- IV. David's Conquests for the Kingdom (8:1 – 10:19)
- V. David's Crimes within the Kingdom (11:1-27)
- VI. David's Conflicts in the Kingdom (12:1 – 20:26)
- VII. David's Conclusion in the Kingdom (21:1 – 24:25)

Mittelstaedt: It was always God's intention to reign as king in the hearts and lives of the Israelites. A government so ordered by God in which its citizens look to God for their laws, for guidance, and for protection against those who threaten the state – such a government is called a *theocracy* (“*rule of God*”). In time God intended to give his people an earthly representative of his rule – a king who would work to preserve the unity of God's chosen people. The rule of one king is called a *monarchy* (“*rule of one*”). God's desire, however, was to combine the two, so that Israel, his people, would be governed by a *theocratic monarchy*. In other words, God wanted the kingdom of Israel to be both an outward kingdom and an inward rule of faith in the people's hearts.

Deffinbaugh: 2 Samuel leaves us with an appreciation for the greatness of David, but also a realization of his human weaknesses. If there is to be a king who will dwell forever on the throne of David (2 Samuel 7:12-14), it must be one who is greater than David. If David is the best king who ever ruled over Israel, then God will have to provide, Himself, a better King. And so He will.

2 SAMUEL OVERVIEW –

We pick up this morning in the book of **2 Samuel** right where we left off at the end of 1 Samuel – with the death of King Saul – the People’s Choice for king who was **outwardly impressive** but lacked substance. That should be no surprise because the 2 books are really one. It is somewhat of an artificial distinction to divide them into 2 separate books. Our focus today will be on the **Tumultuous Reign of King David** – *the man after God’s own heart*. David is in many senses the ideal king and the one who typifies the coming **Messiah King** who alone will reign in righteousness and peace and justice and wisdom.

So let’s remember what we covered last week in 1 Samuel – a book of **transition** – 3 key figures

- Samuel
- Saul
- And then to the interaction between Saul and David in the final section of the book.

But I want to back up even further to the book of **Genesis** – the book of Beginnings. Here we saw that **foundational Abrahamic Covenant** set forth in **Genesis 12:1-3** that has dictated God’s **kingdom agenda** up to this point in Israel’s history.

“Now the LORD said to Abram, ‘Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you; ² And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing; ³ And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.’”

Remember the three key elements of this great unconditional promise:

- A Promised Land to occupy and possess for peace and security and testimony
- A Promised Nation to be God’s special people to represent Him in holiness before the nations
- A Promised Worldwide Blessing that will encompass all those who enter into the household of the faith of Father Abraham – both Jew and Gentile

Now as we get to 2 Samuel God makes another monumental covenant – this time with King David in **Chapter 7** – a covenant that will dictate God’s **kingdom agenda** for the remainder of human history into eternity – **2 Sam. 7:8-17**

“Now therefore, thus you shall say to My servant David, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should be ruler over My people Israel. ⁹ And I have been with you wherever you have gone and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make you a great name, like the names of the great men who are on the earth. ¹⁰ I will also appoint a place for My people Israel and will plant them, that they may live in their own place and not be disturbed again, nor will the wicked afflict them any more as formerly, ¹¹ even from the day that I commanded judges to be over My people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. The LORD also declares to you that the LORD will make a house for you. ¹² When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after

you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom.¹³ He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.¹⁴ I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me; when he commits iniquity, I will correct him with the rod of men and the strokes of the sons of men,¹⁵ but My lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you.¹⁶ And your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever.’¹⁷ In accordance with all these words and all this vision, so Nathan spoke to David.”

Look at how God’s key promises become more specific and more focused as we see that it will be a descendant not only of Abraham but now from the line of David that will rule as this enduring king over God’s kingdom. Look at how God’s same promises are concentrated in Jesus in **Luke 1:30-33** as the angel Gabriel appears to Mary and proclaims what God is now accomplishing beginning at the Incarnation:

“And the angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God.³¹ And behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus.³² He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David;³³ and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and His kingdom will have no end.’”

This is the lens through which we must view the events of **2 Samuel** and the ups and downs of the reign of King David. God is accomplishing His **kingdom agenda**. Even though God’s promises are now extrapolated out into future eternity – they are still rooted in a specific land with boundaries, a specific nation of ethnic Israel (who will be supernaturally regathered and saved when Christ returns) and a specific throne that is focused in Jerusalem, the capital of the city of David. The **amillennial perspective** [Prefix “A” = no millennium] says that there is no future 1,000 year kingdom on earth where Jesus will reign over the earth from His throne in Israel. [Even though it is clearly revealed in **Rev. 20** which details the end times events.]

Instead He reigns right now in the hearts of men **spiritually** who turn to Him in repentance and faith. While that spiritual aspect of the reign of Christ is true, it does not negate the ongoing faithfulness of God to His **literal promises** to ethnic Israel regarding the physical reign of Christ during the coming millennial kingdom. That is why we interpret God’s kingdom agenda from a **premillennial** [Prefix “Pre” = Christ returns before the 1000 year rule on earth] **perspective**. This is the **dispensational framework** where the church does not replace Israel in the fulfillment of God’s OT promises; but God still has a **future program** for ethnic Israel as well as for all the world. Read **Romans 9-11** and you will see the distinction between ethnic Israel and the Gentiles maintained. We can become spiritual children of Abraham by faith ... but the ethnic nation of Israel is never abandoned by God totally and permanently.

[The **New Covenant of Jeremiah 31** differs from the **Davidic Covenant** in that it focuses more on the internal heart transformation and individual relationship with God rather than on the external function of kingship in the leadership of the nation.]

But we have no time to argue the differing views of **eschatology** here. Our task is to understand the book of **2 Samuel** and how it should impact our lives today.

The **overall Structure** of the book is very simple:

- **Chaps. 1-10** – The Triumphs of David’s Reign
 - o As he consolidates his kingdom over first Judah and then all of Israel
 - o At the heart of this section is the Davidic Covenant in **Chap. 7**
 - o 2 prongs to David’s successful reign
 - Victory on the battlefield
 - Grace on the throne – bringing justice to the vulnerable – reflecting the heart of God
- **Chap. 11** – The Tragic Transgression of David’s Sin with Bathsheba
David proves to be a highly flawed leader; he will commit other significant sins as well; but this is the one that marks the turning point in the book
- **Chaps 12-20** – The Troubles arising as the Consequences of Sin
 - o Personal, Family and National consequences
- **Chaps. 21-24** – Appendix – some closing reflections

[**Charles Ryrie** offers a good outline that breaks things out in a little more detail:

- I. David’s Coronation over the Kingdom (**1:1 – 5:6**)
(1-4) King over **Judah** only, based from Hebron
(5-12) King of all **Israel** based from Jerusalem
- II. David’s Consolidation of the Kingdom (**5:7 – 6:23**)
- III. David’s Covenant Concerning the Kingdom (**7:1-29**)
- IV. David’s Conquests for the Kingdom (**8:1 – 10:19**)
- V. David’s Crimes within the Kingdom (**11:1-27**)
- VI. David’s Conflicts in the Kingdom (**12:1 – 20:26**)
- VII. David’s Conclusion in the Kingdom (**21:1 – 24:25**)]

Big Idea:

Triumphs don’t insulate us (or flawed leaders like David) from troubles due to transgression, but God faithfully accomplishes His kingdom agenda = fulfilling His unconditional covenant with David. [God’s kingdom plans are not **derailed** by human failure.]

Warren Wiersbe: One of the major themes of 2 Samuel is **Restoration** –

- the restoration of national unity of all the 12 tribes = The United Kingdom
- the restoration of David after he sinned – based on confession and repentance – see **Psalm 51** – personal restoration in his relationship with God and leadership restoration after he had undermined his ability to govern
- and the restoration of the throne in Jerusalem after Absalom’s rebellion had forced David to flee

Key Verse: **2 Samuel 7:16**

“And your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever.”

Expanded Summary:

The Book of **2 Samuel** recounts the **tumultuous reign** of King David. As the type of the Messiah who is yet to come to fully establish God's Kingdom on earth, it is surprising to witness the many failures in the life of this great OT leader who has been characterized as "*the man after God's own heart.*" Yet God demonstrates His Power and His Providence in mercifully restoring David, in sustaining and even strengthening his United Kingdom over the twelve tribes, and in preparing the way for that future Messianic Kingdom.

David's supreme loyalty to His God amidst all of the trials and pressures stands in contrast to those who have very selfish, politically-motivated agendas. When David is confronted with his sin, he repents and seeks God's gracious restoration. Ultimately, the state of the union which David passes on to his son Solomon far surpasses the fragmented tribal bickering reflected at the conclusion of the reign of Saul.

God has granted the nation rest from attacks from external enemies and protected the nation from its own internal civil strife so that it has become an impressive showcase for His glory. The focus remains on the future where the expectations will be met by the coming of the Prince of Peace.

Chaps. 1-10 – The Triumphs of David's Reign

- 1) **(CHAPS 1-6)** KINGDOM TRANSITION – FROM SAUL TO DAVID
- 2) **(CHAPS 7-10)** KINGDOM BLESSINGS – CONQUESTS AND CONSOLIDATION

Chap. 1 – **DEATH OF SAUL AND JONATHAN HIS SON / LAMENT OF DAVID**

(1:1-4)

"Now it came about after the death of Saul, when David had returned from the slaughter of the Amalekites, that David remained two days in Ziklag. ² And it happened on the third day, that behold, a man came out of the camp from Saul, with his clothes torn and dust on his head. And it came about when he came to David that he fell to the ground and prostrated himself. ³ Then David said to him, 'From where do you come?' And he said to him, 'I have escaped from the camp of Israel.' ⁴ And David said to him, 'How did things go? Please tell me.' And he said, 'The people have fled from the battle, and also many of the people have fallen and are dead; and Saul and Jonathan his son are dead also.'"

David had been seeking refuge in Ziklag. In the days of Saul the city was under the rule of the Philistines. King Achish of Gath gave it to David when he was being pursued by Saul. Here is where David had been hanging out with his men. Imagine the **patience** it took for David to **wait upon the Lord's timing** to begin ruling over Israel. Instead of acting presumptuously or trying to force the issue, he submitted to God's timetable.

This Amalekite presents himself as a humble hero who administer the final death blow to Saul – who had tried to commit suicide but needed someone to finish the job.

How did David respond? Not with glee over the demise of his arch enemy. But with mourning over the Lord's anointed – the appointed leader of God's people.

Vs. 14 – *“How is it you were not afraid to stretch out your hand to destroy the Lord's anointed?”* – remember David previously had opportunities to kill Saul but was unwilling to kill the Lord's anointed.

Then in the second half of the chapter we have this beautiful song of lament: *“How have the mighty fallen!”* David especially expresses his love for Jonathan.

Vs. 26 *“your love to me was more wonderful than the love of women.”* Not some perverted homosexual relationship pictured here but genuine friendship being expressed

Chap. 2 – POWER STRUGGLE DIVIDES THE NATION

It was not a smooth transition from Saul to David. The nation was marred by political fractures and spiritual disillusionment.

A **power struggle** developed between the southern tribe of Judah where **Joab** is the military leader supporting David and the northern tribes of Israel where **Abner**, Saul's commander, is trying to prop up **Ishbosheth** as a puppet king in opposition to David

(:1-4) David is crowned King over Judah in Hebron (this is the second anointing of David)

Vs. 1 -- *“Shall I go up to one of the cities of Judah?”* Now it is time for David to more aggressively pursue his calling to the throne. But he **submits all that he does to the counsel of the Lord**. Just because the circumstances had drastically changed and the obstacle of Saul was out of the picture, David did not dash in without the authorization from the Lord.

“Shall I go up to one of the cities of Judah?”

“Where shall I go up?”

Hebron was strategically located near the center of the tribe of Judah. It was well protected by being in the mountains – about 20 miles south of Jerusalem.

Chap. 3 – PERSONAL VENDETTAS JEOPARDIZE KINGDOM GOALS

(:1) *“Now there was a long war between the house of Saul and the house of David; and David grew steadily stronger, but the house of Saul grew weaker continually.”*

David slowly getting the upper hand in this conflict with the northern tribes

Critical turning point was the **defection of Abner**

[(:7) Accusation by Ishbosheth

“Now Saul had a concubine whose name was Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah; and Ishbosheth said to Abner, ‘Why have you gone in to my father's concubine?’”

This was no small matter - Having intercourse with a king's concubine was a treasonous act, for it was in essence making a claim to the throne.

This internal spat ended up alienating Abner from Ishbosheth.

(:9-10) *“May God do so to Abner, and more also, if as the Lord has sworn to David, I do not accomplish this for him -- to transfer the kingdom from the house of Saul, and to establish the throne of David over Israel and over Judah, from Dan even to Beersheba.”*

Look at how Abner shows **awareness of the Davidic Covenant**

Abner negotiates an alliance with David on the one condition that he bring with him Michal – who needed to be taken back from her current husband Paltiel the son of Laish (:14-15).

You might imagine that things were on stable footing here after such a fortuitous reversal of loyalties. But Joab was shocked by the treaty between David and Abner; he rejects David’s explanation of the rationale for the treaty; he impugns the motives of Abner and takes matters into his own hands to take revenge and assassinate Abner without David’s knowledge.

(:27) Joab Takes His Revenge on Abner for the death of his brother Ashel after luring him back to Hebron

“So when Abner returned to Hebron, Joab took him aside into the middle of the gate to speak with him privately, and there he struck him in the belly so that he died on account of the blood of Asahel his brother.”

Warren Wiersbe: Everything about the death of Abner was wrong. The two brothers (Joab and Abishai) knew what their king wanted, yet they deliberately put their own interests ahead of that of the kingdom. Asahel had been pursuing Abner on the battlefield, so he was another casualty of war; but the death of Abner was murder. Hebron was a city of refuge, a sanctuary where an accused murderer could get a fair trial, but the two brothers never gave the elders in Hebron a chance to hear the case. Abner killed Asahel in self-defense; but when Joab and Abishai killed Abner, it was pure revenge, and Abner never had the opportunity to defend himself. Asahel’s death occurred in broad daylight where everybody could witness what happened, but Abner was deceived and led into the shadows.

Then you have David mourning the death of Abner at the end of **Chap. 3** -- He wisely distances himself from the folly of Joab and encourages vengeance from the hand of the Lord upon Joab and his house for this injustice.]

Chap. 4 – THE COLD-BLOODED MURDER OF ISHBOSHETH WINS NO FAVOR FROM THE RIGHTEOUS KING DAVID

After the death of Abner, the anti-David coalition starts to blow up. The sons of Rimmon expected the trophy of the head of Ishbosheth to earn them favor from King David

(:8) Trophy Presentation of the head of Ishbosheth

“Then they brought the head of Ishbosheth to David at Hebron, and said to the king, ‘Behold, the head of Ishbosheth, the son of Saul, your enemy, who sought your life; thus the Lord has given my lord the king vengeance this day on Saul and his descendants.’”

(:11) David's Righteous Response

"How much more, when wicked men have killed a righteous man in his own house on his bed, shall I not now require his blood from your hand, and destroy you from the earth?"

Chap. 5 -- THE BLESSING OF GOD REACHES MAJESTIC HEIGHTS AS DAVID REIGNS OVER ALL OF ISRAEL AS A TYPE OF THE MESSIAH TO COME

(:1-5) All opposition to David's reign has been eliminated; the nation can finally unite behind God's chosen leader

"Then all the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and said, 'Behold, we are your bone and your flesh.'² Previously, when Saul was king over us, you were the one who led Israel out and in. And the LORD said to you, 'You will shepherd My people Israel, and you will be a ruler over Israel.'³ So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, and King David made a covenant with them before the LORD at Hebron; then they anointed David king over Israel.⁴ David was thirty years old when he became king, and he reigned forty years.⁵ At Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months, and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty-three years over all Israel and Judah."

Life for David doesn't get much better than what we see in this chapter.

David then captures Jerusalem from the Jebusites to make it the new capital city.

(:10) Key = The Blessing of God

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

Experiences victories over a number of external enemies and receives tribute from various kings

Hint that not all is perfect

(:13) Multiplication of Concubines and Wives

"Meanwhile David took more concubines and wives from Jerusalem, after he came from Hebron"

Chap. 6 – 2 KEY EXPRESSIONS OF WORSHIP

This chapter highlights:

TWO HUMANISTIC REACTIONS THAT FAIL TO GRASP THE PRIORITY OF REVERENCE AND CELEBRATION SURROUNDING THE PRESENCE OF GOD

- 1) (:1-11) King David responds in anger when God judges Uzzah for showing irreverence in touching the ark

The **ark of the covenant** had been largely neglected in obscurity during Saul's reign; it was important to focus the attention of the nation on the presence of God in their midst – a declaration that God, not man, was the ultimate King of Israel

(:1-2) *“Now David again gathered all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand. And David arose and went with all the people who were with him to Baalejudah, to bring up from there the ark of God”*

- Wrong method of transportation – might have seemed easier – but it was the way of the Philistines
- Wrong people in charge – the house of Abinadab
- Obedience must come before exuberant celebration
- Uzzah’s knee jerk reaction led to the Lord’s anger burning in striking him down
- David responded poorly

2) (:12-23) Michal responds in contempt when King David dances with joy before the Lord

(:12b) Overall attitude of gladness in bringing the ark back to Jerusalem
“And David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obedom into the city of David with gladness.”

(:14-15) Exuberant Celebration Expressed Via Dancing and Shouting and Trumpeting
“And David was dancing before the Lord with all his might, and David was wearing a linen ephod. So David and all the house of Israel were bringing up the ark of the Lord with shouting and the sound of the trumpet .”

(:16) Michal’s Self-Centered, Egotistical, Proudful Contempt for Her Husband
“Then it happened as the ark of the Lord came into the city of David that Michal the daughter of Saul looked out of the window and saw King David leaping and dancing before the Lord; and she despised him in her heart.”

Chap. 7 – THE BLESSINGS OF THE DAVIDIC COVENANT

David desired to build a house for the Lord; Nathan initially thought it was a good idea; but God was the one who pledged to build a house for David.

Chap. 8 -- VICTORY OVER KINGDOM ENEMIES

Repeated phrase: *“the Lord helped David wherever he went”* (:6, 13, 14)

Height of David’s greatness – victory over the Philistines, Moabites, Edomites and others; Don’t ever become prideful because of the gifts or victories that the Lord has accomplished for you. Cultivate attitudes of humility and gratefulness and make it all about God, not all about you.

Chap. 9 – DAVID FAVORS MEPHIBOSHETH WITH UNEXPECTED KINDNESS

You can see all of the aspects of **grace**:

- Sovereign initiative
- Seeking out the helpless

- Showering him with undeserved mercy, love and favor
- Shepherding and caring for him
- Synergy with personal responsibility

Chap. 10 – REJECTING GOD’S KINDNESS UNLEASHES GOD’S WRATH

- David’s Kindness Revealed – reaching out to show kindness to Hanun – Ammonite king
- David’s Kindness Rejected – David’s messengers subjected to humiliating treatment
- David’s Kindness Revenged

- **Chap. 11 – The Tragic Transgression of David’s Sin with Bathsheba**
David proves to be a highly flawed leader; he will commit other significant sins as well; but this is the one that marks the turning point in the book

7 Practical Applications from this familiar story:

1. Guard against the dangers of idleness and complacency

“Then it happened in the spring, at the time when kings go out to battle. . .David stayed at Jerusalem (11:1) Walking around on his rooftop -- David about 50 years old – don’t put yourself in situations where temptation can attack you

- **Application:** Avoid spiritual and moral vulnerability by staying engaged in your responsibilities. Idleness often opens the door to temptation.

2. Lust is a heart issue that must be taken seriously

David saw, desired, and took—echoing the pattern of temptation in **Genesis 3**.

Immediate gratification leads to lasting painful consequences.

It was not like David did not have beautiful wives available to him. Some times forbidden waters seem sweeter.

- **Application:** Guard your heart and eyes. Lust can take root quickly; address it early through confession, discipline, and accountability.

3. God sees all, even what we try to hide

David tried to conceal his actions, but *“the thing David had done displeased the Lord.” (11:27)*

- **Application:** You can’t hide from God. Live with integrity even when no one is watching.

4. Unconfessed Sin leads to compounding sins when we try to cover up our sin

David’s initial sin of lust led to adultery, deceit, and murder.

- **Application:** Sin, when hidden or unrepented, tends to escalate. What seems small in private can lead to devastating public consequences.

5. Sin affects others, not just the sinner

Bathsheba, Uriah, Joab, and even the nation of Israel were all impacted.

- **Application:** Our moral choices can have ripple effects on family, communities, and institutions. No sin is isolated.

6. Repentance is essential and must be sincere

While not in chapter 11, David's response in **Psalm 51** shows the depth of his remorse.

- **Application:** When we fall, we must run to God in repentance—not try to cover our sin ourselves.

7. God can redeem broken stories for His glory

From this tragic union, **Solomon** is born, and ultimately Jesus comes from this line.

- **Application:** No failure is beyond God's ability to redeem. His grace can bring restoration even from our worst moments.

- **Chaps 12-20** – The Troubles arising as the Consequences of Sin
Personal, Family and National consequences

Chap. 12 – 4 Steps in the Cycle of Judgment and Restoration for a Fallen Leader

- 1) **(:1-15a) STEP#1: PRONOUNCEMENT OF THE GUILTY VERDICT** – Nathan confronts David with his sin
Look at how David responds: “*I have sinned against the Lord*” (**vs. 13**) – same response in **Chap. 24:10** after wrongly conducting a census – “*I have sinned greatly in what I have done*”
- 2) **(:15b-23) STEP #2: PAYING THE PRICE** – David wrestles with the Lord for the life of his newborn son
- 3) **(:24-25) STEP #3: PROCESS OF RESTORATION** – The Lord blesses David and Bathsheba with Solomon = the beloved of the Lord
- 4) **(:26-31) STEP #4: PROCESS OF REBUILDING TRUST AND REPUTATION** – Joab encourages David to resume his kingly responsibilities

As we move through **chapters 13-20** we see a wide range of troubles that afflict the latter portion of David's reign.

- **Chap. 13** – Amnon rapes his half sister Tamar – Amnon born to Ahinoam (3:2) and Tamar to Maacah (3:3); David does nothing in response – Bitterness and Resentment grow when justice is delayed or denied; David's family sinks into dysfunction
- Absalom schemes to take revenge and ends up killing Amnon 2 years later – bitterness can brew over a long period of time; ends up fleeing to Geshur for 3 years while David mourned for the loss of Amnon and became anxious to see Absalom again
- **Chap. 14** – Aborted attempts at reconciliation with Absalom without ever applying justice for his actions
- **Chap. 15** – Absalom schemes to subvert David's authority and attract a following for a rebellious coup – trying to usurp David's throne; Absalom was handsome, charismatic and politically savvy; gradually won the hearts of the people; David and his household

forced to flee Jerusalem

- **Chap. 16** – 4 incidents that highlight the depths of humiliation for King David as he hides from Absalom in exile
 - o **(:1-4) David estranged from Mephibosheth by the conniving of Ziba**
 - o **(:5-14) David submits to the arrogant curses of Shimei; showed remarkable restraint – waiting upon the Lord**
 - o **(:15-19) David’s friend Hushai forced to swear allegiance to Absalom in order to function in Jerusalem as a spy for David**
 - o **(:20-23) David’s concubines violated by his son Absalom in a scene of public disgrace**

- **Chap. 17** – God providentially protects the Messianic line of David as Absalom rejects the wise counsel of Ahithophel to quickly pursue and finish off David and his troops – God’s kingdom plans cannot be thwarted; Absalom follows the opposing counsel of Hushai instead and David is allowed time to regroup and flee

(:14) Providence of God Working Behind the Scenes

“Then Absalom and all the men of Israel said, ‘The counsel of Hushai the Archite is better than the counsel of Ahithophel.’ For the Lord had ordained to thwart the good counsel of Ahithophel, in order that the Lord might bring calamity on Absalom.”

- **Chap. 18** Joab kills Absalom, contrary to the orders of King David
- **Chaps. 19-20** – Process of restoring the kingdom to the control of David; Putting down the foolish rebellion of Sheba; but despite this restoration there are still scars – David’s kingdom had been fractured; his family devastated and his authority shaken

(20:23-26) Finally we see David’s key leaders in place and order restored in the kingdom

“Now Joab was over the whole army of Israel, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and the Pelethites; ²⁴ and Adoram was over the forced labor, and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was the recorder; ²⁵ and Sheva was scribe, and Zadok and Abiathar were priests; ²⁶ and Ira the Jairite was also a priest to David.”

- **Chaps. 21-24** – Appendix – some closing reflections

Chap. 22 – David’s Song of Praise for Deliverance and Security –

6 Ways that God Has Providentially Blessed Us:

- 1) **PROTECTS US (:1-4)** – The Images of God’s Protection
Rock, fortress, deliverer, shield, horn of my salvation, stronghold, refuge, savior
- 2) **LOVES US (:5-7)** -- The Timeliness of God’s Attentiveness
Hears me in desperate times

- 3) AVENGES US (:8-16) – The Unleashing of God’s Anger – language of theophany
- 4) RESCUES US (:17-20) -- The Completeness of God’s Deliverance
“because He delighted in me” (vs. 20)
- 5) REWARDS US (:21-28) – The Consistency of God’s Justice
 God rewards the righteous but punishes the perverse
- 6) CONCLUSION: TRANSFORMS US (:29-30) – The Adequacy of God’s New Creation
 - (:29) The Darkness Yields to God’s Light
*“For Thou art my lamp;
 And the Lord illumines my darkness”*
 - (:30) Obstacles Present No Problem to God’s Warriors
*“For by Thee I can run upon a troop;
 By my God I can leap over a wall”*

Chap. 23:1-7 – Last Words of David – Legacy of Greatness

Mark Dever based his entire overview message of the book of 2 Samuel on these closing verses -
 - I put a link to his message on my website on the summary page for 2 Samuel

king on his deathbed reflecting on what authority well used is like—used imagery to highlight
2 critical aspects of righteous kingdom rule –

“He who rules over men righteously, Who rules in the fear of God”

1) Kingdom Rule should be Splendid – Awe Inspiring

Cf. the light of morning at sunrise over a cloudless morning

“Is as the light of the morning when the sun rises, A morning without clouds,”

2) Kingdom Rule should be Beneficent – bringing blessing and benefit to others

Cf. the brightness after rain that brings the grass from the earth – fruitful; bringing good to others

“When the tender grass springs out of the earth, Through sunshine after rain.”

David’s rule was the ideal standard for all the kings who would come after him.

Why is David called “a man after God’s own heart”? Might be **surprising** given some of his huge failures that we have seen in 2 Samuel – adultery with Bathsheba, murder of Uriah, numbering the troops, failure to punish sin decisively, etc.

What it doesn’t mean:

- It **doesn't** mean David never sinned.
- It **doesn't** mean David was morally superior to others.

What it does mean:

1. He had a deep reverence for God and an intimate personal relationship which he expressed in devoted worship

- David consistently honored and worshiped God, even from a young age as a shepherd (e.g., **Psalm 23**).

Example: 2 Sam. 24:25 Bought the threshing floor from Araunah = to build an altar there to worship God – establishing the location for the future temple which Solomon would build
“*And David built there an altar to the LORD, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings.*”
David knew and experienced God’s forgiveness

2. He was quick to confess and repent when confronted with sin

- Unlike Saul, who made excuses, David owned his sin when the prophet Nathan confronted him (**2 Sam. 12**).
- He expressed genuine repentance in **Psalm 51**, showing a broken and contrite heart.
- He maintained an honest relationship with the Lord.

Key trait: A repentant heart is central to being aligned with God's heart.

3. He sincerely sought God’s will and did not act presumptuously

- David often inquired of the Lord before making decisions, whether in battle or leadership (**2 Sam. 5:19**).
 - Was the most prayerful king over the nation
-

4. He loved God’s Word

- David delighted in God's law and meditated on it. Though Psalms contains works by other authors, many are David’s, showing his love for God’s word and ways.

Example: “*Oh how I love your law! It is my meditation all the day.*” (**Psalm 119:97**)

5. He trusted God deeply and was willing to wait on God’s timing

- When fleeing Saul, David consistently placed his trust in God rather than in human strength.
 - Realized his power was derived from God and that ultimately he would give an account
-

6. He had a heart aligned with God’s kingdom purposes

- David cared about God's name, God's glory, and God's people. Contrasted with Saul who cared deeply about his image and what others thought of him.
- His kingship was marked not by self-exaltation, but by a desire to lead under God’s authority.
- He demonstrated a heart of mercy and compassion towards the vulnerable, the weak, those in positions of seeming insignificance – like the cripple Mephibosheth

Why Study This Book?

- To highlight the Power and Providence of God in working out His Kingdom Program throughout human history. As others have often quoted, “History” is primarily “His Story.”
- To remind us that human government, even under the best possible leadership, cannot escape the painful consequences of sin and therefore the need for God’s mercy, grace, and restoration.
- To encourage us that despite our failures and periods of walking outside of God’s will for our life, God is quick to forgive, compassionate, and merciful and able to restore us to fellowship and usefulness in His kingdom. David models what it looks like to turn back to God.
- To encourage the heads of families to effectively nurture and discipline their children to avoid the painful consequences of sin and rebellion which wreck the peace and harmony of the home.
- To stress the importance of doing God’s work in God’s way and in accordance with His timing and leading rather than taking matters into our own hands.
- To point our attention to the Messiah and His Kingdom which will accomplish the ultimate fulfillment of the **Davidic Covenant**.

OUTLINE OF 2 SAMUEL

THE TUMULTUOUS REIGN OF KING DAVID

GOD' POWER AND PROVIDENCE SUSTAIN HIS KINGDOM PROGRAM AMIDST THE CHALLENGES OF DAVID'S REIGN

1.0 (CHAPS 1-6) KINGDOM TRANSITION – FROM SAUL TO DAVID

CHAPTER 1

HOW HAVE THE MIGHTY FALLEN!

BIG IDEA:

TRAGIC SETBACKS TO GOD'S SOVEREIGN PROGRAM SHOULD BE OCCASION NOT FOR OPPORTUNISTIC SELF-ADVANCEMENT BUT FOR MOURNFUL LAMENT ON THE PART OF SUBMISSIVE LOYALISTS

I. (:1-10) OPPORTUNISTIC DECEIVERS SEEK TO ADVANCE THEIR OWN CAUSE WITHOUT REGARD FOR GOD'S SOVEREIGN PROGRAM – THE TWISTED ACCOUNT OF THE DEATH OF SAUL AND JONATHAN

- A. (:1) Setting: Tragic death of Saul and Providential Victory of David
- B. (:2-3) Credentials of a Credible Reporter
- C. (:4-10) Checking Out the Details – 2 Key Questions from David

II. (:11-16) SUBMISSIVE LOYALISTS REACT WITH RIGHTEOUS INDIGNATION TO ANY VIOLATION OF GOD'S SOVEREIGN PROGRAM – THE EXECUTION COMMANDED BY DAVID

- A. (:11-12) Emotional Mourning for Defeat of God's People
- B. (:13-14) Revisiting the Credentials and Questioning the Motivation of the Reporter
- C. (:15-16) Execution CommanDED and Justified

III. (:17-27) GRIEVING COMRADES LAMENT THE TRAGIC LOSS OF THE KINGLY LINE OF SAUL AND JONATHAN – THE SONG OF THE BOW

- A. (:17-18) Introduction and Propagation of Lament
- B. (:19) Theme / Refrain – The Glory of the Lord has taken a huge hit
- C. (:20) Gloating of Enemies
- D. (:21) Curse on Fateful Setting for Saul's Demise
- E. (:22-23) Praise for Saul and Jonathan

- F. (:24) Praise for Prosperity of Reign of Saul
- G. (25a) Refrain Repeated
- H. (:25b-26)
- I. (:27) Closing Refrain

CHAPTER 2

POWER STRUGGLE DIVIDES THE NATION AND COSTS MANY LIVES

BIG IDEA:

LEADERSHIP TRANSITION SPARKS CIVIL WAR BETWEEN HOUSE OF JUDAH – Southern Tribe (DAVID AND JOAB = military leader) AND HOUSE OF ISRAEL (ABNER= Saul’s military leader AND ISHBOSHETH = puppet king)

I. (:1-7) CROWNING DAVID -- ESTABLISHMENT OF KINGDOM OF DAVID BY DIVINE DIRECTION

- A. (:1-4a) Crowned King over Judah in Hebron (the Second Anointing of David)
- B. (:4b-7) Strategic Alliance with Jabesh-gilead

II. (:8-11) CROWNING RIVAL -- CORONATION OF RIVAL ISH-BOSHETH BY POLITICAL MANEUVERING OF ABNER

- A. (:8) Initiative of Abner to Prolong the Line of Saul
- B. (:9) Extent of Rival Kingdom – over all Israel
- C. (:10-11) Contrast Between Reign of David and Ish-Bosheth

III. (:12-17) CHALLENGING THE OPPOSITION -- CIVIL WAR ESCALATES FROM REPRESENTATIVE CHALLENGE TO TOTAL ENGAGEMENT

- A. (:12-13) Staging of the Confrontation
- B. (:14-16) Representative Challenge with Tragic Results
- C. (:17) Escalation to Total Engagement with Many Casualties and Defeat of Abner

IV. (:18-23) CRYING OVER BROTHERLY CONFLICT -- THE TRAGEDY OF CIVIL WAR CASUALTIES HEIGHTENED BY INTERTWINING OF PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

- A. (:18-19) Fleet Footed Asahel Doggedly Pursuing Abner
- B. (:20-22) Abner Tries to Avoid Killing Asahel
- C. (:23) Abner Forced to Kill Asahel

V. (:24-29) CALLING OFF THE DOGS – AGREEMENT TO HALT THE SENSELESS BLOODSHED

- A. (:24-25) Abner Forced Into Making a Last Stand
- B. (:26-27) Agreement that Further Bloodshed Would Be Senseless – Assigning of Blame

VI. (:30-32) COUNTING UP THE CASUALTIES – EVEN THE WINNERS OF A CIVIL WAR INCUR TRAGIC LOSSES

- A. (:30) Losses on Joab’s Side

- B. (:31) Greater Losses on Abner's Side
- C. (:32) Burial and Moving On

CHAPTER 3

PERSONAL VENDETTAS JEOPARDIZE KINGDOM GOALS

BIG IDEA:

DAVID WISELY EXCELS AT DAMAGE CONTROL AFTER JOAB JEOPARDIZES KINGDOM CONSOLIDATION BY TAKING PERSONAL REVENGE ON ABNER

I. (:1-5) SETTING – STRENGTHENING OF KINGDOM OF DAVID

- A. (:1) David Gaining Ground in Civil War
- B. (:2-5) Siring of the Royal Family

II. (:6-11) POLITICAL MANEUVERING -- CRITICAL ALIENATION OF ABNER FROM KINGDOM OF ISHBOSHETH

- A. (:6) Abner Solidifies His Significant Leadership Role
- B. (:7-8) Abner Accused of Treasonous Sexual Liaison
- C. (:9-10) Abner Swears to Unite the Kingdom under Davidic Rule
- D. (:11) Abner Shuts the Mouth of Fearful Ishbosheth

III. (:12-21) ABNER NEGOTIATES PEACE COVENANT BRINGING ISRAEL UNDER KINGDOM OF DAVID

- A. (:12-16) Preliminary Negotiations with David
- B. (:17-19) Political Persuasion of Key Leaders in Israel
- C. (:20-21) Closing the Deal

IV. (:22-30) JOAB FOOLISHLY JEOPARDIZES KINGDOM CONSOLIDATION IN KILLING ABNER OUT OF REVENGE

- A. (:22-25) Joab Criticizes David for Not Executing Abner as an Assumed Spy
- B. (:26-30) Joab Takes Matters Into His Own Hands and Assassinate Abner

V. (:31-39) DAVID WISELY HONORS ABNER AND DISTANCES HIMSELF FROM THE FOLLY OF JOAB

- A. (:31-32) David Commands Joab and All the People to Properly Mourn the Untimely Assassination of Abner
- B. (:33-34) David Offers Lament of Regret for the Undeserving Circumstances of
- C. (:35-37) David Extends His Fasting to Confirm His Claim of Innocence
- D. (:38-39) Final Lament of David

CHAPTER 4

TREACHERY SHOULD NEVER BE REWARDED -- RIGHTEOUS GOALS CAN ONLY BE ATTAINED THROUGH RIGHTEOUS MEANS

BIG IDEA:

THE COLD-BLOODED MURDER OF ISHBOSHETH WINS NO FAVOR FROM THE RIGHTEOUS KING DAVID

(:1) INTRODUCTION: DEATH OF ABNER CHANGED THE POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

I. (:2-4) MAJOR PLAYERS REMAINING FOR ISRAEL

- A. (:2-3) Prominent Military Commanders – Two Sons of Rimmon the Beerothite – Example of Striving After Blessing by Selfish Ambition and Treachery
- B. (:4) Crippled Mephibosheth – Example of Receiving Blessing by Grace

II. (:5-8) COSTLY MISCALCULATION – THE SONS OF RIMMON EXPECTED THE TROPHY OF THE HEAD OF ISHBOSHETH TO EARN THEM FAVOR FROM KING DAVID

- A. (:5) Surprise Attack
- B. (:6-7) Treacherous Plot
- C. (:8) Trophy Presentation

III. (:9-12) SWIFT RETRIBUTION – RIGHTEOUS KING DAVID DESPISED TREACHERY AS A METHOD FOR FURTHERING GOD’S KINGDOM

- A. (:9-11) Response of David
- B. (:12) Execution, Humiliation, and Respect

CHAPTER 5

ENTHRONED ON HIGH – HOW DO PEOPLE RESPOND TO GOD’S KING?

BIG IDEA:

THE BLESSING OF GOD REACHES MAJESTIC HEIGHTS AS DAVID REIGNS OVER ALL OF ISRAEL AS A TYPE OF THE MESSIAH TO COME

I. (:1-5) THE BLESSING OF GOD CROWNS DAVID KING OVER ALL OF ISRAEL AS A TYPE OF THE MESSIAH TO COME

- A. (:1-2) Three Reasons the King Deserves Our Total Allegiance
- B. (:3) Covenant Commitment and Majestic Coronation
- C. (:4-5) Forty Year Reign

II. (:6-12) THE BLESSING OF GOD ESTABLISHES DAVID AS KING IN JERUSALEM (NEW CAPITAL)

- A. (:6-10) The Blessing of God Accomplishes the Impossible – David Captures Jerusalem – the stronghold of Zion -- the City of David
- B. (:11-12) The Blessing of God Brings Worldwide Honor – King of Tyre Builds Majestic House for David

III. (:13-16) THE BLESSING OF GOD DOES NOT MEAN SINLESS PERFECTION

- A. (:13) Besetting Family Sins

B. (:14-16) Listing of David's Children Born to Him in Jerusalem

IV. (:17-25) THE BLESSING OF GOD GRANTS DAVID VICTORY OVER HIS INVADING ENEMIES

2 Very Different Military Strategies – 1 Very Consistent Result –

- A. (:17-21) First Battle Against the Invading Philistines – Frontal Assault
 - 4 Strategies for Being Victorious in the Lord when attacked by enemies:
- B. (:22-25) Second Battle Against the Invading Philistines – Rear Assault (Outflanking the enemy)

CHAPTER 6

ENTHUSIASTIC DEVOTION TO THE PRESENCE OF A HOLY GOD

BIG IDEA:

THE PRESENCE OF GOD SHOULD EVOKE HOLY REVERENCE AND EXUBERANT CELEBRATION – 2 KEY EXPRESSIONS OF WORSHIP

TWO HUMANISTIC REACTIONS THAT FAIL TO GRASP THE PRIORITY OF REVERENCE AND CELEBRATION SURROUNDING THE PRESENCE OF GOD

I. (:1-11) FIRST HUMANISTIC REACTION: KING DAVID RESPONDS IN ANGER WHEN GOD JUDGES UZZAH FOR SHOWING IRREVERENCE IN TOUCHING THE ARK

- A. (:1-5) Bringing the Ark to Jerusalem – Right Idea . . . Wrong Execution
- B. (:6-11) The Righteous Anger of the Lord Evokes the Humanistic Anger of David

II. (:12-23) SECOND HUMANISTIC REACTION: MICHAL RESPONDS IN CONTEMPT WHEN KING DAVID DANCES WITH JOY BEFORE THE LORD IN CONCERT WITH ALL OF ISRAEL

- A. (:12-19) Michal Out of Step with Joyful Reception of the Ark to Jerusalem
- B. (:20-23) David Rebukes Michal for Her Egotistical Pride

2.0 (CHAPS 7-10) KINGDOM BLESSINGS – CONQUESTS AND CONSOLIDATION

CHAPTER 7

THE BLESSINGS OF THE DAVIDIC COVENANT

BIG IDEA:

OUR HEARTS SHOULD OVERFLOW WITH PRAISE WHEN GOD REVEALS HIS ABUNDANT PROMISED BLESSINGS

I. (:1-3) KINGDOM VICTORIES SHOULD INCREASE OUR ZEAL TO SEE OUR GOD EXALTED – DAVID’S DESIRE TO BUILD GOD A HOUSE

- A. (:1) Kingdom Victories Free Us Up to Increase Our Spiritual Service
- B. (:2) Zeal for the Lord Should Inspire Ambitious Plans
- C. (:3) Spiritual Leaders Are Constantly Susceptible to the Satanic Trap of Presumption

II. (:4-17) THE ABUNDANT BLESSINGS PROMISED TO THE DAVIDIC KINGDOM ARE ULTIMATELY FULFILLED IN THE REIGN OF THE MESSIAH -- GOD’S DETERMINATION TO BUILD DAVID A HOUSE

- A. (:4-7) God Defines Our Role in His Kingdom
- B. (:8-11) Abundant Blessings Focused on Reign of David
- C. (:12-17) Abundant Blessings Focused on Reign of Solomon as Type of Ultimate Fulfillment in Reign of the Messiah

III. (:18-29) THE HEART OF GOD’S SERVANTS SHOULD OVERFLOW IN HUMILITY, PRAISE, AND A DESIRE TO SEE GOD GLORIFIED

David’s Prayer of Response to God’s Revelation of the Davidic Covenant

- A. (:18-21) Responded in Humility
- B. (:22-24) Responded in Praise
- C. (:25-27) Responded with a Desire to See God Glorified
- D. (:28-29) Closing with Confidence in God’s Faithfulness

CHAPTER 8

ONLY THE BLESSING OF THE LORD SECURES A KINGDOM THAT ADMINISTERS JUSTICE AND RIGHTEOUSNESS

BIG IDEA:

VICTORY OVER KINGDOM ENEMIES

- WINS WAR TROPHIES THAT BRING GLORY TO GOD AND
- GAINS US A GOOD REPUTATION TO MINISTER WISELY AND MORE EFFECTIVELY

I. (:1-8) VICTORY OVER KINGDOM ENEMIES – GOD BLESSES DAVID WITH A STRING OF IMPRESSIVE MILITARY VICTORIES TO SECURE THE KINGDOM

- A. (:1) Victory Over the Philistines and Strategic Control Over Chief City (Gath)
- B. (:2) Victory Over the Moabites and Strategic Execution of 2/3 of Soldiers
- C. (:3-4) Victory Over the Zobahites and King Hadadezer and Strategic Appropriation of Military Resources
- D. (:5-6a) Victory Over the Arameans of Damascus and Strategic Fortification
- E. (:6b) Key to Victory

II. (:7-12) WAR TROPHIES THAT BRING GLORY TO GOD – DAVID BRINGS THE PRECIOUS SPOILS OF WAR TO JERUSALEM AND DEDICATES THEM TO THE LORD

- A. (:7-11a) Bringing the Precious Spoils of War to Jerusalem
- B. (:11-12) Dedication of Trophies to the Lord

III. (:13-18) A GOOD REPUTATION TO MINISTER WISELY AND MORE EFFECTIVELY – DAVID’S KINGDOM EXEMPLIFIES WISE ADMINISTRATION WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE LORD

- A. (:13) A Growing Reputation
- B. (:14a) A Garrisoned Dominion
- C. (:14b) Key to Victory – Refrain Repeated
- D. (:15) A Godly Government
- E. (:16-18) A Gifted Bureaucracy – David’s Court Officials

CHAPTER 9

DAVID FAVORS MEPHIBOSHETH WITH UNEXPECTED KINDNESS

BIG IDEA:

POWERFUL SOVEREIGN DEMONSTRATES UNEXPECTED COVENANT LOYALTY TO CRIPPLED LEFTOVER FROM FORMER REGIME

I. (:1-8) DAVID REACHES OUT TO BLESS MEPHIBOSHETH – GRACIOUS HEART OF DAVID EXTENDS UNEXPECTED COVENANT LOYALTY TO CRIPPLED MEPHIBOSHETH

- A. (:1) Sovereign Initiative of a Loyal Heart
- B. (:2-5) Compassionate Empathy of a Loving Heart
- C. (:6-7) Abundant Blessings of a Gracious Heart
- D. (:8) Humble Thankfulness of a Servant Heart

II. (:9-13) DAVID INSTRUCTS ZIBA REGARDING PRACTICAL DETAILS -- ADMINISTRATIVE WISDOM OF DAVID INSTRUCTS ZIBA REGARDING STEWARDSHIP OF HOUSEHOLD OF MEPHIBOSHETH

- A. (:9-10) David’s Charge to Ziba Regarding Stewardship
- B. (:11a) Ziba’s Commitment to Obey the King’s Charge
- C. (:11b-13) Mephibosheth’s Enjoyment of the King’s Favor

CHAPTER 10

DANGER OF WAKING A SLEEPING GIANT -- REJECTING GOD’S KINDNESS UNLEASHES GOD’S WRATH

BIG IDEA:

MISJUDGING MOTIVES MOBILIZES POWERFUL FORCES TO ENGAGE IN COMBAT -- BUT ENEMY ALLIANCES DISINTEGRATE BEFORE THE FOCUSED STRENGTH OF GOD’S ARMY

I. (:1-5) UNFOUNDED SUSPICION KINDLES ANGER WHERE THERE HAD BEEN KINDNESS

- A. (:1) Instability of Leadership Succession -- Can Create Volatile, Uncertain Times
- B. (:2a) Initiative of Reciprocal Kindness – Show of Compassion by King David
- C. (:2b-3) Insecurity of Suspicious Counselors –
Leads to Misjudging Motives and Unwise Counsel
- D. (:4) Indignity of Humiliating Mistreatment
- E. (:5) Indignation of Misjudged Motives – Resolve to Punish the Offenders

II. (:6-14) FAITH-BASED TACTICS DEFEAT POWERFUL ENEMY ALLIANCES

- A. (:6-8) Tactics of Engagement
- B. (:9-12) Victorious Mindset
- C. (:13-14) Routing the Enemy

III. (:15-19) COMPLETE VICTORY REQUIRES FINISHING OFF THE ENEMY AND FORCING A FAVORABLE PEACE

- A. (:15-17) One Last Stand
- B. (:18) One Great Slaughter
- C. (:19) One Favorable Peace

3.0 (CHAPS 11-17) KINGDOM UPHEAVAL – HEINOUS CRIMES / PAINFUL CONSEQUENCES / PROVIDENTIAL PROTECTION

CHAPTER 11

DAVID AND BATHSHEBA – THE TRAGEDY OF SEXUAL SIN BACKSLIDING . . . MORE LIKE A FREE FALL

BIG IDEA:

SEXUAL TEMPTATION CAN TRIGGER COMPOUNDING SINS WITH GRIEVOUS CONSEQUENCES

(:1) BACKGROUND -- SETTING THE STAGE FOR A TRAGIC FALL

I. (:2-5) THE DECEITFUL LURE OF ADULTERY

- A. (:2) Entertaining Temptation – The Lust of the Eyes – Peeping David
- B. (3) Checking Her Out -- Background Check
- C. (:4) Committing Adultery
- D. (:5) Facing Unwanted Consequences

II. (:6-13) THE FAILED ATTEMPT AT COVER-UP (DUE TO THE INTEGRITY OF URIAH)

- A. (:6-8) Setting the Stage to Trick Uriah
- B. (:9-11) Single-Minded Focus and Dedication of Uriah

C. (:12-13) Second Attempt to Trick Uriah

III. (:14-25) THE DECEITFUL TACTIC OF COMPOUNDING ADULTERY WITH MURDER

- A. (:14-17) Insidious Plot to Murder Uriah
- B. (:18-21) Dirty Secrets Give Joab Leverage
- C. (:22-25) Expedient Mindset of King David

(:26-27) SAD CONCLUSION

- A. (:26) Required Period of Mourning
- B. (:27a) Swift Consummation of the Marriage
- C. (:27b) Cursed Offspring from the Adulterous Relationship
- D. (:27c) Accountability Assessment by the Omniscient Judge

CHAPTER 12 ONE SON DIES BUT ANOTHER IS BORN

BIG IDEA:

THE BLESSING OF GOD CAN SPRING FROM THE SOIL OF SINFUL FAILURE – BUT NOT WITHOUT SORROWFUL CONFESSION AND PAINFUL CONSEQUENCES --

THE FOUR STEPS IN THE CYCLE OF CONDEMNATION AND RESTORATION FOR A FALLEN LEADER

I. (:1-15a) STEP#1: GUILTY VERDICT -- NATHAN CONFRONTS DAVID WITH HIS SIN

- A. (:1-6) Parable of Contemptible Exploitation –
Rich Man Taking Advantage of Poor Man (Stealing his only resource)
- B. (:7-12) Prophecy of Condemnation
- C. (:13) Penitence of Confession – Essential to repent and come clean
- D. (:13b-14) Pain of Consequences – Softened by Forgiveness
- E. (:15a) Message Delivered – No Debate

II. (:15b-23) STEP #2: PAYING THE PRICE -- DAVID WRESTLES WITH THE LORD FOR THE LIFE OF HIS NEWBORN SON

- A. (:15b-17) Pleading for Mercy
- B. (:18-19) Facing the Finality of Death
- C. (:20-23) Resuming the Responsibilities of Life

III. (:24-25) STEP #3: RESTORATION -- THE LORD BLESSES DAVID AND BATHSHEBA WITH SOLOMON = THE BELOVED OF THE LORD

- A. (:24a) Comforting Conception – Birth of Solomon
- B. (:24b-25) Loving Label -- Renaming of Solomon

IV. (:26-31) STEP #4: REBUILDING HIS REPUTATION -- JOAB

ENCOURAGES DAVID TO RESUME HIS KINGLY RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. (:26-28) Encouragement by Trusted Subordinates
- B. (:29-31) Initiative to Resume Leadership Responsibilities

CHAPTER 13

JUDGMENT ON DAVID'S ROYAL OFFSPRING

BIG IDEA:

THE FLAME OF LUST IGNITES HORRIFIC CRIMES AND TEARS FAMILIES APART (VERY DESTRUCTIVE TO THE KINGDOM OF GOD)

I. (:1-14) THE INDULGENCE OF LUST – AMNON RAPES TAMAR

- A. (:1-2) Fanning the Flames of Lust
- B. (:3-5) Scheming the Scenario for Sexual Liaison
- C. (:6-10) Setting the Stage – Executing the Game Plan
- D. (:11-14) Violating the Victim – Refusing to Take “NO” for an Answer

II. (:15-22) THE RESPONSE OF ANGER AND HATRED TO THE RAPE OF TAMAR

- A. (:15-19) Response of Amnon – Hatred and Rejection
- C. (:20, 22) Response of Absalom – Anger and Hatred
- D. (:21) Response of David – Angry with Amnon

III. (:23-29) THE CASCADING TRAGEDY OF REVENGE -- ABSALOM SCHEMES TO TAKE REVENGE AND KILL AMNON

- A. (:23-27) Laying the Trap to Kill Amnon
- B. (:28-29) Taking Revenge on Amnon

IV. (:30-36) THE ULTIMATE SPIN DOCTOR -- JONADAB INGRATIATES HIMSELF TO KING DAVID

- A. (:30-31) Initial Exaggerated False Report
- B. (:32-36a) Reassurance from Jonadab – Amnon was Absalom's Sole Target
- C. (:36b) Mourning for Death of Amnon

(:37-39) CONCLUSION

- A. Long Exile for Absalom
- B. Longing for Reconciliation on the Part of David

CHAPTER 14

UNEASY STANDOFF BETWEEN DAVID AND ABSALOM

BIG IDEA:

RECONCILIATION WITHOUT GENUINE REPENTANCE AND APPROPRIATE PROPITIATION TRIVIALIZES THE JUSTICE OF GOD

I. (13:37-14:24) DELAYED JUSTICE SETS THE STAGE FOR COMPROMISED

JUSTICE

- A. (13:37a) **Clear Guilty Verdict** -- Absalom knew he was Guilty and Deserving of Judgment
- B. (13:37b-39) **Clouded Judgment** -- David's Grief for Amnon and Fatherly Affection for Absalom Clouded His Judgment and Made Him Indecisive
- C. (14:1-3) **Conniving Opportunist** – Joab takes advantage of King David's Vulnerability
- D. (:4-7) **Case Study with Significant Deviation from Circumstances at Hand** -- Parable Pitting Justice Against Preservation of the Family Line
- E. (:8-11) **Careless Verdict** -- Judgment of King David that Death Should not be Compounded
- F. (:12-17) **Calculated Application** of the Parable to David's Situation – Reconciliation and Mercy Should Take Priority over Judgment and Punishment
- G. (:18-20) **Clairvoyant Perception of Joab's Direction** -- Disclosure of Joab's Initiative
- H. (:21-23) **Course of Action** -- Retrieval of Absalom – But Without Reconciliation = the essential Prerequisite for Reconciliation – and without Inquiring of the Lord = the essential checkpoint before taking action
- I. (:24) **Conflicted Conscience** -- Vacillation on the part of King David – wavering, indecisive

II. (:25-33) FORCED RECONCILIATION WITHOUT GENUINE REPENTANCE AND APPROPRIATE PROPITIATION TRIVIALIZES THE JUSTICE OF GOD

- A. (:25-27) David's Hand Forced by Absalom's Growing Popularity
- B. (:28-32) David's Hand Forced by Absalom's Frustration
- C. (:33) David's Hand Forced by the Charade of Pretended Submission

CHAPTER 15

TEARING APART THE KINGDOM OF GOD – SON RISES UP AGAINST FATHER AND KING

BIG IDEA:

SELF AMBITION ERUPTS IN A REBELLIOUS COUP THAT DIVIDES THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND CREATES DIFFICULT DECISIONS OF ALLEGIANCE

I. (:1-6) ABSALOM SCHEMES TO GAIN A FOLLOWING BY SUBVERTING THE KING'S AUTHORITY

- A. (:1) Making Himself Look Impressive
- B. (:2) Looking for Opportunities to Gain a Following
- C. (:3) Criticizing the Judgments of King David
- D. (:4) Anointing himself as the Standard for Justice
- E. (:5) Presenting Himself as a God-Like Figure
- F. (:6) Summary: Applying His Scheme Consistently and Achieving the Desired Result

II. (:7-12) ABSALOM DECEITFULLY POSITIONS HIMSELF TO USURP DAVID'S THRONE

- A. (:7-9) Using the Cloak of Spiritual Commitment to Disguise His Self Ambition – Setting Himself Up at Hebron
- B. (:10) Instructing His Key Insurgents Regarding the Timing of the Coup
- C. (:11) Leading Astray the Innocent
- D. (:12a) Recruiting Key Advisors
- E. (:12b) Summary: Achieving the Desired Result

III. (:13-18) DAVID AND HIS HOUSEHOLD ARE FORCED TO FLEE THE ROYAL CITY

- A. (:13) Terrifying News of the Coup's Success
- B. (:14) Desperate Decision to Flee the City
- C. (:15) Pledge of Loyal Commitment on the Part of David's Servants
- D. (:16-17) David Sets His House in Order
- E. (:18) Foreigners Comprise the Bulk of His Loyal Forces

IV. (:19-37) WHILE UNDER TREMENDOUS TRIAL, DAVID EXHIBITS GODLY CHARACTER IN COUNSELING THREE GROUPS OF LOYAL FRIENDS

- A. (:19-23) David's Unselfishness – Receiving the Unconditional Support of Willing Loyalists – Ittai the Gittite
- B. (:24-29) David's Humility – Submitting to God's Providence – God's Presence Belongs in God's City – Zadok and Abiathar – Priests of God
- C. (:30-37) David's Wisdom – Planting a Loyal Mole – Hushai the Archite – Brave Friend of David

CHAPTER 16 HUMILIATION MARKS DAVID'S JOURNEY INTO EXILE

BIG IDEA: FOUR INCIDENTS THAT HIGHLIGHT THE DEPTHS OF HUMILIATION FOR KING DAVID AS HE FLEES INTO EXILE

I. (:1-4) INCIDENT #1 – DAVID ESTRANGED FROM MEPHIBOSHETH BY THE CONNING OF ZIBA – OPPORTUNISTIC DECEPTION VULNERABLE TO AMBITIOUS POLITICKING

- A. (:1) Beware of Cunning Men Bearing Gifts
- B. (:2) Question the Motives
- C. (:3) Question the Commitment to Faithfulness
- D. (:4) Don't Be Gullible = David giving Ziba the benefit of the doubt

II. (:5-14) INCIDENT #2 -- DAVID SUBMITS TO THE BRAZEN ATTACKS FROM SHIMEI – BRAZEN DEFAMATION – VULNERABLE TO ABUSIVE ATTACKS

- A. (:5-8) Brazenness of Shimei In Blasting David

- B. (:9-12) Meekness of David Exemplified in His Remarkable Restraint
- C. (:13-14) Wearisomeness of Ongoing Humiliation

III. (:15-19) INCIDENT #3 – DAVID’S FRIEND HUSHAI FORCED TO SWEAR ALLEGIANCE TO ABSALOM (IN ORDER TO FUNCTION IN JERUSALEM AS A SPY) – FEIGNED DISLOYALTY

- A. (:15) Triumphal Entry of Absalom
- B. (:16) Profession of Loyalty by Hushai
- C. (:17) Suspicious Interrogation by Absalom
- D. (:18-19) Assurance of Loyalty by Hushai

IV. (:20-23) INCIDENT #4 – DAVID’S CONCUBINES VIOLATED BY HIS SON ABSALOM IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COUNSEL OF AHITHOPHEL (MAKING THE RIFT BETWEEN DAVID AND ABSALOM PERMANENT) – HUMILIATING DEFILEMENT

- A. (:20-21) Strategic Counsel of Ahithophel
- B. (:22) Shamelessness of Absalom
- C. (:23) Supreme Respect for Counsel of Ahithophel

CHAPTER 17

NARROW ESCAPE ENGINEERED BY THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD

BIG IDEA:

THE SOVEREIGN GOD PROVIDENTIALLY PROTECTS THE MESSIANIC LINE OF DAVID

5 KEY PRACTICAL LESSONS FOR US:

I. (:1-4) AGGRESSIVE PLAN OF AHITHOPHEL SHOULD HAVE DOOMED DAVID --

THE FUTILITY OF OPPOSING GOD

- A. (:1) Strategic Strike Force Can Move Quickly
- B. (:2) Surprise Attack Will Isolate David for the Kill
- C. (:3) Slaying David Will Unify the Nation Under Leadership of Absalom
- D. (:4) Shrewd Counsel Well Received

II. (:5-14) SUBVERSIVE PLAN OF HUSHAI GAINED DAVID PRECIOUS TIME --

THE POWER OF PRAYER

- A. (:5-6) Opportunity for Hushai to Mislead Absalom
- B. (:7) Negative Assessment of Ahithophel’s Plan
- C. (:8-10) Scare Tactics Based on Reputation of David and His Valiant Men
- D. (:11-13) Appeal to Superior Numbers and Vanity of Absalom
- E. (:14) Providence of God Working Behind the Scenes

III. (:15-22) DANGEROUS LOGISTICS INVOLVED IN SPIES REPORTING TO DAVID --

THE URGENCY OF BOLDLY TAKING ACTION

- A. (:15-16) Urgent Instructions to the Priests for David
- B. (:17) Usual Intelligence Channels to Relay Messages to David
- C. (:18-20) Undercover Tactics -- Narrow Escape
- D. (:21-22) Delivering the Message

IV. (:23) SURPRISING SUICIDE OF AHITHOPHEL HIGHLIGHTS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE REJECTION OF HIS COUNSEL – THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SMARTS AND WISDOM

- A. Perception of His Fate
- B. Preparations for His Death
- C. Performance of the Deed

V. (:24-29) PREPARATIONS FOR BATTLE REFRESH AND ENCOURAGE DAVID – THE ABUNDANT PROVISION OF GOD

- A. (:24a) Mobilization of David's Forces
- B. (:24b-26) Mobilization of Absalom's Forces
- C. (:27-29) Munchies and Supplies For David's Hungry, Weary Troops

4.0 (CHAPS 18-21) KINGDOM RESTORATION – SUSTAINED BY PROVIDENCE AND POWER OF GOD

CHAPTER 18

SLAYING OF ABSALOM – DAVID'S LEADERSHIP DEFICIENCIES OVERSHADOW ISRAEL'S KINGDOM VICTORY

BIG IDEA:

GODLY LEADERSHIP FOCUSES ON KINGDOM PRIORITIES AT THE EXPENSE OF ANY PERSONAL AGENDA – THE DEFEAT OF THE REBELS COMES WITH THE HEARTACHE OF THE MALICIOUS SLAYING OF ABSALOM BY JOAB IN DEFIANCE OF THE KING'S COMMAND

5 LEADERSHIP LESSONS FOR US:

I. (:1-5) GODLY LEADERS MUST BOLDLY PURSUE KINGDOM PRIORITIES BY FAITH --

LAME LEADERSHIP -- DAVID STAYS HOME -- DEPLOYING HIS TROOPS WITH CAVEAT TO SPARE ABSALOM'S LIFE

- A. (:1-2) Faith Slipping
- B. (:3-4) Following the Counsel of the People
- C. (:5) Favoring Natural Affection Over Kingdom Responsibility – Key Verse

II. (:6-8) GOD'S PROVIDENCE PRODUCES REMARKABLE KINGDOM VICTORIES -- LIGHTNING STRIKE -- BATTLE RESULTS IN THE GREAT SLAUGHTER OF THE REBELLIOUS ISRAELITE TROOPS

- A. (:6) Forest Fighting
- B. (:7) Decisive Defeat
- C. (:8) Tough Terrain

III. (:9-15) SUBMISSION TO GOD-ORDAINED AUTHORITY PROTECTS AGAINST IMPURE MOTIVES AND SELFISH AMBITION -- LAME DUCK – ABSALOM'S VULNERABILITY HIGHLIGHTS THE KING'S COMMAND – TWO CONTRASTING REACTIONS

- A. (:9) Hanging High – Watershed Decision Time
- B. (:10-13) Finder's Fee – Wisely Refraining from Disobeying the King's Command
- C. (:14-15) Butchering Brutally

IV. (:16-18) THE MONUMENTS TO HUMAN PRIDE AND ACHIEVEMENT MEAN NOTHING IN LIGHT OF ETERNITY -- LASTING LEGACY – CONTEMPT AND HUMILIATION RATHER THAN GLORY AND HONOR – FUTILITY OF FIGHTING GOD

- A. (:16) Bloodshed Minimized
- B. (:17) Buried With Contempt and Humiliation
- C. (:18) Boasting Reduced to Shame

V. (:19-33) GOD'S LIBERATING GOOD NEWS SHOULD TAKE PRIORITY OVER ANY PERSONAL AGENDA -- EVEN NATURAL AFFECTIONS -- LIBERATING GOOD NEWS RECEIVED AS LAMENTABLE TRAGEDY -- THE BATTLE REPORT DEVASTATES DAVID (DESPITE THE KINGDOM VICTORY)

- A. (:19-23) Ahimaaz Outpaces the Cushite to Report to the King
- B. (:24-27) Anticipation of Good News on the Part of King David
- C. (:28-33) Good News Gone Bad

**CHAPTER 19
KINGDOM RESTORATION AMIDST KINGDOM RIVALRIES**

**BIG IDEA:
KINGDOM RESTORATION REQUIRES CAREFUL DIPLOMACY AMIDST QUARRELING**

I. (:1-8a) ADJUSTING PERSPECTIVE -- DAVID REBUKED BY JOAB FOR PUTTING HIS PERSONAL LOSS ABOVE THE SACRIFICE OF HIS TROOPS

- A. (:1-3) Sweet Victory Turned Sour
- B. (:4) Self Pity of David
- C. (:5-7) Scathing Rebuke by Joab
- D. (:8a) Strategic Access to the King

II. (:8b-15) APPEALING FOR ACCEPTANCE -- DAVID LOBBIES JUDAH TO RECEIVE HIM BACK TO JERUSALEM

- A. (:8b-10) Situation Ripe for David's Return to Jerusalem
- B. (:11-15) Political Overtures by David Win Over the Men of Judah

III. (:16-39) ADJUDICATING RIGHTEOUSNESS -- DAVID DEMONSTRATES GODLY LEADERSHIP UPON HIS RETURN TO POWER – TYING UP LOOSE ENDS WITH 3 KEY PEOPLE

- A. (:16-23) David Shows Mercy and Restraint in Sparing the Life of **Shimei**
- B. (:24-30) David Shows Wisdom and Skepticism in Responding to the Tale Told by **Mephibosheth**
- C. (:31-39) David Shows Appreciation and Generosity in Rewarding the Loyalty of **Barzillai**

IV. (:40-43) ALARMING DISSENSION -- JEALOUS FACTIONS LOBBY FOR POSITIONS OF POWER IN THE RECONSTITUTED REGIME

- A. (:40) Picture of Unity
- B. (:41-43) Insight Into Discord

CHAPTER 20

FOOLISH REBELS DESTINED TO LOSE THEIR HEADS

BIG IDEA:

DESTRUCTION WILL BE THE DESTINY OF THOSE WHO REBELLIOUSLY REJECT THE

I. (:1-3) FOOLISH REBELLION OF SHEBA

- A. (:1) Trumpeting of Rebellion – Declaration of Independence by Sheba
- B. (:2) Test of Loyalty -- Division Between Israel and Judah
- C. (:3) Testimony of Shame -- David's Sad Return to Jerusalem

II. (:4-14) RELENTLESS PURSUIT OF SHEBA

- A. (4-10) Joab Relieves Amasa of Command of the Troops
- B. (:11-14) Distraction of Amasa Set Aside So Pursuit Could Continue

III. (:15-22) CALCULATED EXECUTION OF SHEBA SPARES THE CITY OF ABEL

- A. (:15) Potential for Huge Collateral Damage -- Siege Against City of Abel
- B. (:16-21) Wise Intervention to Spare the City
- C. (:22) Mission Accomplished -- Delivering the Head of Sheba to Joab

(:23-26) CONCLUSION – LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE RECONSTITUTED KINGDOM

- A. (:23) Military Leadership
- B. (:24a) Director of Public Works

- C. (:24b) Recorder
- D. (:25a) Scribe
- E. (:25b-26) Priestly Leadership

CHAPTER 21 CAUSE FOR RELIEF AND REJOICING

BIG IDEA:

THE PROVIDENCE AND POWER OF GOD SUSTAINED DAVID AND HIS KINGDOM – THREE EXAMPLES

I. (:1-14) NEGOTIATED EXCHANGE OF SAUL'S SONS FOR RELIEF FROM DISCIPLINARY FAMINE – FINAL DELIVERANCE FROM SAUL

- A. (:1) Famine Attributed to Sins of Saul (Breaking Covenant with Gibeonites)
- B. (:2-6) Costly Settlement of Grievance
- C. (:7-9) Selection and Execution of Required Victims
- D. (:10-14a) Respect for the Dead of Saul's Family
- E. (:14b) Famine Averted by Submission to David

II. (:15-17) NARROW ESCAPE FROM DEATH SIGNALS END OF DAVID'S ACTIVE MILITARY CAREER

- A. (:15) Exposed in Battle
- B. (:16) Targeted for Death
- C. (:17a) Rescued by Abishai
- D. (:17b) Retired From Active Combat

III. (:17-22) NOBLE EXPLOITS IN KILLING THE FOUR SONS OF THE GIANT OF GATH – FINAL DELIVERANCE FROM THE PHILISTINES

- A. (:17) Ishbi-benob Killed by Abishai
- B. (:18) Saph Killed by Sibbecai
- C. (:19) Goliath Killed by Elhanan
- D. (:20-21) Freak Giant Killed by Jonathan
- E. (:22) SUMMARY

5.0 (CHAPS 22-24) KINGDOM MEMORIES – PRAISE AND RECOGNITION / FAILURE AND RESTORATION

CHAPTER 22:1-30 SONG OF PRAISE FOR DELIVERANCE AND SECURITY – PART 1

BIG IDEA:

DAVID'S EXPERIENCE OF GOD'S POWER AND PROVIDENCE ON HIS BEHALF EVOKES THIS SONG OF PRAISE AND WORSHIP – 6 WAYS THAT GOD HAS DEALT WITH US – LEADING US TO PRAISE AND WORSHIP HIM

I. (:1-4) WE ARE PROTECTED --

INTRODUCTION: THE IMAGES OF GOD'S PROTECTION LEAD TO PRAISE AND WORSHIP -- PRAISE FOR THE ROCK OF SALVATION

- A. (:1) Context – Deliverance
- B. (:2-3) Relationship: Secure Under the Loving Protection of the Savior
- C. (:4a) Response: Call Upon the Lord – Why?
- D. (:4b) Result: Deliverance – From Whom?

II. (:5-7) WE ARE BELOVED --

THE TIMELINESS OF GOD'S ATTENTIVENESS -- OUR DESPERATE CRIES FOR DELIVERANCE FIND GOD TO BE ATTENTIVE -- CRY FOR HELP EVEN WHEN DELIVERANCE SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE

- A. God's Anointed was in a Tough Jam
- B. God Hears Our Desperate Cries for Help

III. (:8-16) WE WILL BE AVENGED --

THE UNLEASHING OF GOD'S ANGER – LEADS TO AWE-INSPIRED WORSHIP; FEAR OF GOD WHEN OUR SUPERGOD GETS ANGRY HE UNLEASHES HIS SUPER POWERS –

ALL NATURE QUAKES WHEN GOD GETS ANGRY– WATCH OUT!

What happens when God gets Angry? (language of theophany)

- A. (:8) The Earth Shakes in Anticipation of God's Angry Rebuke
- B. (:9) God Breathes Smoke and Fire
- C. (:10-11) God Springs Quickly Into Action
- D. (:12-13) God's Brightness Hides Behind a Cloak of Darkness as He Approaches
- E. (:14) God Announces His Arrival with Displays of Power
- F. (:15) God Routs the Enemy
- G. (:16) The Earth Submits to God's Angry Rebuke

IV. (:17-20) WE HAVE BEEN RESCUED --

THE COMPLETENESS OF GOD'S DELIVERANCE -- THE LORD RESCUES HIS ANOINTED EVEN FROM THE MOST POWERFUL ENEMIES

- A. The Danger
- B. The Deliverance
- C. The Delight

V. (:21-28) WE WILL BE REWARDED --

THE CONSISTENCY OF GOD'S JUSTICE -- THE LORD REWARDS THE RIGHTEOUS BUT PUNISHES THE PERVERSE

- A. The Lord Rewards the Righteous According to Their Righteousness
- B. (:27b, :28b) The Lord Punishes the Perverse According to Their Sin

**VI. (:29-30) CONCLUSION – WE HAVE BEEN TRANSFORMED --
THE ADEQUACY OF GOD'S NEW CREATION**

- A. (:29) The Darkness Yields to God's Light
- B. (:30) Obstacles Present No Problem to God's Warriors

CHAPTER 22:29-51

SONG OF PRAISE FOR DELIVERANCE AND SECURITY -- PART 2

BIG IDEA:

**TRANSFORMATION SHOULD LEAD TO VICTORY --
A SUPERGOD MAKES HIS ANOINTED VICTORIOUS LIKE A SUPERMAN**

3 IMPLICATIONS OF TRANSFORMATION: IMPLICATION #1

I. (:29-30) TRANSFORMED – THE ADEQUACY OF GOD'S NEW CREATION

– Transition Verses; Key Verses – The Secret to Victorious Living

- A. (:29) Enlightened
- B. (:30) Enabled

2ND IMPLICATION OF TRANSFORMATION:

**II. (:31-37) TRANSFORMED: THE PATHWAY OF VICTORY IS SECURE --
7 WAYS THAT GOD MAKES US VICTORIOUS --**

- A. (:31a) God Leads Us in the Path of Victory -- God is a Proven Winner
- B. (:31b-32) God is Our One-of-a-Kind Shield and Rock
- C. (:33) God Surrounds Me with Protection and Keeps Me On Track
- D. (:34) God Equips Me with Security and Keeps Me from Falling
- E. (:35) God Equips Me with Offensive Weapons – I am in a battle
- F. (:36) God Equips Me with Defensive Protection – I am in a battle
- G. (:37) God Makes Me Stand Tall as a Winner

3RD IMPLICATION OF TRANSFORMATION:

**III. (:38-46) TRANSFORMATION: THE EXTENT OF VICTORY IS
ABSOLUTE (COMPLETE / COMPREHENSIVE) -- SUPERMAN TAKES NO
PRISONERS --**

- A. (:38-43) Total Destruction of Enemies – God's Game plan for Conquering Enemies
- B. (:44-46) Complete Submission to God's Anointed – God's Anointed Leadership should expect 5 privileges of God-given victory

(:47-51) CONCLUSION: HYMN OF PRAISE

Repeated Refrain of Praise surrounded by 3 Blessings of God's Love, Power, and Protection – we are secure in God's Love

- A. (:47) Refrain of Praise
- B. (:48) Blessing #1: God Executes Vengeance for Me
- C. (:49, 51a) Blessing #2: God Delivers Me from my Enemies

D. (:50) Refrain of Praise

CHAPTER 23

THE LAST WORDS OF DAVID – LEGACY OF GREATNESS

BIG IDEA:

TWO LASTING MEMORIALS OF GREATNESS FROM THE REIGN OF KING DAVID

I. (:1-7) FIRST LASTING MEMORIAL: REMINDER OF THE DAVIDIC COVENANT – GREATNESS OF LEADERSHIP

- A. (:1-3a) Prophetic Communication of the Word of God
- B. (:3b-4) Pleasant Ambiance Associated with a Righteous Ruler
- C. (:5) Personal Application: The Davidic Covenant
- D. (:6-7) Pronouncement of Condemnation on the Wicked

II. (:8-32) SECOND LASTING MEMORIAL: RECOGNITION FOR DAVID'S MIGHTY MEN – GREATNESS OF VICTORIES

- A. (:8-12) The Three Main Mighty Men (1 Chron. 11:10-14)
- B. (:13-17) The Second Tier of Three Other Mighty Men (Not Named)
- C. (:18-23) Two Special Commanders (1 Chron. 11:20-25)
- D. (:24-39) The Thirty Listed (1 Chron. 11:26-47)

CHAPTER 24

STUMBLING DOWN THE HOMESTRETCH – THE CENSUS AND THE PLAGUE

BIG IDEA:

FOR OUR WORSHIP TO BE ACCEPTABLE WE CANNOT COMPROMISE DEPENDENCE ON THE LORD BY TRUSTING IN THE FLESH

I. (:1-9) PRIDEFUL CENSUS -- DAVID CHOOSES THE PATH OF PRIDE RATHER THAN THE PATH OF HUMILITY AND COMPLETE DEPENDENCE ON THE LORD

- A. (:1-4) Choice to Rely on the Arm of the Flesh
- B. (:5-9) Campaign to Compile the Census

II. (:10-17) PAINFUL PLAGUE -- GOD HUMBLER DAVID WITH STRONG DISCIPLINE MITIGATED BY TENDER MERCY

- A. (:10) Conscience Kicks In
- B. (:11-14) Consequences Cannot Be Avoided – Choice of Discipline
- C. (:15-17) Calamity Runs Its Appointed Course (Abbreviated by God's Mercy)

III. (:18-25) PLEASING WORSHIP -- DAVID REPENTS -- OFFERING WORSHIP AND SACRIFICE IN OBEDIENCE TO THE LORD'S COMMAND

- A. (:18-19) Obeying God's Worship Instructions
- B. (:20-24) Paying for the Opportunity to Sacrifice
- C. (:25) Offering Sacrifices

TEXT: 2 Samuel 1:1-27

TITLE: *HOW HAVE THE MIGHTY FALLEN!*

BIG IDEA:

TRAGIC SETBACKS TO GOD'S SOVEREIGN PROGRAM SHOULD BE OCCASION NOT FOR OPPORTUNISTIC SELF-ADVANCEMENT BUT FOR MOURNFUL LAMENT ON THE PART OF SUBMISSIVE LOYALISTS

INTRODUCTION: When it comes to God's kingdom program for this earth – how much skin do we have in the game? Does it matter to us whether the testimony of the church is honoring Jesus Christ ... or whether God's name is being dishonored because of the failures of His people? Is it all about us and how we are impacted and what opportunities and honor we experience ... or is it all about God's glory and the advancement of His agenda? What are some hits that the church of Jesus Christ has taken in recent days?? (every time there is some type of moral failure of a public Christian leader) – should not be a lot of political jockeying for position in the church like there is in every corporation and bureaucracy

I. (:1-10) OPPORTUNISTIC DECEIVERS SEEK TO ADVANCE THEIR OWN CAUSE WITHOUT REGARD FOR GOD'S SOVEREIGN PROGRAM – THE TWISTED ACCOUNT OF THE DEATH OF SAUL AND JONATHAN

A. (:1) Setting: Tragic death of Saul and Providential Victory of David

“Now it came about after the death of Saul, when David had returned from the slaughter of the Amalekites, that David remained two days in Ziklag.”

1. David had been close to being stoned – 1 Sam. 30:6

His slaughter of the Amalekites was an amazing reversal of fortune

2. Saul and his sons had died and been totally humiliated – 1 Sam. 31

Unsettled time of transition and upheaval; people jockeying for political position
Tremendous contrast between the fortunes of David and Solomon at end of 1 Sam

B. (:2-3) Credentials of a Credible Reporter

Many examples recently of reporting that has not been credible – deceptive; plagiarism; self-serving; pursuing political agenda; etc. – Errors have been exposes and big name reporters have been ruined

1. Valuable Timeliness – Timely Reporting – providing the scoop

“And it happened on the third day”

2. Verifiable Source -- Eyewitness Account

“that behold, a man came out of the camp from Saul”

3. Vestiges of Mourning – Emotional Empathy for the Situation
“with his clothes torn and dust on his head”
4. Veneration for Authority – Show of Submission and Respect for Superior
“And it came about when he came to David that he fell to the ground and prostrated himself.”
5. Vetting by David – Front Line Account of what transpired
“Then David said to him, ‘From where do you come?’ And he said to him, ‘I have escaped from the camp of Israel.’”

C. (:4-10) Checking Out the Details – 2 Key Questions from David

1. What Happened?

“How did things go? Please tell me.”

a. In General for the Nation as a whole -- Israel Routed

“The people have fled from the battle, and also many of the people have fallen and are dead.”

b. Specifically with respect to God’s Appointed Leadership

“and Saul and Jonathan his son are dead also”

2. Is Your Information Reliable? – Convincing Fabrication

“How do you know that Saul and his son Jonathan are dead?”

a. Painting Opportunism as Providential Orchestration

“By chance I happened to be on Mount Gilboa”

b. Presenting Himself as a Humble Hero

1) Available (cf. account of Samuel – *“Send me”*)

“Here I am”

2) Humble (unlikely hero)

“I am an Amalekite”

remember David just got done slaying this evil group of marauders; maybe this had been one of the ring leaders who had escaped .. maybe he was just a mercenary who had joined forces with Saul

Interesting that Saul had been commanded to totally destroy this group of people, but he had failed to fully obey (1 Sam. 15).

3) Obedient Tool in Necessary Mercy Killing

“So I stood beside him and killed him because I knew that he could not live after he had fallen.”

c. Proving His Story with Physical Evidence

“And I took the crown which was on his head and the bracelet which was on his arm, and I have brought them here to my lord.”

Ryrie: The Amalekite’s story is at variance with the record of 1 Sam. 31:3-6 and is clearly a fabrication. He apparently sought recognition or reward for claiming to have killed Saul (who in reality committed suicide). As a mercenary or looter, he came across Saul’s body and took the king’s crown and bracelet to substantiate his fabrication.

II. (:11-16) SUBMISSIVE LOYALISTS REACT WITH RIGHTEOUS INDIGNATION TO ANY VIOLATION OF GOD’S SOVEREIGN PROGRAM – THE EXECUTION COMMANDED BY DAVID

A. (:11-12) Emotional Mourning for Defeat of God’s People

1. Physical Sign of Mourning

“Then David took hold of his clothes and tore them”

Incredible display of respect for Saul and love for Jonathan and love for all of the people of Israel – especially in light of how Saul had treated him in 1 Sam --

- incident of ducking the spear
- forced to flee and hide
- pursued relentlessly by the jealous and insecure king

Not treating this as relief

1. Unified Scope of Mourning

“ and so also did all the men who were with him”

Impact of David’s leadership – able to get his men to follow his lead

2. Component Aspects of Mourning

“They mourned and wept and fasted”

3. Duration of Mourning

“until evening”

4. Significance of this Mourning – Tied to Tragic Defeat of God’s People

“for the people of the Lord and the house of Israel, because they had fallen by the sword.”

B. (:13-14) Revisiting the Credentials and Questioning the Motivation of the Reporter

1. (:13) Revisiting His Credentials – Suspicion Arising

“David said to the young man who told him, ‘Where are you from?’ And he answered, ‘I am the son of an alien, an Amalekite.’”

2. (:14) Questioning His Motivation – Righteous Indignation Building

“Then David said to him, ‘How is it you were not afraid to stretch out

your hand to destroy the Lord's anointed?"

No good answer provided here; David the best example of not taking matters into his own hands; not resorting to expediency to accomplish what he might have thought were legitimate ends

Humility of David – did not see everything through how it affected him; did not treat Saul with disdain; still treated him with respect

C. (:15-16) Execution Commanded and Justified

1. (:15) Execution Commanded – Justice Exacted

*“And David called one of the young men and said, ‘Go, cut him down.’
So he struck him and he died.”*

2. (:16) Execution Justified – Self Incrimination

“David said to him, ‘Your blood is on your head, for your mouth has testified against you, saying, ‘I have killed the Lord’s anointed.’”

No excuse for killing the Lord’s anointed

Who is the Lord’s anointed today?

III. (:17-27) GRIEVING COMRADES LAMENT THE TRAGIC LOSS OF THE KINGLY LINE OF SAUL AND JONATHAN – THE SONG OF THE BOW

A. (:17-18) Introduction and Propagation of Lament

“Then David chanted with this lament over Saul and Jonathan his son, and he told them to teach the sons of Judah the song of the bow; behold, it is written in the book of Jashar.”

B. (:19) Theme / Refrain – The Glory of the Lord has taken a huge hit

*“Your beauty, O Israel, is slain on your high places!
How have the mighty fallen!”*

C. (:20) Gloating of Enemies

*“Tell it not in Gath,
Proclaim it not in the streets of Ashkelon,
Or the daughters of the Philistines will rejoice,
The daughters of the uncircumcised will exult.”*

D. (:21) Curse on Fateful Setting for Saul’s Demise

*“O mountains of Gilboa,
Let not dew or rain be on you, nor fields of offerings;
For there the shield of the mighty was defiled,
The shield of Saul, not anointed with oil.”*

E. (:22-23) Praise for Saul and Jonathan

1. (:22) Battle Tested and Productive

*“From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty,
The bow of Jonathan did not turn back,
And the sword of Saul did not return empty.”*

2. (:23) Praised in Death as in Life

*“Saul and Jonathan, beloved and pleasant in their life,
And in their death they were not parted;
They were swifter than eagles,
They were stronger than lions.”*

F. (:24) Praise for Prosperity of Reign of Saul

*“O daughters of Israel, weep over Saul,
Who clothed you luxuriously in scarlet,
Who put ornaments of gold on your apparel.”*

G. (25a) Refrain Repeated

“How have the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle!”

H. (:25b-26)

*“Jonathan is slain on your high places.
I am distressed for you, my brother Jonathan;
You have been very pleasant to me.
Your love to me was more wonderful Than the love of women.”*

I. (:27) Closing Refrain

*“How have the mighty fallen,
And the weapons of war perished!”*

* * * * *

DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

- 1) Why do we have to be so careful not to gullibly believe everything that is reported to us? How can we check the facts and verify the truthfulness of spiritual claims?
- 2) Who is the Lord’s **anointed** today and how would this statement of protection apply? When is this principle wrongly applied?
- 3) How do people try to use setbacks to God’s program (local church problems, downfall of different pastors, etc.) to advance their own agendas and improve their own cause? How is this self-serving and a failure to connect with the heart of God?
- 4) How passionate are we for the public testimony to the beauty of the glory of the Lord? How upset are we when something compromises the unity and effectiveness of the testimony of God’s people?

* * * * *

QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Davis: The sorrow which David expressed over the death of Saul and Jonathan was genuine. There was no pretense or superficiality in the actions of David. His recorded elegy over the fallen and the dead is one of the most eloquent in all Scripture.

Keil & Delitzsch: It is one of the finest odes of the Old Testament: full of lofty sentiment, and springing from deep and sanctified emotion, in which, without the slightest allusion to his own relation to the fallen king, David celebrates without envy the bravery and virtues of Saul and his son, Jonathan, and bitterly laments their loss.

Blackwood: The wise leader's attitude towards the past. The new leader did everything in his power to show respect for the memory of the dead ruler and for the past regime. A smaller man than David might have exulted in the overthrow of the former dynasty. To have done so would have alienated the men on whom the new leader had to rely for the success of the incoming administration. Surely David showed wisdom when he praised all that had proved worthy in the immediate past.

Pink: "Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth; and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth" (Prov. 24:17). There are many who secretly wish for the death of those who have injured them, or who keep them from honors and estates, and who inwardly rejoice even when they pretend to mourn outwardly. But the grace of God subdues this base disposition, and forms the mind to a more liberal temper. Nor will the spiritual soul exult in the prospect of worldly advancement, for he realizes that such will increase his responsibilities, that he will be surrounded by greater temptations and called to additional duties and cares. David mourned for Saul out of good will, without constraint: out of compassion, without malice; because of the melancholy circumstances attending his death and the terrible consequences which must follow, as well as for Israel's being triumphed over by the enemies of God.

Gil Rugh: Second Samuel is about David's life and reign as king of Israel, paralleled by **Second Chronicles 11-29**. David will reign from 1010-970 BC. Seven and one-half years over Judah and the last thirty-three years over all the tribes of Israel. History flows along from 1 Samuel. David is an outstanding figure in Scripture. We know more about him than any other figure. Many of the psalms written by David, the sweet psalmist of Israel. Way back in 1 Sam 13 David had been anointed by Samuel to replace Saul – but it took a number of years to accomplish this; took many years; difficult years; on the run; in foreign territories belonging to the Philistines; trying to hide from Saul. David did nothing to contribute to Saul's death. It will be 7 years after the death of Saul before David becomes king over the united nation of all the tribes. He becomes king over Judah very quickly. Saul reigned for 40 years (Acts 13:21) and so did David. (2 Sam. 5:4 breaks down David's reign)

David = a warrior king; no soft, effeminate leadership here; no long drawn out trial; swift execution; Saul was insecure and did not like to see David promoted and revered by the people; but David had no problem honoring Saul; national sorrow; “the song of the bow” – connects to them military accomplishments of Saul and Jonathan
Don’t air our dirty laundry before the unbeliever
Unique relationship of David and Jonathan (could not be replaced) – focuses at the end on him

Summary:

- God is at work even when confusion seems to characterize our lives; times of turmoil for David
- we must patiently wait upon the Lord; anointed as king a long time ago – still 7 more years to wait; God acts in His time; David had numerous chances to try to execute Saul himself
- the world does not understand the values of the believer; this Amalekite had no concept of David’s view of Saul as the Lord’s anointed; expects reward from David
- there should be no bitterness or lack of forgiveness in the heart of a believer; no desire for revenge; Eph 4:30
- we should be concerned that unbelievers not be given occasion to rejoice over the fall of the leaders of God’s people; don’t air our dirty laundry
- Our testimony is on the line even when we are not aware of it; David had no idea how God would use him in the future; just living day by day; his faithfulness was essential; always do the right thing; honor God; it might be broadcast 3000 years later!

Conclusion:

1 Peter 2:18ff important passage about suffering unjustly before unjust masters – all about Christ; not all about us; how can I honor you in this situation?

Thomas A. Gormley: David did not seek after Saul’s death – even though it was the last obstacle in rising to the throne; David was 50 miles away in Ziklag to the south; God in His providence kept David out of the way so he would not be participating in this battle; the Amalekite was a liar; David’s first order as king following the death of Saul – executing this liar; Who were the Amalekites? They tend to all blend together ... their origin: Amalek -- grandson of Esau = their founder; sub group of Edomites; settled in south of Canaan; one of those people groups that should have been done away with in time of Joshua – **Ex. 17:8ff** first encounter of Israelites with Amalekites, having just crossed the Red Sea = there very first military battle upon leaving Egypt; unprovoked attack ; there will be enemies after we have been redeemed during this earthly pilgrimage; as Moses prayed the Lord’s people had victory, **Ex. 17:14-16** – God targets this nation for total destruction; a doomed people; continue tracing different incidents **1 Sam. 14:48** Saul defeated the Amalekites – but we saw in **chap 15** – a problem – Saul was instructed to wipe them out; spared the king; we are to rid our lives of all sin; world and church filled with great pretenders

TEXT: 2 Samuel 2:1-32

TITLE: POWER STRUGGLE DIVIDES THE NATION AND COSTS MANY LIVES

BIG IDEA:

LEADERSHIP TRANSITION SPARKS CIVIL WAR BETWEEN HOUSE OF JUDAH – Southern Tribe (DAVID AND JOAB = military leader) AND HOUSE OF ISRAEL (ABNER= Saul’s military leader AND ISHBOSHETH = puppet king) 11 other tribes to the North

Last Week (Handout) – 2 very different reactions to the death of Saul and his 3 sons

- Amalekite – opportunity to advance his own self interests; we looked at the lying account of Saul’s death which he fabricated to try to impress David
- David – grieving over the national impact of the loss of these heroic figures (implications for Israel’s testimony to the world; concerned for God’s glory) -- and his personal loss of his close friend Jonathan

This week: INTRODUCTION Chap 2:

Tragedy of brother fighting against brother; friend against friend in any type of civil war; Look at how many people died in **our country’s own civil war**; many stories of how top level generals who were the best of friends were opposed to each other on opposite sides of this battle; human interest side of the grief and tragedy involved

cf. **conflicts within the local church** – pain and suffering involved; people not being led of the Lord and willing to follow His direction and submit to His Word;

1) Are there **legitimate reasons** to leave a local church? How many people have left another church over some type of conflict or dissatisfaction (not from moving geographically) – Difficult subject

- Can’t respect the leadership
- Have areas of differences in biblical conviction that are significant enough to warrant a change

2) But many times the source of the conflict is selfish ambition; some form of a power play; a desire on the part of someone to promote themselves into leadership and gather disciples for themselves

James 4:1-2 – Examine our own motivations

Acts 20: 28-30 – Be alert to the danger from within

3 John 9 – Recognize the selfish ambitious profile -- indictment against Diotrephes – “who loves to be first among them” – does not accept the apostolic instruction – not content with whatever his role was in the church – had a “lord it over the flock” mentality rather than one of servant leadership

This is why this account from back in Israel’s history is so relevant to us today

I. (:1-7) CROWNING DAVID -- ESTABLISHMENT OF KINGDOM OF DAVID BY DIVINE DIRECTION

A. (:1-4a) Crowned King over Judah in Hebron (the Second Anointing of David)

1. (:1) Asking God for Direction
 - a. *“Shall I go up to one of the cities of Judah?”*

Answer: *“Go up”*

Previously he had left the cities of Judah "inquiring" of his own heart (1 Sam. 27:1) and taken refuge in the cities of the Philistines – major change in orientation for David

Importance of **seeking direction from the Lord** – even in a case where David should have had a high degree of confidence; guarding against presumption and self advancement; faith = dependence upon God for our daily walk ...

What does the Lord want me to do; When? Where?

Young people – what is your attitude towards following the will of the Lord? What are you seeking?

Are we just drifting through life or actively asking God what He wants us to be doing? Some people have trouble saying NO ... responding emotionally to needs rather than asking God for direction

Probably more people have trouble saying YES to what God has clearly revealed ...

Principle: **John 7:17** *“If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know of the teaching, whether it is of God or whether I speak from Myself”*

Why does David limit his inquiry her to “the cities of Judah”?

- b. *“Where shall I go up?”*
- Answer: *“To Hebron”*

Davis: It was an ideal place for the capital in Judah since it was situated near the center of the tribe. It was well protected, being located in the mountains, and it had a long sacred history.” 20 miles south of Jerusalem

2. (:2-3) Relocation Program for David, His Family and His Key Leaders
 - a. David – *“so David went up there”*
 - b. Two Wives – *“and his two wives also, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess and Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite”*
 - c. Key Leaders with their Households
“And David brought up his men who were with him, each with his household and they lived in the cities of Hebron.”
3. (:4a) Anointed King over Judah
“Then the men of Judah came and there anointed David king over the house of Judah.”

This was the second anointing – remember **1 Samuel 16:13** – this first anointing was before his family household; his second anointing was before the tribe of Judah in our

passage; his third anointing was before the entire nation – **2 Sam. 5:1-5**

B. (:4b-7) Strategic Alliance with Jabesh-gilead

1. (:4b) Alliance Prompted by Kind Act

“And they told David, saying, ‘It was the men of Jabesh-gilead who buried Saul.’”

City located East of the Jordan (called the TransJordan area – study your roots in school = across the Jordan River) and further north than the tribe of Judah – had been rescued by Saul – **1 Samuel 11** – great heroic account of Saul delivering them from the Ammonites

They had shown their great loyalty to Saul by risking their lives to collect his bones for burial

Very strategic initiative by David – extending his influence beyond the borders of just Judah

2. (:5-6) Reciprocal Kindness Offered

a. *“because you have shown this kindness to Saul your lord, and have buried him”*

b. Reciprocal Blessing from the Lord

- *lovingkindness*

- *truth*

- *goodness*

Look at what the Lord has to offer us in response to whatever service we perform for Him – **very lopsided equation**

First, it is always the Lord who initiates any blessing – We love because He first loved us

Second, you can never out give the Lord

Remember the anxious question of the disciples of Jesus – what are we going to gain for having made significant sacrifices to follow you? How did Jesus respond?

Rom. 8:18 *“For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us”*

3. (:7) Strategic Call for Loyalty to Leadership of David –

Get with the New Program

a. Call for Loyalty and Commitment and Strength and Courage

“Now therefore, let your hands be strong and be valiant”

b. Can't Live in the Past

“for Saul your lord is dead,”

c. Coronation Offers Validation

“and also the house of Judah has anointed me king over them.”

II. (:8-11) CROWNING RIVAL -- CORONATION OF RIVAL ISH-BOSHETH BY POLITICAL MANEUVERING OF ABNER

A. (:8) Initiative of Abner to Prolong the Line of Saul

“But Abner the son of Ner, commander of Saul’s army, had taken Ish-bosheth the son of Saul and brought him over to Mahanaim.”

But Abner – there is always an obstacle to gum up the works; something to be overcome by faith and trust in the Lord; we fight spiritual battles

Background of Abner – important to understand his motivation – had been very prominent for a long time as Saul’s right hand man and commander of his troops

Member of the royal family – first cousin of Saul through his father Ner (1 Sam. 14:51)
1 Sam. 17:55 – Abner whom Saul consulted back in battle of David with Goliath – he had been chief military commander for a long time; **1 Sam. 20:25** – Abner given more honored position than even Jonathan at king’s feast; faithful and loyal servant of Saul; Also commanded the troops which had pursued David; had acted as Saul’s bodyguard – **1 Sam. 26:13-16** – had been shown up big time by David – had no expectation that he would be shown any favor by David

Feared giving up his personal **position** and **power** in the new regime; David had Joab = his own leaders – Not concerned with God’s will or God’s kingdom program

Background of Ish-Bosheth: Youngest son of Saul ... but still old enough to fight; 40 years old at this point; Where was he in the battle against the Philistines where his 3 brothers died?? Very weak individual; a puppet king manipulated by Abner – Raises question of how should the leadership of God’s people be established?? Normal kingship would be by family heredity – but God had other designs – Sovereign appointment of David – Contrast between the flesh and the Spirit

Warren Wiersbe: There’s a modern touch to this scenario, for our political and religious worlds are populated by these same three kinds of people. We have weak people like Ish-Bosheth, who get where they are because they have “connections.” We have strong, selfish people like Abner, who know how to manipulate others for their own personal profit. We also have people of God like David who are called, anointed, and equipped but must wait for God’s time before they can serve.

B. (:9) Extent of Rival Kingdom – over all Israel

“He made him king over Gilead, over the Ashurites, over Jezreel, over Ephraim, and over Benjamin, even over all Israel.”

Why was Israel willing to follow Abner?

C. (:10-11) Contrast Between Reign of David and Ish-Bosheth

“Ish-bosheth, Saul’s son, was forty years old when he became king over Israel,

and he was king for two years. The house of Judah, however, followed David. The time that David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months.”

It would appear from this timetable that David was king for about 5 1/2 years before Ish-bosheth was crowned – what happened during this period?? Ish-bosheth regaining control of the northern territory from the Philistines??

III. (:12-17) CHALLENGING THE OPPOSITION -- CIVIL WAR ESCALATES FROM REPRESENTATIVE CHALLENGE TO TOTAL ENGAGEMENT

A. (:12-13) Staging of the Confrontation

1. (:12) Abner and His Forces

“Now Abner the son of Ner, went out from Mahanaim to Gibeon with the servants of Ishbosheth the son of Saul.”

2. (:13a) Joab and His Forces

*“And Joab the son of Zeruiah and the servants of David went out and met them by the pool of Gibeon;“
7 miles NW of Jerusalem*

3. (:13b) Hostile Stare Down

“and they sat down, one on the one side of the pool and the other on the other side of the pool.”

Presents an interesting image – not rushing into conflict – recognizing that civil war presents some unique difficulties

B. (:14-16) Representative Challenge with Tragic Results

1. (:14) Agreement on Terms of Challenge

“Then Abner said to Joab, ‘Now let the young men arise and hold a contest before us.’ And Joab said, ‘Let them arise.’”

Was this a good idea? Suspect because we see the initiation came from Abner
Not that out of the ordinary back in those times – cf. incident between David and Goliath

2. (15) Appointing the Twelve Man Teams

“So they arose and went over by count, twelve for Benjamin and Ishbosheth the son of Saul, and twelve of the servants of David.”

These would be the choicest of the fighting men

3. (:16) All Die! -- Fight to the Death Proves Inconclusive

“And each one of them seized his opponent by the head, and thrust his sword in his opponent’s side; so they fell down together. Therefore that

place was called Helkath-hazzurim, which is in Gibeon.”

Mittelstaedt: The contest turned bloody as the warriors began drawing their swords and killing each other, while their comrades on each side looked on. You can understand why the battleground came to be called *Helkath Hazzurim*, that is, the “field of daggers.”

Josephus records centuries later that there must have been some type of collusion for this knife fight to end in the death of all 24?? Does seem like a surprising outcome; very honorable process; nobody cheats and comes to the aid of someone else; strict one-on-one combat

C. (:17) Escalation to Total Engagement with Many Casualties and Defeat of Abner
“And that day the battle was very severe, and Abner and the men of Israel were beaten before the servants of David.”

Opportunity here to cut things off or to escalate the conflict – more of an emotional reaction than a reasoned out strategic decision ... look at how conflicts escalate in families and in the church

Short sentence but very heavy ramifications; think of all the family connections affected

IV. (:18-23) CRYING OVER BROTHERLY CONFLICT -- THE TRAGEDY OF CIVIL WAR CASUALTIES HEIGHTENED BY INTERTWINING OF PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

A. (:18-19) Fleet Footed Asahel Doggedly Pursuing Abner
“Now the three sons of Zeruah were there, Joab and Abishai and Asahel; and Asahel was as swift-footed as one of the gazelles which is in the field. And Asahel pursued Abner and did not turn to the right or to the left from following Abner.”

1 Chron.2:16 -- Zeruah = David’s sister; these are David’s nephews

Asahel determined to run down Abner and end the conflict; youthful zeal and confidence – but not very shrewd; Ambitious just like Abner

Some trust in horses and some in chariots (and some in speed) ... but apparently Asahel was not trusting in the wisdom of the Lord to direct him or the power of the Lord to grant him success

B. (:20-22) Abner Tries to Avoid Killing Asahel

1. (:20) Verifies His Identity

“Then Abner looked behind him and said, ‘Is that you, Asahel?’ And he answered, ‘It is I.’”

2. (:21) Offers Him Options

“So Abner said to him, ‘Turn to your right or to your left, and take hold of one of the young men for yourself, and take for yourself his spoil.’”

But Asahel was not willing to turn aside from following him.”

MacArthur: To gain the armor or spoil of the enemy general, Abner, who was fleeing the defeat, would be to possess the greatest trophy. Asahel was ambitious to get it, while Abner kept warning him and suggested he take the spoil of some other soldier for his trophy, since he was not able to defeat Abner

3. (:22) Pleads with Him to Break Off the Pursuit

“And Abner repeated again to Asahel, ‘Turn aside from following me. Why should I strike you to the ground? How then could I lift up my face to your brother Joab?’”

Did not want things to get personal between him and Joab

C. (:23) Abner Forced to Kill Asahel

1. Asahel Forced the Issue

“However, he refused to turn aside”

2. Asahel Impaled in Tragic Fashion

“therefore Abner struck him in the belly with the butt end of the spear, so that the spear came out at his back. And he fell there and died on the spot.”

Configuration of the spear?? Sharp wooden point – not what you hold the spear by – there is a handle in the middle – for practice you throw the butt end into the ground so you don’t dull the sharpened metal end – equally balanced

3. Asahel Mourned by All

“And it came about that all who came to the place where Asahel had fallen and died, stood still.”

Shocking sight

V. (:24-29) CALLING OFF THE DOGS – AGREEMENT TO HALT THE SENSELESS BLOODSHED

A. (:24-25) Abner Forced Into Making a Last Stand

1. (:24) Cornered and Forced to Take a Stand

“But Joab and Abishai pursued Abner, and when the sun was going down, they came to the hill of Ammah, which is in front of Giah by the way of the wilderness of Gibeon.”

2. (:25) Prepared to Fight to the Finish

“And the sons of Benjamin gathered together behind Abner and became one band, and they stood on the top of a certain hill.”

B. (:26-27) Agreement that Further Bloodshed Would Be Senseless – Assigning of Blame

1. (:26) Plea of Abner – Call off your Dogs
“Then Abner called to Joab and said, ‘Shall the sword devour forever? Do you not know that it will be bitter in the end? How long will you refrain from telling the people to turn back from following their brothers?’”

What hypocritical words by Abner – he had instigated the whole fight

2. (:27) Rejoinder by Joab – You Started It
“And Joab said, ‘As God lives, if you had not spoken, surely then the people would have gone away in the morning, each from following his brother.’”

VI. (:30-32) COUNTING UP THE CASUALTIES – EVEN THE WINNERS OF A CIVIL WAR INCUR TRAGIC LOSSES

- A. (:30) Losses on Joab’s Side
“Then Joab returned from following Abner; when he had gathered all the people together, nineteen of David’s servants besides Asahel were missing.”
- B. (:31) Greater Losses on Abner’s Side
“But the servants of David had struck down many of Benjamin and Abner’s men, so that three hundred and sixty men died.”
- C. (:32) Burial and Moving On
“And they took up Asahel and buried him in his father’s tomb which was in Bethlehem. Then Joab and his men went all night until the day dawned at Hebron.”

Great moment of **restraint for Joab**; his brother had been killed; he clearly had the upper hand; yet did not wipe out Abner
But this was not the end of the civil war – look at opening of chap 3; eventually would result in death of Abner itself
Cf. 3:1 which continues the story

* * * * *

DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

- 1) What application do you see to conflicts within local churches? How do these get started? Why are they prolonged? What grief and loss results?
- 2) How critical was it for David to seek God’s direction? How could Abner enlist such strong support despite not seeking the Lord’s direction? Why was Israel willing to follow his lead?

3) What insights did you glean regarding how such conflicts begin and how they are prolonged – even when they seem so senseless?

4) Why did this not spell the end of conflict between the house of Israel and the house of Judah?

* * * * *

QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Blackwood: The new regime began with prayer. . . At the very start he could see that the new movement needed a geographical center, to impart “visibility and permanence,” as well as to afford a rallying point. During all the time Saul had acted as king he never could see that the government needed a “local habitation and a name.” With the provincialism of a small-minded farmer he directed affairs from his rural home. By contrast David stands out as a constructive leader. He has a plan, and he begins at once to go forward. What an auspicious beginning, all because he followed the guidance of the Lord in answer to prayer!

Pink: The manner in which David conducted himself on this occasion presents an example which we do well to take to heart and punctually emulate. The important principle of action which was here exemplified has been well expressed by another: "If we would possess temporal things with a blessing, we must not eagerly seize upon them, nor be determined by favorable events or carnal counsel: but we must observe the rules of God's Word, and pray for His direction; using those means, and those only, which He has appointed or allowed, and avoid all evil, or 'appearance of evil,' in our pursuit of them: and then whatever else we fail in, we shall be directed in the way to the kingdom of heaven" (Thomas Scott). "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths" (Prov. 3:5,6).

To "acknowledge" the Lord in all our ways means that instead of acting in self-sufficiency and self-will, we seek wisdom from above in every undertaking of our earthly affairs, beg God to grant us light from His Word on our path, and seek His honor and glory in all that we attempt. Thus it was now with David: "And it came to pass after this, that David inquired of the Lord, saying, Shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah?" (2 Sam. 2:1). This is very blessed, and should be linked with all that was before us in 1 Samuel 30:6-31. What is here recorded of David supplies further proof of his having been restored from backsliding. Previously he had left the cities of Judah "inquiring" of his own heart (1 Sam. 27:1), but now he would only think of returning thither as God might conduct him. Alas, that most of us have to pass through many painful and humiliating experiences ere we learn this lesson.

Blaikie: The well-meant and earnest efforts of David to ward off strife and bring the people together in recognizing him as king were frustrated, as we have seen, through the efforts of Abner. Unmoved by the solemn testimony of God, uttered again and

again through Samuel, that He had rejected Saul and found as king a man after His own heart; unmoved by the sad proceedings at Endor, where, under such awful circumstances, the same announcement of the purpose of the Almighty had been repeated; unmoved by the doom of Saul and his three sons upon Mount Gilboa, where such a striking proof of the reality of God's judgment on his house had been given; unmoved by the miserable state of the kingdom, overrun and humiliated by the Philistines and in the worst possible condition to bear the strain of a civil war, -- this Abner insisted on setting up Ishbosheth and endeavouring to make good his claims by the sword. It was never seen more clearly how "one sinner destroyeth much good."

Gil Rugh: The official beginning of what will be a forty year reign by David takes place with his seven and one-half year rule over the tribe of Judah from Hebron. His first official act will be to honor the men of Jabesh-Gilead who showed respect for the bodies of Saul and his sons.

He begins his reign presuming nothing but inquires of the Lord what He should do testifying that he is 'a man after God's own heart.'

The first years are filled with conflict between David and the tribe of Judah with the leaders and armies of the other eleven tribes. During this seven year period, David's force grows in strength while what that of the other eleven tribes grows weaker.

David is confronted with a difficult situation when from within his own ranks his military leader kills Abner, the other tribes leader after David has made a peace pact with them. The way he handles this serves to increase the respect the people have for him.

The way is being prepared for David to set up and reign over all Israel the next thirty-five years.

Observations from these chapters include:

1. Never presume upon the Lord - seek His will in everything.
2. Use wisdom in all conduct - showing respect for others.
3. We must be faithful in all the tasks the Lord gives us - even the 'little' things.
4. Godly conduct builds respect.
5. God uses the sinfulness of men to accomplish His purposes - but that does not justify sin.
6. We must not condone sin.
7. The plans of God cannot be frustrated.

Moved from Ziklag in Philistine territory to Hebron. David did not presume anything -- even when Saul was dead. Judah is David's home tribe. Always concerned to be what the Lord wants him to be. No rush with David. My life is in the Lord's hands. 20 miles south of Jerusalem. 1 Sam. 16:13 -- anointed by Samuel -- treats kindly those who respected Saul as David did; Abner is the power here -- may have been the dominant influence for first 5 years; Ish-bosheth only reigned for last 2 years of David's 7.5 yr

reign in Hebron.

7 miles NW of Jerusalem = pool of Gibeon; has been excavated; Abner vs Joab meet at this pool and face off on opposite sides of this pool of water; mini-contest proposed by Abner; that didn't solve anything

1 Chron.2:16 -- Zeruah = David's sister; these are David's nephews; take on one of these other young soldiers; don't get into a fight with me; Abner does not want problems with Joab; instead of one army against another this will become a personal matter; ran him through with the blunt end instead of the pointed end – how do you do that? Last stand – took the high ground; then Abner spoke – there has to come an end to this; further battle will only increase the bitterness between brothers; how will there ever be reconciliation and peace? An overwhelming victory for Joab and David's forces; no need to carry it any further; ultimately David needs to reign over the whole nation; during 7 year period David added to his wives and had a number of children

Thomas A. Gormley: But Abner . . . There's always a But . . . another obstacle to come our way . . . Abner sought self promotion

At last Saul was removed and David was acting honorably before the Lord. Yet in verse eight of 2 Samuel 2 we read: But Abner....

David's troubles were far from over. Abner knew the promises of God, but chose to promote himself instead.

Church leadership – promoting self or submissive to the Lord's will and caring for the needs of the flock? Paul's warning to elders at Ephesus in Acts 20 –

David was in Ziklag because he had been disobedient. Sought the Lord's will.

Abner feared giving up his position and power:

Big Idea: “The deadly results of human ambition when it flies in the face of God's revealed will”

1 Sam. 17:55 – Abner whom Saul consulted back in battle of David with Goliath – he had been chief military commander for a long time; 1 Sam. 20:25 – Abner given more honored position than even Jonathan at king's feast; faithful and loyal servant of Saul; apparently Saul had another son who had not been killed in battle – why hadn't he been there? 40 years when he became king; why have we never heard about him earlier? But a puppet in Abner's hand

Why was David satisfied just with reigning over Judah?? Why didn't he protest Abner's actions? He was not pursuing a forced reign over all of the tribes at this time; he was living at peace

There had never been a civil war in Israel to this point; similar to the David and Goliath

confrontation; perhaps this was a less barbarous way of settling the conflict; Spears very valuable – sharp wooden end – used for practicing?? Different than configuration we picture??

Ratio of casualties = 18 to 1; a rout

Great moment of restraint for Joab; his brother had been killed; he clearly had the upper hand; yet did not wipe out Abner
But this was not the end of the civil war – look at opening of chap 3; eventually would result in death of Abner itself

How do civil wars start in local church??

David Dykstra: civil war is terrible thing; friend against friend; relative against relative; worst possible conflict that humanity can experience; cf. General Ulysses S. Grant and General Longstreet (Pete) = best man at his wedding; people die because of the self ambition of a leader that will not submit to the will of God; a man who was not content with David becoming the new king; Abner contests that regime change; knew the divine will but rebelled against it;
(:12-32)

I. Explanation of the Narrative

4 Scenes that develop

A. (:12-16) The Scene at the pool of Gibeon

Abner = aggressor; you can't have a civil war without an aggressor; somebody who is opposed to union; we must have division; you would think David would have been the aggressor; Joab responded to the threat coming out of the north; was it foolish for Joab to go along with this representative conflict?? Josephus says collusion on the part of the 24 to all die?? Disastrous and indecisive

B. (:17-23) The Scene on the Run

Asahel: let me end this conflict by targeting the captain and eliminating him; Trying to bring the war to an end; Abner does not appear too concerned by the outcome of this potential confrontation; he warns him repeatedly; front section with sharp blade – honed very sharp; don't want to mess up the blade; rear section = equal weight; practice by throwing this end; middle section with grip; we don't fight fair when it is for our life; shocking sight to see David's nephew in pool of his own blood

C. (:24-28) The Scene on the Hilltop – high ground; defensible

Renewed vigor and anger; out for revenge; what hypocritical words coming from the man who had begun the conflict

D. (:29-32) The Return to their Respective Towns

Lopsided victory

II. 2 Lessons that emerge from the Narrative

A. Mark how much sorrow and misery can result from one man's attempt to safeguard

his position in life

Abner: I like to be the general of the army; David has Joab; I have worked for this position; I deserve this position; What did he determine to do about it? Used his power to his advantage; set up puppet king that would be totally dependent upon him; deaths of key men; widows; orphans . . . long war resulting; funeral upon funeral – Why? What should he have done? Cast his loyalty to David; but he was not content with that; Acts 20:30 – trying to get disciples for themselves rather than building up the flock as disciples of Christ; pride, ambition; discontent with a position

B. “It is possible to know the truth, but not embrace it; to quote the truth but not submit to it; to hold the truth but assault the truth”

Abner knew the will of God but refused to submit to it; 2 Sam. 3:6-10 – “as the Lord has sworn to David” – Abner was defiant; Any Abners sitting here? Maybe you want to safeguard your position in school and continue to be Mr. Popular? You know what will happen if you take a stand for Christ

TEXT: 2 Samuel 3:1-39

TITLE: PERSONAL VENDETTAS JEOPARDIZE KINGDOM GOALS

BIG IDEA:

**DAVID WISELY EXCELS AT DAMAGE CONTROL AFTER JOAB
JEOPARDIZES KINGDOM CONSOLIDATION BY TAKING PERSONAL
REVENGE ON ABNER**

Review: remember from Chap. 2 the confrontation between Joab and Abner at the pool of Gibeon; Asahel, Joab's brother had pursued after Abner; Abner tried to get him to back off ... but eventually was forced to defend himself and killed the brother of Joab – so Joab has something very personal against Abner; Judah and Israel at odds

INTRODUCTION:

This is a story about self-will; about revenge; about personal vendettas; about putting one's own personal interests ahead of the interests of God's program; about effective leadership exercising damage control to stay on course; about diplomacy in the most delicate of situations

I. (:1-5) SETTING – STEADY STRENGTHENING OF KINGDOM OF DAVID

A. (:1) David Gaining Ground in Civil War

“Now there was a long war between the house of Saul and the house of David; and David grew steadily stronger, but the house of Saul grew weaker continually.”

Civil war is a sad state of affairs in a nation (or in a church or in a denomination); loyalty to Saul still a major issue

Blaikie: The war does not seem to have been carried on by pitched battles, but rather by a long series of those fretting and worrying little skirmishes which a state of civil war breeds, even when the volcano is comparatively quiet.

Providence of God at work accomplishing His purposes

How was David growing stronger?? Military exploits; reputation; knowledge of God's will

Cf. our response to the kingship of Christ in our lives – sometimes gradual progress when it should be more immediate

B. (:2-5) Siring of the Royal Family

“Sons were born to David at Hebron”

Raises the question that Kirk had asked in our first class – How could God have allowed polygamy in the OT – **Deut 17:17**

- Many of these were for the sake of key political alliances

- Distinction between wives and concubines??

Many levels of social standing in a society where polygamy was practiced; Obviously these women did not have the same rights and privileges as wives; closer to a slave woman rather than a free woman; yet their children could be co-heirs and sexual relations were somehow viewed as legitimate; the women would be faithful to one man; more prevalent during the time of the Judges; after that seemed to be the prerogative of kings; certainly created complicated relationships and family troubles

1. Amnon

“his first-born was Amnon, by Ahinoam the Jezreelitess”

2. Chileab

“and his second, Chileab, by Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite”
Story of foolish Nabal and his wise wife Abigail told in **1 Sam. 25**

3. Absalom

“and the third, Absalom the son of Maacah, the daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur”

Davis: son of a foreign princess; implications regarding his later rebellion

Political alliance on NE border of kingdom of Ish-bosheth – very important strategically

4. Adonijah

“and the fourth, Adonijah the son of Haggith”

5. Shephatiah

“and the fifth, Shephatiah the son of Abital”

6. Ithream

“and the sixth, Ithream, by David’s wife Eglah”

“These were born to David at Hebron.” others born later on (**5:13-16**)

II. (:6-11) POLITICAL MANEUVERING -- CRITICAL ALIENATION OF ABNER FROM KINGDOM OF ISHBOSHETH

A. (:6) Abner Solidifies His Significant Leadership Role

“And it came about while there was war between the house of Saul and the house of David that Abner was making himself strong in the house of Saul.”

How was Abner making himself strong?

Controlling his puppet king; making sure that he got credit for anything good that happened; making sure that men loyal to him were in positions of power and influence; think of the business world today and the politics involved in someone building their own kingdom

B. (:7-8) Abner Accused of Treasonous Sexual Liaison

1. (:7) Accusation by Ishbosheth

“Now Saul had a concubine whose name was Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah; and Ishbosheth said to Abner, ‘Why have you gone in to my father’s concubine?’”

Don’t bring the accusation if you are not prepared to follow through.
Sounds like whining when you don’t have the strength to act.

Ryrie: Having intercourse with a king’s concubine was a treasonous act, for it was in essence making a claim to the throne (cf. **16:20-21**).

Strengthens your hand if you can get away with it

2. (:8) Indignant Response by Abner

He never actually answers the accusation; instead argues that he is above the law and should never be questioned because of his importance to the kingdom

a. Lashing out in Anger – Violent Outburst

“Then Abner was very angry over the words of Ishbosheth”

b. Demanding Unquestioned Respect and Honor – Sarcastic Analogy

“and said, ‘Am I a dog’s head that belongs to Judah?’”

How many have a dog for a pet?? Some bad news here – dogs not viewed favorably in Scriptures; half-wild animals living in the streets off the garbage and refuse; you would need to drive them away with a stick at times; not some adorable little pet

c. Pleading His Track Record of Shoring up the Kingdom of Saul – History of Loyalty

“Today I show kindness to the house of Saul your father, to his brothers and to his friends, and have not delivered you into the hands of David”

d. Minimizing the Charge Leveled Against Him – Diplomatic Immunity

“and yet today you charge me with a guilt concerning the woman.”

Very condescending reference to the concubine – “the woman” = regarded as property; no respect

C. (:9-10) Abner Swears to Unite the Kingdom under Davidic Rule

1. (:9) Invoking the Davidic Covenant in his Oath

“May God do so to Abner, and more also, if as the Lord has sworn to David, I do not accomplish this for him”

Look at what Abner understood regarding God's promises to David

2. (:10) Promising to Unite the Kingdom under Davidic Rule
"to transfer the kingdom from the house of Saul, and to establish the throne of David over Israel and over Judah, from Dan even to Beersheba."

D. (:11) Abner Shuts the Mouth of Fearful Ishbosheth
"And he could no longer answer Abner a word, because he was afraid of him."
Not a very healthy situation for a king . . .

III. (:12-21) ABNER NEGOTIATES PEACE COVENANT BRINGING ISRAEL UNDER KINGDOM OF DAVID

A. (:12-16) Preliminary Negotiations with David

1. (:12) Attractive Proposal from Abner to David
"Then Abner sent messengers to David in his place, saying, 'Whose is the land? Make your covenant with me, and behold, my hand shall be with you to bring all Israel over to you.'"

Interesting approach to someone you had openly opposed for so many years; What is surprising about how Abner approached David here?? No contrition; no repentance; no humility

Gordon: Abner approaches King David, not as one who has done him a great wrong, but as one who offers to do him a great favour. There is not word of regret for his having opposed what he knew to be God's purpose and promise, no apology for the disturbance he had wrought in Israel, no excuse for all the distress which he had caused to David by keeping the kingdom and the people at war. He does not come as a rebel to his sovereign, but as one independent man to another. Make a league with me. Secure me from punishment; promise me a reward. For this he simply offers to place at David's disposal that powerful hand of his that had been so mighty for evil.

2. (:13) Agreement from David Based on One Condition
"And he said, 'Good! I will make a covenant with you, but I demand one thing of you, namely, you shall not see my face unless you first bring Michal, Saul's daughter, when you come to see me.'"
3. (:14-15) Acquiescence of Ishbosheth to Demand of David
"So David sent messengers to Ishbosheth, Saul's son, saying, 'Give me my wife Michal, to whom I was betrothed for a hundred foreskins of the Philistines.' And Ishbosheth sent and took her from her husband, from Paltiel the son of Laish."

1 Sam 18

4. (:16) Anguish of Michal's Husband Over the Separation
"But her husband went with her, weeping as he went, and followed her"

as far as Bahurim. Then Abner said to him, 'Go, return.' So he returned."

B. (:17-19) Political Persuasion of Key Leaders in Israel

1. (:17-18) Political Persuasion of Elders of Israel

"Now Abner had consultation with the elders of Israel, saying, 'In times past you were seeking for David to be king over you. Now then, do it! For the Lord has spoken of 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. (:19) Political Persuasion of Leaders of House of Benjamin

"And Abner also spoke in the hearing of Benjamin; and in addition Abner went to speak in the hearing of David in Hebron all that seemed good to Israel and to the whole house of Benjamin."

House of Benjamin mentioned specifically because Saul had come from here; these would be the most fierce loyalists for Ish-bosheth

C. (:20-21) Closing the Deal

1. (:20) David Entertains Delegation of Abner (in Absence of Joab)

"Then Abner and twenty men with him came to David at Hebron. And David made a feast for Abner and the men who were with him."

Was it wise for David to exclude Joab and hide these events from him?

2. (:21) Abner Commits to Executing the Covenant

"And Abner said to David, 'Let me arise and go, and gather all Israel to my lord the king that they may make a covenant with you, and that you may be king over all that your soul desires.' So David sent Abner away, and he went in peace."

Significance of phrase *"he went in peace"*

**IV. (:22-30) JOAB FOOLISHLY JEOPARDIZES KINGDOM
CONSOLIDATION IN KILLING ABNER OUT OF REVENGE**

A. (:22-25) Joab Criticizes David for Not Executing Abner as an Assumed Spy

1. (:22-23) Joab Shocked at Peace Treaty with Abner

a. (:22) The Situation – Abner has come and gone in Joab's absence

"And behold, the servants of David and Joab came from a raid and brought much spoil with them; but Abner was not with David in Hebron, for he had sent him away, and he had gone in peace."

b. (:23) The Explanation – David made a peace treaty with him

"When Joab and all the army that was with him arrived, they told Joab, saying, 'Abner the son of Ner came to the king, and he has

sent him away, and he has gone in peace.’”

2. (:24-25) David Criticized for Letting Abner Return Home

a. (:24) Joab Demands Answers

“Then Joab came to the king and said, ‘What have you done? Behold, Abner came to you; why then have you sent him away and he is already gone?’”

b. (:25) Joab Upbraids King David for being Naive

“You know Abner the son of Ner, that he came to deceive you and to learn of your going out and coming in, and to find out all that you are doing.”

Lack of Submission on the part of Joab

No respect in attitude or deed

No fear of authority

No understanding of how the authority of God stands behind those in authority over us

B. (:26-30) Joab Takes Matters Into His Own Hands and Assassinates Abner

1. (:26) Joab Lures Abner Back to Hebron – without David’s Knowledge

“When Joab came out from David, he sent messengers after Abner; and they brought him back from the well of Sirah; but David did not know it.”

2. (:27) Joab Takes His Revenge on Abner

“So when Abner returned to Hebron, Joab took him aside into the middle of the gate to speak with him privately, and there he struck him in the belly so that he died on account of the blood of Asahel his brother.”

Contrast the 2 deaths: Asahel and Abner – what was different?

Signif of “the gate”

Signif of cities of refuge

Signif of it not being a fair fight – no honor involved

Davis: It should be remembered that Abner had slain Asahel in battle unwillingly and in self-defense. It should also be noted that Hebron was a city of refuge (Josh. 21:13) and in such a city not even the avenger of blood might slay the murderer without a trial (cf. **Num. 35:22-25**). Thus Joab violated basic laws established within Israel.

Wiersbe: Everything about the death of Abner was wrong. The two brothers knew what their king wanted, yet they deliberately put their own interests ahead of that of the kingdom. Asahel had been pursuing Abner on the battlefield, so he was another

casualty of war; but the death of Abner was murder. Hebron was a city of refuge, a sanctuary where an accused murderer could get a fair trial, but the two brothers never gave the elders in Hebron a chance to hear the case. Abner killed Asahel in self-defense; but when Joab and Abishai killed Abner, it was pure revenge, and Abner never had the opportunity to defend himself. Asahel's death occurred in broad daylight where everybody could witness what happened, but Abner was deceived and led into the shadows. Abishai had accompanied David into Saul's camp and had seen him refuse to kill his father-in-law (1 Sam. 26;6ff), so he knew that David would never countenance the murder of Saul's general. We wonder if Abner died thinking that David had been involved in the plot to kill him.

3. (:28-29) David Proclaims His Innocence and Curses Joab's Family

a. (:28) David Proclaims His Innocence

"And afterward when David heard it, he said, 'I and my kingdom are innocent before the Lord forever of the blood of Abner the son of Ner.'"

Could be major problems here

b. (:29) David Curses Joab's Family – 5 Family Blights

"May it fall on the head of Joab and on all his father's house; and may there not fail from the house of Joab:

1. Physically Cursed and Ceremonially Unclean

"one who has a discharge"

2. Physically Cursed and Socially Ostracized

"or who is a leper"

3. Emasculated

" or who takes hold of a distaff"

Ryrie: one fit for women's work; effeminate

4. Defeated and Killed in Battle

"or who falls by the sword"

5. Impoverished

"or who lacks bread."

V. (:31-39) DAVID WISELY HONORS ABNER AND DISTANCES HIMSELF FROM THE FOLLY OF JOAB

A. (:31-32) David Commands Joab and All the People to Properly Mourn the Untimely Assassination of Abner

1. (:31a) Instructions to Joab and His Troops to Honor Abner

"Then David said to Joab and to all the people who were with him, 'Tear your clothes and gird on sackcloth and lament before Abner.'"

Must have been difficult for Joab to swallow

2. (:31b) David Leads By Example in Honoring Abner

"And King David walked behind the bier."

3. (:32) David's Kingdom Unified in Mourning for Abner

"Thus they buried Abner in Hebron; and the king lifted up his voice and wept at the grave of Abner, and all the people wept."

B. (:33-34) David Offers Lament of Regret for the Undeserving Circumstances of Abner's Death – not a death befitting a valiant warrior

"And the king chanted a lament for Abner and said, 'Should Abner die as a fool dies? Your hands were not bound, nor your feet put in fetters; As one falls before the wicked, you have fallen.' And all the people wept again over him."

C. (:35-37) David Extends His Fasting to Confirm His Claim of Innocence

1. (:35) Fasting Continues Even After the Burial of Abner

"Then all the people came to persuade David to eat bread while it was still day; but David vowed, saying, 'May God do so to me, and more also; if I taste bread or anything else before the sun goes down.'"

2. (:36) Wise and Appropriate Behavior

"Now all the people took note of it, and it pleased them, just as everything the king did pleased all the people."

Great statement summarizing the results of wise politicking

3. (:37) Persuasive Regarding David's Innocence

"So all the people and all Israel understood that day that it had not been the will of the king to put Abner the son of Ner to death."

D. (:38-39) Final Lament of David

1. (:38) Praise for Abner

"Then the king said to his servants, 'Do you not know that a prince and a great man has fallen this day in Israel?'"

2. (:39) Vengeance is the Lord's

"And I am weak today, though anointed king; and these men the sons of Zeruiah are too difficult for me. May the Lord repay the evildoer according to his evil."

Shouldn't David have executed Joab here? Why leave this for Solomon later?

Moore: In all that we read about him, Abner acted with honor. He deserved better. Joab, on the other hand, was a vengeful and murderous man. We would wonder why David put up with Joab's evil but for two facts. First, we learn in 1 Chronicles 2:13-17 that Joab was David's nephew. Second, David doubtless felt that he owed Joab loyalty because they had weathered the fugitive years together. Sometimes justice is more important than loyalty or lineage. In my opinion, David should have opted for justice.

Gordon: Until Joab and Abishai were reined in, it would be difficult for David to cast

off the old life-style which had suited an outlaw, but which ill befitted a king. That was his dilemma: *these men . . . are too hard (i.e. ruthless) for me.*

* * * * *

DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

- 1) Where have we learned to lay down our personal rights and turn the other cheek when attacked personally in order to pursue longer range kingdom objectives?
- 2) What colored Joab's discernment and prevented him from acting with the discernment and wisdom that characterized David in this account?
- 3) Why was Abner in a stronger position than Ishbosheth in Israel?
- 4) Why was David so effusive in his praise and eulogy upon the death of Abner?

* * * * *

QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Davis: A dog in the ancient Near East was something thoroughly contemptible. They were chiefly found prowling around the towns in a half-wild condition, living off offal and garbage. . . . Ish-bosheth was clearly not in a position to challenge the power of Abner. This is made clear in verse 11 and indicates that Ish-bosheth was extremely weak. He had no real power apart from Abner and his men. Abner concluded that the future of the northern kingdom was rather dark under the leadership of such an incompetent monarch and decided to change his allegiance from Ish-bosheth to David.

Gordon: Sudden as the conversion of Abner to David's cause may seem, he must have realized for some time that David's progress was irresistible. In that case, the squabble with Ish-bosheth over Saul's concubine was merely the pretext for breaking with this feckless monarch. In particular, Abner was aware of certain pro-Davidic sympathies that were gaining ground among the tribal heads of Israel. But his own part in the rapprochement between Israel and Judah ended abruptly in the gate of Hebron, and it was left to the tribes themselves to negotiate with David.

Thomas A. Gormley: A Little Joab in Each of Us – Joab's Treachery / Disobedience David acting wisely – but both Abner and Joab causing him problems. Abner still seeking to serve himself; seeking political ambition; if there is something in it for me I will be glad to deliver the 11 tribes to you. Joab did not trust Abner with good reason. Sometimes the enemies we face come from without; sometimes our troubles come from those close by. David wanted his first wife; his lawful wife before God. David promised Abner peace and safe conduct; Joab understood this condition of peace;

3 things that Joab did in Disobedience to God:

I. Disregarded David's Authority

David's nephew; his mother was David's sister; probably close to the same age and grew up together; familiarity breeds contempt; valuable as a military advisor, but in matters of state did not show insight; openly questioning David's wisdom and accusing him; What authority are you under? Not for you to question their commands; we have responsibility to obey

II. Murdered Abner in Cold Blood

Premeditated; carefully enacted; Abner came back expecting peace; gate of the city = place of justice and judgment where elders sat to minister justice; Joab used it as a place for injustice; Joshua 21:13 -- tribe of Levi was not given a land; but 48 cities spread throughout the land; 6 were special = *cities of refuge* – Numbers 35 – men who had committed murder could flee for refuge from the relatives he had killed; Deut. 4:41 – contrast to death of Asahel;

III. Lied About His Motivation in the Whole Affair

I am killing Abner for the honor of the Lord; disobey the Lord under the pretext of serving the Lord; 1 Kings 2:1ff – David's instructions to Solomon before he died; repeating the promise that God gave him; note vs. 5 regarding Joab – don't let this old man go to his grave in peace; carry out judgment against him for his crimes; vs. 32 – slew 2 men more righteous than he; Abner was a political, self-serving conniver – but did these things openly; Joab was a very faithful general but treacherous; did not kill Abner because he thought he was a spy, but out of revenge – in the city of refuge, in the gate of the city, in direct disobedience to the revealed will of the king; why hadn't David put Joab to death? Why did he leave this act for Solomon? Joab created more problems later on; enemies from within are most difficult; what am I doing to controvert the Lord's purposes? Rebelling against God's authority in the world

David Silversides: The Progress of the Kingdom

David was the anointed of God (the Christ of God). Submission to David was submission to the Lord. Not everybody who submitted outwardly was a true believer.

I. (:1) Submission to and Fulfillment of the Word

Shift in power to David due to:

- 1) David's military victories = effects of David's kingship
- 2) changing conditions in the hearts of the people – Word of the Lord should have been sufficient to have people rally immediately to David; but for some it was a gradual growth of conviction

Christ is the King; but the church submits imperfectly; it is a process; we must submit in everything

II. (:2-5) An Unhealthy Legacy

David had faults; a polygamist – common practice of kings, but still wrong; always led to trouble

III. (:6-11) An Incident in Providence

To take the concubine of a king = a claim to the throne; not just a question of the morality of it; suggesting that there is rebellion and a desire for the throne; aspirations for the kingship; God's Providence has a multitude of twists and turns;

IV. (:12-16) A Painful Necessity

"cut thy covenant" – a bond of promise before the Lord; he was entitled to insist on having his first wife returned; David had not divorced her; such complexities are painful; not just because he was still fond of Michal; wanted a re-establishment of the old link with the followers of Saul; thus uniting the kingdom; be established as Saul's son-in-law rather than an enemy of his house; a godly shrewdness;

V. (:17-21) Abner Fulfills His Ordained Role

Abner takes on role of diplomat;

VI. (:22-27) An Abuse of Ecclesiastical Affairs

Asahel was a foolish young man seeking glory by winning Abner's armor; his death was his own fault; driven by pride and ambition; Joab puts the worst interpretation on Abner's negotiations; both brothers involved in the murder of Abner; Joab settling a private score (even though he claimed it was in the interest of the kingdom and of King David); we would be wrong to act independently of Christ

VII. (:28-39) The King is not to be Judged by his Professed Subjects

- A. David's Curse upon house of Joab; he had such power with the army that David could not execute him? 1 Kings 2:5-6 he shed the blood of war in peace; it was murder;
- B. David commands public mourning (would have been hard for Joab to take); David was not involved, did not approve, did not rejoice in the death of Abner;
- C. David's Lament – Abner slain not on account of his own folly but because of Joab's wickedness
- D. David's Fasting
- E. David Assesses parties involved

TEXT: 2 Samuel 4:1-12

TITLE: TREACHERY SHOULD NEVER BE REWARDED –
RIGHTEOUS GOALS CAN ONLY BE ATTAINED THROUGH RIGHTEOUS MEANS

BIG IDEA:
**THE COLD-BLOODED MURDER OF ISHBOSHETH WINS NO FAVOR
FROM THE RIGHTEOUS KING DAVID**

**(:1) INTRODUCTION: DEATH OF ABNER CHANGED THE POLITICAL
LANDSCAPE**

“Now when Ishbosheth, Saul’s son, heard that Abner had died in Hebron, he lost courage, and all Israel was disturbed.”

This was an unsettled time in Israel. Different factions were vying for political prominence. Ishbosheth had been propped up by the strong military leadership and political savvy of Abner. With Abner out of the picture he knew his time was up.

King David certainly recognized the vulnerability of Israel. He knew God’s overall scheme to have him reign over a united nation. Yet he was committed to trusting in God and following His timetable and submitting to His will. He was not selfishly ambitious in the sense of taking matters into his own hands and thinking that God was dependent on David making something happen.

Contrast the reaction of Ishbosheth in times of trouble to that of David who would always strengthen himself in his Lord.

Verse 9 is key: *“As the Lord lives, who has redeemed my life from all distress.”* David detested the treachery of political manipulators. He did not need their assistance. His hope was in the Lord and his commitment was to righteousness. He was truly a *man after God’s own heart.*

I. (:2-4) MAJOR PLAYERS REMAINING FOR ISRAEL

A. (:2-3) Prominent Military Commanders – Two Sons of Rimmon the Beerothite – Example of Striving After Blessing by Selfish Ambition and Treachery
“And Saul’s son had two men who were commanders of bands: the name of the one was Baanah and the name of the other Rechab, sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, of the sons of Benjamin (for Beeroth is also considered part of Benjamin, and the Beerothites fled to Gittaim, and have been aliens there until this day).”

Gordon: In continuation of his father’s policy (1 Sa. 22:7), Ishbosheth (or Abner?) appears to have favoured Benjaminites for command positions in his army.

- B. (:4) Crippled Mephibosheth – Example of Receiving Blessing by Grace
“Now Jonathan, Saul’s son, had a son crippled in his feet. He was five years old when the report of Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel, and his nurse took him up and fled. And it happened that in her hurry to flee, he fell and become lame. And his name was Mephibosheth.”

Obviously the house of Saul is left helpless and crippled when it comes to having any power or resources to prop itself up.

McGee: The story about Mephibosheth and David is one of the most beautiful stories ever told. This boy was Jonathan’s son. As long as he lived, he was a constant danger to David because he had throne rights. Since he was Jonathan’s son, however, David would never harm a hair of his head. Later on David will go looking for family members of Saul and Jonathan not to slay them but to show them kindness.

II. (:5-8) COSTLY MISCALCULATION – THE SONS OF RIMMON EXPECTED THE TROPHY OF THE HEAD OF ISHBOSHETH TO EARN THEM FAVOR FROM KING DAVID

- A. (:5) Surprise Attack
“So the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, Rechab and Baanah, departed and came to the house of Ishbosheth in the heat of the day while he was taking his midday rest.”
- B. (:6-7) Treacherous Plot
- (:6) Overview
“And they came to the middle of the house as if to get wheat, and they struck him in the belly; and Rechab and Baanah his brother escaped.”
 - (:7) More Detailed Account
“Now when they came into the house, as he was lying on his bed in his bedroom, they struck him and killed him and beheaded him. And they took his head and traveled by way of the Arabah all night.”
- C. (:8) Trophy Presentation
“Then they brought the head of Ishbosheth to David at Hebron, and said to the king, ‘Behold, the head of Ishbosheth, the son of Saul, your enemy, who sought your life; thus the Lord has given my lord the king vengeance this day on Saul and his descendants.’”

They must have been shocked out of their mind at the reaction of righteous indignation on the part of David. They respected the customary cultural reward due to those who were bringing glad tidings from afar.

III. (:9-12) SWIFT RETRIBUTION – RIGHTEOUS KING DAVID DESPISED

TREACHERY AS A METHOD FOR FURTHERING GOD'S KINGDOM

A. (:9-11) Response of David

1. (:9a) Introducing the Response

“And David answered Rechab and Baanah his brother, sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, and said to them”

2. (:9b) Invoking His Reliance on God = Key verse for this chapter

“As the Lord lives, who has redeemed my life from all distress”

Cf. 1 Sam. 26:24

3. (:10) Illustrating His Abhorrence of Treachery by Citing Historical Example

“when one told me, saying, ‘Behold, Saul is dead.’ And thought he was bringing good news, I seized him and killed him in Ziklag, which was the reward I gave him for his news.”

Those who ignore the lessons of history are destined to repeat them.
(like retaking a class you failed in school)

4. (:11) Indicting the Perpetrators of This Very Wicked Act

a. Very Wicked because of the Contrast in Character between the Perpetrators and the Victim

“How much more, when wicked men have killed a righteous man”

Ryrie: Ishbosheth was called *righteous* in that he was not guilty of any wicked deed or crime. He had merely assumed the throne upon Saul's death, at the encouragement of Abner.

b. Very Wicked because of the Treachery of the Setting

“in his own house on his bed”

c. Fundamental Principle of Justice – Implications for Capital Punishment

“shall I not now require his blood from your hand, and destroy you from the earth?”

B. (:12) Execution, Humiliation, and Respect

1. Execution of Sons of Rimmon

“Then David commanded the young men, and they killed them”

2. Humiliation of Sons of Rimmon

“and cut off their hands and feet, and hung them up beside the pool in Hebron.”

Appropriate retribution for their dismembering of the body of

Ishbosheth.

3. Respect Shown in Burying Head of Ishbosheth

“But they took the head of Ishbosheth and buried it in the grave of Abner in Hebron.”

Buried with full military honors

* * * * *

DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

1) How does this incident relate to the common rationalization that “the end justifies the means?” Why wouldn’t David embrace an outcome that would help strengthen his reign over Israel?

2) What type of *distress* has the Lord redeemed you from? How does that give you confidence to trust in His timing and His ways in the future rather than taking matters into your own hands or resorting to worldly means?

3) Why is *Mephibosheth* mentioned in this context? What do we learn about him from other passages?

4) What does this incident contribute to the discussion on the merits of capital punishment?

* * * * *

QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Davis: But these men [sons of Rimmon], like the Amalekite, had miscalculated the character of David. He considered the throne a sacred office not to be secured by murder and bloodshed. David was thoroughly convinced that God had promised him the throne of Israel and that in due time that throne would be his. . .

One cannot help but be impressed with the ethical and political sophistication that David brought to Israel’s politics. This was in contrast to the approach adopted by King Saul. David did not follow the philosophy that the end justifies any means. He was convinced of the providential and sovereign control of his God. He believed that in the proper time the way would be open for the unification of the land and the establishment of one throne.

Wiersbe: David’s answer made it clear that at no time in his career had he ever broken God’s commandment by murdering somebody in order to accomplish his purposes. The Lord had watched over him and protected him during ten years of exile and now more than seven years as king in Hebron. As when Saul and Abner died, David made it very clear that he was not involved in any way. It would have been very easy for

David's enemies to start slanderous rumors that the king had engineered both deaths in order to clear the way for ascending the throne of Israel.

Thomas A. Gormley: David's oath before Rechab and Baanah reveals his anchor in the promise of the Messiah despite the chaos going on around him in the world. Lots of people had been killed up to this point in the narrative; Sin, rebellion, disobedience, deceit, civil war, death – not a pleasant sight. Today we see the condition of David's heart (4:9). David's oath shows he had truly taken stock of his situation. He saw death, disorder, murder as he sat on throne in Hebron. David's eyes were on his God. God is still in control.

1. *The Lord lives*; does more than that – He works in this world. Contrast position of deists who said that God started the world and then stepped back and was no longer involved. Dan. 7:14 – Daniel understood the eternal reign of the Lord Jesus Christ in this world. Ps. 103:19;

2. The name *Jehovah* –

3. The one who had *redeemed David's soul* – Gen. 2:7; we cannot answer all questions about the origin of the human soul; but we know it is eternal; concept of redemption – buying a slave out of the marketplace; examine some of the biblical characteristics of redemption

- it is a work of God – Ex. 3:7 (the book of redemption, of exodus)

David did not put faith in what he could see around him but in his Lord and in the promise of God

4. *Adversity* of this world is a result of man's sin

David Silversides: Treating Advantageous Sin as Sin

Actions of others may seem beneficial to us ... but if they are sinful, treat them as sinful.

1. (:1-3) A lost cause with evil supporters

Two captains jumped ship immediately; unprincipled men whose only concern is to be on the side which comes out on top; governed by self-interest; no fixed convictions; their support of David really meant nothing

2. (:4) Ishbosheth = the last obstacle to be removed

This verse doesn't appear to be connected to the thread, but it is; no other contender to the throne; covenanted kindness shown by David later; Israel should have been preoccupied with divine appointment rather than natural succession

3. (:5-8) A wrong assumption and a false doctrine

Collecting wheat for their men; Like the Amalekite in chap. 1, they did not understand the godly thinking of David; figured David would be overjoyed and reward them; selfish, unprincipled opportunists; assumed that David would think the same way; cannot understand godly thinking; Ps. 50:21 – they think that even God is such a one as they are; **Is. 55:7** – my thoughts are not your thoughts; my ways are not your ways; the end does not justify the means; sin is contained within the providential plan of God – but that does not remove the sinfulness of their action; we can never use the fact of God's providence to justify sinful actions; looks as though it has worked out all right ... Took an unlawful initiative as if they did not believe in the providence of God to accomplish His plan;

4. (:9-12) The King Judges in Righteousness

Attributes his deliverances to the Lord; did not need so-called friends like these kind of men; calls him righteous in a judgment of charity; defenseless and asleep; **unpunished murder brings guilt upon a nation** – we are a bloodguilty nation; nation must avenge the shedding of blood;

5. The many-sided expressions of sin

Ruthless Joab; mighty Abner; inept Ishbosheth; etc.

Contrasted with David himself – stands out for his godliness; things may seem terribly confused to us because of abundant sinfulness; but no confusion in the mind of God

TEXT: 2 Samuel 5:1-25

TITLE: ENTHRONED ON HIGH – HOW DO PEOPLE RESPOND TO GOD’S KING?

BIG IDEA:

THE BLESSING OF GOD REACHES MAJESTIC HEIGHTS AS DAVID REIGNS OVER ALL OF ISRAEL AS A TYPE OF THE MESSIAH TO COME

INTRODUCTION:

This should be a tremendously exciting chapter. We see the blessing of God operating in super abundant fashion. We see God’s program reaching a tremendous climax as David reigns victorious over all of his enemies from his throne in Jerusalem. We still see chinks in David’s walk with God (as he unwisely continues the monarch’s political tradition of multiplying wives); but overall his life is characterized as enjoying the fruits of blessing by virtue of *the Lord God of hosts being with him* and directing his steps. Life doesn’t get much better than what we see in this chapter. This is all about victorious living in the center of God’s will for the sake of God’s glory.

Look back at the promises of God and all of the difficulties and obstacles that had to be overcome to reach this pinnacle of success. It had not been an easy road for the nation of Israel to rise to such a place of prominence on the world scene.

Look forward to the Millennial Kingdom when the kingdom of David will soar to new heights under the reign of the Messiah from the same throne in Jerusalem.

I. (:1-5) THE BLESSING OF GOD CROWNS DAVID KING OVER ALL OF ISRAEL AS A TYPE OF THE MESSIAH TO COME

(not accomplished by selfish ambition on David’s part)

A. (:1-2) Three Reasons the King Deserves Our Total Allegiance (spending a lot of time in this section)

Applications:

- cf. Significance of historical context with David
- cf. our allegiance to Christ as the Lord of our life
- cf. our allegiance to the elders in our local church

1. (:1) He’s One of Us -- Family Solidarity Reasserts Itself

“Then all the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and said, ‘Behold, we are your bone and your flesh.’”

- Significance of historical context with David
Coming out of context of civil war

- Application to Christ as our Lord

Truth of the Incarnation – Word became flesh

High priest that can sympathize with our weakness

Mediator that is perfect man and truly God – can represent us
Intercede for us

Do we really believe this?

- Application to local church elders

Not some hired gun that will run away when the flock is in
Danger

Choose from among yourselves ...

2. (:2a) He's Our Proven Leader -- Past Faithfulness in Leadership and Service
Remembered

*"Previously, when Saul was king over us, you were the one who led
Israel out and in."*

- Significance of historical context with David

- Application to Christ as our Lord

- Application to local church elders

From the time that David had killed Goliath – led them even when Saul was on the throne; God used David mightily; *"Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands"* **1 Sam. 18:7** -- people looked to David for defense and victory over the Philistines; 1 Sam. 18:14 *"David was prospering in all his ways for the Lord was with him"* --people came to him for justice even when in exile -- **1 Sam. 22:1-2**; being an elder does not come from having an official title slapped on you ... but from faithfully doing the work of the ministry

Who is your leader? Whom do you respect and follow?

3. (:2b) He's God's Choice -- Former Promises Remembered

"And the Lord said to you, 'You will shepherd My people Israel, and you will be a ruler over Israel.'"

- Significance of historical context with David

- Application to Christ as our Lord

- Application to local church elders

They saw that David was God's choice to lead them as a people – this was by divine direction

Jonathan understood that David would be king – gave him a robe to wear **1 Sam. 18:4** = his own robe as heir to the throne; sign of deference; **1 Sam. 23:17**; *Saul* knew it as well; *Abigail* (Nabal's wife) **1 Sam. 25:30** – she understood the promises

Blaikie: Why, if this was the command of God, had they been so long of carrying it out? Ought not effect to have been given to it at the very first, independent of all other reasons whatsoever? The elders cannot but give it a place among their reasons for offering him the throne; but it is added to the others as if they needed to be supplemented before effect could be given to it. The elders did not show that supreme regard to the will of God which ought ever to be the first consideration in every loyal

heart.

B. (:3) Covenant Commitment and Majestic Coronation

1. Covenant Commitment

“So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, and King David made a covenant with them before the Lord at Hebron”

Look at parallel passage in **1 Chron. 12:23-40** – large assembly – not just a few representatives – 350,000 total from all of these tribes; Samuel just referring to the leading elders; but the armies come as well; this account fills in some of the details; huge celebration

Emphasis on unity; oneness of mind and heart; no wavering in their commitment

2. Majestic Coronation

“then they anointed David king over Israel”

This was David’s third anointing. Recognizing what God had established.

C. (:4-5) Forty Year Reign

“David was thirty years old when he became king, and he reigned forty years. At Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months, and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty-three years over all Israel and Judah.”

Long reign over united kingdom – in contrast to later divided monarchy

II. (:6-12) THE BLESSING OF GOD ESTABLISHES DAVID AS KING IN JERUSALEM (NEW CAPITAL)

Why did David need a new capital?

The Jebusites are first named in Genesis 10:15-16, where we are told that they are truly Canaanites, the descendants of Canaan, the third son of Ham (Genesis 10:6). It was this Canaan who saw the nakedness of Noah (Genesis 9:22), and who brought a curse upon himself and his descendants (Genesis 9:25).

Joshua 15:63 – Jebusites had maintained control; could not be driven out; now David is going to conquer this city; it will become the **city of David**; **1 Chron. 11: 4-9** Judah was successful in defeating the Jebusites on one occasion, but was not able to occupy or control the site permanently (Judg. 1:8-9). The Benjaminites were also unsuccessful in an attempt to take the city on a permanent basis (cf. Judg. 1:21 with 19:11-12).

Look at background from **Gen. 14:18**; **Ps 76:2** identifies Salem as another name for Jerusalem – Melchizedek as a type of Christ

In the next chapter, Jerusalem will become the dwelling place of God, as the ark of the covenant is brought to the city, where Solomon will later build the temple.

A. (:6-10) The Blessing of God Accomplishes the Impossible –

David Captures Jerusalem – the stronghold of Zion -- the City of David

1. (:6) Feeling of Invincibility on the part of Jebusites in Jerusalem
“Now the king and his men went to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, and they said to David, ‘You shall not come in here, but the blind and lame shall turn you away’; thinking, ‘David cannot enter here.’”

Gordon: David’s personal army involved

2. (:7) Impressive Capture of Jerusalem
“Nevertheless, David captured the stronghold of Zion, that is the city of David.”

Ryrie: David established his capital in neutral territory between Israel and Judah. Jerusalem was an excellent fortress city, for it was naturally defensible on the S., E., and W. (due to valleys) and had a good water supply, the Gihon spring.

3. (:8) Sarcastic Response to Taunting of Jebusites
“And David said on that day, ‘Whoever would strike the Jebusites, let him reach the lame and the blind, who are hated by David’s soul, through the water tunnel.’ Therefore they say, ‘The blind or the lame shall not come into the house.’”

4. (:9) Taking Control of the Territory (Fortifying it)
“So David lived in the stronghold, and called it the city of David. And David built all around from the Millow and inward.”

Bergen: David did much to build up Israel’s new capital city. He added fortifications, increased the hill-top city’s usable building area by constructing sturdy terraces around the edge of the settlement, and built a palace with assistance from Hiram, king of Tyre.

5. (:10) Key = The Blessing of God
“And David became greater and greater, for the Lord God of hosts was with him.”

(Use of Commentaries) Blaikie: The personal affection for David and his heroes which would thus be formed must have been very warm, nay, even enthusiastic. In the case of David, whatever may have been true of the others, all the influence thus acquired was employed for the welfare of the nation and the glory of God. The supreme desire of his heart was that the people might give all the glory to Jehovah, and derive from these brilliant successes fresh assurances how faithful God was to His promises to Israel. Alike as a man of piety and a man of patriotism, he made this his aim. Knowing as he did what was due to God, and animated by a profound desire to render to God His due, he would have been horrified had he intercepted in his own person aught of the honour and glory which were His. But for the people’s sake also, as a man of patriotism, his desire was equally strong that God should have all the glory. What were military successes however brilliant to the nation, or a reputation however eminent, compared to

their enjoying the favour and friendship of God? Success – how ephemeral it was; reputation – as transient as the glow of a cloud beside the setting sun; but God’s favour and gracious presence with the nation was a perpetual treasure, enlivening, healing, strengthening, guiding for evermore. “Happy is that people that is in such a case; yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord.”

B. (:11-12) The Blessing of God Brings Worldwide Honor – King of Tyre Builds Majestic House for David

1. (:11) Foreign Support

“Then Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David with cedar trees and carpenters and stonemasons; and they built a house for David.”

That was a political and economic move for Hiram. He could profit from trade with Israel and was especially in need of Israel’s grain (cf. I Kings 5:11; Acts 12:20).

2. (:12) Maintaining Perspective – God Providentially Establishing His Kingdom

“And David realized that the Lord had established him as king over Israel, and that He had exalted his kingdom for the sake of His people Israel.”

Contrast the demeanor of King Nebuchadnezzar in **Daniel 4:28-37**

Psalm 87 – Insights from the Psalms – significance of the City of David

III. (:13-16) THE BLESSING OF GOD DOES NOT MEAN SINLESS PERFECTION (OR IS THIS A SIGN OF PROSPERITY??)

A. (:13) Besetting Family Sins

1. Multiplication of Concubines and Wives

“Meanwhile David took more concubines and wives from Jerusalem, after he came from Hebron”

2. Multiplication of Offspring

“and more sons and daughters were born to David.”

B. (:14-16) Listing of David’s Children Born to Him in Jerusalem

IV. (:17-25) THE BLESSING OF GOD GRANTS DAVID VICTORY OVER HIS INVADING ENEMIES

Reign of David was confirmed by God’s blessing and prosperity ... but it was immediately challenged as well by God’s enemies

When we submit to Christ as Lord of our life – there will be blessing; there will be attacks

2 Very Different Military Strategies – 1 Very Consistent Result –

A. (:17-21) First Battle Against the Invading Philistines – Frontal Assault

4 Strategies for Being Victorious in the Lord when attacked by enemies:

1. (:17-18) Strengthening Himself in the Lord When Attacked --

Philistines Quick to Test the New King

“When the Philistines heard that they had anointed David king over Israel, all the Philistines went up to seek out David; and when David heard of it, he went down to the stronghold. Now the Philistines came and spread themselves out in the valley of Rephaim.”

2. (:19) Seeking the Lord’s Direction and Blessing = the Key

“Then David inquired of the Lord, saying, ‘Shall I go up against the Philistines? Wilt Thou give them into my hand?’ And the Lord said to David, ‘Go up, for I will certainly give the Philistines into your hand.’”

3. (:20) Stepping Out in Faith and Giving the Lord the Credit

“So David came to Baalperazim, and defeated them there; and he said, ‘The Lord has broken through my enemies before me like the breakthrough of waters.’ Therefore he named that place Baalperazim.”

Ryrie: Lit., *the Lord of breaking forth*. The image is of flooding waters breaking through a dam, as David’s troops broke through the Philistine assault.

4. (:21) Securing All the Loot from a Total Victory

“And they abandoned their idols there, so David and his men carried them away.”

1 Chron. 14:12 – David ordered these idols burned

B. (:22-25) Second Battle Against the Invading Philistines – Rear Assault (Outflanking the enemy)

Simpson: The spiritual lesson here is very important. God sometimes suffers us to be tempted over again on exactly the same lines, even where we have had complete victory before. It may be the devil wants to surprise us through our very security, as we are less likely to expect him to repeat his attack. It may be that God wants to teach us, as in the present instance, some new lesson. It often is because we have not quite triumphed on this line before, and God is good enough to give us a second opportunity. Let us never be too sure of the subjugation of our Philistine foes, but let us ever watch and be ready.

A New Way – We see the same temptation met in an entirely different way. This was the great lesson that God was seeking to teach David and us also. Our danger is, when a similar experience comes, to go on by the force of habit on the same lines, and thus really be trusting unconsciously in our own experience and wisdom. David was graciously delivered from this. It would have been perfectly natural for him to say, “I have defeated these Philistines here before, and I have only to do as I did then and I

shall defeat them again.” But David, with great wisdom and simplicity, went straight to God, as though he had had no experience and possessed no wisdom of his own, and he was rewarded by receiving an entirely different direction.

1. (:22) Persistence of the Enemy
“Now the Philistines came up once again and spread themselves out in the valley of Rephaim.”

2. (:23-24) Providence of God Works in a Variety of Ways
 - a. Identical Seeking of the Lord’s Direction and Blessing
“And when David inquired of the Lord”

 - b. Opposite Strategy Commanded
“He said, ‘You shall not go directly up; circle around behind them and come at them in front of the balsam trees.’”

 - c. Identical Result of Total Victory from the Hand of the Lord
“And it shall be, when you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees, then you shall act promptly, for then the Lord will have gone out before you to strike the army of the Philistines.’ Then David did so, just as the Lord had commanded him, and struck down the Philistines from Geba as far as Gezer.”

Those who received David as God's king were blessed; those who rejected David as God's king were crushed.

DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

- 1) How important are family ties?
- 2) Do we remember the former promises of God and still look for their fulfillment?
- 3) Do we consistently seek God’s direction and blessing in all of our endeavors?
- 4) Why shouldn’t we be surprised when the same enemy keeps attacking us and we have to fight the same battle over and over?

QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Davis: The elders cited three reasons why the land should be unified. First, they recognized that David had been divinely appointed as king over Israel (v. 2). Second,

they reminded David of their common heritage (v. 1; cf. Gen. 29:14; Judg. 9:2; II Sam. 19:12). Finally, they recognized the fact that David had played an important role in Israel's military history (v. 2).

Millo. From the Hebrew "to fill"; hence a "mound" or "terrace." It served as part of Jerusalem's northern defenses (I Kings 9:24).

Davis: After seven-and-one-half years of division and failure, it became apparent that the nation of Israel could not afford the luxury of such division any more. David, who had long been recognized as a champion of Israelite causes, had already proven himself a worthy king in Judah. The inability of Ishbosheth to strengthen the northern tribes, the continued success of the Philistines in warfare and the humiliating defeat suffered by Abner's men at Gibeon made it clear that the only practical solution to their problems was to recognize David as king over all the land.

Once David was recognized as king over all the tribes, it was inappropriate that his throne should remain in Hebron which was centrally located in the tribe of Judah, but certainly not easily accessible to the northern tribes. David had to look for a suitable location which would not give political advantage to either the north or the south. The two factions would be very sensitive to the location of the new capital with regard to this point. David selected the city of Jerusalem which was near the border of Judah and Benjamin. His selection was a wise one because Jerusalem had not been an Israelite city up to this time. It had been able to maintain its independent status under the rule of the Jebusites (cf. Josh. 15:63). Judah was successful in defeating the Jebusites on one occasion, but was not able to occupy or control the site permanently (Judg. 1:8-9). The Benjaminites were also unsuccessful in an attempt to take the city on a permanent basis (cf. Judg. 1:21 with 19:11-12). In the fourteenth century B.C. the city of Jerusalem was closely aligned with Egypt and apparently depended on Egypt for help in its defense. Now that Egypt was weak, the defense of the city rested on the Jebusites alone.

Gordon: Once the northern tribes had sworn allegiance to David, Hebron ceased to be a useful base of operation, if only because the new king must not seem to be favouring his own tribe. The ancient city of Jerusalem, sometimes known as Jebus (cf. Jdg. 19:10, etc.) represented both an opportunity and a challenge in this regard. It was situated in Benjaminite territory, but close to the border with Judah – and it was still in Jebusite hands! Its capture and designation as David's capital city is one of the more inspired moves for which he is justly remembered. The defeat and expulsion of the Philistines, following two separate engagements on Israelite soil (vv. 17-25), was also a notable achievement, and the one which most of all proved his fitness to sit upon the throne of Israel (cf. 3:18).

Gordon: Associated with the Israelite capture of Jerusalem is a saying whose significance is perhaps no longer recoverable; it is omitted in the parallel account in 1 Chronicles 11:5. Not that attempts at elucidation have been lacking. One view is that

the Jebusites place such confidence in the impregnability of their fortress that they considered even the physically handicapped to be a sufficient garrison. . . [*That is the view I have taken in my outline here.*] Another explanation of *the blind and lame* is that the Jebusites were announcing their intention of fighting to the last man; even the disabled would offer resistance (so Ackroyd). There has also been an attempt to relate the reference to a sanctions clause in a treaty which David is supposed to have made with the Jebusites some time before he decided to take control of the fortress. This suggestion takes its rise from a Hittite loyalty-oath ceremony in which a blind and deaf woman was paraded before the assembled army as a warning of what would befall those who failed to keep the oath.

Laney: International recognition of David's rule over Israel came quickly. Soon Hiram, King of Tyre, sent messengers to begin negotiations with David. He also sent skilled Phoenician workmen to build David a fine house (5:11). That was a political and economic move for Hiram. He could profit from trade with Israel and was especially in need of Israel's grain (cf. I Kings 5:11; Acts 12:20).

Simpson: We see an example of repeated temptation on the very same lines. It was not very long before the Philistines came up again into the same valley. This time, no doubt, they came with greatly augmented forces, and determined that they should avenge themselves upon their enemy and recover their lost prestige.

The spiritual lesson here is very important. God sometimes suffers us to be tempted over again on exactly the same lines, even where we have had complete victory before. It may be the devil wants to surprise us through our very security, as we are less likely to expect him to repeat his attack. It may be that God wants to teach us, as in the present instance, some new lesson. It often is because we have not quite triumphed on this line before, and God is good enough to give us a second opportunity. Let us never be too sure of the subjugation of our Philistine foes, but let us ever watch and be ready.

A New Way – We see the same temptation met in an entirely different way. This was the great lesson that God was seeking to teach David and us also. Our danger is, when a similar experience comes, to go on by the force of habit on the same lines, and thus really be trusting unconsciously in our own experience and wisdom. David was graciously delivered from this. It would have been perfectly natural for him to say, "I have defeated these Philistines here before, and I have only to do as I did then and I shall defeat them again." But David, with great wisdom and simplicity, went straight to God, as though he had had no experience and possessed no wisdom of his own, and he was rewarded by receiving an entirely different direction.

Redpath: Immediately following David's coronation day [draws parallel to making Christ undisputed king on the throne of your life], some important events took place in his life. These events recorded in II Samuel 5 show in Old Testament picture form the events which take place in the life of a child of God when the Lord Jesus Christ has a coronation day in his heart. . . When that revolutionary change takes place, surely there ought to be some evidences of it. These evidences I wish to consider with you right now.

What happens when Jesus is King? Look at our text for a moment: what happened when David was king?

In the first place, **the sovereignty of David was immediately confirmed**, and it was confirmed in two ways. If you look at II Samuel 5:7, you will see the first: David “*took the strong hold of Zion.*” Probably you know the history of the people of God in the land of Canaan well enough to remember that the city of Jerusalem was always a thorn in their side. In spite of the fact that the whole land had been given to them, they had so far never been able to possess it all. The city from which God’s King was destined to reign, the most strategic city in the whole land was, alas, a city in which the enemy was deeply entrenched. . .

The conquest which had baffled the Israelites through their whole history became amazingly easy when David was king. One of the first evidences of the enthronement of Jesus Christ in our lives will be that deeply entrenched habits of evil will be put under subjection to our risen Lord, who will inhabit that temple of the Holy Spirit, your body and mind. That stronghold of sin which has defied our best efforts, that which has caused us many a heartache and many a tear and many a feeling of remorse and frustration, that which has almost made us give up the fight altogether – how wonderful, when Jesus becomes King it is put under His feet. He comes into our lives to establish His kingdom, and to inaugurate it by giving us the first taste of deliverance and victory over the power of inbred sin.

Have you ever noticed how the Lord Jesus liked to deal with long-standing complaints? How many instances we find in the New Testament of men and women who for years had been bound by infirmity and sin, crippled and helpless and hopeless until the Lord came! . . .

In our lives, the first mark of the sovereignty of Christ is that the habits of years, which have baffled all our efforts and mocked all our struggles, the things which have brought us in shame and confession of failure time and time again to the Lord in contrition and repentance – their power is broken when He is upon the throne.

Furthermore, the sovereignty of David was not only confirmed by this conquest of the stronghold of Zion, but it was also confirmed in that “*David went on, and grew great*” (II Samuel 5:10: margin, “*went on going and growing*”). In other words, the sovereignty of David was expressed in ever-increasing areas of the kingdom. . .

Every step of faith and obedience has immediately brought a new demand that my Lord’s sovereignty be displayed in another area of my life. . .

In the second place, the sovereignty of David was not only confirmed, but it was immediately challenged. Notice that the Philistines gathered themselves together and came up to attack him. . . Satan counterattacks pointedly and he counterattacks persistently. He will never admit defeat; if you have crowned Jesus Christ as Lord, you are in for a life of constant warfare.

Deffinbaugh: A Place of One's Own

We come in 2 Samuel 5 to the point where David becomes king of all Israel and, at the same time, he finally obtains a place of his own. The place has been known as Jebus up to this point in time, and its inhabitants, were called the Jebusites. But from our text onward, Jebus becomes Jerusalem, Zion, the "city of David." In the next chapter, Jerusalem will become the dwelling place of God, as the ark of the covenant is brought to the city, where Solomon will later build the temple.

- 5:1-5 -- Israel submits to David as "God's king."
- 5:6-10 -- David takes Jebus and makes it Jerusalem, the "city of David."
- 5:11-16 -- The building of David's house (his physical house, and his household).
- 5:17-25 -- David defeats the Philistines.

Samuel puts this whole matter into perspective in chapter 12. Israel's demand for a king is a sin against God, for which a storm is sent to destroy their wheat crop (12:12-18). In one sense, this generation of Israelites is just like their forefathers. Opposition from foreign powers is a divine chastisement for Israel's disregard of God's laws. But in another sense, their sin of asking for a king is even greater than that of their forefathers. In the past, God sends Israel a deliverer in response to the nation's repentance and cry for deliverance. In this case, there has been no repentance at all. They do not plead for deliverance; they demand a king. I believe Israel wants a deliverer without repentance, and they want a king so that future deliverances is assured as well. They want a king so that they will not have to trust in or obey God. When Samuel points this out and underscores it with a storm, the people repent.

But when we come to [2 Samuel 5](#), we see a distinct change. The change is not just that from a pathetic king like Saul to a patriot and leader like David; the change is also evident in the people. I have a confession to make at this point. Up until now, I have felt unkindly toward the Israelites. I have been standing on the sidelines of this story with my hands on my hips, impatiently tapping my foot. As I read verses 1-5 of chapter 5, I find myself thinking, "Well, its about time!" I have changed my mind, however. I now look differently upon the Israelites delay. Let me try to explain why this is so.

You will notice that there is no crisis here, no pressing danger, which forces the Israelite leaders to act. Saul is dead, along with his sons, including Ish-bosheth. But there is no Philistine attack, no Ammonite threat. The Philistines attack in response to hearing David is anointed king over all Israel ([2 Samuel 5:17](#)). The Israelite elders come to David while he is in Hebron, submitting themselves to him as God's king. In [1 Samuel 8](#), they are rebelling against God as their King, but not here. Here, the Israelite leaders are acting out of obedience to God, not in rebellion against Him. The king they gain in David is, in some measure, the king they deserve. When they approach David, they acknowledge several vitally important truths, which are the basis for David's kingship and thus their submission to him as their king.

- (1) The Israelite leaders acknowledge their physical ties to David: "We are your bone and flesh . . ."*
- (2) The Israelites recognize David's leadership over them in the past, even while Saul was their king.*
- (3) The elders of Israel submit themselves to the Word of God as they recognize David as God's choice for the next king of Israel.*

It is no surprise that when David is anointed (for the third time) as Israel's king by these elders, it is done in the context of a covenant which is made with David before the Lord ([2](#)

[Samuel 5:3](#)). This is an act of obedience and faith. This is a far cry from the confrontation that we see between Samuel and Israel's elders in 1 Samuel chapter 8. The reign of David is a reign of righteousness, due in part to the repentance and obedience of Israel and its leaders.

The story of the city of Jerusalem is a long one as well. Jerusalem was, until the time that David captured it, known as Jebus. Its inhabitants were known as the Jebusites. The Jebusites are first named in [Genesis 10:15-16](#), where we are told that they are truly Canaanites, the descendants of Canaan, the third son of Ham ([Genesis 10:6](#)). It was this Canaan who saw the nakedness of Noah ([Genesis 9:22](#)), and who brought a curse upon himself and his descendants ([Genesis 9:25](#)). It was on Mt. Moriah that Abraham offered up his son, Isaac (Genesis). This Mt. Moriah is the same mountain on which Solomon built the Temple ([2 Chronicles 3:1](#)).

In the Book of Joshua, Jebus was first described as one of the cities belonging to the sons of Judah, who were not able to drive them out ([Joshua 15:63](#)). In [Joshua 18:28](#), Jebus seems to be a Benjamite city, and the Benjamites are not able to drive out the Jebusites, either ([Judges 1:21](#)). This leads to a kind of coexistence, which results in the Israelites embracing the sins of the Jebusites ([Judges 3:1-7](#)). The result of this was oppression from their neighbors as a divine chastening (3:8ff.). In [Judges 19:10-12](#), the city of Jebus is still portrayed as non-Israelite. There may have been times when Jebus was under Israelite control (cf. [1 Samuel 17:54](#)), but the victory was far from complete. It is not until David's day (and our text-- see also [1 Chronicles 21:15](#)) that Jebus falls to the Israelites once and for all. There is even more to say about this city of Jebus, now to become Jerusalem, but we shall wait until our next lesson on chapter 6 to do this.

Why, then, Did David lead all of Israel up against this city, a city which the Israelites had never been able to thoroughly defeat before?

I believe that that there are several reasons. First and foremost, it was a city that God had promised to give to the Israelites, and a people that He had ordered the Israelites to destroy. Their presence among the Israelites was corrupting God's people ([Judges 3:5-6](#)). Saul was reluctant to deal decisively with attacks from Israel's enemies from without. He was even willing to live with the enemy dwelling within Israel. The Jebusites were left alone, so far as we can tell. Even the garrison of Philistines was not resisted, until Jonathan could bear their presence no longer, virtually forcing both the Philistines and his father to act ([1 Samuel 13:3](#)). David recognized that no kingdom could be viewed with fear (or even respect) if it were not able to expel its enemies from its midst. The Jebusites had to be dealt with, and David knew it. It was time for these enemies of God to be defeated. The defeat of the Jebusites and the taking of Jebus would be the first step in Israel's conquest of their enemies, a conquest that was partial in the times of Joshua and the judges. This victory would overshadow the victory of Saul and the Israelites over the Ammonites ([1 Samuel 11](#)). What a way to start a reign as king!

Second, David needed a new capital city. When David had been king of Judah alone, Hebron served well as his capital city. But now David was the king of all Israel. He needed a capital that was farther north. He needed a capital which would be more centrally located, and one which would unify the nation. Jebus was the perfect city. Israel's victory over the Jebusites would unite the nation. The possession of Jebus as David's new capital would do likewise. The city was virtually on the border of Judah and Benjamin. It was a city that neither the sons of Judah nor the sons of Benjamin had been able to capture. Thus, taking this city as his capital would not seem to favor either of these two tribes. In addition to all of this, its natural setting made it difficult to defeat (which is why the Israelites had not taken and held it before). It was in the hill country, on the top of more than one mountain, and with valleys around it. With a little work, it was a virtual fortress (5:9).

David was a prototype of the One who would come after him, who would seek out those who were infirmed, and minister to them (see [Luke 4:16-21](#); 5:29-32; 7:18-23). And just as David represents the Messiah, the arrogant and boastful Jebusites represent the self-righteous, who scorn Jesus, and will eventually suffer defeat at His hand. David's enemies were defeated, as he became greater and greater. He could not be stopped for God was with him.

In the minds of those in the ancient orient, many wives and many children meant prosperity.

Unlike Saul, David is not just a king who knows nothing other than crisis management, who seems only willing to “put out fires.” Saul only dealt with the problems he could not avoid. David dealt with problems that those before him had avoided, and with some success. The taking of Jebus is one such example of David's initiative and leadership. I believe that David understood God's promise that He would give over the Jebusites and their land. I further believe that David sought to obey God's command, though given to Israel in an earlier day, to defeat the Jebusites and drive them out of the land. I believe that David saw the city of Jebus as an ideal capital, and one that would serve to unite the tribes of Israel under his rule. He could have chosen to “peacefully co-exist” with the Jebusites, as others before him had done, but instead he took the difficult path and prevailed over them. And it was a victory such as this which gave Israel (and her king) status and respect (even fear) among the nations.

If I were to sum up the entire 5th chapter of 2 Samuel, I believe it's unity can be found in one central theme: men's response to God's king. While Saul, Abner, and others may have resisted David's rise to the throne, it was the will of God. After Abner's death, the people of Israel recognized that David should be their king, and it was their leaders who approached David, expressing their desire for him to be their king. In short, the tribes of Israel submitted to David as God's king (5: 1-5). The Jebusites opposed God's king, and so it was that God gave David -- His king -- the victory over the Jebusites (5:6-10). They were overthrown by God's king, because they opposed him. Hiram, king of Tyre, seems to have recognized to one degree or another that David was God's king, and by his offer to help build David a palace, he demonstrated his submission to God's king (5: 11-12). In the taking of more wives and the bearing of more children, David was thriving as God's king (5: 13-16). The Philistines, however, would not submit to David as God's king. They attacked David, seeking to kill him and to remove the threat that he and a united Israel posed (5: 17-25). Not once, but twice, did these Philistines come against David and the army of Israel. And twice God gave David the victory over his enemies. Those who received David as God's king were blessed; those who rejected David as God's king were crushed.

Gil Rugh: David's Reign Extends Over All Israel

3 reasons David should be king over them:

- blood relatives
- you have been our military leader
- awareness of Lord's calling

First use in the Scriptures of that **metaphor of shepherding** = ruler over flock of God's people;

1 Chron. 12:23 parallel passage – large assembly – not just a few representatives – 350,000 total from all of these tribes; Samuel just referring to the leading elders; but the armies come as well; this account fills in some of the details;

David moving his capital to Jerusalem; **Joshua 15:63** – Jebusites had maintained control; could not be driven out; now David is going to conquer this city; it will become the city of David; 1 Chron. 11: 6 Joab became leading man over armies of Israel; tunnel from spring to top of Mt Zion; provided water for the city; gained access through this

water tunnel; that city will one day be the capital of the world; secret of David's success – Lord was with Him; [look at David's attitude contrasted to Nebuchadnezzar]

Thomas Gormley – Acknowledging the King

Everything we have to be thankful for is a product of what Christ has done. God rules over all – whether we acknowledge it or not; God does not rule by the consent of the governed. David now 37 years old. At age of 15 he had been anointed by Samuel before his family. When he was 30 he was anointed a second time. Now anointed a third time. Christ is King in God's eyes; is He king in your heart? David did not pursue the kingship; God raised him up. Cf. ordination of elder – just recognized what God has already done in his life and ministry. We are born into this world rejecting the reign of Christ as Lord over us. There is a time coming when every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. Phil. 2:9 –

3 Things that we Acknowledge about Christ when we are Saved:

1) They saw their relationship to David

Context had been civil war; a long war; many killed on both sides; we are all brethren here; not right for us to be fighting against one another; living God was made flesh and dwelt among us; truth of the Incarnation; yet fully God retaining His divinity; but perfectly human; Jesus knows what we go through in this world; Jesus is one of us in His humanity; qualified to serve as our mediator

2) They saw David's proven service as their leader in times past

From the time that David had killed Goliath – led them even when Saul was on the throne; God used David mightily; people looked to David for defense and victory over the Philistines; people came to him for justice even when in exile; being a king does not come from wearing a crown and sitting on a throne; but from performing the function of ruling as a king

3) They saw that David was God's choice to lead them as a people – this was by divine direction

Jonathan understood that David would be king – gave him a robe to wear = his own robe as heir to the throne; sign of deference; 1 Sam. 23:17; *Saul* knew it as well; *Abigail* (Nabal's wife) 1 Sam. 25:30 – she understood the promises

Do we realize these same three things about Christ?

Grateful submission of the people

TEXT: 2 Samuel 6:1-23

TITLE: ENTHUSIASTIC DEVOTION TO THE PRESENCE OF A HOLY GOD

BIG IDEA:

THE PRESENCE OF GOD SHOULD EVOKE HOLY REVERENCE AND EXUBERANT CELEBRATION – 2 KEY EXPRESSIONS OF WORSHIP

INTRODUCTION:

The ark of the covenant represents the holy presence of God. While God desires our worship, that worship must be in spirit and in truth. Man must come to God on His terms. Sincerity is no excuse for failure to obey God's directives. The presence of God is no trifling matter. He should command our holy reverence and inspire unrestrained joyful celebration. This passage provides tremendous insight into how we should approach a holy God in worship and praise.

Trace the phrase "*and God was with him*" throughout the Bible and see the blessing that accompanies the presence of God. No matter our circumstances or opposition, we are secure in God's blessing when God is with us.

The journey of the ark of the covenant to its proper abode in the city of Jerusalem should have been one of unmitigated worship and celebration. Such was not the case.

This chapter highlights:

TWO HUMANISTIC REACTIONS THAT FAIL TO GRASP THE PRIORITY OF REVERENCE AND CELEBRATION SURROUNDING THE PRESENCE OF GOD

I. (:1-11) FIRST HUMANISTIC REACTION: KING DAVID RESPONDS IN ANGER WHEN GOD JUDGES UZZAH FOR SHOWING IRREVERENCE IN TOUCHING THE ARK

A. (:1-5) Bringing the Ark to Jerusalem – Right Idea . . . Wrong Execution

1. (:1-2) Setting the Stage – Top Priority, Sacred Mission

a. (:1) Impressive Organization

"Now David again gathered all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand."

Important to get buy-in and participation on the part of the people for this significant national event.

b. (:2a) Worthy Mission

"And David arose and went with all the people who were with him to Baalejudah, to bring up from there the ark of God"

c. (:2b) Sacred Symbol

“the ark of God which is called by the Name, the very name of the Lord of hosts who is enthroned above the cherubim.”

Nothing to mess around with here; must be very careful; calls for obedience to all of the regulations God had called for regarding the handling and transportation of the ark.

2. (:3-4) Expedient Methodology vs. Obedience to Prescribed Regulations

a. (:3a) Wrong Method of Transportation – Easier not always Better

“And they placed the ark of God on a new cart that they might bring it from the house of Abinadab which was on the hill”

Seemed like a good idea from a natural perspective; but the Ark was to be carried by the sons of Kohath (Exod. 25:14-15; Num. 3:30-31; 4:15; 7:9)

The Philistines had employed this method – but the methods of the world are not to be adopted by God’s people.

b. (:3b-4) Wrong People in Charge

“and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, were leading the new cart. So they brought it with the ark of God from the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill; and Ahio was walking ahead of the ark.”

House of Abinadab had done well to house the ark during this time of upheaval and transition; but now they were overstepping their role. What had been a blessing to their household was about to become a curse.

3. (:5) Premature Response of Exuberant Celebration

“Meanwhile, David and all the house of Israel were celebrating before the Lord with all kinds of instruments made of fir wood, and with lyres, harps, tambourines, castanets and cymbals.”

Obedience and holy reverence must come first. Then there is appropriate opportunity for exuberant celebration. The Lord cannot accept our worship when it is not in the context of obedience.

B. (:6-11) The Righteous Anger of the Lord Evokes the Humanistic Anger of David

1. (:6-7) Uzzah’s Expedient Irreverence Evokes the Righteous Anger of the Lord

a. (:6) Knee Jerk Reaction of Expediency – Uzzah’s Fatal Mistake

“But when they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah reached out toward the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen nearly upset it.”

Now we see why God’s regulations were so crucial.

God never needs His creation's help.

- b. (:7) Immediate Execution -- God's Righteous Anger
"And the anger of the Lord burned against Uzzah, and God struck him down there for his irreverence; and he died there by the ark of the Lord."

2. (:8-11) David's Humanistic Anger Causes Him to Miss Out on the Blessing of God's Presence

- 1. (:8) Response of Humanistic Anger instead of Submission
"And David became angry because of the Lord's outburst against Uzzah, and that place is called Perez-uzzah to this day."

David thought the Lord had acted too harshly and unfairly.

- 2. (:9) Fear of the Lord Should Lead to Repentance – Not Avoidance
"So David was afraid of the Lord that day; and he said, 'How can the ark of the Lord come to me?'"

3. (:10-11) Sulking and Self Pity Rob Us of the Blessing of God's Presence

"And David was unwilling to move the ark of the Lord into the city of David with him; but David took it aside to the house of Obededom the Gittite. Thus the ark of the Lord remained in the house of Obededom the Gittite three months, and the Lord blessed Obededom and all his household."

David still had to move the ark – but chose not to bring it with him into Jerusalem.

II. (:12-23) SECOND HUMANISTIC REACTION: MICHAL RESPONDS IN CONTEMPT WHEN KING DAVID DANCES WITH JOY BEFORE THE LORD IN CONCERT WITH ALL OF ISRAEL

A. (:12-19) Michal Out of Step with Joyful Reception of the Ark to Jerusalem

- 1. (:12-15) David's Attitude Adjustment – Brings the Ark to Jerusalem
 - a. (:12a) Positive Report of the Blessing Associated with the Presence of the Lord

"Now it was told King David, saying, 'The Lord has blessed The house of Obededom and all that belongs to him, on account of the ark of God.'"

Blaikie: "The God of heaven," says Bishop Hall, "pays liberally for His lodging."

- b. (:12b-15) Appropriate Attitudes for Attending to the Presence of the

Lord

1) (:12b) Overall Attitude of Gladness

“And David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obbedom into the city of David with gladness.”

2) (:13) Holy Reverence Expressed Via Sacrifice --

“And so it was, that when the bearers of the ark of the Lord had gone six paces, he sacrificed an ox and a fatling.”

This was the test distance to see whether God would strike them dead again. There must have been great relief and thanksgiving to see that all was well.

3) (:14-15) Exuberant Celebration Expressed Via Dancing and Shouting and Trumpeting

“And David was dancing before the Lord with all his might, and David was wearing a linen ephod. So David and all the house of Israel were bringing up the ark of the Lord with shouting and the sound of the trumpet.”

2. (:16) Michal’s Self-Centered, Egotistical, Prideful Contempt for Her Husband

“Then it happened as the ark of the Lord came into the city of David that Michal the daughter of Saul looked out of the window and saw King David leaping and dancing before the Lord; and she despised him in her heart.”

3. (:17-19) The Ark’s Rightful Home -- **Study Psalm 24**

a. (:17a) Installing the Ark in Jerusalem

“So they brought in the ark of the Lord and set it in its place inside the tent which David had pitched for it”

b. (:17b-18) Demonstration of Holy Reverence –

Sacrifices to the Lord / Blessing Upon the People

“and David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the Lord. And when David had finished offering the burnt offering and the peace offering, he blessed the people in the name of the Lord of hosts.”

c. (:19) Demonstration of Exuberant Celebration–

Feast of three cakes per person

“further, he distributed to all the people, to all the multitude of Israel, both to men and women, a cake of bread and one of dates and one of raisins to each one. Then all the people departed each to his house.”

B. (:20-23) David Rebukes Michal for Her Egotistical Pride

1. (:20) Egocentric World of Michal

“But when David returned to bless his household, Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David and said, ‘How the king of Israel distinguished himself today! He uncovered himself today in the eyes of his servants’ maids as one of the foolish ones shamelessly uncovers himself!’”

She objected to this enthusiastic display of devotion to the presence of God as symbolized by the ark. David was aligning himself here more with the people than exalting himself as their monarch.

Redpath: Before long we will come to consider the great sin of David’s life. Could its root have been right here? Perhaps the thing that started him looking at another man’s wife was the bitterness of soul which began when he came back from a day of victory to find the woman of his own heart and house did not enter into the joy of it but despised him for his devotion.

2. (:21) Theocentric World of King David

“So David said to Michal, ‘It was before the Lord, who chose me above your father and above all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the Lord, over Israel; therefore I will celebrate before the Lord.’”

3. (:22) Commitment to Humility for David

“And I will be more lightly esteemed than this and will be humble in my own eyes, but with the maids of whom you have spoken, with them I will be distinguished.”

4. (:23) Condemnation to Childlessness for Michal

“And Michal the daughter of Saul had no child to the day of her death.”

Note the political significance of this childlessness:

Gordon: forecloses any possibility that David and Michal will produce an heir who will be able to unite Davidide and Saulide loyalties.

* * * * *

DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

1) Does our approach to God reflect a proper blend of holy reverence and exuberant celebration? How about our corporate worship as the people of God?

2) Why was Uzzah’s mistake so grievous to the Lord that He would strike him dead? Do you think David was nervous when he came to move the ark the next time?

3) What do we learn here about the appropriateness of music and dancing in the context of praising the Lord?

4) Why was Michal so upset with her husband? When do we put our egotistical desires above our priority to show devotion to the Lord?

* * * * *

QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

McGee: Now the ark of the covenant denoted the presence of God among His people. . . In the outer court was the burnt altar and the brazen laver. Sin was dealt with there. Then there was the Holy Place which contained three articles of furniture, all of which spoke of worship and the person of Christ: the golden lampstand, the golden altar, and the table of showbread. Then inside the Holy of Holies was the ark and over it the mercy seat. This was where God met with His people. I suppose the ark is the best picture of Christ that we have in the Old Testament. It is the only picture, actually, that God ever painted. . .

At least eleven of the psalms were composed around the great event of bringing the ark to Jerusalem. You can be sure of one thing: David did not have some peculiar superstition about the ark. He knew where the Lord was, and he knew He was not in that box. In Psalm 123:1 David says, *“Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens.”* David knew where God was, but he knew that the approach to God was made through the ark which spoke of a mediator between God and man.

McGee: David “uncovered himself” in the sense that he took off his royal garments that set him apart as the king. He mingled and mixed with the people, and thanked God, and rejoiced in the fact that the ark was being brought to the city of David. Micah did not like that.

Davis: She may have objected to David’s actions because it was more common for the women to act this way than for the men (cf. Exod. 15:20-21; Judg. 11:34; I Sam. 18:6). Her displeasure, however, was more likely tied in with her insensitivity to the religious significance of this occasion. Her speeches to David were characterized by sarcasm and bitterness (cf. v. 20).

Gordon: We may also observe that this apparent judgment on Michal, for the sake of the ark, is in pointed contrast to the blessing, also for the sake of the ark, of Obed-edom and his household.

Blaikie: The joyful spirit in which this service was performed by David and his people is another interesting feature of the transaction. Evidently it was not looked on as a toilsome service, but as a blessed festival, adapted to cheer the heart and raise the spirits. What was the precise nature of the service? It was to bring into the heart of the nation, into the new capital of the kingdom, the ark of the covenant, that piece of sacred

furniture which had been constructed nearly five hundred years before in the wilderness of Sinai, the memorial of God's holy covenant with the people, and the symbol of His gracious presence among them. In spirit it was bringing God into the very midst of the nation, and on the choicest and most prominent pedestal the country now supplied setting up a constant memento of the presence of the Holy One. Rightly understood, the service could bring joy only to spiritual hearts; it could give pleasure to none who had reason to dread the presence of God. To those who knew Him as their reconciled Father and the covenant God of the nation, it was most attractive. It was as if the sun were again shining on them after a long eclipse, or as if the father of a loved and loving family had returned after a weary absence. God enthroned on Zion, God in the midst of Jerusalem – what happier or more thrilling thought was it possible to cherish? God the sun and shield of the nation, occupying for His residence the one fitting place in all the land, and sending over Jerusalem and over all the country emanations of love and grace, full of blessing for all that feared His name!

Matthew Henry: But Uzzah was singled out to be made an example, perhaps because he had been most forward in advising that way of conveyance; however, he had fallen into another error, which was occasioned by that. Perhaps the ark was not covered, as it should have been, with the covering of badgers' skins (Numb. vi. 6.). and that was a further provocation. God would hereby strike an awe upon the thousands of Israel, would convince them that the ark was never the less venerable for its having been so long in mean circumstances; and thus he would teach them to rejoice with trembling, and always to treat holy things with reverence and holy fear. God would hereby teach us that a good intention would not justify a bad action; it will not suffice to say of that which is ill done, that it was well meant. He will let us know that he can and will secure his ark, and needs not any man's sin to help him to do it.

Blackwood: King David strove to make that event momentous, not merely incidental. Wise men still do that on special occasions. They plan most carefully for the dedication of a sanctuary, or the setting apart of a young man for the ministry. In view of New Testament simplicity, some of our friends do not believe in elaborate rites. Notwithstanding these scruples, no one has discovered in the New Testament any reason for refusing to celebrate the chief events of our corporate religious experience. All of us know that the Gospels and the Epistles leave us free to worship as we desire, provided we do so "*decently and in order.*" Many of us feel that the welfare of our children and young people calls for an occasional dramatizing of our holy faith.

Redpath: Preparation for Service – The one thing above all else which David wanted was that, having assumed the responsibility of this position, he should know constantly the presence of God with him. He could not possibly rule in authority and power and victory without the Lord's guidance. . . This is the thing that matters most in the life of a Christian: that the ungrieved Holy Spirit is indwelling his life in power and authority.

Moore: I'm not sure we will ever be fully released to "dance" before the Lord until we've learned to wail. You'll never know the experience of being clothed with joy until you've allowed Him to remove your sackcloth. Like David, you may be angry at

God for taking someone's life you cared for deeply. Perhaps you are still hurt and confused. We have no idea whether David ever fully understood Uzzah's death. We just know he was willing to wait, to study, to hear God's Word, and to approach Him again. Then came indescribable celebration. He may not have understood more about Uzzah's death, but he understood more about God, which made his loss more tolerable. God is not harsh; He is holy. He is not selfish; He is sovereign. He is not unfeeling; He is all-knowing. Like David, we need to come to know Him, and respect Him; and, like David, we will love Him more.

TEXT: 2 Samuel 7:1-29

TITLE: *THE BLESSINGS OF THE DAVIDIC COVENANT*

BIG IDEA:

OUR HEARTS SHOULD OVERFLOW WITH PRAISE WHEN GOD REVEALS HIS ABUNDANT PROMISED BLESSINGS

INTRODUCTION:

60 Minutes last Sunday night – How many saw it?? Segment on the Ministry of Joel Osteen – prosperity gospel – “God is nice, you are nice, let’s think nice thoughts and act nicely towards others –“ Hitting all the main TV interview shows to promote his new best seller – on Larry King Live again with his wife and co-pastor ...

Sing the same worship songs we do; say that the same Bible lies behind the positive principles they espouse ... but they treat the Bible like a Chinese Fortune Cookie – open up ... put your finger on one of God’s promises and claim it for yourself in whatever application suits your fancy – this is a good chapter for Joel Osteen to exploit

I just keep things simple; my gift is not to explain what the Bible means; people don’t need to be told about what they are doing wrong; they need to be inspired; they need a message of hope; I’m not leading people astray to trust a false God; look at how many people come up and testify to God having changed their lives, their marriages through my preaching and books and influence -- \$13M advance on his most recent book; I walked into Borders yesterday – there was a whole table full of his new book right at the entrance; tries to ooze sincerity – doesn’t even ask for money on his TV show – takes the soft sell approach – the money rolls in – his family = main benefactors – all involved in the ministry; asked the questions about the exclusivity of the gospel – always waffles – asked What about the Muslims?? Speaks out against fanaticism (probably would lump us in that category) – but says nothing about them going to hell .. when pressed he will admit that hell is a real place ...but if you ask him who is going to end up there .. he backs away ... even talking about some of the Hollywood crash-and-burn cases like Britney Spears – I believe they are basically good people Radically wrong view of human nature;

Anyway this is a chapter that the prosperity gospel preachers must love – We want to love it from a proper understanding of its truth and its rightful application

What are the blessings of the New Covenant which God has promised to His precious elect? How does our heart respond as we meditate upon those precious promises?

Here we will look at King David’s response to the covenant blessings God promised him and his house and his nation at this important juncture in Israel’s history.

(Possible that this chapter chronologically should be placed after chapter 10 – after God had given David rest from his enemies. However, when you read Chap. 8:1 it sounds like the author is presenting things in sequence.)

Gordon: In response to David's modest proposal to build a permanent "house" for the ark of the covenant, Yahweh announces his startlingly generous intention of building a dynastic "house" for David.

I. (:1-3) KINGDOM VICTORIES SHOULD INCREASE OUR ZEAL TO SEE OUR GOD EXALTED – DAVID'S DESIRE TO BUILD GOD A HOUSE

A. (:1) Kingdom Victories Free Us Up to Increase Our Spiritual Service

"Now it came about when the king lived in his house, and the Lord had given him rest on every side from all his enemies"

Victories not an occasion to rest on our laurels or gloat over our successes; There were still more military campaigns that God had in mind for David.

B. (:2) Zeal for the Lord Should Inspire Ambitious Plans

"that the king said to Nathan the prophet, 'See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells within tent curtains.'"

Nothing wrong with David's desire; he does the right thing in submitting his grand plans to the counsel of God's prophet
God desires obedience to His revealed will over creative attempts to put forward a bold agenda; we are to be about the business of carrying out His plans

C. (:3) Spiritual Leaders Are Constantly Susceptible to the Satanic Trap of Presumption

"And Nathan said to the king, 'Go, do all that is in your mind, for the Lord is with you.'"

Just as God has a will for our lives; so does Satan
Plans that sound good to us on the surface may not be God's will since His ways are not our ways; discipline of waiting upon the Lord is essential
Nathan thought that this was a no-brainer ... didn't bother to seek the Lord's counsel; still the Lord was gracious to him

II. (:4-17) THE ABUNDANT BLESSINGS PROMISED TO THE DAVIDIC KINGDOM ARE ULTIMATELY FULFILLED IN THE REIGN OF THE MESSIAH -- GOD'S DETERMINATION TO BUILD DAVID A HOUSE

A. (:4-7) God Defines Our Role in His Kingdom

1. (:4-5) Swift Word of Correction – David is Not God's Choice for Building the Temple

"But it came about in the same night that the word of the Lord came to Nathan, saying, 'Go and say to My servant David, Thus says the Lord, Are you the one who should build Me a house to dwell in?'"

David trying to tackle a task that was not appropriate for him from God's Perspective

Kapteyn: God tells us here that He is the one who provides for us, not us for Him. He will determine our relationship with Him not us. He will not be boxed into the temple or building of our choosing.

Roper: Do you see what God is saying to David? "David, I do not want you to build a house for me I will build a house for You see, that is the kind of Lord we have. He is not a harsh, demanding Lord who expects us to build something out of our lives. He is the Lord who wants to give. The Pharisees came to Jesus once and said, "What must we do to work the works of God? How can we pay God back? How can we work the things that God wants us to work?" Jesus said, "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent." The only way to work the works of God is to let God work on your behalf, to receive what he has done, to appropriate what he has, to let him pour himself out to you. He wants you to be a tent that he can fill and flood, and in which he can manifest his glory. "David, I will build you a house. I don't want you to build me a house. Heaven is my throne, the earth my footstool. I'm the one who builds houses around here." God was speaking, of course, not literally of a house, but of David's posterity.

How do we react **when God says NO** to our plans and dreams and initiatives??

2. (:6) Mobile State Appropriate So Far – Tent vs. Temple

"For I have not dwelt in a house since the day I brought up the sons of Israel from Egypt, even to this day; but I have been moving about in a tent, even in a tabernacle."

3. (:7) Concentrate on God's Commands – Contentment with no Temple

"Wherever I have gone with all the sons of Israel, did I speak a word with one of the tribes of Israel, which I commanded to shepherd My people Israel, saying, 'Why have you not built Me a house of cedar?'"

B. (:8-11) Abundant Blessings Focused on Reign of David

1. (:8-9a) Review of Past Blessings – "You've come a long way, baby"

a. (:8) Sovereign Selection of David to Reign From Humble Origins

"Now therefore, thus you shall say to My servant David, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts, I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should be ruler over My people Israel.'"

b. (:9a) Providential Leading and Protection

"And I have been with you wherever you have gone and have cut off all your enemies from before you"

2. (:9b-11) Promise of Future Blessings

a. (:9b) Great Name

“and I will make you a great name, like the names of the great men who are on the earth.”

b. (:10-11a) Secure Place

“I will also appoint a place for My people Israel and will plant them, that they may live in their own place and not be disturbed again, nor will the wicked afflict them any more as formerly, even from the day that I commanded judges to be over My people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies.”

c. (:11b) Lasting Dynasty

“The Lord also declares to you that the Lord will make a house for you.”

Transition to next section

God has some big plans – way beyond anything that David had envisioned

Eternal in scope; global in scope

C. (:12-17) Abundant Blessings Focused on Reign of Solomon as Type of Ultimate Fulfillment in Reign of the Messiah

1. (:12) Kingdom Succession -- Establishing Reign of Solomon = David's Son

“When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom”

Quite different from King Saul whose royal line did not continue.

2. (:13a) Sacred Temple – Solomon will get the privilege denied to David

“He shall build a house for My name”

Roe: God does want this temple built, but he says it will be a place for my Name [II Samuel 7:13], a place where my name will be magnified, a symbolic place which says, "This is where God will meet with man." So God says it is a temple for my Name not for Me, for all that I stand for, yes, but not for my person. God wants to get them back to the fundamentals, the tent of the meeting, a place where man can meet God. Back in those days God used object lessons for theological infants. So God had an actual place of meeting, but that was not God's dwelling place. That was where God met man. God was far bigger than that, and so God calls it a place for his Name. God did want a temple built some day, something firm and established so that the people would know they were now in the place where God wanted them to be. God never wanted to give them the idea that the life they were leading, which was a life of constant disturbance and upheaval, constant conflict, within their own families even, was what he promised in the land of rest. Although Canaan is a picture of rest, it is not a picture of heaven. In Canaan, we are told, we are to have constant battle. We are to take the land by force. God has given it to us, but we are to go out there and take it by force using the strength

of God. So Canaan cannot be a picture of heaven. But it is a picture of victory here.

3. (:13b) Permanent Dynasty

“and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever”

4. (:14-15) Intimate Relationship as a Protected Son

a) Family Commitment

“I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me”

b) Tough Discipline

“when he commits iniquity, I will correct him with the rod of men and the strokes of the sons of men”

Kapteyn: God's promise is unconditional. He will not go against His word. He does not say that He will establish David's kingdom forever only if certain conditions are met. He simply says that He will do it.

But this does not mean that God will simply allow David's sons to do what they want with no consequences to them. He warns that He will punish those who do wrong or evil, that He will chasten or punish them with the rod of men, with floggings inflicted by men.

c) Steadfast Lovingkindness

“but My lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you.”

5) (:16) Messianic Implications

“And your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever.”

6) (:17) Nathan's Role as Faithful Messenger

“In accordance with all these words and all this vision, so Nathan spoke to David.”

Blaikie: It was an unspeakable privilege to learn, as he did now, that his dynasty would be alike permanent and secure; that, as a rule, his children would not be exposed to the atrocities of Oriental successions; that they would be under the special care and protection of God; that their faults would be corrected without their being destroyed; and that this state of blessing would continue for ages and ages to come.

III. (:18-29) THE HEART OF GOD'S SERVANTS SHOULD OVERFLOW IN HUMILITY, PRAISE, AND A DESIRE TO SEE GOD GLORIFIED

David's Prayer of Response to God's Revelation of the Davidic Covenant

A. (:18-21) Responded in Humility

1. (:18) Humility in Light of David's Family Insignificance

“Then David the king went in and sat before the Lord, and he said, ‘Who

am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that Thou hast brought me this far?'"

2. (:19) Humility in Light of Man's Transitoriness vs. God's Eternity
"And yet this was insignificant in Thine eyes, O Lord God, for Thou hast spoken also of the house of Thy servant concerning the distant future. And this is the custom of man, O Lord God."

Kapteyn: As much as we thank God for what He has done, the future will even be greater - the hope of heaven - the place of rest from our enemies is indeed a real reason to rejoice. (Rom 8:18)

And what makes this even greater is that God has revealed the future to us. God lets us know what lies ahead. Doesn't keep it hidden as a Christmas present to be taken out on the day it is to be given. Think of child in car on way to a new experience. He asks "What will it be like when we get there?" Parent says, "You'll see when we get there." God tells us what lies ahead.

Roper: David saw that this was not going to be fulfilled in the immediate future but in the distant future. And he immediately adds, "And this is the law [to translate literally] with reference to the man, the Adam, i.e., the Messiah, Lord Jehovah." This is translated in the New American Standard Version as: "And this is the custom of man, O Lord God", as if he were addressing himself to God. But the Hebrew simply says, "This is the law with respect to the man, the Lord Jehovah." Many ancient translators, Luther included, rendered the passage this way, as a direct reference to One who would come to fulfill this prophecy. He would be the man, the second Adam, the last man, Messiah, who would reign forever, who would be the Lord Jehovah. David saw that. Peter says he saw the resurrection of Christ, and therefore David knew that he would endure. Nothing would take his throne away from him. He would never lose his sphere of influence, because One would enter his line who would ensure his eternal continuity. The prophets even state that in the millennial kingdom, when Jesus Christ reigns as Messiah over his people, it is David who reigns, because David, in Christ, still reigns over his people.

3. (:20) Humility in Light of God's Omniscience
"And again what more can David say to Thee? For Thou knowest Thy servant, O Lord God."
4. (:21) Humility in Light of the Privilege of God's Revelation
"For the sake of Thy word, and according to Thine own heart, Thou hast done all this greatness to let Thy servant know."

ASIDE – Mahaney book on Humility

B. (:22-24) Responded in Praise (**cf. the Psalms** here for fuller expressions) 1.

(:22) Praise God for His Unique Greatness

"For this reason Thou art great, O Lord God; for there is none like

Thee, and there is no God besides Thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears.”

2. (:23) Praise God for His Awesome Redemption

“And what one nation on the earth is like Thy people Israel, whom God went to redeem for Himself as a people and to make a name for Himself, and to do a great thing for Thee and awesome things for Thy land, before Thy people whom Thou has redeemed for Thyself from Egypt, from nations and then gods?”

3. (:24) Praise God for His Sovereign Election and Providential Protection

“For Thou hast established for Thyself Thy people Israel as Thine own people forever, and Thou, O Lord, hast become their God.”

C. (:25-27) Responded with a Desire to See God Glorified

1. (:25) God is Glorified as He Faithfully Performs His Word

“Now therefore, O Lord God, the word that Thou hast spoken concerning Thy servant and his house, confirm it forever, and do as Thou hast spoken.”

2. (:26) God is Glorified as His People Walk Worthy of Their High Calling – The High Calling of the Nation Israel and the High Calling of the House of David

“that Thy name may be magnified forever, by saying, ‘The Lord of hosts is God over Israel’; and may the house of Thy servant David be established before Thee.”

3. (:27) God is Glorified as His People Take Courage to Rest in His Promises

“For Thou, O Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, hast made a revelation to Thy servant, saying, ‘I will build you a house’; therefore Thy servant has found courage to pray this prayer to Thee.”

How Bold are we in laying hold of God’s promises?

D. (:28-29) Closing with Confidence in God’s Faithfulness

1. (:28) 3 Reasons for Confidence in God’s Faithfulness

a. The Nature of God Himself

“And now, O Lord God, Thou art God”

b. The Truthfulness of His Word

“and Thy words are truth”

c. The Reliability of God’s Promises

“and Thou hast promised this good thing to Thy servant.”

2. (:29) Nike Invocation – Just Do It! – A Call for God to Perform His

Promises

“Now therefore, may it please Thee to bless the house of Thy servant, that it may continue forever before Thee. For Thou, O Lord God, hast spoken; and with Thy blessing may the house of Thy servant be blessed forever.”

* * * * *

DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

- 1) When have we failed to wait upon the Lord for a decision and been shocked to find that our thoughts and plans were not God’s thoughts and plans?
- 2) How does David respond when God redirects his thinking? How does this help us to see how God characterizes David as “*a man after God’s own heart?*”
- 3) Why do people want to make churches so expensive and ornate if God does not dwell in such buildings?
- 4) How does this passage contribute to our understanding of eternal security and of the role of discipline in the family of God?

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QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Davis: The Davidic covenant was a very important affirmation of God’s intention to complete that which he had promised to Abraham (Gen. 12). This covenant consisted of three essential elements: (1) a posterity (vv. 12, 13, 16), (2) a throne (vv. 13, 16; cf. Luke 1:32) and (3) a kingdom (vv. 13, 16; cf. Luke 1:33). The nature and scope of this covenant are such that their fulfillment could not have been realized in the days of Solomon, but will find their ultimate fulfillment in Christ through the establishment of His kingdom on earth (cf. Isa. 9:6).

Roe: In the last chapter, the ark of God, turned out to be a vessel you didn't mess with. Now the ark of God is not God. It is not even God's dwelling place. It is the place where God meets man. In fact the "tent of meeting," which originally contained the ark, was called the tent of meeting because that is where God met man. God didn't dwell in that tent. God is everywhere. He is both transcendent and imminent. He is above and beyond the universe, yet he is directly involved within his universe. A little box, 4x2x2, even though it is gold and is made to his exact specifications, is not God's dwelling place. It is God's point of meeting. Now it is very easy to transfer a place where God meets his people to a place where God lives. We call these sacred places, and we tend to invest them with the attributes that belong to the Creator. As we have seen, this ark has been a dangerous thing, and consequently David was investing it with more than it

really was, the meeting place of God with his people. So you see the necessity of the 2nd Commandment. The 1st is "Thou shall not have any Gods before me," and the 2nd is "Thou shall not make any graven image." We have an insatiable desire to see God, to see him in some way. It is hard to walk by faith. It is hard to talk to the air. And yet that is exactly what God requires. Somewhere along the line, if you want to become a Christian, you have to talk to the air. And that air, the person who lives in that air, when he comes into your life, becomes your Lord and your God and thereby your Savior.

Apple: (from an earlier study)

GOD'S PROMISES COMPEL US TO PRAISE HIM

1. God's Promises Surpass our Desires (:18-19)
 - a. David already knew from personal experience that God's promises surpass our desires
 - b. Our experience is a drop in the bucket compared to what God has promised for the future
2. God's Promises Showcase God's Purposes (:21-22)

Motivation:

"for the sake of thy word"
"according to thine own heart"
3. God's Promises Succeed Against All Odds (:23-24)

Piper:

The conditionality of this covenant is repeated again and again in Kings and Chronicles. For example, in 1 Kings 2:4 David tells Solomon that God said, "If your sons take heed to their ways, to walk before me in faithfulness with all their heart and with all their soul, there shall not fail you a man on the throne of Israel." This means that as long as David's sons are disobedient the kingdom cannot be made secure for ever. Then look at 1 Kings 8:25 where Solomon prays, "Now, Lord God of Israel, keep with thy servant David my father what thou hast promised him, saying, 'There shall never fail you a man before me to sit upon the throne of Israel if only your sons take heed to their way to walk before me as you have walked before me.'" (See also 1 Kings 6:11,12; 9:4-9; 1 Chron. 22:8-13; 28:1-10.)

Israel learned over the centuries following David and Solomon that disobedience in her king always brought the nation to ruin. But the godly among them knew one thing for sure: God had promised that the throne of David would be established for ever (2 Sam. 7:4). So they came to see that a son of David must be coming who would fulfill the conditions of the covenant, sit on David's throne and rule forever. A succession of imperfect kings could never fulfill the promise. If God were true to his word, if he stuck by his job description in 2 Samuel 7, he would have to raise up a righteous, obedient son of David to take the throne (see Psalm 89:29-37).

This is just what Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel promised he would do. Ezekiel looks to the future salvation of God's people and speaks God's word (in 37:23f): "I will save them from all the backslidings in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them and they shall be my people and I will be their God. My servant David shall be king over them; and they shall have one shepherd" (see 34:23). Jeremiah stresses that the coming king will fulfill the condition of righteousness (in Jer. 23:5-6): "Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which he will be called: 'The Lord is our righteousness'" (see 33:21, 25-26). But it was Isaiah who saw the glory of the Son of David more clearly than anyone and virtually identified him as God (in 9:6-7): "For unto us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government will upon his shoulder, and his name will be called 'Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.' Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, upon 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." So the surety of the covenant with David lies ultimately in the fact that God himself will come as king and sit upon the throne. When a covenant is conditional and yet is also certain, you can be sure God himself will intervene to fulfill the conditions. . .

I close with an invitation for you to make God's covenant with David a covenant with you. It's not just my invitation., It's God's. Turn to Isaiah 55:1-3. The point of this invitation is that the very sovereignty and wisdom and love of God which assured David of an eternal kingdom can also assure you of God's eternal kindness as a part of that kingdom. Listen: "Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Hearken diligently to me and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in fatness. Incline your ear and come to me; hear that your soul may live; and I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast sure love for David." The very mercy and faithfulness that guarantees David an eternal kingdom can guarantee you all the joy and righteousness and peace of that kingdom. God is saying to you this morning: if you will come to me empty-handed and hungry, willing to receive what I give, then I will write for myself in your presence a job description and bind myself with an oath to treat you for ever with the same mercy and faithfulness that I have demonstrated in my covenant with David.

Blaikie: We seem to see in this prayer the very best of David – much intensity of feeling, great humility, wondering gratitude, holy intimacy and trust, and supreme satisfaction in the blessing of God. We see him walking in the very light of God's countenance, and supremely happy. We see Jacob's ladder between earth and heaven, and the angels of God ascending and descending on it. Moreover, we see the infinite privilege which is involved in having God for our Father, and in being able to realize that He is full of most fatherly feelings to us. The joy of David in this act of fellowship

with God was the purest of which human beings are capable. It was indeed a joy unspeakable and full of glory. Oh that men would acquaint themselves with God and be at peace! Let it be our aim to cherish as warm sentiments of trust in God, and to look forward to the future with equal satisfaction and delight.

Blackwood: (vv. 8-17) When God withholds one blessing, He has a way of granting another, and that more glorious. Instead of permitting the king to erect a new church edifice, the Lord promises that his household shall endure and become a means of blessing to the world. Here the stress falls on what God plans to do for David, not on what David wishes to do for God. In keeping with the grandeur of these promises, the style soars into realms of rarest beauty. Where even in the twin books of Samuel can one find a more moving prose rhythm?

Redpath: How do you react when God says, “No!?” When the early dream and vision are unfulfilled, there is nothing more likely than that you want to sit down in despair and let your life go to waste. Not so with David – as a matter of fact, God’s refusal became to him the occasion of tremendous blessing. . .

Has God said “No” to you? Then before you turn away, before there creeps into your life some resentment, just sit down before the Lord and think about His blessings. He gave us the capacity to know Him, and that puts a touch of dignity upon human life. Though by nature we are sinful and deserve only His judgment, yet God cared enough to give His Son to die for us. Although in ignorance we have trampled underfoot the blood of the everlasting covenant, He sent His Holy Spirit to reveal Jesus Christ to our hearts and to fit us for heaven. . .

And when God has said “No” to the ambition of your life, to something that is very precious to you, He brings you close to His heart and shows you that every need of your soul is met by His promises. He wants to teach you, in the face of His negative answer, to learn to make your own every possible promise in the Book.

* * * * *

HUMILITY – TRUE GREATNESS – by C. J. Mahaney

I. Our greatest friend, Our Greatest Enemy – The Battle of Humility versus Pride

No matter who we are; our age; our vocation

Cited book **Good to Great** – by Jim Collins – one of the most popular and influential in the business world – studied 11 corporations that had made the jump; identified 2 specific character qualities shared by the CEOs of these companies

- first was no surprise = driven, willing to endure anything to make their company a success

- the second was a surprise – all of these leaders were self-effacing and modest – didn’t try to attract attention to themselves; they were seemingly ordinary people quietly producing extraordinary results

World takes notice of the importance of Humility

But more importantly, God takes notice

Is. 66:2 *This is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word*

Whom does God promise to help? James 4:6
God gives grace to the humble

Def: "Humility is honestly assessing ourselves in light of God's holiness and our sinfulness."

The Perils of Pride: God hates pride – Why

Pride is when sinful human beings aspire to the status and position of God and refuse to acknowledge their dependence upon Him – contending for supremacy with God; trying to rob God of His glory and get glory for ourselves

II. The Great Reversal -- Our Savior and the secret of true greatness

Genuine humility requires a radical redefinition of success; key is the Cross of Christ and its benefits for sinners like us

Who's the Greatest? = Question on the hearts of the disciples

Mark 9:35 *"If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all"*

Jesus turns everything upside down – Serving others for the glory of God defines greatness

Mark 10:45 – *The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many*

We cannot free ourselves from pride and selfish ambition; a divine rescue is absolutely necessary

Where would you be if God had not ransomed and delivered you?

You would be self-sufficient, seeking to cultivate self-confidence for the purpose of self-glorification
Now we have been forgiven and transformed so that we can fulfill God's call to lay down our lives for others

III. Our greatest pursuit – The Practice of True Humility

Very practical suggestions – how to cultivate humility and attack pride

TEXT: 2 Samuel 8:1-18

TITLE: ONLY THE BLESSING OF THE LORD SECURES A KINGDOM THAT ADMINISTERS JUSTICE AND RIGHTEOUSNESS

BIG IDEA:

VICTORY OVER KINGDOM ENEMIES

- WINS WAR TROPHIES THAT BRING GLORY TO GOD AND
- GAINS US A GOOD REPUTATION TO MINISTER WISELY AND MORE EFFECTIVELY

REVIEW:

Transition after the death of King Saul to David ... How have the mighty fallen!

David not selfishly opportunistic – but waiting on God’s timetable

Initially just recognized as king by Judah in the south – hdqtrs at Hebron

Power struggle; civil war – difficult time for the nation

Ishbosheth under the military leadership of Abner king over Israel in North;

Abner tried to make a league with David; Joab and Abishai murder Abner;

Damage control by King David

Chap 4 – Ishbosheth murdered

Righteous goals can only be attained through righteous means

Chap 5 – David king over all Israel – victories over the Philistines

The blessing of God upon David

Chap 6 – 2 aspects of worship – reverent obedience and joyful celebration

Problems in transporting the ark – Uzzah struck down by the Lord

Michal despising David for his dancing with the common folk

Chap. 7 – Great Davidic Covenant – man of war and bloodshed – not the one chosen to build the temple – but God will build a great name for David

The kingdom belongs to the line of David –

God had promised to make David a great name – happens in this chapter as David brings all of the well-known enemies into subjection to Israel

Established the boundaries of his empire; secured his kingdom

INTRODUCTION:

What are the kingdom enemies that threaten us today? How is the battle going in our camp? Where do we see the hand of God with us and blessing us? How do we glorify God when we are victorious? How do we leverage our position of spiritual security and protection to minister to others and be an agent for justice and righteousness? Is our kingdom characterized by a wise administration under orderly and skillful leadership?

The key to victory over our enemies and wise administration is the blessing of the Lord. The refrain repeated twice in this chapter tells the story:

“And the Lord helped David wherever he went.”

I. (:1-8) VICTORY OVER KINGDOM ENEMIES – GOD BLESSES DAVID WITH A STRING OF IMPRESSIVE MILITARY VICTORIES TO SECURE THE KINGDOM

Read Passage

Geography Lesson– **Genesis 15:18** – Don't forget God's Promise to Abraham

West v.1 Gath -- Philistines

East v.2 Moab

North v.3-11 Zobah (NE of Damascus/ W of Euphrates) / Aramaens--Damascus

South v.13-14 Edom

A. (:1) Victory Over the Philistines and Strategic Control Over Chief City (Gath)

“Now after this it came about that David defeated the Philistines and subdued them; and David took control of the chief city from the hand of the Philistines.”

Defeat those to the **West** of Jerusalem and a little south

Lange: David not only defeated them in a *battle*, but also subjected them to his *authority*.

B. (:2) Victory Over the Moabites and Strategic Execution of 2/3 of Soldiers

“And he defeated Moab, and measured them with the line, making them lie down on the ground; and he measured two lines to put to death and one full line to keep alive. And the Moabites became servants to David, bringing tribute.”

Defeat those in the **East** – cross the Jordan

Treats them harshly

(Think back to **counting off by three's in gym class** – quite a surprising glimpse into the harsh reality of kingdom warfare.)

1 Sam. 22:3 – previously had good relationships with the Moabites; what changed

Jewish tradition: King of Moab betrayed David's trust and killed his parents??

Something has changed

Davis: The fact that David conducted a campaign against Moab indicates a change of attitude on his part concerning these people. He had previously enjoyed rather good relations with Moab as indicated by their willingness to provide asylum for David's parents when he was a fugitive from Saul (cf. I Sam. 22:3-4). The reason for David's change of attitude has been attributed to a deception on the part of the Moabites resulting in the death of David's parents; however, this tradition cannot be verified.

C. (:3-4) Victory Over the Zobahites and King Hadadezer and Strategic (or Sinful??) Appropriation of Military Resources

“Then David defeated Hadadezer, the son of Rehob king of Zobah, as he went to restore his rule at the River. And David captured from him 1,700 horsemen and

20,000 foot soldiers; and David hamstringed the chariot horses, but reserved enough of them for 100 chariots.”

Defeated those in the **North** of Damascus

“Hadad (name of the Canaanite storm god) is my help”

1 Chron. 18:4 – 7,000 was more realistic number than 1700 – transposition of numbers

Ryrie: *hamstrung* – i.e., disabled them for military activity by cutting the back sinews of the hind legs.

In light of Deut 17 and Josh account – was this actually sinful on David’s part??

(I remember tearing my hamstring – quite painful and it never was quite the same)

Redpath: The purpose of this command [Deut. 17:15-16] was to keep the people of God from putting confidence in anything except in the Lord. Any misplaced confidence in their own weapons of warfare had to be completely destroyed. [Psalm 20:7; 33:16-17]

D. (:5-6a) Victory Over the Arameans of Damascus and Strategic Fortification

“And when the Arameans of Damascus came to help Hadadezer, king of Zobah, David killed 22,000 Arameans. Then David put garrisons among the Arameans of Damascus, and the Arameans became servants to David, bringing tribute.”

Defeat of those to **North** = Syrians with Damascus as capital = Arameans

E. (:6b) Key to Victory

“And the Lord helped David wherever he went.”

Home Depot slogan: *“You can do it, we can help”*

David sought Israel’s welfare in light of the kingdom of God

II. (:7-12) WAR TROPHIES THAT BRING GLORY TO GOD – DAVID BRINGS THE PRECIOUS SPOILS OF WAR TO JERUSALEM AND DEDICATES THEM TO THE LORD

A. (:7-11a) Bringing the Precious Spoils of War to Jerusalem

1. (:7-8) Trophies from Zobah

a. (:7) Shields of Gold from Servants of King Hadadezer

“And David took the shields of gold which were carried by the servants of Hadadezer, and brought them to Jerusalem.”

b. (:8) Large Amount of Bronze from Cities of Zobah

“And from Betah and from Berothai, cities of Hadadezer, King David took a very large amount of bronze.”

2. (:9-10) Trophies from Hamath

a. (:9-10a) Appreciative Initiative of King Toi

“Now when Toi king of Hamath heard that David had defeated all the army of Hadadezer, Toi sent Joram his son to King David to greet him and bless him, because he had fought against Hadadezer and defeated him; for Hadadezer had been at war with Toi.”

Was this just feigned submission?

b. (:10b) Silver, Gold, and Bronze

“And Joram brought with him articles of silver, of gold and of bronze.”

B. (:11-12) Dedication of Trophies to the Lord

1. (:11a) Dedication of Trophies from Hamath

“King David also dedicated these to the Lord”

2. (:11b-12) Dedication of Trophies from Other Nations

“with the silver and gold that he had dedicated from all the nations which he had subdued; from Aram and Moab and the sons of Ammon and the Philistines and Amalek, and from the spoil of Hadadezer, son of Rehob, king of Zobah.”

David beginning to stockpile the materials for the temple which his son Solomon will build; David can't build the temple himself but can stockpile the resources

Dedicate all to the Lord – what have we that we have not received from the Lord –

Not just fitting the Lord in to our busy schedules

Temple not built in David's lifetime – he had long term perspective – not shortsighted

We don't have to see in this life the fruit for what we suffer

David as a type of Christ – who reigned to the glory of God the Father

III. (:13-18) A GOOD REPUTATION TO MINISTER WISELY AND MORE EFFECTIVELY – DAVID'S KINGDOM EXEMPLIFIES WISE ADMINISTRATION WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE LORD

A. (:13) A Growing Reputation

“So David made a name for himself when he returned from killing 14,000 Arameans in the Valley of Salt.”

Defeated enemies in the South and East

Ryrie: Probably a copyist's error and a reference to Edom rather than Aram (cf. 1 Chron. 18:12; Psalm 60, title).

Psalm 20 – Battle Hymn of the Kingdom of God – when the king goes out to battle

David writes **Psalm 60** in this context

Expressing something of the troubles and trials in his struggles; God will be his resource and strength; not just an easy victory – it was a struggle – insight into more of the difficulty – at times it looked like they would be overwhelmed; turmoil; it seems at times like God has rejected us

B. (:14a) A Garrisoned Dominion

“And he put garrisons in Edom. In all Edom he put garrisons, and all the Edomites became servants to David.”

Davis: David’s victory over the Edomites in the territory south of the Dead Sea was important because it gave David access to the very rich copper mines of the Arabah. Furthermore, it placed control of important trade routes from the gulf of Aqaba in David’s hands.

C. (:14b) Key to Victory – Refrain Repeated

“And the Lord helped David wherever he went.”

D. (:15) A Godly Government

“So David reigned over all Israel; and David administered justice and righteousness for all his people.”

E. (:16-18) A Gifted Bureaucracy – David’s Court Officials

1. Military Leader

“And Joab the son of Zerulah was over the army”

2. Recorder

“and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder.”

3. Priests

“And Zadok the son of Ahitub and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar were priests”

4. Secretary

“and Seraiah was secretary.”

5. Body Guards

“And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and the Pelethites”

Davis: (cf. 15:18; 20:7; 23; I Kings 1:38, 44; I Chron. 18:17) The Cherethites were many times associated with the Philistines and may have been part of that nation (I Sam. 30:14 cf. Ezek. 25:16; Zeph. 2:5)

6. Chief Ministers

“and David’s sons were chief ministers.”

* * * * *

DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

- 1) Do we have the sense of the Lord helping us in our specific endeavors?
- 2) What were some of the different elements of David’s strategy in gaining control over the enemies of Israel? What can we learn from his strategy?
- 3) Why is this ideal picture of a godly kingdom administering justice and righteousness so unfamiliar to us down throughout history? What will the reign of the Messiah in the millennial kingdom be like?
- 4) How did David use his reputation to bring glory to God?

* * * * *

QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Davis: While the wars of Saul were characteristically defensive in nature, the wars of David took on the character of being offensive and led to expansion of the borders of Israel. The chapter before us describes the successful campaigns of David as they related to the surrounding nations. It is evident that David took geography and natural resources into consideration as he planned the expansion of Israel’s borders.

Gordon: David’s military and administrative archives provide the raw material for this chapter. The emphasis is on the military, as David campaigns in regions west (v. 1), east (v. 2), north (vv. 3-11), and south (vv. 13f) of Israel.

Blaikie: We are called to contemplate David in a remarkable light, as a professional warrior, a man of the sword, a man of blood; wielding the weapons of destruction with all the decision and effect of the most daring commanders. That the sweet singer of Israel, from whose tender heart those blessed words poured out to which the troubled soul turns for composure and peace, should have been so familiar with the horrors of the battle-field is indeed a surprise. We can only say that he was led to regard all this rough work as indispensable to the very existence of his kingdom and to the fulfillment of the great ends for which Israel had been called.

Winter: It was the duty of the recorder to keep the annals of the kingdom and call David’s attention to the needs of the kingdom. The scribe’s duty was the writing of the official documents. Other men were entrusted with the oversight of subdivisions of the kingdom. The Cherethites and the Pelethites were a part of the Philistine peoples.

Lange: In all his wars and victories over Israel's enemies David, as theocratic king, was only the instrument of the Lord, who Himself waged these wars for His people. Therefore in his royal military calling David knows himself also only as servant of the Lord, to whom, as the true Commander, he consecrates and dedicates the booty gained. . . David's royal calling was to be fulfilled chiefly in wars and victories over Israel's enemies, in order that the kingdom of God in Israel might attain its unhindered, theocratic-national full development of form. But from this historical basis is subsequently developed the idea of the theocratic kingdom as a mighty and powerful one that victoriously combats the enemies of the theocracy, and makes them subservient to the divine might and power. On this is then built up the Messianic prophecy of the future king, who in divine might and glory will complete the kingdom of God by the thorough conquest of all its enemies, establish God's universal dominion in the people of God redeemed from the world-powers, and dispense God's blessing under His protection and pastoral fidelity.

Redpath: This is the strategy of heaven: the destruction of every false strength, the dedication of the fruits of victory, and the declining of applause. . . David's rule was marked at first by godliness, integrity, and justice. However, it was not long before he forsook those heavenly principles and brought disaster on himself, his family, and his nation.

Moore: In this chapter, we see David as a man after God's own heart more than ever before in our study. We've seen Christ's own heart illustrated over and over. No one was more humble. No one held himself more accountable to God. No one revealed a greater heart for worship. No one had such a depth of cooperation with God. In all these ways David provides a picture of Jesus.

David Silversides: Christ Ruling For and in the Church
Always enemies in this world to kingdom of God -- 1 Cor. 16:9 *For a great door and effectual is opened unto me and there are many adversaries*

Mark Kelderman:

1) David's continued battles

Goes out to subdue these Philistines; not just reacting defensively against their attacks; brings these cities under his control; David knew this territory like the back of his hand; all of the caves and hiding places

2) The preservation by the Lord

3) The difficulties and dangers of the struggles

Numbers 24 prophecy – regarding Moabite defeat –

God had promised the land from the river of Egypt to river Euphrates –

David not accumulating spoils for his own good

Troubling: why did David keep some horses and chariots for himself? A Question – why did he keep them in the first place? Seems to be a mistake

Psalm 20 – some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we will trust in...

Deut 17 – law of Moses regarding kings -- not to marry multiple wives; not to accumulate silver and gold for their own good, not to multiply horses and chariots and

put their trust in them

Maybe someday I might need them??

Solomon fell prey to multiplying horses and chariots in greater magnitude – David began in just a little measure – watch example we set for our children

1 Kings 11 – Joab stayed for 6 months in Edom and cut off every male

TEXT: 2 Samuel 9:1-13

TITLE: DAVID FAVORS MEPHIBOSHETH WITH UNEXPECTED KINDNESS

BIG IDEA:

POWERFUL SOVEREIGN DEMONSTRATES UNEXPECTED COVENANT LOYALTY TO CRIPPLED LEFTOVER FROM FORMER REGIME

Background:

1 Sam. 20:14-15 – Jonathan was concerned that his family be preserved when David eventually took over the kingdom; covenant loyalty

1 Sam. 20:41-42 – bond between David and Jonathan; exchanged promises of a continuing relationship between their two families

2 Sam 4:4 – account of how Mephibosheth was injured – son of Jonathan (not son of Saul mentioned once elsewhere 2 Sam. 21:8)

Name means: “*a shameful thing*” “*he scatters shame*”

Read Passage – 2 Sam 9

Carr: For just a moment, let’s put ourselves in the shoes of Mephibosheth. He is one of the few remaining members of the house of Saul. He is living in a place called Lo-debar, which means “no pasture.” He is probably living each day in fear for his life; afraid that King David will come and take his life way. No doubt he is a poor man. He does not have access to the wealth or the lands of his family. He is a crippled man. His father was killed in battle and when the news came, his nurse tried to flee with the child and he was dropped and his legs were permanently damaged, 2 Sam. 4:4. He was five when this happened. All of his life he has been warned that David might find him. He lives in fear and he lives in misery every day.

INTRODUCTION:

This is a beautiful picture of divine grace (especially when you remember the unkind and unjust treatment David suffered at the hand of Saul) – with the caveat that David had earlier promised Jonathan that he would care for his family (so the story in its context is also about loyalty). Still you can see all of the aspects of grace:

- sovereign initiative
- seeking out the helpless
- showering him with undeserved mercy and love and favor
- protecting him and caring for him
- yet requiring some aspect of personal responsibility

I. (:1-8) DAVID REACHES OUT TO BLESS MEPHIBOSHETH – GRACIOUS HEART OF DAVID EXTENDS UNEXPECTED COVENANT LOYALTY TO CRIPPLED MEPHIBOSHETH

A. (:1) Sovereign Initiative of a Loyal Heart

“Then David said, ‘Is there yet anyone left of the house of Saul, that I may show

him kindness for Jonathan's sake?"

David gets a chance to catch his breath from his intense military campaigns and desires to follow up on his former commitment to his good friend Jonathan.

Ryrie (on 1 Sam. 20:14-15) – *hesed* – Love and loyalty, the two essential aspects of a covenant relationship, are bound together in this word. Jonathan recognized that David would one day be king and requested protection for himself and his family when David would take the throne.

B. (:2-5) Compassionate Empathy of a Loving Heart

1. (:2) Reconnecting to the House of Saul

“Now there was a servant of the house of Saul whose name was Ziba, and they called him to David; and the king said to him, ‘Are you Ziba?’ And he said, ‘I am your servant.’”

Very dangerous situation for Ziba; must have been very fearful

Blaikie: Re Ziba – a man of more substance than principle, as his conduct showed at a later period of his life. Ziba, we are told, had fifteen sons and twenty servants. He seems to have contrived to make himself comfortable notwithstanding the wreck of his master's fortunes, more comfortable than Mephibosheth, who was living in another man's house.

2. (:3a) Seeking out an Opportunity to Show Kindness

“And the king said, ‘Is there not yet anyone of the house of Saul to whom I may show the kindness of God?’”

We must always remember that it is the life of God flowing through us that can be a blessing to others. It is not our kindness, but God's kindness that we are privileged to be able to show to others. The origin of the grace and the goodness is not from ourselves.

3. (:3b) Discovering a Helpless Cripple

“And Ziba said to the king, ‘There is still a son of Jonathan who is crippled in both feet.’”

Not someone that would be much of a threat to the king
Requires quite a commitment to take on the care of the handicapped.

4. (:4-5) Bringing Him Into the King's Presence

a. (:4) Locating Mephibosheth in Humble Circumstances

“So the king said to him, ‘Where is he?’” And Ziba said to the king, ‘Behold, he is in the house of Machir the son of Ammiel in Lo-debar.’”

Matthew Henry: This Machir appears to have been a very generous free-hearted man, and to have entertained Mephibosheth, not out of any disaffection to David, or his government, but in compassion to the reduced son of a prince, for afterward we find him kind to David himself, when he fled from Absalom; he is named (ch. xvii.27.) among those that furnished the king with what he wanted at Mahanaim; though when David sent for Mephibosheth from him, he little thought that the time would come when he himself would gladly be beholden to him; and perhaps Machir was then the more ready to help David, in recompence for his kindness to Mephibosheth; therefore we should be forward to give, because we know not but we ourselves may sometimes be in want.”

b. (:5) Relocating Mephibosheth to the Royal Palace

“Then King David sent and brought him from the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, from Lo-debar.”

C. (:6-7) Abundant Blessings of a Gracious Heart

1. (:6) Formal Introduction

“And Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan the son of Saul, came to David and fell on his face and prostrated himself. And David said, ‘Mephibosheth.’ And he said, ‘Here is your servant!’”

Name means *“he scatters shame”* or *“shameful thing”*

2. (:7) Three Gracious Promises

a. Blessing of Protection – based on covenant loyalty and kindness

“And David said to him, ‘Do not fear, for I will surely show kindness to you for the sake of your father Jonathan,”

b. Blessing of Possessions

“and will restore to you all the land of your grandfather Saul;”

This would constitute a considerable fortune. What would be the reaction of those who had to give it up??

c. Blessing of Provisions

“ and you shall eat at my table regularly.”

D. (:8) Humble Thankfulness of a Servant Heart

“Again he prostrated himself and said, ‘What is your servant, that you should regard a dead dog like me?’”

Ryrie: someone contemptible and useless

**II. (:9-13) DAVID INSTRUCTS ZIBA REGARDING PRACTICAL DETAILS --
ADMINISTRATIVE WISDOM OF DAVID INSTRUCTS ZIBA REGARDING**

STEWARDSHIP OF HOUSEHOLD OF MEPHIBOSHETH

A. (:9-10) David's Charge to Ziba Regarding Stewardship

1. (:9) Laying out the Privileges

"Then the king called Saul's servant Ziba, and said to him, 'All that belonged to Saul and to all his house I have given to your master's grandson.'"

2. (:10) Laying out the Responsibilities

a. Farming the Land

"And you and your sons and your servants shall cultivate the land for him, and you shall bring in the produce so that your master's grandson may have food"

b. Royal Treatment

"nevertheless Mephibosheth your master's grandson shall eat at my table regularly."

c. Impressive Work Force and Resources

"Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants."

B. (:11a) Ziba's Commitment to Obey the King's Charge

"Then Ziba said to the king, 'According to all that my lord the king commands his servant so your servant will do.'"

C. (:11b-13) Mephibosheth's Enjoyment of the King's Favor

1. (:11b) Treated as the King's Son

"So Mephibosheth ate at David's table as one of the king's sons."

2. (:12a) Provision for His Own Son

"And Mephibosheth had a young son whose name was Mica."

3. (:12b) Faithful Service from House of Ziba

"And all who lived in the house of Ziba were servants to Mephibosheth."

4. (:13a) Royal Treatment

"So Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem, for he ate at the king's table regularly."

5. (:13b) Undeserving of Such Favor – Key point to the story

"Now he was lame in both feet."

DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

1) How would our life be different if we were more aggressive in taking the initiative

to **show kindness** to others – especially to those who do not have much to offer in return?

2) How **faithful** are we in our relationships with our friends as David was to Jonathan?

3) Do we appreciate the blessings we enjoy from our King – those of **protection** (never any reason to fear); of **possessions** (an eternal inheritance that can never be taken away from us); of **provisions** (privilege of eating at the King’s table – both physical sustenance and more importantly partaking of the bread of life)?

4) Do we appreciate being treated as **the King’s son** in every respect?

* * * * *

QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Davis: David’s kindness to this surviving son of Jonathan was prompted by two things:

- (1) The covenant which he had made with Jonathan, and
- (2) the attempt to end any conflict between his household and the household of Saul [But David’s reign was so well established at this time that there was no real threat remaining from the household of Saul ... so reason #1 must be primary. On the other hand, this passage makes constant reference to the household of Saul – not just Jonathan. – PGA]

Blaikie: This proceeding of David’s in making inquiry for a fit object of beneficence may afford us a lesson as to the true course of enlightened kindness. Doubtless David had numberless persons applying for a share of his bounty; yet he makes inquiry for a new channel in which it may flow. The most clamorous persons are seldom the most deserving, and if a bountiful man simply recognizes, however generously, even the best of the cases that press themselves on his notice, he will not be satisfied with the result; he will feel that his bounty has rather been frittered away on miscellaneous undertakings, than that it has achieved any solid and satisfying result.

Matthew Henry: Now, because David was a type of Christ, his Lord and Son, his Root and Offspring, let his kindness to Mephibosheth serve to illustrate the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward fallen man, which yet he was under no obligation to, as David was to Jonathan. Man was convicted of rebellion against God, and, like Saul’s house, under a sentence of rejection from him, was not only brought low and impoverished, but lame and impotent, made so by the fall: the Son of God inquires after this degenerate race, that inquired not after him; comes to seek and save them. To those of them that humble themselves before him and commit themselves to him, he restores the forfeited inheritance, he entitles them to a better paradise than that which Adam lost, and takes them into communion with himself, sets them with his children at his table, and feasts them with the dainties of heaven. *Lord, what is man, that thou shouldst thus magnify him!*

Pink: Next, we may notice the object of David's quest. It was not one who had befriended him during the days of his own dire need. Nor was it one whom men of the world would call "a deserving case." Nor was it one from whom David could expect anything again in return. Instead, it was one immediately descended from his most merciless and implacable foe; it was one who was hiding away from him; it was one who had nothing of his own, having lost his heritage. How accurate the picture The Gospel of God's grace is not seeking those who have something of their own to commend them unto the Lord, nor does it offer salvation in return for service to be rendered afterwards. Its inestimable riches are for worthless wretches, spiritual paupers, lost and undone sinners; and those riches are freely proffered "without money and without price." . . .

Next, let us look more closely at this one to whom David showed "the kindness of God"—covenant-kindness. First, his name, for no detail here is meaningless. The son of Jonathan was called "Mephibosheth" (v. 6), which signifies "a shameful thing." How accurately does that appellation describe the natural man! "We are all as an unclean thing" (Isa. 64:6) says God's Word—polluted by sin. We are by birth and practice thoroughly depraved and corrupt. Our understanding is darkened so that we cannot apprehend spiritual things, our will are opposed to God's, our hearts are desperately wicked, our consciences are seared, our strength spent in the service of Satan; and in the sight of the Holy One our very righteousnesses are "as filthy rags." "A shameful thing," then, we truly are: "from the sole of the foot even unto the crown of the head there is no soundness" in us by nature, but instead "wounds and bruises and putrefying sores" (Isa. 1:6). O what cause have we to cry with the leper "Unclean! unclean!" and say with Job "I am vile."

Second, Mephibosheth was a fugitive from David. When news reached the survivors of his family that Saul and his sons had been slain in battle, and David had ascended the throne, Mephibosheth and his nurse fled in terror: "he was five years old when the tidings came of Saul and Jonathan out of Jezreel, and his nurse took him up, and fled" (2 Sam. 4:4). They were anxious to keep out of David's way. So it is with the sinner, he is afraid of God, and seeks to banish Him from his thoughts. The knowledge of God's holiness, power and omniscience fills him with dismay, and he seeks to have nothing to do with Him. "The wicked flee when no man pursueth."

Third, Mephibosheth was a cripple. He was "lame of his feet" (2 Sam. 4:4): as the closing words of our chapter states, he "was lame on both his feet" (v. 13). How accurately that portrays the condition of those who are out of Christ! The natural man is unable to run in the path of God's commandments, or tread the narrow way which leadeth unto Life. He is a spiritual cripple; "without strength" (Rom. 5:6). The utter inability of the unregenerate to meet God's requirements and walk acceptably before him, is a truth written plain across the Scriptures, though it is given little place indeed in much modern preaching. The greatness of man, the freedom of his will, his ability to accept Christ any time, is now the sweet opiate which is chloroforming millions. "No man can come to Me except the Father which hath sent Me draw him" (John 6:44): how those words of Christ's attest the solemn fact that the sinner is "lame of both his feet"!

Fourth, Mephibosheth became a cripple through a fall: "and his nurse took him up and fled: and it came to pass, as she made haste to flee that he fell, and became lame" (2 Sam. 4:4). What a truly marvelous book the Bible is! Yet how it needs eyes anointed by the Divine Inspirer to perceive its wonders and beauties! How obvious it is to those favored with spiritual discernment that we have here far more than an historical account pertaining to a single individual: that it is rather a typical picture having a universal application. Man was not originally created in the condition he is now in. Man was far from being "lame on both his feet" when his Maker proclaimed him "very good." The faculties of man's soul have become spiritually crippled as the result of the fall—our fall in Adam. In consequence of that fall, "they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Rom. 8:8).

Fifth, the place where Mephibosheth resided. It was not at Jerusalem, no, indeed; none out of Christ live there. Jerusalem signifies "the foundation of peace" and as Holy Writ truly declares, "There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked" (Isa. 48:22): how can there be while they despise Him in whom alone peace is to be found? "But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest" (Isa. 57:20)—discontented, dissatisfied. No, it was not at Jerusalem that poor Mephibosheth resided. Instead, he dwelt at "Lodebar" (2 Sam. 9:4), which means, "the place of no pasture." What a significant line in our picture is this, so obviously drawn by more than a human artist. How aptly does it portray the world in which we live, the world which is away from God, which lieth in the wicked one. It is a world which provides no food for the soul: it is a great "howling wilderness" so far as spiritual provisions are concerned. Yet how little is that fact realized by those who are in it and of it.

Constable: The sensitive reader will observe many parallels between Mephibosheth and himself or herself and between David and God. As Mephibosheth had fallen, was deformed as a result of his fall, was hiding in a place of barrenness, and was fearful of the king, so is the sinner. David took the initiative to seek out in spite of his unloveliness, bring into his house and presence, and adopt as his own son Mephibosheth. He also shared his bounty and fellowship with this undeserving one for the rest of his life because of Jonathan, as God has done with us for the sake of Christ (cf. Ps. 23:6).

Redpath: The first word in connection with the salvation which grace ministers is **acceptance** by virtue of the merit of another. The second word is **abasement** by the revelation of that grace bestowed upon us all in Christ. My third word is **abundance**. "I . . . will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father," said David to Mephibosheth, "and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually" (II Samuel 9:7). . .

One of the evidences that grace has been genuine in a man's life is that there is something about him of abstinence: something about his character, his speech, his behavior, his dress, that indicates he shares in the suffering and rejection of Christ until He comes again.

* * * * *

CONTRAST: Look at the type of person that refuses to repent and seek God's mercy

- they think they need no salvation from God = **the Pharisees**
- self-righteous **Matt 5:20; 9:11-14** had no concept they were sinners in need of salvation
- trusted in their national lineage – “We have Abraham for our father” **Matt. 3:9**
“*brood of vipers*” = snakes – children of Satan
- unwilling to truly repent and bring forth fruit of repentance
- wise in their own eyes
- legalistic in their behavior – checking off boxes of self-imposed external requirements
- leading others down the same road of destruction; like blind leading the blind
- self-sufficient – imagine that they are the experts on God's revelation
Do what they say; don't do what they do
- lack compassion and mercy towards others; characterized by judgmental spirit
Matt 12:2
- conspiring against Christ and His kingdom – Matt 12
 - seeking to destroy Christ vs. 14
 - attributing works of the Holy Spirit to the devil vs 24
 - how can you being evil speak what is good vs 34
- characterized as hypocrites – the leaven of the Pharisees = their teaching 16:6,11,12
Matthew 23 – scathing rebuke of the Pharisees

TEXT: 2 Samuel 10:1-19

TITLE: DANGER OF WAKING A SLEEPING GIANT --
REJECTING GOD'S KINDNESS UNLEASHES GOD'S WRATH

BIG IDEA:

**MISJUDGING MOTIVES MOBILIZES POWERFUL FORCES TO ENGAGE
IN COMBAT -- BUT ENEMY ALLIANCES DISINTEGRATE BEFORE THE
FOCUSED STRENGTH OF GOD'S ARMY**

Missed this emphasis the first time I studied this passage

Simple Outline from **Noel Hughes**: (contrast to Chapter 9 – God's Kindness Received)

- **David's Kindness Revealed**
- **David's Kindness Rejected**
- **David's Kindness Revenged**

INTRODUCTION:

We have no reason to fear the powerful enemies that conspire to attack us. We need to be strong and courageous to engage the enemy – but trusting all the time in the power and blessing of God to give us the victory. This story also illustrates the danger of misjudging the motives of others and failing to give others the benefit of the doubt.

When we have a suspicious, judgmental spirit we can stir up strife where none existed. Kindness should be our approach to others.

But judging on the level of personal relationships different than in the context of national security

I. (:1-5) UNFOUNDED SUSPICION KINDLES ANGER WHERE THERE HAD BEEN KINDNESS

- A. (:1) Instability of Leadership Succession -- Can Create Volatile, Uncertain Times
“Now it happened afterwards that the king of the Ammonites died, and Hanun his son become king in his place.”

Look at illustration of succession in world of Caterpillar dealerships.

Youth and inexperience can be a problem.

“Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely.”

Ackroyd: The theme of loyalty provides a neat link with chapter 9. It is evident that there was some kind of treaty between David and Ammon. While nothing further is known of this, it is understandable that David would be glad to maintain a peaceful agreement with one of the neighbouring lands, as he also did with the Phoenicians.

- B. (:2a) Initiative of Reciprocal Kindness – Show of Compassion by King David
“Then David said, ‘I will show kindness to Hanun the son of Nahash, just as his father showed kindness to me.’ So David sent some of his servants to console him concerning his father.”

The specific kindness shown by Hanun's father is not recorded.

Ryrie: perhaps when David was a refugee

C. (:2b-3) Insecurity of Suspicious Counselors –

Leads to Misjudging Motives and Unwise Counsel

“But when David’s servants came to the land of the Ammonites, the princes of the Ammonites said to Hanun their lord, ‘Do you think that David is honoring your father because he has sent consolors to you? Has David not sent his servants to you in order to search the city, to spy it out and overthrow it?’”

These counselors seem to be picking a fight; maybe it was as much selfish ambition as insecurity that led them to misrepresent David's motives and fan the flames of this conflict

Kirkpatrick: The new king's counselors were as foolish as Rehoboam's advisors (1 Kings xii. 10, 11). Their unjust suspicions of David's motives may have been excited by his recent conquest of Moab.

In the multitude of counselors there lacks not wisdom = general principle – but be careful where you turn for advice – what are their credentials? What type of wisdom do they possess?

D. (:4) Indignity of Humiliating Mistreatment

“So Hanun took David’s servants and shaved off half of their beards, and cut off their garments in the middle as far as their hips, and sent them away.”

Counting the Cost: What were they prepared to do if David came after them? What did they expect would be the outcome of this strategy? Doesn't look like they had thought very far ahead

What reaction was Hanun expecting from David when he did this? Had he thought through the consequences of this mistreatment?

Ryrie: Shaving off a person's beard is still regarded by the Arabs as a great indignity. Sign of manhood and wisdom
Barber shop story from yesterday – guy with shaved head – gashed; getting married

E. (:5) Indignation of Misjudged Motives – Resolve to Punish the Offenders

“When they told it to David, he sent to meet them, for the men were greatly humiliated. And the king said, ‘Stay at Jericho until your beards grow, and then return.’”

Not a matter of turning the other cheek in terms of personal relationships; this had implications for national security; how was David going to be viewed by his enemies?

As a pushover? Or a strong leader? Sensitivity to his men

Talk about coming home with your tail between your legs

II. (:6-14) FAITH-BASED TACTICS DEFEAT POWERFUL ENEMY ALLIANCES

A. (:6-8) Tactics of Engagement

1. (:6) Tactic of a Fearful Enemy = Recruiting Opportunistic Reinforcements
“Now when the sons of Ammon saw that they had become odious to David, the sons of Ammon sent and hired the Arameans of Bethrehob and the Arameans of Zobah, 20,000 foot soldiers, and the king of Maacah with 1,000 men, and the men of Tob with 12,000 men.”

Paid 1,000 talents of silver to assemble this mercenary force;
Some trust in horses and some in chariots – they thought they could win by force of numbers

2. (:7) Tactic of a Confident King = Deploying Valiant Warriors
“When David heard of it, he sent Joab and all the army, the mighty men.”

Does not sound like David went into battle with his men here
The leadership and character of his fighting force was what was important to David – and more importantly – their confidence was in the Lord

3. (:8) Tactic of Traditional Combat
“And the sons of Ammon came out and drew up in battle array at the entrance of the city, while the Arameans of Zobah and of Rehob and the men of Tob and Maacah were by themselves in the field.”

B. (:9-12) Victorious Mindset

1. (:9-11) Mindset of Cooperative Deployment Against Both Battle Fronts
 - a. (:9) Deployment Against the Arameans
“Now when Joab saw that the battle was set against him in front and in the rear, he selected from all the choice men of Israel, and arrayed them against the Arameans.”

Dangerous situation to have to fight on two fronts – surrounded in the front and in the rear; felt that the threat from the Arameans was the most dangerous

- b. (:10) Deployment Against the Ammonites
“But the remainder of the people he placed in the hand of Abishai his brother, and he arrayed them against the sons of Ammon.”
 - c. (:11) Commitment to Help One Another
“And he said, ‘If the Arameans are too strong for me, than you shall help me; but if the sons of Ammon are too strong for you, then I will come to help you.’”

2. (:12) Mindset of Courageous Resolve Coupled with Unwavering Faith
“Be strong, and let us show ourselves courageous for the sake of our people and for the cities of our God; and may the Lord do what is good in His sight.”

Much to be learned in this verse regarding fighting spiritual battles – **3 Keys**

- **personal responsibility** – not just “let go and let God” – embrace your role
Command of the Lord – “Fear not ... take courage”
Charge to Joshua upon entering the Promised Land initially **Josh 1:5-9**
You have to fight – against temptation, against enemies, etc.
- **unselfish allegiance** to the cause of God and of His people -- representing the glory of God – He has more at stake in protecting His people and advancing His kingdom
- **enthusiastic submission** to the Lord’s providence and ultimate disposition of His good will
 - He sees the big picture
 - He will do what is best in his sight – leads to optimistic confidence

Lange: These words express trust in God combined with unconditional submission. Alongside of the faithfulness (to be shown by bravery and firmness), that was to do its duty in this situation so dangerous for the people and for Jehovah, is put the hidden will of God in respect to what will happen, and unconditional submission to His counsel and deed.

C. (:13-14) Routing the Enemy

1. (:13) Putting the Arameans to Flight
“So Joab and the people who were with him drew near to the battle against the Arameans, and they fled before him.”
2. (:14) Putting the Ammonites to Flight
“When the sons of Ammon saw that the Arameans fled, they also fled before Abishai and entered the city. Then Joab returned from fighting against the sons of Ammon and came to Jerusalem.”

III. (:15-19) COMPLETE VICTORY REQUIRES FINISHING OFF THE ENEMY AND FORCING A FAVORABLE PEACE

A. (:15-17) One Last Stand

1. (:15-16) Arameans Rally with Reinforcements
“When the Arameans saw that they had been defeated by Israel, they gathered themselves together. And Hadadezer sent and brought out the Arameans who were beyond the River, and they came to Helam; and Shobach the commander of the army of Hadadezer led them.”

Called in reserves from as far away as the Euphrates River

2. (:17) David Relishes the Opportunity

“Now when it was told David, he gathered all Israel together and crossed the Jordan, and came to Helam. And the Arameans arrayed themselves to meet David and fought against him.”

One would have expected that the enemy had suffered enough losses and would have just fled to wait for a more opportune time. David was probably glad for the opportunity to finish them off at Helam.

B. (:18) One Great Slaughter

“But the Arameans fled before Israel, and David killed 700 charioteers of the Arameans and 40,000 horsemen and struck down Shobach the commander of their army, and he died there.”

Ryrie: 700. Probably a copyist’s error, in place of 7,000 (cf. 1 Chron. 19:18).

C. (:19) One Favorable Peace

“When all the kings, servants of Hadadezer, saw that they were defeated by Israel, they made peace with Israel and served them. So the Arameans feared to help the sons of Ammon anymore.”

David was able to negotiate a favorable peace treaty on his terms. The enemy was left with no bargaining power and was forced to be completely subservient.

Eugene Merrill: This is the second account of a subjugation of Hadadezer by David (cf. 2 Sam. 8:3-8). Apparently chapter 8 records an initial reduction of the Arameans of Zobah to Israelite vassal-dom, while chapter 10 assumes an Aramean rebellion against David’s over-lordship, a rebellion which was squashed and which resulted in continued Aramean submission.

CONCLUSION: contrast chapter 9 and chapter 10

A “the kindness of God” intended to lead us to repentance **Rom 2:1-4**

Look at what unleashes the wrath of God

REJECTING GOD’S KINDNESS UNLEASHES GOD’S WRATH

B. **2 Cor. 2:14-17** but talking about Word of God and response of people rather than their response to manifestation of common grace and the kindness of God

C. **Parable of soils** – 2 possible responses – contrast with previous chapter where kindness was extended to Mephibosheth and was humbly received **Mark 4:1-20**

DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

- 1) What type of leadership successions (in world governments or in the church arena) have you witnessed where the situation proved to be volatile and unstable? What were some of the mistakes made in those situations? What were some of the lessons learned?
- 2) Are we careful not to misjudge the motives of others? Do we stir up strife or are we characterized as those whom Jesus described as “*Blessed are the peacemakers?*”
- 3) When we are acting out of courageous faith do we have the same commitment to the Goodness of God and His Providential care as David and Joab did so that we are ready to accept the outcome decreed by the Lord?
- 4) What instances from the history of the United States could you cite where we failed to adequately finish off the enemy and force a favorable peace? What were the consequences of not following through when we had the opportunity?

* * * * *

QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Laney: Chapters 9 and 10 show God’s blessing on David’s demonstration of loyal love. David expressed covenant loyalty to God (chap. 6-7), his fellowman (9:1), and to a foreigner (10:2), which resulted in God’s blessing on his rule. That is remarkable in contrast to the judgment on David’s sin beginning in chapter 11.

Lange: This great danger, prepared for David by his enemies, was made through the divine control to conduce to the magnifying of his name, and to his ascent to the highest point of royal glory. The bold insolence of the enemies of God’s people and kingdom must serve not only to bring about more wonderfully the revelation of the Lord’s power in subduing enemies and helping friends, but also to manifest more splendidly the glory and might of His kingdom in the battles into which it is forced by enemies.

Blaikie: And when Joab came to the spot, he found that he had a double enemy to face. The Ammonite army came out from the city to encounter him, while the Syrian army were encamped in the country, ready to place him between two fires when the battle began. To guard against this, Joab divided his force into two. The Syrian host was the more formidable body; therefore Joab went in person against it, at the head of a select body of troops chosen from the general army. The command of the remainder was given to his brother Abishai, who was left to deal with the Ammonites. If either section found its opponent too much for it, aid was to be given by the other.

Winter: The Ammonites not only were able to hire men from the Syrians of Beth-rehob and Zobah, but they were able to get men from Maacah. Maacah was a city and small Syrian kingdom at the foot of Mount Hermon near Geshur (Joshua 13:13; 1 Chronicles 19:7). This territory was the land around the southern and eastern slopes of Hermon; it also took in a portion of the rocky plateau called Iturea. The land really belonged to Israel, but it was not possessed by them in Joshua’s day. Its king contributed 1,000 men

to the Ammonites as they fought against David, but they were all defeated (verse 19).

Kirkpatrick: The text of Chronicles differs from that of Samuel in several points.

a) It mentions the price paid to the Syrians, a thousand talents of silver, and names Medeba as the rendezvous where their forces assembled.

b) The names of the countries from which the mercenaries were drawn are given as Mesopotamia, Maacah, and Zobah. Beth-rehob may be included under Mesopotamia (v. 6, note). Tob is not mentioned; perhaps it was a dependency of Zobah, and is included under it. The contingent sent by each is not specified.

c) The total number of 32,000 besides the men of Maacah, agrees with the numbers here; but the reading *chariots* in the present text of 1 Chr. xix.7 can scarcely be right. 32,000 chariots would be a force of unexampled magnitude. . . . The text of Samuel also seems to be defective, as the force doubtless had some cavalry and chariots and did not consist of infantry only.

David Silversides: Kindness Despised

Hanun's contempt for David's kindness in contrast with humble acceptance on the part of Mephibosheth. God's sovereign disposition with respect to salvation does not reduce the rightness of receiving the gospel or the wrongness of rejecting it.

David showed kindness to Hanun for his father's sake. Servants of David were shamefully treated. This was not just a practical joke but a deliberate insult to King David and all of Israel. Appeasement is not the answer once these boundaries have been crossed. David would have been wrong to just dismiss this. This was a matter of national security.

Applications

- There is a twofold response to Christian kindness; therefore we must show kindness for the Lord's sake; not in order to be treated kindly in return (or you will become bitter and disillusioned)
- There is a twofold response to the Lord's kindness through His people

Noel Hughes: Kindness of God Spurned

These 2 chapters placed side by side not by accident.

Their actions brought upon themselves the wrath of the king. Two very difficult conclusions to these chapters. Reception and Enjoyment in chap. 9; Shameful Rejection and Corresponding Wrath of the King in chap. 10.

- **David's Kindness Revealed** (vs. 2)

Revealed in a time of great sorrow and a time of great loss; David sends his servants to bring comfort; Gospel is a message of comfort which arises from the heart of God's mercy and grace; this message came at a time when death reigned.

Lord Jesus spoke words of comfort on 3 different occasions:

Matt 9:2 – Paralytic forgiven -- "*Be of good cheer* (comfort)" – Comfort of Forgiveness

Mark 10:49 – blind Bartemaeus – Comfort of Reconciliation

Luke 8:48 -- woman with issue of blood for 12 years – Comfort of Healing and

Peace and Fullness

Different physical maladies; no remedy from mankind; Christ comes with the message: "I have made you whole!"

David motivated by a prior act of kindness shown to him – this is different from divine grace; salvation is unmerited and undeserved

- **David's Kindness Rejected** (vs. 3)

God has sent His servants into the world to preach the gospel and they have been mistreated and abused; treated with contempt and reproach; What is the reason behind this action? Why did they spurn David's offer of kindness? Due to their unbelief and mistrust; misjudged his motives; thought that David was out for their destruction. They reasoned that David's offer would ultimately be detrimental to them. The world thinks they will lose out if they bow to the gospel. Christ will rob them of joy and happiness. *"the pleasures of sin for a season"*

They view Christ as a kill joy. I will not advance in my career. Etc.

Christ will never disadvantage me.

- **David's Kindness Revenged**

Actions of Ammonites provoked the anger of David. The response was the wrath of the king. If man rejects the mercy of God, no other alternative but God's wrath. **2 Thess 1: 7**

Men cannot be neutral towards the gospel – either accept or reject it

Ammonites sought for help, tried to strengthen their defense when they saw they had aroused the king's wrath – but no help could deliver them. When the King came ... that was the end. Rev. 6; man will not be able to put up any resistance against the wrath of the king

TEXT: 2 Samuel 11:1-27

TITLE: DAVID AND BATHSHEBA – THE TRAGEDY OF SEXUAL SIN
BACKSLIDING . . . MORE LIKE A FREE FALL

BIG IDEA:
**SEXUAL TEMPTATION CAN TRIGGER COMPOUNDING SINS WITH
GRIEVOUS CONSEQUENCES**

(:1) BACKGROUND -- SETTING THE STAGE FOR A TRAGIC FALL

“Then it happened in the spring, at the time when kings go out to battle, that David sent Joab and his servants with him and all Israel, and they destroyed the sons of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. But David stayed at Jerusalem.”

David about 50 yrs old; **1 Kings 15:4-5** overall evaluation of reign of David
Successful king with too much time on his hands. Complacent

Debate: King shirking his responsibility of military leadership in the field of battle?? Or was he justified to delegate this responsibility now that the borders were largely secured?

Weather = big factor in warfare – you wanted to be home for fall harvest; winter not a good time to do battle

City of Rabbah for the Ammonites had been defeated in Chap 10 but not wiped out.

Vulnerable when temptation arrived; not walking in dependence upon God’s grace; probably self confident over past successes – full of himself

Radio show: Turning Point – this was turning point in life and reign of King David = The Tumultuous Reign of King David

I. (:2-5) THE DECEITFUL LURE OF ADULTERY

A. (:2) Entertaining Temptation – The Lust of the Eyes – Peeping David

“Now when evening came David arose from his bed and walked around on the roof of the king’s house, and from the roof he saw a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful in appearance.”

Flat roofs; cool breezes

Job 31:1 “I have made a covenant with my eyes ...”

Matt 5:27-28 – famous President Jimmy Carter verses

The first look is not sin .. just the presentation of temptation – how you respond is the key – how did Joseph respond to sexual temptation with Potiphar’s wife?

Flee youthful lusts

Cf. James 1:14-15

Proverbs chapter 5 and 7 later

B. (3) Checking Her Out -- Background Check

“So David sent and inquired about the woman. And one said, ‘Is this not

Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?"

Ryrie: Though a Hittite, Uriah must have worshiped Yahweh (the Lord), since his name means "Yahweh is my light."

23:39 not just any common soldier but one of the mighty men of David; leader over a significant force; probably well off financially – lived in the high rent district of the neighborhood of the king – nice homes; high on the social ladder; had proven his loyalty to the nation and to the king; not someone who deserved such abuse

C. (:4) Committing Adultery

"And David sent messengers and took her, and when she came to him, he lay with her; and when she had purified herself from her uncleanness, she returned to her house."

David had plenty of wives – certainly very beautiful – why the need to take Bathsheba? Stolen waters are sweet / Sin is irrational – lusts of the flesh; Why do I eat too much?? I like that extra sticky bun

Why would Bathsheba come to the king? Certainly very powerful request .. She is not the central figure of the story; but still culpable

Lev. 15:18 – followed by section on menstrual uncleanness and purification
Why the scruples to follow this external requirement of the law when you had just smashed one of the Big Ten of the Ten Commandments??

D. (:5) Facing Unwanted Consequences

"And the woman conceived; and she sent and told David, and said, 'I am pregnant.'"

When you see the fall of public political figures or of people in visible ministry positions – seems sudden and so unexpected .. but the culmination of a pattern over time of smaller decisions of omission or commission – a decline in watchfulness

Only 2 possible reactions to sin

- confess it and turn away from it
- try to ignore it or cover it up

You can't undo it – I wish I could just go back and tee the ball up and play it again

Either we think

- consequences will not hurt us
- consequences won't be so bad

Sin is foolishness

II. (:6-13) THE FAILED ATTEMPT AT COVER-UP (DUE TO THE

INTEGRITY OF URIAH)

A. (:6-8) Setting the Stage to Trick Uriah

1. (:6) Summoning Him from the Battlefield

“Then David sent to Joab, saying, ‘Send me Uriah the Hittite.’ So Joab sent Uriah to David.”

Winter: David called Uriah back from the battlefield in an effort to have him in Jerusalem at a time when the public would think that the child born to Bathsheba was fathered by Uriah. It was the desperate effort of a desperate man to cover up his sin.

2. (:7) Faking Concern

“When Uriah came to him, David asked concerning the welfare of Joab and the people and the state of the war.”

Pretending to be concerned and wanting a status report when all he wanted was a pretext to hide his sin

3. (:8) Manipulating the Circumstances

“Then David said to Uriah, ‘Go down to your house, and wash your feet.’ And Uriah went out of the king’s house, and a present from the king was sent out after him.”

You can be sure the *present* included some strong drink.

Ryrie: *wash your feet*. A contemporary idiom meaning “spend some time at home.”

B. (:9-11) Single-Minded Focus and Dedication of Uriah

1. (:9) Rejecting the Invitation

“But Uriah slept at the door of the king’s house with all the servants of his lord, and did not go down to his house.”

Was Uriah suspicious? Rumors circulating?? Text just takes the high road here; loyalty to remain identified with his troops in battle

2. (:10) Being Interrogated by the King

“Now when they told David, saying, ‘Uriah did not go down to his house,’ David said to Uriah, ‘Have you not come from a journey? Why did you not go down to your house?’”

3. (:11) Putting the King to Shame

“And Uriah said to David, ‘The ark and Israel and Judah are staying in temporary shelters, and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are camping in the open field. Shall I then go to my house to eat and to drink and to lie with my wife? By your life and the life of your soul, I will not do this thing.’”

Would that King David had such a commitment – this is why it seems like there was something wrong for a healthy king not to lead his troops into battle but to stay at home in ease and comfort

C. (:12-13) Second Attempt to Trick Uriah

1. (:12) Delaying His Departure

“Then David said to Uriah, ‘Stay here today also, and tomorrow I will let you go.’ So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day and the rest.”

2. (:13a) Dulling His Alertness

“Now David called him, and he ate and drank before him, and he made him drunk;”

3. (:13b) Duplicating the Results

“and in the evening he went out to lie on his bed with his lord’s servants, but he did not go down to his house.”

III. (:14-25) THE DECEITFUL TACTIC OF COMPOUNDING ADULTERY WITH MURDER

A. (:14-17) Insidious Plot to Murder Uriah

1. (:14-15) Insidious Plot Concocted

a. Urgency of the Insidious Plot

“Now it came about in the morning”

b. Mastermind of the Insidious Plot

“that David”

c. Medium for the Instructions – Dangerous to put it in writing

“wrote a letter”

d. Minister of the Murder Plot – Loyal enough to the king to carry it out

“to Joab”

e. Messenger for the Murder Instructions = the Victim Himself

“and sent it by the hand of Uriah”

f. Modus Operandi

“And he had written in the letter, saying, ‘Place Uriah in the front line of the fiercest battle and withdraw from him, so that he may be struck down and die.’”

2. (:16-17) Insidious Plot Carried Out

a. Integrated into Overall Battle Strategy

“So it was as Joab kept watch on the city, “

- b. Putting Uriah in Harm's Way
"that he put Uriah at the place where he knew there were valiant men."
- c. Predictable Engagement
"And the men of the city went out and fought against Joab,"
- d. Collateral Damage
"and some of the people among David's servants fell;"
- e. Murder Accomplished
"and Uriah the Hittite also died."

B. (:18-21) Dirty Secrets Give Joab Leverage

1. (:18) Overall Report

"Then Joab sent and reported to David all the events of the war."

2. (:19-21a) Tactical Mistakes Could Anger the King

"And he charged the messenger, saying, 'When you have finished telling all the events of the war to the king, and if it happens that the king's wrath rises and he says to you, Why did you go so near to the city to fight? Did you not know that they would shoot from the wall? Who struck down Abimelech the son of Jerubbesheth? Did not a woman throw an upper millstone on him from the wall so that he died at Thebe? Why did you go so near the wall?'"

3. (:21b) Ace in the Hole is Joab's Protection

"then you shall say, 'Your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.'"

Joab has "Get Out of Jail" card he can play at any time

C. (:22-25) Expedient Mindset of King David

1. (:22-24) Carefully Crafted Communication of the Report

a. Following Joab's Coaching

"So the messenger departed and came and reported to David all that Joab had sent him to tell."

b. Painting the Best Possible Picture

"And the messenger said to David, 'The men prevailed against us and came out against us in the field, but we pressed them as far as the entrance of the gate.'"

c. Minimizing the Significant Losses

"Moreover, the archers shot at your servants from the wall; so some of the king's servants are dead,"

c. Highlighting the Primary Objective

“and your servant Uriah the Hittite is also dead.”

2. (:25) Callousness of David to Significant Losses of Life

“Then David said to the messenger, ‘Thus you shall say to Joab, Do not let this thing displease you, for the sword devours one as well as another; make your battle against the city stronger and overthrow it; and so encourage him.’”

(:26-27) SAD CONCLUSION

A. (:26) Required Period of Mourning

“Now when the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she mourned for her husband.”

B. (:27a) Swift Consummation of the Marriage

“When the time of mourning was over, David sent and brought her to his house and she become his wife; “

C. (:27b) Cursed Offspring from the Adulterous Relationship

“then she bore him a son.”

D. (:27c) Accountability Assessment by the Omniscient Judge

“But the thing that David had done was evil in the sight of the Lord.”

* * * * *

DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

- 1) When churches become very large, is there a tendency to delegate more of the hands-on pastoring to other staff members and for the preaching pastor(s) to become more removed from interacting with the flock? Should David have gone to battle with Joab or was it OK to delegate that responsibility?
- 2) How culpable are women today when they dress provocatively – even though men still have no excuse for succumbing to sexual temptation?
- 3) Why is the cover-up always worse than the initial sin?
- 4) Do we have any secret sins that we are not bringing before the omniscient Judge who knows even the thoughts and intents of our heart?

* * * * *

QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

McGee: Why did he stay? I have only a suggestion to make. After David built his palace he found it very comfortable. It was quite different from the cave of Adullam where he had spent his youth. His palace was a place of luxury and comfort. Also David loved Mt. Zion and wanted to stay around that place. Prosperity is one of the things that has trapped so many men and women. Our great comfort has become a curse in our nation. David tarried still in Jerusalem. That was his first mistake. He should have gone to war with his men.

Ryrie: Oriental homes had an enclosed courtyard that was considered part of the house. Bathsheba, bathing herself by lamplight, was not immodest for she was in her house. However, the interior of the courtyard could be seen from the roof of David's house, situated as it was on the higher elevation of Mt. Zion.

Laney: Bathsheba, bathing by lamplight, would not be considered immodest in consideration of the fact that she was in her own house. But she was probably indiscreet. She undoubtedly knew that the interior of her courtyard could be seen from the roof of David's house situated at a higher elevation on Mt. Zion. In the darkness of the night, perhaps David saw more with his imagination than he did with his eye. Both were guilty – Bathsheba for indiscretion and David for fantasizing a relationship with another man's wife.

Davis: The greatest victories are sometimes annulled by foolish mistakes. David's unparalleled success had made it possible for him to enjoy all the comforts of royal life. No longer did he need to be in the field of combat since capable leadership was provided by Joab and there were no more immediate serious threats to the kingdom. It was in these circumstances that David's greatest failure occurred (cf. I Kings 15:5). It was tragic indeed that such a brilliant career should be marred in this manner; however, it is well-known that Satan is most effective in his approaches when the believer is comfortable and successful.

McGee: David thinks he has gotten by with his sin, although there are a few people who know the facts. Joab, David's captain, knows the facts. A few of David's intimate counselors in Jerusalem who brought Bathsheba to the palace know the facts. Beyond that no one knows, and the lips of these men are closed. They would not dare talk. David, however, wonders as he sits on his throne and looks around him. . . . After a time David probably sat back in satisfaction and said to himself, *Well, I got by with it. Nobody knows.* My friend, whether it was known in Jerusalem or not, David's secret sin and our secret sins are open before God. Someone has put it this way, "Secret sin on earth is open scandal in heaven." God knows all about what we do.

Lange: The inscrutable development of many individual sins from one hidden root proceeds according to an inner natural law: the human will, by detaching the heart from the living God, surrenders itself to the power of sinful lust, and the latter through the removal of the moral forces that had hitherto held it down and controlled the outer and inner life, gets unrestrained dominion. When the life is at the highest point of

communion with the living God, pride slips in and leads to an all the deeper fall. The enjoyment of experiences of divine favor, and of the fruits of struggle for the kingdom of God, leaves the door of the heart open to fleshly security. Temporary rest from work and fight, though not in itself insidious, leads to moral indolence, to spiritual sloth, to carelessness and unfaithfulness in office and calling. Wicked lust, excited from without at a hidden point of the inner life, no longer finds limitations in thoughts on the solemn divine command and prohibition: Thou shalt and thou shalt not, in the warning and exhorting voice of conscience, in the restraints and hindrances of divine providence, in faithful performance of duty and labor in one's calling, whereby the kindled fire might again be smothered. The "evil conscience" that follows the satisfaction of evil lust leads on the beaten, slippery and precipitous path to lying and deception, in order to conceal the sin from men. From the soil of the heart poisoned by one sin, from perversion from God of feeling and will in one hidden point of the heart, comes one sin after another.

Blackwood: Such a brilliant tactician as David could think of more than one way to "liquidate" an undesirable soldier. The scheme that the king devised left him clear in the eyes of the law. As long as his conscience failed to condemn, what had he to dread? After he had caused the woman's husband to fall in battle, the royal culprit might have whispered to himself, with a sigh of relief: "All's well that ends well!" Perhaps so, if a man forgets God. For years this one had stood out in his world as the public representative of the Most High. Indeed, he was to become the forebear of the promised Messiah. And yet the most highly favored of men had deliberately committed adultery and murder. Worse still, he had no thought of confessing those sins. What can the Almighty do with such an ingrate?

Anderson: Cover-up Attempts:

- 1) Delusion – try to get Uriah to think he was the father
- 2) Deception – try to get Uriah drunk so he lets down his defenses
- 2) Destruction – just go ahead and arrange circumstances to have him killed

Consequences rolled in – wave upon wave – leaving both guilty and innocent awash.

- David's child died
- David's influence was destroyed
- David's family disintegrated. The sword hung over his house as brother raped sister and brother slaughtered brother. His kingdom fell into shambles.

Epp: It does not seem that David's sin was necessarily a sin of a moment. The affair with Bath-sheba was the climax of 20 years of looseness with regard to the warnings of God concerning kings. In Deuteronomy 17:16,17 the Lord warned Israel's leaders that they should not multiply horses nor lay up to themselves silver and gold nor multiply to themselves wives. David was careful about two of these things. He did not go in for raising horses and what gold and silver he laid up was for the purpose of building a house for God. But in the third realm David failed. He had many wives. Michal, Saul's daughter was his first wife. Then he married Abigail, the widow of Nabal, then Ahinoam of Jezreel. While living at Hebron, he took to himself four more wives.

Then, when he moved his home to Jerusalem, he added more wives and concubines.

Woodrow Kroll: Are there any lessons you and I can learn about David's lust? I think there are. I keep remembering that old song we used to sing in Sunday school when I was a kid. "Oh, be careful little eyes what you see. Oh, be careful little eyes what you see. For the Father up above is looking down in love, so be careful little eyes what you see." That's good advice for all of us, isn't it? Sometimes that first look at sin and that first temptation is inadvertent, but the second look is pure lust. . .

Look at how the lust of David has degenerated. His lust led him to adultery. Frequently that happens. His adultery led him to conspiracy. Frequently that happens as well. But notice today that his conspiracy led him to duplicity. What does duplicity mean? Duplicity simply means double dealing. It's a hypocritical cunning or a deception. You see, while David did not actually shoot the arrow that killed Uriah or would kill him, he was the double-dealing deceiver who made sure that Uriah would die. That's duplicity. With David in the palace, Bathsheba in her house and Uriah still in Jerusalem, David's lust and his adultery were already coming back to haunt him. . .

The first half of David's life was a life of great victory. The second half of his life was a life of great defeat. The dividing point is his lust and his sin with Bathsheba. Subsequent to David's sin, David's house is the scene of horrible crimes and feuds and scandals, every kind of disgrace imaginable. In chapter 13, his daughter Tamar is raped by his son Amnon. In chapter 15, his son Absalom incites a rebellion, which drove David out of Jerusalem and away from his throne. In chapter 16, David is cursed by Shimei, a nobody. Although David was returned to the throne, in chapter 20 another nobody, Sheba, incites another rebellion against David. In chapter 21 there is a three-year famine striking the land. In chapter 24 David brings a plague upon his own people because of his pride. You see, you can easily divide success and failure in David's life by his lust and his sin with Bathsheba.

Redpath: David was called "*a man after God's own heart.*" That was the caliber of the man, the height to which he had risen. He had become king of all Israel, and he had defeated all his enemies. He had risen now to the peak of his life and career – when suddenly the devil tripped him up.

Oh, from what heights of blessing it is possible for a man to fall! To what depths of sin a man can descend, even with all that spiritual background! The higher the pinnacle of blessing, authority, and publicity he has attained by grace, the deeper and more staggering can be his collapse. There is never a day in any man's life but that he is dependent upon the grace of God for power and the blood of Jesus for cleansing.

David Silversides: Applications:

- Watch against the beginnings of sin – don't overestimate your maturity; treat all sin seriously
- watch for signs of spiritual decay: cynicism, bitterness, indifference
- Don't rest on past laurels – need grace for today

- Confess; don't hide your sin; leads to worse problems; pride prevents us from being open about our sins

TEXT: 2 Samuel 12:1-31

TITLE: *ONE SON DIES BUT ANOTHER IS BORN*

BIG IDEA:

THE BLESSING OF GOD CAN SPRING FROM THE SOIL OF SINFUL FAILURE – BUT NOT WITHOUT SORROWFUL CONFESSION AND PAINFUL CONSEQUENCES --

THE FOUR STEPS IN THE CYCLE OF JUDGMENT AND RESTORATION FOR A FALLEN LEADER

INTRODUCTION:

The pleasure of sin is but for a moment (“the fleeting pleasures of sin”) when weighed against the pain of its consequences. The fuller confession of King David is found in Psalm 32 and 51. But here we see the grace and mercy of the Lord in bringing something good out of the ruins of a fallen spiritual leader.

St. Augustine: David’s fall should put upon their guard those who have not fallen, and save from despair those who have.

Note: **Blaikie** explains that the sequence of events in these chapters in 2 Samuel are probably not presented in chronological order. In that case the cycle discussed here is presented in logical order . . . not chronological. That might explain David’s cruelty to his enemies – exacted at a time when David’s heart was still in a cold and backslidden condition. (The other reading of the text here would be that David subjected his enemies to various forms of slave labor.)

I. (:1-15a) STEP#1: GUILTY VERDICT -- NATHAN CONFRONTS DAVID WITH HIS SIN

A. (:1-6) Parable of Contemptible Exploitation –

Rich Man Taking Advantage of Poor Man (Stealing his only resource)

1. (:1a) Confrontational Mission

“Then the Lord sent Nathan to David, And he came to him, and said”

Certainly a difficult mission for Nathan.

2. (:1b-3) Materialistic Contrast Between the Rich Man and the Poor Man

“There were two men in one city; the one rich and the other poor. The rich man had a great many flocks and herds. But the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb Which he bought and nourished; And it grew up together with him and his children. It would eat of his bread and drink of his cup and lie in his bosom, And was like a daughter to him.”

A story that a former shepherd could relate to easily.
Speaks to how precious Bathsheba was to Uriah.

3. (:4) Contemptible Exploitation

“Now a traveler came to the rich man, And he was unwilling to take from his own flock or his own herd, To prepare for the wayfarer who had come to him; Rather he took the poor man’s ewe lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him.”

4. (:5-6) Passionate Condemnation

“Then David’s anger burned greatly against the man, and he said to Nathan, ‘As the Lord lives, surely the man who has done this deserves to die. And he must make restitution for the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing and had no compassion.’”

B. (:7-12) Prophecy of Condemnation

1. (:7a) Exposing the Perpetrator

“Nathan then said to David, ‘You are the man!’”

2. (:7b-8) Recounting the King’s Past Blessings – all attributable to Divine Providence – the gracious favor shown by the Lord

“Thus says the Lord God of Israel”

a. Divine Coronation as King

“It is I who anointed you king over Israel”

b. Divine Protection from the Attacks of Saul

“It is I who delivered you from the hand of Saul”

c. Unlimited Prosperity, Power and Prestige

“I also gave you your master’s house and your master’s wives into your care, and I gave you the house of Israel and Judah; and if that had been too little, I would have added to you many more things like these!”

Deffinbaugh: David's problem is that his possessions have come to own him. He is so “possessed” with his riches that he is unwilling to spend any of them. He wants “more” and “more,” and so he begins to take what isn’t his to take, rather than to ask the divine Giver of all he has.

3. (:9) Redressing the King’s Incomprehensible Transgressions

a. Affront to God’s Graciousness, God’s Word, and God’s Holiness

“Why have you despised the word of the Lord by doing evil in His sight?”

b. Guilty of Gross Adultery and Murder

“You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword, have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the sons of Ammon.”

4. (:10-12) Prophecy of the Coming Judgments on David’s Family

a. (:10) Family Condemned to Violence

“Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.”

Ryrie: These predictions of judgment were fulfilled in the violent deaths of Amnon (13:28-29) and Absalom (18:15), and in Absalom’s public appropriation of David’s royal concubines (16:22).

b. (:11) Family Condemned to Incestuous Evil of the Most Disgraceful Variety

“Thus says the Lord, ‘Behold, I will raise up evil against you from your own household; I will even take your wives before your eyes, and give them to your companion, and he shall lie with your wives in broad daylight.’”

c. (:12) Public Humiliation

“Indeed you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel; and under the sun.”

C. (:13) Penitence of Confession – Essential to repent and come clean

“Then David said to Nathan, ‘I have sinned against the Lord’”

Study Psalm 51

You don’t find the attempts at feeble excuses and self justification that you see on the part of King Saul (1 Samuel 15)

D. (:13b-14) Pain of Consequences – Softened by Forgiveness

1. (:13b) Granted Forgiveness

“And Nathan said to David, ‘The Lord has taken away your sin

2. (:13c) Spared Personal Death

“ you shall not die.”

2. (:14) Disciplined with Family Tragedy

“However, because by this deed you have given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also that is born to you shall surely die.”

E. (:15a) Message Delivered – No Debate

“So Nathan went to his house.”

II. (:15b-23) STEP #2: PAYING THE PRICE -- DAVID WRESTLES WITH THE LORD FOR THE LIFE OF HIS NEWBORN SON

A. (:15b-17) Pleading for Mercy

1. (:15b) Judgment Initiated

“Then the Lord struck the child that Uriah’s widow bore to David, so that he was very sick.”

2. (:16-17) Last Ditch Intercession

“David therefore inquired of God for the child; and David fasted and went and lay all night on the ground. And the elders of his household stood beside him in order to raise him up from the ground, but he was unwilling and would not eat food with them.”

B. (:18-19) Facing the Finality of Death

1. (:18) Impossibility of Denying Reality

“then it happened on the seventh day that the child died. And the servants of David were afraid to tell him that the child was dead, for they said, ‘Behold, while the child was still alive, we spoke to him and he did not listen to our voice. How then can we tell him that the child is dead, since he might do himself harm!’”

2. (:19) Wisdom of Accepting Reality

“But when David saw that his servants were whispering together, David perceived that the child was dead; so David said to his servants, ‘Is the child dead?’ And they said, ‘He is dead.’”

C. (:20-23) Resuming the Responsibilities of Life

1. (:20a) Priority of Worship

“So David arose from the ground, washed, anointed himself, and changed his clothes; and he came into the house of the Lord and worshiped.”

2. (:20b) Necessity of Nourishment

“then he came to his own house, and when he requested, they set food before him and he ate.”

3. (:21-23) Explanation of Mindset

a. (:21) Depression and Despair Anticipated

“Then his servants said to him, ‘What is this thing that you have done? While the child was alive, you fasted and wept; but when the child died, you arose and ate food.’”

b. (:22-23) Faith and Realism Explained

1) (:22) Aggressively Seeking a Miracle

“And he said, ‘While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, Who knows, the Lord may be gracious to me, that the child may live.’”

Ryrie: While the verse may lend support to the view that infants who die are taken to heaven, the emphasis here is not on existence after death, but on the inevitability of death. The child could not return to life, but David would someday join his son in death.

Deffinbaugh: I simply do not find this explanation to be an adequate explanation for David's comfort and conduct. I believe that David is looking beyond the grave, to his reunion with this child at the resurrection.

At least we can say that this verse speaks to the futility of prayers for the dead.

2) (:23) Submissively Accepting God's Will

“But now he has died; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he will not return to me.”

Futility of prayers offered for the dead

III. (:24-25) STEP #3: RESTORATION -- THE LORD BLESSES DAVID AND BATHSHEBA WITH SOLOMON = THE BELOVED OF THE LORD

A. (:24a) Comforting Conception – Birth of Solomon

“Then David comforted his wife Bathsheba, and went in to her and lay with her; and she gave birth to a son, and he named him Solomon.”

MacArthur: [Signif. of name] – either *God is peace*, or *His replacement* – both were true of Solomon

B. (:24b-25) Loving Label -- Renaming of Solomon

“Now the Lord loved him and sent word through Nathan the prophet, and he named him Jedidiah for the Lord's sake.”

IV. (:26-31) STEP #4: REBUILDING HIS REPUTATION -- JOAB ENCOURAGES DAVID TO RESUME HIS KINGLY RESPONSIBILITIES

A. (:26-28) Encouragement by Trusted Subordinates

1. (:26) Victory Secured by Joab

“Now Joab fought against Rabbah of the sons of Ammon, and captured the royal city.”

2. (:27) Victory Reported to David

“And Joab sent messengers to David and said, ‘I have fought against Rabbah, I have even captured the city of waters.’”

3. (:28) Credit Appropriate for the King

“Now therefore, gather the rest of the people together and camp against the city and capture it, lest I capture the city myself and it be named after me.”

B. (:29-31) Initiative to Resume Leadership Responsibilities

1. (:29) Military Conquests

“So David gathered all the people and went to Rabbah, fought against it, and captured it.”

2. (:30) Spoils of Victory

“Then he took the crown of their king from his head; and its weight was a talent of gold, and in it was a precious stone; and it was placed on David’s head. And he brought out the spoil of the city in great amounts.”

A talent weighed about 75 lbs.

3. (:31) Execution of Justice (but with unexplained cruelty)

“He also brought out the people who were in it, and set them under saws, sharp iron instruments, and iron axes, and made them pass through the brick kiln. And thus he did to all the cities of the sons of Ammon. Then David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.”

2 Views – based on slight differences in the Hebrew text: **Davis**

Difference of a Hebrew consonant

1) The first view considers the implements mentioned as instruments of torture and death – *“he sawed them to pieces with the saw and with iron harrows”*

Made his captives pass through the brick kiln;

Cf. 1 Chron. 20:3 which takes this translation – probably consistent with some of the practices of that day – but would that be out of place for David??

2) Hebrew text should remain as it is in Samuel = *“he appointed to labor with saws”* -- Ammonites put to various forms of slave labor; *made them work at brickmaking*

Study Genuine Repentance – 2 Cor. 7

* * * * *

DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

1) *“Faithful are the wounds of a friend.”* When has that proven to be true in your experience? When has someone lovingly confronted you and helped to restore you in some area of your life?

- 2) How does this parable remind us to take the log out of our own eye before we go around inspecting for the speck in the lives of others?
- 3) Note how David's sin began with a failure to give God thanks and credit for all of his success. Where does a sense of entitlement or personal power impel us to covetousness?
- 4) How would you contrast the genuine repentance of David with the type of sorrow for just being caught in sin that many evidence (apart from repentance)?

* * * * *

QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Dave Wyrzten: This passage speaks to the reality that Satan can attack the life of even mature believers, people who have walked with the Lord for many years, and cause them in mid-life to suddenly fall into sin that we could never have imagined that they would ever experience. . .

What I want you to know—whatever you've done and whatever I might do and whatever failure that we might come under disobedience to God—the God of Holy Scripture, the God who is really there, if He can forgive David, He can forgive us.

Robert Roe: Why do you think God gave Solomon a second name? David has been a murderer, an adulterer, a coveter, a deceiver, you name it, and when he has a second son, God deliberately sends Nathan to tell him "Jehovah sent me because he wants a second name given to that child "The beloved of Jehovah." What does that indicate to David? Acceptance! The issue is closed as far as God is concerned. The consequences will go on. He has promised that, but as far as God is concerned the issue is closed. David has been disciplined. David has accepted the discipline, and God has said, "The issue is closed." It is reassurance to David that he is totally clean, totally available, totally usable. . .

The tragedy is what became of Solomon. He had 700 first class wives, 300 concubines, a life that was far away from Jehovah, and he died a tyrant. Peaceful Solomon, the man who was "beloved of Jehovah" died a tyrant and away from Jehovah. Where were those seeds sown in the life of Solomon and by whom were they sown? David, a man after God's own heart. Don't ever mess with God. David was totally forgiven. David was totally cleansed. David was totally restored, and he was God's man again. But he had sown some seeds, and they were going to produce. The seeds were wild oats, and they were going to produce wild oats. "Be not deceived, God is not mocked. Whatsoever a man sows he shall also reap." David sowed to the flesh and of the flesh reaped corruption. If you sow to the Spirit, you reap of the Spirit life everlasting. It was true of David 3,000 years ago, and it is true of us right down here today.

Henry Vander Kam: My father said to me once of a very rebellious boy who finally came to his senses, and his father said, "you know every time that you committed one of these evils I drove a nail into this board. Now, he says, upon confession and upon betterment I pulled them out, and finally they are all out. But, yah, there are all those holes. Yah, exactly; the scars. The nails are gone, but the scars are still there. And this child whom he wants so badly, is going to die. But, that's not enough though! He has said "four fold!" That's what Exodus 22 also says; four fold. He loses four children as a result of his dastardly deed. How much must a man pay! Sin is expensive; sin is awful. Absalom dies, Amnon dies, and yet one more; Adonijah, as well as this child of Bathsheba; four! In his lifetime, that he has to look into the graves of four of his children, and with every one he could say, "That is my fault! I have sinned!" And your sins are taken away, it is forgiven, but how then can we say with those of whom the apostle Paul speaks in Romans to say "Shall we then sin that grace may abound?" Ah, who can even think so! Of course not! We are scared to sin, and we better be scared to sin. It scars, those scars are deep, and those scars stay.

But this man is forgiven. My sins are forgiven, and that is the greatest wonder of grace that we have ever had, and that we have been received as His child. But the scars remain. Amen.

Deffinbaugh quotes **Dr. Warfield** regarding salvation of infants:

Dr. Warfield says: "Their destiny is determined irrespective of their choice, by an unconditional decree of God, suspended for its execution on no act of their own; and their salvation is wrought by an unconditional application of the grace of Christ to their souls, through the immediate and irresistible operation of the Holy Spirit prior to and apart from any action of their own proper wills . . . And if death in infancy does depend on God's providence, it is assuredly God in His providence who selects this vast multitude to be made participants of His unconditional salvation . . . This is but to say that they are unconditionally predestinated to salvation from the foundation of the world."

Matthew Henry: He seems to have been too harsh with his prisoners of war, v. 31. Taking the city by storm, after it had obstinately held out against a long and expensive siege, if he had put all whom he found in arms to the sword in the heat of battle, it would have been severe enough; but to kill them afterwards in cold blood, and by cruel tortures, with saws and harrows, tearing them to pieces, did not become him who, when he entered upon the government, promised to sing of mercy as well as judgment, Ps. ci. 1. Had he made examples of those only who had abused his ambassadors, or advised or assisted in it, that being a violation of the law of nations, it might have been looked upon as a piece of necessary justice for terror to other nations; but to be thus severe with all the cities of the children of Ammon (that is, the garrisons or soldiers of the cities) was extremely rigorous, and a sign that David's heart was not yet made soft by repentance, else the bowels of his compassion would not have been thus shut up--a sign that he had not yet found mercy, else he would have been more ready to show mercy.

Blaikie: With all his consciousness of sin, David has yet a profound faith in God's mercy, and he is forgiven. But as we have seen, the Divine displeasure against him is to

be openly manifested in another form, because, in addition to his personal sin, he has given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme.

TEXT: 2 Samuel 13:1-39

TITLE: JUDGMENT ON DAVID'S ROYAL OFFSPRING

BIG IDEA:

**THE FLAME OF LUST IGNITES HORRIFIC CRIMES AND TEARS
FAMILIES APART (VERY DESTRUCTIVE TO THE KINGDOM OF GOD)**

INTRODUCTION:

"Now it was after this" – shows that these tragic events were directly tied to God's judgment against David's house as prophesied by Nathan in Chapter 12 for his sins of Chapter 11. But God's sovereignty in no way mitigates man's responsibility. We have much to learn here about unchecked lust and the festering power of anger and hatred as it erupts in revenge. Probably the most intriguing character is the conniving schemer Jonadab who provides Amnon with the game plan for violating Tamar and then turns around and tries to ingratiate himself with King David.

David Roe: David is a polygamist. He had a very strong sensual desire which he catered to. As king he could cater to it with magnificent regal splendor. He had probably at least 10 wives, as near as we can figure, and unnumbered concubines. Under the law of that day, what the king saw he took, unless she was married. So David acted like the other kings of the earth instead of like God's king. As a result, his household consisted of a series of wives all competing for his affections, as Leah and Rachel did back in Jacob's time. There was no family unit, and the kids grew up competing with one another. They lived in separate houses. Each wanted to be king, so each looked with a jaundiced eye on the first born above him. Amnon was the first born, Chileab was the second born, but apparently by now he has been slain in battle, which moves Absalom up to number two. We are going to see that Absalom is not above a little self-interest when revenging his sister's violation. He wants to be king, but Amnon the first born is standing in his way. So, we have brothers Amnon and Absalom in competition with one another because of the household that David himself set up in defiance of Deuteronomy 17. This is where we are at the beginning of Chapter 13. . .

Topics:

- Consequences of Sin
- Lust vs Love
- Anger, Hatred and Revenge
- Selfish ambition and rivalry
- Deception and intrigue
- Failure to discipline and administer justice
- Separation and lack of reconciliation

Who would follow David on the throne of Israel – very important

12:23-24 – Solomon recognized prophetically as the one especially beloved of the Lord; complexity of David's family situation because of his sin – much contention and selfish

ambition and rivalry

Going to see account of how the rivals to the throne disqualified themselves and were eliminated from the picture – but not in an easy, peaceful fashion

Understand the law of God – **Lev. 18:1-18; Lev. 20:17; Deut. 27:22**

I. (:1-14) THE INDULGENCE OF LUST – AMNON RAPES TAMAR

A. (:1-2) Fanning the Flames of Lust

1. (:1) The Unseemly Royal Players

a. The Target of Lust = Beautiful Tamar

“Absalom the son of David had a beautiful sister whose name was Tamar”

b. The Fantasizer of Lust = Deceived Amnon

“and Amnon the son of David loved her”

Difference between love and lust

What type of images were racing through Amnon’s mind?

Ryrie: Amnon and Tamar were David’s children by Ahinoam (3:2) and Maacah (3:3) respectively.

2. (:2a) The Sexual Tension Stirred Up By Lust

“And Amnon was so frustrated because of his sister Tamar that he made himself ill”

3. (:2b) The Virtuous Reputation of Tamar

“for she was a virgin, and it seemed hard to Amnon to do anything to her.”

It was very unlikely she would respond to any attempts at seduction.

B. (:3-5) Scheming the Scenario for Sexual Liaison

1. (:3) Conniving Counselor

a. Close Friend

“But Amnon had a friend whose name was Jonadab”

Look at the type of friend that Amnon cultivated – one that he did not mind sharing this account of his own sexual lust and asking for assistance in carrying out his desires.

b. Politically Connected

“ the son of Shimeah, David’s brother;”

c. Politically Motivated

“and Jonadab was a very shrewd man.”

2. (:4) Persistent Prober

a. Probing the Cause of Depression

“And he said to him, ‘O son of the king, why are you so depressed morning after morning? Will you not tell me?’”

b. Pinpointing the Source of Depression

“Then Amnon said to him, ‘I am in love with Tamar, the sister of my brother Absalom.’”

3. (:5) Devious Deceiver

“Jonadab then said to him, ‘Lie down on your bed and pretend to be ill; when your father comes to see you, say to him, Please let my sister Tamar come and give me some food to eat, and let her prepare the food in my sight, that I may see it and eat from her hand.’”

C. (:6-10) Setting the Stage – Executing the Game Plan

Step by step recounting of the events that put Tamar in harm’s way

D. (:11-14) Violating the Victim – Refusing to Take “NO” for an Answer

1. (:11-13) Desperate Attempt at Consensual Sex

a. (:11) Shameful Proposition to Commit Incest

“When she brought them to him to eat, he took hold of her and said to her, ‘Come, lie with me, my sister.’”

b. (:12-13a) Efforts at Resistance

1) (:12) Based on Accepted Standards of Righteousness

a) Appealed to her close family connections

“But she answered him, ‘No, my brother, do not violate me”

Calling a spade a spade; not talking about some cozy love affair

b) Appealed to his conscience -- Based on National Standards of Righteousness – sense of right and wrong

“for such a thing is not done in Israel”

c) Appealed to the Abhorrent Nature of the Act --Based on Personal Standards of Righteousness

“do not do this disgraceful thing.”

2) (:13a) Based on Tragic Consequences for both of them

a) For Tamar

“As for me, where could I get rid of my reproach?”

b) For Amnon

“And as for you, you will be like one of the fools in Israel.”

c (:13b) Desperate Appeal to His Craftiness – Something can be worked out – you are a smooth operator

“Now therefore, please speak to the king, for he will not withhold me from you.”

Doubtful that the king would give his assent to such a relationship? Is Tamar just stalling for time here? Otherwise Amnon would have already gone and asked the king for permission?

2. (:14) Determined Assault Despite Resistance

“However, he would not listen to her; since he was stronger than she, he violated her and lay with her.”

II. (:15-22) THE RESPONSE OF ANGER AND HATRED TO THE RAPE OF TAMAR

A. (:15-19) Response of Amnon – Hatred and Rejection

1. (:15a) Intense Hatred

“Then Amnon hated her with a very great hatred; for the hatred with which he hated her was greater than the love with which he had loved her.”

Gordon: Self-gratification is followed by a feeling of revulsion at the act for which it was responsible. The observation that Amnon loathed his half-sister with an intensity exceeding his earlier passion for her represents an interesting psychological insight on the part of the narrator.

2. (:15b) Cold Dismissal

“And Amnon said to her, ‘Get up, go away!’”

3. (:16a) Aside: Response of Tamar: Don’t Compound Your Sin!

“But she said to him, ‘No, because this wrong in sending me away is greater than the other that you have done to me!’”

4. (:16b-17) Hard Hearted Rejection

“Yet he would not listen to her. Then he called his young man who attended him and said, ‘Now throw this woman out of my presence, and lock the door behind her.’”

5. (:18-19) Aside: Response of Tamar: Unmitigated Mourning and Grief

“Now she had on a long-sleeved garment; for in this manner the virgin

daughters of the king dressed themselves in robes. Then his attendant took her out and locked the door behind her. And Tamar put ashes on her head, and tore her long-sleeved garment which was on her; and she put her hand on her head and went away, crying aloud as she went.”

C. (:20, 22) Response of Absalom – Anger and Hatred

Rooted in Selfish Ambition – they had been competitors from day one;
Now Absalom saw his opportunity to go after Amnon.

1. (:20) Immediate Damage Control

“Then Absalom her brother said to her, ‘Has Amnon your brother been with you? But now keep silent, my sister, he is your brother; do not take this matter to heart.’ So Tamar remained and was desolate in her brother Absalom’s house.”

Moore: Absalom was wrong to tell Tamar to be quiet and not take it to heart. The shame was crushing her to pieces. He minimized the significance of the terrible crime against her. She was invited to live with him, but she was not invited to be honest with him. She was left desolate – like the living dead.

2. (:22) Festering of Anger and Hatred

“But Absalom did not speak to Amnon either good or bad; for Absalom hated Amnon because he had violated his sister Tamar.”

D. (:21) Response of David – Angry with Amnon

“Now when King David heard of all these matters, he was very angry.”

But like the failure of Eli, he did nothing to discipline his sons.

III. (:23-29) THE CASCADING TRAGEDY OF REVENGE -- ABSALOM SCHEMES TO TAKE REVENGE AND KILL AMNON

A. (:23-27) Laying the Trap to Kill Amnon

1. (:23a) Biding His Time for the Proper Moment

“Now it came about after two full years that Absalom had sheepshearers in Baal-hazor, which is near Ephraim”

2. (:23b) General Invitation to All the King’s Sons

“and Absalom invited all the king’s sons.”

2. (:24-25) Strategic Invitation to the King to Secure His Blessing

“And Absalom came to the king and said, ‘Behold now, your servant has sheepshearers; please let the king and his servants go with your servant.’ But the king said to Absalom, ‘No, my son, we should not all go, lest we be burdensome to you.’ Although he urged him, he would not go, but blessed him.”

Somehow Absalom knew the king would reject this insincere invitation.

3. (:26-27) Persuasive Invitation to King David to Command Amnon to Attend
“Then Absalom said, ‘If not, please let my brother Amnon go with us.’ And the king said to him, ‘Why should he go with you?’ But when Absalom urged him, he let Amnon and all the king’s sons go with him.”

B. (:28-29) Taking Revenge on Amnon

1. (:28) Absalom Giving the Murder Instructions
“And Absalom commanded his servants, saying, ‘See now, when Amnon’s heart is merry with wine, and when I say to you, Strike Amnon, then put him to death. Do not fear; have not I myself commanded you? Be courageous and be valiant.’”
2. (29a) His Servants Carrying Out the Assassination
“And the servants of Absalom did to Amnon just as Absalom had commanded.”
3. (:29b) King’s Remaining Sons Fleeing the Scene
“Then all the king’s sons arose and each mounted his mule and fled.”

IV. (:30-36) THE ULTIMATE SPIN DOCTOR -- JONADAB INGRATIATES HIMSELF TO KING DAVID

A. (:30-31) Initial Exaggerated False Report

1. (:30) Tale of Total Devastation
“Now it was while they were on the way that the report came to David, saying, ‘Absalom has struck down all the king’s sons, and not one of them is left.’”
2. (:31) Picture of Abject Mourning
“Then he king arose, tore his clothes and lay on the ground; and all his servants were standing by with clothes torn.”

B. (:32-36a) Reassurance from Jonadab – Amnon was Absalom’s Sole Target

1. (:32-33) Prediction by Jonadab that Amnon was the Sole Target
“And Jonadab, the son of Shimeah, David’s brother, responded, ‘Do not let my lord suppose they have put to death all the young men, the king’s sons, for Amnon alone is dead; because by the intent of Absalom this has been determined since the day that he violated his sister Tamar. Now therefore, do not let my lord the king take the report to heart, namely, all the king’s sons are dead. For only Amnon is dead.’”

If Jonadab knew that Absalom had it in his heart to kill Amnon, why had he not warned his friend? Could he already have switched allegiances to protect his

position in the king's court and his political future?

2. (:34-36a) Corroborating Report by the Spared King's Sons

C. (:36b) Mourning for Death of Amnon

"the king's sons came and lifted their voices and wept; and also the king and all his servants wept very bitterly."

(:37-39) CONCLUSION

A. Long Exile for Absalom

1. Fleeing to a City of Refuge

"Now Absalom fled and went to Talmi the son of Ammihud, the king of Geshur."

2. Remaining in Exile

"So Absalom had fled and gone to Geshur, and was there three years."

Roe: Absalom flees to his grandfather. Remember he was the son of a Syrian princess. Geshur was a little Syrian country east of Galilee up in the middle of David's sphere of influence. David didn't conquer it because he married into the family. It was within the boundaries of Israel, although it was a separate kingdom. He could easily have taken it if he had wanted to , but he didn't.

B. Longing for Reconciliation on the Part of David

1. Dealing with the Loss of Amnon

"And David mourned for his son every day."

2. Desiring Reconciliation with Absalom

"And the heart of King David longed to go out to Absalom; for he was comforted concerning Amnon, since he was dead."

Ryrie: David gradually accepted the fact of Amnon's death, and became anxious to see Absalom again.

DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

1) How would you describe the differences between love and lust? How do the sins of the fathers tend to reproduce themselves in their children?

2) Why didn't David get involved when he found out about the situation? Why was he so weak in the area of family discipline and nurturing?

3) When have we wrestled with emotions of hatred and revenge?

4) How did Jonadab manage to avoid being exposed as the mastermind behind Amnon's attack on Tamar?

* * * * *

QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Roe: David is a polygamist. He had a very strong sensual desire which he catered to. As king he could cater to it with magnificent regal splendor. He had probably at least 10 wives, as near as we can figure, and unnumbered concubines. Under the law of that day, what the king saw he took, unless she was married. So David acted like the other kings of the earth instead of like God's king. As a result, his household consisted of a series of wives all competing for his affections, as Leah and Rachel did back in Jacob's time. There was no family unit, and the kids grew up competing with one another. They lived in separate houses. Each wanted to be king, so each looked with a jaundiced eye on the first born above him. Amnon was the first born, Chileab was the second born, but apparently by now he has been slain in battle, which moves Absalom up to number two. We are going to see that Absalom is not above a little self-interest when revenging his sister's violation. He wants to be king, but Amnon the first born is standing in his way. So, we have brothers Amnon and Absalom in competition with one another because of the household that David himself set up in defiance of Deuteronomy 17. This is where we are at the beginning of Chapter 13. . .

So Amnon lusts after his step-sister Tamar who is a beautiful girl. The law of God says if a half-sister and a half-brother marry, they were both to be slain. If a half-brother violated a half-sister, he should be slain. An incestuous relationship even as close as a half-brother and half-sister was totally illegal under the law of God. What does Amnon care. Big daddy not only committed adultery, which violated that law, but also murdered the woman's husband, which violated that law, also the 6th, 7th and 10th commandments and got away with it. Why should Amnon observe the law of God? . . .

It is interesting, Jonadab does not suggest marriage. He knows that is illegal. He does suggest a way that will force David's hand. David indeed indulges and loves that first born, the strength of his loins. So if Amnon rapes Tamar, the only thing David can do to alleviate the problem is to use the law of the violated virgin. [Deut. 22:28] Tamar is not engaged, therefore, it will not be adultery. If a virgin is violated by a man under Jewish law, the man must pay fifty shekels of silver to her father, marry her and can never divorce her. In the Jewish culture a non-virgin was a very hard person to marry off. There was stigma attached to her. In fact if she was found to be a non-virgin by the man who married her, she was to be stoned. But Jonadab could trap David. If Amnon raped Tamar, David was faced with either putting his son to death or marrying the two. It was circumventing the law, but, in a sense, accomplishing it and probably buying off the wrath of God and the wrath of the people. So here is the kind of reasoning that went on in the palace, understandable perhaps considering the way they were brought up. Intriguingly enough Jonadab doesn't seem to be at all worried that David will find out

whose idea this was. Where did David lose his authority to uphold the law of God? why can't he put the fear of God into Jonadab's heart? . . .

The trouble was she was no longer a virgin, and she was a princess. Princesses married princes or kings. One of the things that had to be produced after the marriage night was a sign of the bride's virginity. So Tamar is a desolate woman. This is why God made the provision that the man was not to be slain when a virgin was violated. The man must marry her. The woman involved had a life ahead of her. In the culture of the Hebrews, the woman needed a husband to support her, protect her and provide for her. So God didn't let the man off with a quick death, as he would an adulterer where the woman was already betrothed or married. No, he was required to marry her, stay married forever and also pay a heavy fine to her father, a "dowry," the same process he would go through if he was courting her. God is a very strong protector of women in the Old Testament.

Davis: The hatred that Absalom had for Amnon was precipitated mainly by Amnon's abuse of his sister; however, it is not impossible that Absalom's hatred for him also involved the fact that Amnon was the first-born and, therefore, probably the heir to the throne of David. When the occasion finally presented itself, Absalom took the necessary steps to bring the life of Amnon to an end.

Blaikie: We cannot but be indignant at the inactivity of David. Yet when we think of the past, we need not be surprised. David was too much implicated in the same sins to be able to inflict suitable punishment for them. It is those whose hands are clean that can rebuke the offender. Let others try to administer reproof – their own hearts condemn them, and they shrink from the task.

[Re: "*Train up a child . . .*"] – To train up is not to force, nor is it merely to lay down the law, or to enforce the law. It is to get the whole nature of the child to move freely in the direction wished. To do this needs on the part of the parent a combination of firmness and love, of patience and decision, of consistent example and sympathetic encouragement. But it needs also, on the part of God and therefore to be asked in earnest, believing prayer, that wondrous power which touches the springs of the heart, and draws it to Him and to His ways. Only by this combination of parental faithfulness and Divine grace can we look for the blessed result, "*when he is old he will not depart from it.*"

TEXT: 2 Samuel 14:1-33

TITLE: *UNEASY STANDOFF BETWEEN DAVID AND ABSALOM*

BIG IDEA:

RECONCILIATION WITHOUT GENUINE REPENTANCE AND APPROPRIATE PROPITIATION TRIVIALIZES THE JUSTICE OF GOD

[Makes it appear unimportant, insignificant]

O God, just be merciful ... this is the cry of our culture – let's not hear anything about the justice of God; nothing about repentance; nothing about propitiation; God is a big God – He should just forget about sin

The Goal is Reconciliation – important and worthy goal
But the means are important as well

We looked earlier at the contrast between how King Saul responded when he was confronted by Samuel with his sin = worldly sorrow
And how King David responded when he was confronted by the prophet Nathan = godly sorrow = leads to repentance = results in reconciliation – restored to God's favor
Very important lessons

INRODUCTION:

The family problems began with David. The multiplication of wives created a lot of friction and competitiveness. His failure to properly nurture and discipline his sons led to further breakdown. When David fell with Bathsheba, he set into motion a chain of events that had a grievous impact on his family. This chapter deals with the separation and estrangement between David and Absalom. There are personal implications (between father and son) as well as kingdom implications. It is a story of reconciliation and reconnection . . . but not at the heart level for Absalom. He never expresses any repentance or remorse for taking the life of his brother. The ensuing rebellion of Absalom will cause David and the kingdom of God much hardship.

This passage helps us appreciate the fullness of God's grace and forgiveness and reconciliation which we have received in Jesus Christ. We have truly been restored to a position of favored status as sons of God where God's favor rests upon us. The death of Christ as a propitiation for us all truly satisfied God's wrath and met the demands of God's justice – a factor totally missing in this episode of conflicting principles and priorities.

The other factor in this narrative that is missing is any sign of repentance on the part of Absalom. Reconciliation should be a high priority . . . but repentance is essential to dealing with the sin issues involved. This is a very complicated and messy situation – so drawing practical lessons for us for today can be somewhat speculative.

I. (13:37-14:24) DELAYED JUSTICE SETS THE STAGE FOR COMPROMISED JUSTICE

Our culture knows a lot about delayed justice

- Positives of our court system
- Negatives of our court system

A. (13:37a) **Clear Guilty Verdict** -- Absalom knew he was Guilty and Deserving of Judgment

B. (13:37b-39) **Clouded Judgment** -- David's Grief for Amnon and Fatherly Affection for Absalom Clouded His Judgment and Made Him Indecisive

C. (14:1-3) **Conniving Opportunist** – Joab takes advantage of King David's Vulnerability

This tactic of deception necessary because Joab's motives were not pure -- Was this a noble initiative of Intervention to accomplish a reconciliation desperately needed by God's kingdom? Even so – you would not want to stage a scenario that would trivialize God's Justice

Certainly forcing the king's hand to bring back Absalom through this form of deception set in motion some very negative outcomes for the kingdom. Just look at the events in Chap. 15. Not a good thing to allow Absalom a favored presence with the public.

1. (:1) Perception of Joab

“Now Joab the son of Zeruiah perceived that the king's heart was [against] Absalom.” (cf. same word in Daniel 11:28) – most translations have *“inclined toward”* here which is just the opposite connotation

[Interesting debate – arguments from Keil & Del. Persuasive]

Both emotions were battling within David. He seemed to have somewhat of a longing for restoration (13:39); yet it is clear that he was harboring anger and resentment because even when he allowed Absalom to return he refused to see him. So either translation could be appropriate in this context. David was not able to forgive his son completely.

2. (:2-3) Plan of Joab

“So Joab sent to Tekoa and brought a wise woman from there and said to her, ‘Please pretend to be a mourner, and put on mourning garments now, and do not anoint yourself with oil, but like a woman who has been mourning for the dead many days; then go to the king and speak to him in this manner.’ So Joab put the words in her mouth.”

Joab coached her and prepped her so that she could tell a convincing story. Interesting that such a woman could gain a hearing with the king – similar to a Supreme Court ruling.

David Guzik: ii. There were several factors that made this woman's appeal successful.

- She was a widow, which would invite sympathy
- She lived at some distance from Jerusalem, which made it difficult to easily know or inquire of the facts of her case
- She was old, which gave more dignity to her story
- She wore the clothes of mourning to heighten the effect
- She brought a case of family estrangement to David
- She brought a case that was not too similar, lest it arouse David's suspicions

<http://www.enduringword.com/commentaries/1014.htm>

D. (:4-7) Case Study with Significant Deviation from Circumstances at Hand -- Parable Pitting Justice Against Preservation of the Family Line

There must be some exposure of the issues involved; what are we wrestling with? Why this estrangement? In this case the conflicting priorities made for a thorny situation.

1. Priorities of Justice (tinged with anger and revenge)

“Hand over the one who struck his brother, that we may put him to death for the life of his brother whom he killed, and destroy the heir also.” (:7)

Not a pure desire for justice; many other conflicting emotions and motives.

2. Preservation of Family Line at Stake

“Thus they will extinguish my coal which is left, so as to leave my husband neither name nor remnant on the face of the earth.” (:7b)

Ryrie: The extinction of a family line on account of the absence of an heir was regarded as a terrible misfortune. The surviving son is compared to the last *coal* left among the embers.

Guzik: God has devised a way to bring the banished back to Him, that they might not be expelled from Him. The way is through the person and work of Jesus, and how He stood in the place of guilty sinners as He hung on the cross and received the punishment that we deserved.

E. (:8-11) Careless Verdict -- Judgment of King David that Death Should not be Compounded

“As the Lord lives, not one hair of your son shall fall to the ground.” (:11)

At some point the cycle of death and destruction needs to be broken
But no investigation of the facts; only heard one side of the story; quick snap judgment

F. (:12-17) Calculated Application of the Parable to David’s Situation – Reconciliation and Mercy Should Take Priority over Judgment and Punishment

“For we shall surely die and are like water spilled on the ground which cannot

be gathered up again. Yet God does not take away life, but plans ways so that the banished one may not be cast out from him.” (:14)

There is a proper time for judgment and punishment; but there must also be a priority on reconciliation and restoration???

This statement reminds me of Christ’s instruction that He came the first time to save men rather than to judge them (John 3:17) ????

G. (:18-20) Clairvoyant Perception of Joab’s Direction -- Disclosure of Joab’s Initiative

“So the king said, ‘Is the hand of Joab with you in all this?’”

Gordon: Joab was a “loyalist” and a pragmatist, always ready to act in the best interests of the kingdom as he happened to conceive of them.

H. (:21-23) Course of Action -- Retrieval of Absalom – But Without Reconciliation = the essential Prerequisite for Reconciliation – and without Inquiring of the Lord = the essential checkpoint before taking action

1. (:21) Command to Retrieve Absalom

“Then the king said to Joab, ‘Behold now, I will surely do this thing; go therefore, bring back the young man Absalom.’”

2. (:22) Thankfulness / Relief of Joab

“And Joab fell on his face to the ground, prostrated himself and blessed the king; then Joab said, ‘Today your servant knows that I have found favor in your sight, O my lord, the king, in that the king has performed the request of his servant.’”

3. (:23) Physical Return of Absalom

“So Joab arose and went to Geshur, and brought Absalom to Jerusalem.”

Absalom and Joab had been anticipating this day – why was the king making such a big deal over murdering Amnon? He had it coming to him.

I. (:24) Conflicted Conscience -- Vacillation on the part of King David – wavering, indecisive

Bitterness Prevents Full Reconciliation

“However the king said, ‘Let him turn to his own house, and let him not see my face.’ So Absalom turned to his own house and did not see the king’s face.”

No clear conscience on the matter; no “Thus saith the Lord” to guide his actions; he is making things up as he goes along

Blaikie: The king refuses to see his son, and for two years Absalom lives in his own house, without enjoying any of the privileges of the king’s son. By this means David

took away all the grace of the transaction, and irritated Absalom. He was afraid to exercise his royal prerogative in pardoning him out-and-out. His conscience told him it ought not to be done. To restore at once one who had sinned so flagrantly to all his dignity and power was against the grain.

Deffinbaugh: I may be reading too much into the text, but is there not a kind of poetic justice here, with David confining Absalom to his own house? On the one hand, Absalom is still a murderer who has not been brought to justice. To have him “confined to quarters” is a very practical way of protecting him. It is also a way of keeping him out of circulation. After all, David agreed to his return against his better judgment, it seems. But I am also reminded of the fact that it was Absalom who confined his sister Tamar to quarters. By confining Tamar to his house, Absalom kept her quiet. He also kept her desolate. All of this enabled him to carry out his evil plan to murder Amnon. Now, it somehow seems appropriate that Absalom himself should be confined to the same quarters in which he confined his sister for the rest of her life.

II. (:25-33) FORCED RECONCILIATION WITHOUT GENUINE REPENTANCE AND APPROPRIATE PROPITIATION TRIVIALIZES THE JUSTICE OF GOD

A. (:25-27) David’s Hand Forced by Absalom’s Growing Popularity

1. (:25-26) Admired for His Physical Attributes

“Now in all Israel was no one as handsome as Absalom, so highly praised; from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head there was no defect in him. And when he cut the hair of his head (and it was at the end of every year that he cut it, for it was heavy on him so he cut it), he weighed the hair of his head at 200 shekels by the king’s weight.”

External, physical attributes are very impressive to others, but not the most essential prerequisites for effective governing. Absalom did not score high in the character department.

2. (:27) Blessed with Beautiful Family

“And to Absalom there were born three sons, and one daughter whose name was Tamar; she was a woman of beautiful appearance.”

B. (:28-32) David’s Hand Forced by Absalom’s Frustration –

Ignored by David and Joab for 2 Years – David never dealt effectively with the situation

1. (:28) Frustrating Prolonged Period of Isolation for Absalom

“Now Absalom lived two full years in Jerusalem, and did not see the king’s face.”

2. (:29-31) Getting the Attention of a Reluctant Joab

a. (:29) Initial Two Attempts Rebuffed

“Then Absalom sent for Joab, to send him to the king, but he would not come to him. So he sent again a second time, but he

would not come.”

b. (:30-31) Strategic Arson Got Joab’s Attention

“Therefore he said to his servants, ‘See, Joab’s field is next to mine, and he has barley there; go and set it on fire.’ So Absalom’s servants set the field on fire. Then Joab arose, came to Absalom at his house and said to him, ‘Why have your servants set my field on fire?’”

3. (:32) Pressing for a Relationship Resolution – one way or the other

“And Absalom answered Joab, ‘Behold, I sent for you, saying, Come here, that I may send you to the king, to say, Why have I come from Geshur? It would be better for me still to be there. Now therefore, let me see the king’s face; and if there is iniquity in me, let him put me to death.’”

No remorse on Absalom’s part – he knew the king did not have it in him to execute him; calling his bluff

C. (:33) David’s Hand Forced by the Charade of Pretended Submission

“So when Joab came to the king and told him, he called for Absalom. Thus he came to the king and prostrated himself on his face to the ground before the king, and the king kissed Absalom.”

But heart reconciliation is still missing.

No propitiation for what had occurred.

Contrast Genesis 45:14 – Response of Joseph after years of exile; his reconciliation with Benjamin

Study Prodigal Son – Luke 15

DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

1) Should King David have been seeking reconciliation with Absalom or pursuing some type of more severe judicial punishment for his actions? How did his failures as a father influence his actions in this context?

2) What were Joab’s motives in first taking the initiative in moving David to retrieve his son from exile and then later ignoring the initial appeals for intervention on the part of isolated Absalom?

3) What was the reaction of the King to learning that Joab’s hand was behind the story told by the woman from Tekoa?

4) What was the significance of the king kissing his son?

* * * * *

QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Deffinbaugh: I think there is a lesson to be learned here about discipline, in this case discipline within the family. David wanted to be restored to fellowship with his son, Absalom. He knew better than to ignore or distort the law in order to facilitate such a reunion. David was tricked into allowing his son to return, even though he knew better. We may think that David was cold and uncaring when he refused to allow Absalom to see his face. I do not agree. I think David understood that reconciliation can only follow repentance, and that it cannot precede it. David was angered, not only by Amnon's rape of Tamar, but by Absalom's obstruction of justice and murder of Amnon. David could not be reconciled to Absalom until Absalom had repented, and until David's anger had been "propitiated" (a fancy theological term for having his anger appeased or satisfied). When Joab tricked David into letting Absalom return, he did so in a way that did not facilitate repentance or reconciliation. If we are going to blame anyone for Absalom's sin (other than Absalom, who bears the primary responsibility), it would have to be Joab rather than David, because Joab sought to bring about reconciliation without repentance. . .

Gordon: The petitioner turns preacher and charges the king with failure to appreciate the consequences of his own intransigence, not so much for himself as for the nation. He has exercised the royal prerogative in favour of her, yet withholds it from his own son. . . Death may be irreversible, but God's disciplinary dealings with his creatures are far from irreversible. Furthermore, if God acts according to the dictates of mercy – as in David's own experience (12:13) – then David is obligated to do likewise.

Blaikie: Geshur, to which Absalom fled after the murder of Amnon, accompanied in all likelihood by the men who had slain him, was a small kingdom in Syria, lying between Mount Hermon and Damascus. Maacah, Absalom's mother, was the daughter of Talmi, king of Geshur, so that Absalom was there among his own relations. There is no reason to believe that Talmi and his people had renounced the idolatrous worship that prevailed in Syria. For David to ally himself in marriage with an idolatrous people was not in accordance with the law. In law, Absalom must have been a Hebrew, circumcised the eighth day; but in spirit he would probably have no little sympathy with his mother's religion. His utter alienation in heart from his father; the unconcern with which he sought to drive from the throne the man who had been so solemnly called to it by God; the vow which he pretended to have taken, when away in Syria, that if he were invited back to Jerusalem he would "serve the Lord," all point to a man infected in no small degree with the spirit, if not addicted to the practice, of idolatry. And the tenor of his life, so full of cold-blooded wickedness, exemplified well the influence of idolatry, which bred neither fear of God nor love of man.

Brian Morgan: We resume the David story with the portrait of an angry

father. David is still submerged in grief three years after the loss his son Amnon, who was violently killed by his brother Absalom. The pain has plunged David so deeply into a black hole of grief that he is paralyzed, unable to act. Fokkelman writes: "Its immobility is yet increased by the trap into which he has fallen and which is one of the cruelest which can emotionally entrap a person, rancour. Its two cords, anguish and rage, pull in opposite directions, only tightening the knot. David's rage for the murderer is the other side of the coin of his mourning for the victim, for both are his sons."

...

Finally, the long anticipated moment arrives. The veil of rejection is lifted, and the eyes of both son and father meet after five years. The irony is that if Absalom, this arrogant son, wants to see his father's face, he must bow his face all the way to the ground—a difficult demand for him. Yet bow he does. Then the father moves toward the son and kisses him. A reconciliation that he promised long ago is now sealed with a kiss. Is that it? After five years estrangement, one courtly bow, followed by a kiss, with no words spoken? How different was this meeting from the occasion when Jacob and Esau met, or when Joseph, after years of exile, finally looked upon his brothers who had sold him into slavery. As Joseph looked at his own flesh and blood, face to face, forgiveness welled up within his soul and completely overtook him. He collapsed on his brother's Benjamin's neck and wept, and Benjamin collapsed on his neck, weeping (Gen 45:14). That was true reconciliation. Yet, with David and Absalom, we are left hanging in silent suspense. Did their faces ever meet?

<http://www.pbcc.org/sermons/morgan/1036.pdf>

Matthew Henry: She reasons upon it with the king, to persuade him to recall Absalom out of banishment, give him his pardon, and take him into his favour again.

(1) She pleads the interest which the people of Israel had in him. "What is done against him is done against the people of God, who have their eye upon him as heir of the crown, at least, have their eye upon the house of David in general, with which the covenant is made, and which therefore they cannot see the diminution and decay of, by the fall of so many of its branches in the flower of their age. . .

(2) She pleads man's mortality . . . We are all under a fatal necessity of dying; and when we are dead, we are past recall, as water spilt upon the ground; nay, even while we are alive, we are so, we have lost our immortality, past retrieve. Amnon must have died, some time, if Absalom had not killed him; and if Absalom be now put to death for killing him, that will not bring him to life again. This was poor reasoning, and would serve against the punishment of any murderer; but, it should seem, Amnon was a man little regarded by the people, and his death little lamented, and it was generally thought hard that so dear a life as Absalom's should go for one so little valued as Amnon's.

(3) She pleads God's mercy and his clemency toward poor, guilty sinners.

Guzik: i. It's hard to think of a greater contrast than that between Absalom and the Prodigal Son of Jesus' parable. The Prodigal Son came back humble and repentant. Absalom came back burning Joab's fields.

ii. At the same time, sometimes God gets our attention by setting our "barley field" on fire. "He, knowing that we will not come by any other means, sendeth a serious trial - he sets our barley-field on fire, which he has a right to do, seeing our barley-fields are far more his than they are ours." (Spurgeon)

Deffinbaugh: (Re Joab's suspect motives): Joab's later actions (not to mention some of his earlier ones, like murdering Abner) seem to betray an ulterior motive on his part. David's love for Absalom almost seems to be a weak spot, which Joab seeks to exploit for his own benefit. In Absalom's rebellion against David, we hardly hear of Joab. Absalom made Amasa the commander of Israel's army (that is, the army of those who chose to follow Absalom). When David fought Absalom and his forces, Joab was apparently not acting as the commander of all the army, but as the commander of a third of David's forces (2 Samuel 18:2). Joab was, of course, the one who would kill Absalom, even when David gave orders to "deal gently with him" (18:5, 11-15). When David regained the throne, he replaced Joab with Amasa (19:13), but Joab eventually killed him with the help of his brother Abishai (20:8-10). And finally, when David was old and Adonijah sought to assert himself as David's successor rather than Solomon, Joab joined him, which cost him his life (1 Kings 2:28-33).

Moore: The scene had all the right ingredients [for reconciliation]. Absalom bowing down; the king kissing his son. Only one thing was missing – the heart. The actions of David and his son were generated by custom, not emotion. Fearing his son would do something more than set Joab's field on fire, David summoned Absalom to appease him, not accept him. Absalom sought his father's face to force David to look him in the eye, not to beg forgiveness like the prodigal.

TEXT: 2 Samuel 15:1-37

TITLE: *TEARING APART THE KINGDOM OF GOD – SON RISES UP AGAINST FATHER AND KING*

BIG IDEA:

SELF AMBITION ERUPTS IN A REBELLIOUS COUP THAT DIVIDES THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND CREATES DIFFICULT DECISIONS OF ALLEGIANCE

Review summary outline of entire book:

THE TUMULTUOUS REIGN OF KING DAVID --

GOD' POWER AND PROVIDENCE SUSTAIN HIS KINGDOM PROGRAM AMIDST THE CHALLENGES OF DAVID'S REIGN

I. (CHAPS 1-6) KINGDOM TRANSITION – FROM SAUL TO DAVID

- David did not try to take advantage of death of Saul; no opportunistic self ambition; content to let the providence of God play out
- Civil war – power struggle with Ishbosheth
- Abner attempts to broker a peace agreement .. but Joab kills him and complicates matters
- David made king at Hebron – capital shifted to Jerusalem; great blessing – chap. 5
- Ark of the Covenant returned to Jerusalem – chap. 6

II. (CHAPS 7-10) KINGDOM BLESSINGS – CONQUESTS AND CONSOLIDATION

- Blessings of the Davidic Covenant – chap. 7
- Victory over kingdom enemies on every side – chap. 8
- Mercy shown to Mephibosheth – chap. 9
- Ammonites foolishly mistreat David's servants – faith-based warfare tactics succeed – chap. 10

III. (CHAPS 11-17) KINGDOM UPHEAVAL – HEINOUS CRIMES / PAINFUL CONSEQUENCES / PROVIDENTIAL PROTECTION

- Sin with Bathsheba and murder of Uriah – chap. 11
- Ugly incident with Tamar and Amnon and Absalom
- Finally last week – uneasy restoration of Absalom to public favor – no genuine repentance – chap. 14

IV. (CHAPS 18-21) KINGDOM RESTORATION – SUSTAINED BY PROVIDENCE AND POWER OF GOD

V. (CHAPS 22-24) KINGDOM MEMORIES – PRAISE AND RECOGNITION / FAILURE AND RESTORATION

INTRODUCTION:

King David is in a very vulnerable position. He has made many mistakes .. Political scheming and maneuvering of Absalom ... look at politics today – what are some of the tactics used to gain an advantage .. what gives politicking a bad name – whether in our business setting or in govt??

Read passage

What tactics did Absalom use??

I. (:1-6) ABSALOM SCHEMES TO GAIN A FOLLOWING BY SUBVERTING

THE KING'S AUTHORITY

A. (:1) Making Himself Look Impressive

“Now it came about after this that Absalom provided for himself a chariot and horses, and fifty men as runners before him.”

Blaikie: To multiply horses to himself was one of the things forbidden by the law of Moses to the king that should be chosen (Deut. xvii. 16), mainly, we suppose, because it was a prominent feature of the royal state of the kings of Egypt, and because it would have indicated a tendency to place the glory of the kingdom in magnificent surroundings rather than in the protection and blessing of the heavenly King.

B. (:2) Looking for Opportunities to Gain a Following

“And Absalom used to rise early and stand beside the way to the gate; and it happened that when any man had a suit to come to the king for judgment, Absalom would call to him and say, ‘From what city are you?’ And he would say, ‘Your servant is from one of the tribes of Israel.’”

Gordon: The cases brought to the king would normally be those which were beyond the competence of local elders, doubtless including complaints against the state. Inter-tribal rivalry may also have contributed to the disaffection which Absalom so effectively turned to his own advantage. At least, it could be concluded from verses 2f. that David was more ready to hear the cases of fellow-Judahites like the Tekoite woman of ch. 14 than those of Israelites from further afield.

C. (:3) Criticizing the Judgments of King David

“Then Absalom would say to him, ‘See, your claims are good and right, but no man listens to you on the part of the king.’”

D. (:4) Anointing himself as the Standard for Justice

“Moreover, Absalom would say, ‘Oh that one would appoint me judge in the land, then every man who has any suit or cause could come to me, and I would give him justice.’”

E. (:5) Presenting Himself as a God-Like Figure – almost worthy of worship and adulation

“And it happened that when a man came near to prostrate himself before him, he would put out his hand and take hold of him and kiss him.”

F. (:6) Summary: Applying His Scheme Consistently and Achieving the Desired Result

“And in this manner Absalom dealt with all Israel who came to the king for judgment; so Absalom stole away the hearts of the men of Israel.”

II. (:7-12) ABSALOM DECEITFULLY POSITIONS HIMSELF TO USURP DAVID'S THRONE

A. (:7-9) Using the Cloak of Spiritual Commitment to Disguise His Self Ambition – Setting Himself Up at Hebron

Ryrie: *forty years*. Probably a copyist's error and should read "*four years*" with the LXX, Syriac and writings of Josephus (*Antiq.* 7.9.1). The period probably began with Absalom's return from Geshur.

Davis: There most likely was a very strong anti-Davidic feeling in Hebron. Many people in Hebron had probably not forgiven David for changing the capital from Hebron to Jerusalem and took this occasion to express their dissatisfaction at that move. It was for this reason that Absalom returned to the place of his birth. There he could be assured of a sympathetic ear.

Blaikie: The copestone which Absalom put on his plot when all was ripe for execution was of a piece with the whole undertaking. It was an act of religious hypocrisy amounting to profanity. It shows how well he must have succeeded in deceiving his father when he could venture on such a finishing stroke. Hypocrite though he was himself, he well knew the depth and sincerity of his father's religion. He knew too that nothing could gratify him more than to find in his son the evidence of a similar state of heart.

B. (:10) Instructing His Key Insurgents Regarding the Timing of the Coup

"But Absalom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, 'As soon as you hear the sound of the trumpet, then you shall say, 'Absalom is king in Hebron.'"

C. (:11) Leading Astray the Innocent

"Then two hundred men went with Absalom from Jerusalem, who were invited and went innocently, and they did not know anything."

D. (:12a) Recruiting Key Advisors

"And Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor, from his city Giloh, while he was offering the sacrifices."

SermonNotebook: David wants Hushai to counter the counsel of old Ahithophel. Ahithophel was David's counselor, but he was also Bathsheba's grandfather. He saw the rebellion of Absalom as an opportunity to get even with David for what he had done to Bathsheba and Uriah.

E. (:12b) Summary: Achieving the Desired Result

"And the conspiracy was strong, for the people increased continually with Absalom."

III. (:13-18) DAVID AND HIS HOUSEHOLD ARE FORCED TO FLEE THE ROYAL CITY

A. (:13) Terrifying News of the Coup's Success

"Then a messenger came to David, saying, 'The hearts of the men of Israel are with Absalom'"

Shows how fickle are the hearts of men to be so easily swayed by strong personalities and external appearances

B. (:14) Desperate Decision to Flee the City

"And David said to all his servants who were with him at Jerusalem, 'Arise and let us flee, for otherwise none of us shall escape from Absalom. Go in haste, lest he overtake us quickly and bring down calamity on us and strike the city with the edge of the sword.'"

Ryrie: David fled for his life and for fear of an attack of Jerusalem if he remained at the city. Perhaps he was seeking to avert civil war and bloodshed. But he obviously expected to return to Jerusalem, for he left ten concubines to keep house (v. 16 and 16:21-22).

C. (:15) Pledge of Loyal Commitment on the Part of David's Servants

"Then the king's servants said to the king, 'Behold, your servants are ready to do whatever my lord the king chooses.'"

D. (:16-17) David Sets His House in Order

"So the king went out and all his household with him. But the king left ten concubines to keep the house. And the king went out and all the people with him, and they stopped at the last house."

E. (:18) Foreigners Comprise the Bulk of His Loyal Forces

"Now all his servants passed on beside him, all the Cherethites, all the Pelethites, and all the Gittites, six hundred men who had come with him from Gath, passed on before the king."

Study Psalm 3

IV. (:19-37) WHILE UNDER TREMENDOUS TRIAL, DAVID EXHIBITS GODLY CHARACTER IN COUNSELING THREE GROUPS OF LOYAL FRIENDS

Importance of close friends during this time of severe trial in David's life.

Blackwood: Never does a leader value personal devotion so much as when everyone who matters seems to have gone over to the enemy.

A. (:19-23) David's Unselfishness – Receiving the Unconditional Support of Willing Loyalists – Ittai the Gittite

1. (:19-20) David's Concern for Ittai

“Then the king said to Ittai the Gittite, ‘Why will you also go with us? Return and remain with the king, for you are a foreigner and also an exile; return to your own place. You came only yesterday, and shall I today make you wander with us, while I go where I will? Return and take back your brothers; mercy and truth be with you.’”

2. (:21) Ittai’s Unconditional Support

“But Ittai answered the king, and said, ‘As the Lord lives, and as my lord the king, lives; surely wherever my lord the king may be, whether for death or for life, there also your servant will be.’”

3. (:22-23) David’s *Via Dolorosa* – The Beginning of the Sad Journey

“Therefore David said to Ittai, ‘Go and pass over.’ So Ittai the Gittite passed over with all his men and all the little ones who were with him. While all the country was weeping with a loud voice, all the people passed over. The king also passed over the brook Kidron, and all the people passed over toward the way of the wilderness.”

Blaikie: The interview between David and Ittai was most creditable to the feelings of the fugitive king. Ittai was a stranger who had but lately come to Jerusalem, and as he was not attached to David personally, it would be safer for him to return to the city and offer to the reigning king the services which David could no longer reward. But the generous proposal of David was rejected with equal nobility on the part of Ittai.

Deffinbaugh: David called Ittai aside and urged him to stay in Jerusalem or to return to his own land. This was not his fight. He did not need to endanger himself or those with him. David urged him not to follow, but Ittai would not hear of abandoning David. Note how similar his response to David is to Ruth's response to Naomi:

16 But Ruth said, “Do not urge me to leave you or turn back from following you; for where you go, I will go, and where you lodge, I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God.

17 “Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. Thus may the LORD do to me, and worse, if anything but death parts you and me” (Ruth 1:16-17).

B. (:24-29) David’s Humility – Submitting to God’s Providence – God’s Presence Belongs in God’s City – Zadok and Abiathar – Priests of God

1. (:24) Significance of the Presence of the Ark and the Support of the Priests

“Now behold, Zadok also came, and all the Levites with him carrying the ark of the covenant of God. And they set down the ark of God, and Abiathar came up until all the people had finished passing from the city.”

2. (:25-26) David Casts His Fortunes on the Providence of God

a. Jerusalem is the Proper Place for the Ark – It belongs in the city of God – not Under the Control of David

“And the king said to Zadok, ‘Return the ark of God to the city.’”

b. David Submits to the Appropriate Disposition of the Providence of God

1) Possibility of Finding Favor

“If I find favor in the sight of the Lord, then He will bring me back again, and show me both it and His habitation.”

2) Possibility of Not Finding Favor

“But if He should say thus, ‘I have no delight in you,’ behold, here I am, let Him do to me as seems good to Him.”

3. (:27-28) Significant Role for Zadok and Abiathar Back in Jerusalem

“The king said also to Zadok the priest, ‘Are you not a seer? Return to the city in peace and your two sons with you, your son Abimaaz and Jonathan the son of Abiathar. See, I am going to wait at the fords of the wilderness until word comes from you to inform me.’”

4. (:29) Priests and the Ark Return to Jerusalem

“Therefore Zadok and Abiathar returned the ark of God to Jerusalem and remained there.”

Gordon: But such resignation as there is in David is balanced by a healthy resolution to do what he can to win back his kingdom. If Zadok and Abiathar returned to the city they could act as intelligence-gatherers, using their sons as runners to pass on the information to David. The same sort of combination of the pious and the prudential as is seen in verses 25-29 was put to good effect by Nehemiah: *“And we prayed to our God, and set a guard as a protection against them day and night”* (Ne. 4:9).”

C. (:30-37) David’s Wisdom – Planting a Loyal Mole – Hushai the Archite – Brave Friend of David

1. (:30) Sad Occasion

“And David went up the ascent of the Mount of Olives, and wept as he went, and his head was covered and he walked barefoot. Then all the people who were with him each covered his head and went up weeping as they went.”

2. (:31) Threat of Ahithophel

“Now someone told David, saying, ‘Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom.’ And David said, ‘O Lord, I pray, make the counsel of Ahithophel foolishness.’”

3. (:32-36) Commissioning of Hushai to Remain as Advocate and Spy for David

4. (:37) All the Players in Place

“So Hushai, David’s friend, came into the city, and Absalom came into Jerusalem.”

* * * * *

DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

- 1) Look at how Absalom played to the hearts of discontented Israelites. When has flattery or manipulation been used on us by people with ulterior motives?
- 2) How important were David’s loyal friends during this time of distress and trial? What lessons do you learn from this passage about counting the cost and taking up the cross to follow our Master?
- 3) In casting himself upon the Providence of God for restoring him to favor, how did David minister to those in his household and to his loyal followers?
- 4) Contrast the spies employed by Absalom with those commissioned by David. What similarities and differences do you see?

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QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

SermonNotebook: The effects of David’s sin with Bathsheba are in full bloom. David has seen his family demolished; innocent lives devastated and precious people destroyed. All because of the choices he made. He is at the lowest point of his life! His own son, Absalom, has risen up in rebellion against David and has driven him from his palace and from the city of Jerusalem. This passage finds David on the run for his life from his own son.

At this point in time David does not need a lecture on being a better father. He does not need a seminar of how to govern a kingdom. He does not need someone coming along to tell him what a failure he is. He knows that well enough by now. What David needs is a friend!

2 Samuel 15-19 talks about some friends that walked into David’s life at just the moment he needed them. You see, the Bible says, **“A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother,” Proverbs 18:24.** In the verses we will study today we will see this passage come to life. In the friends who came to David’s aid in his time of need, we can see what real friends ought to be and we can see a picture of the ultimate Friend, the Lord Jesus Christ. I want to take our time today and preach on the thought **Closer Than A Brother**. Allow me to point out the kinds of friends David had in his life. . .

Two men were out hunting in the northern U.S. Suddenly one yelled and the other looked up to see a grizzly charging them. The first started to frantically put on his

tennis shoes and his friend anxiously asked, "**What are you doing? Don't you know you can't outrun a grizzly bear?**" "**I don't have to outrun a grizzly. I just have to outrun you!**"

That is the kind of friends most of us have. When the chips are down, they think of themselves first. A true always puts you first! That trust is illustrated in the following story.

Sam Davis was a Confederate spy executed at Pulaski, Tennessee, for his crime. When captured by the Union army, he had in his possession some papers of vital importance. After examining the case closely, the officers in charge knew he must have had an accomplice in securing the papers. He was court-martialed, led out before the firing squad and blindfolded. Then the officer in charge put forward a proposition: "**If you will give us the name of the man who furnished you this information, you may go free.**" Sam Davis did not hesitate in his reply, "**If I had a thousand lives I would give them all before I would betray a friend.**"

http://www.sermonnotebook.org/old%20testament/2%20Samuel%2015_13-23.htm

Davis: Not long after the restoration of Absalom to the royal court, he sought every opportunity to capture the imagination and the hearts of the people. Verse 2 informs us that he rose up early and made a daily appearance at the gate where legal business was commonly conducted. When controversy arose he consistently took the side of the oppressed and used this occasion to raise questions about the judicial capabilities of his father (v. 3). Along with this was the constant suggestion that if he were made a judge in the land, justice would be more equitable (v. 4). Thus, after a period of time Absalom had gained a rather large following, especially among those who had opposed David from the beginning.

Gordon: David's *Via Dolorosa* begins with the evacuation of the city. To maintain oneself in Jerusalem during a civil war was a different proposition from defending it against a foreign enemy; the presence of even a few of Absalom's sympathizers could have made resistance very difficult. We must also take into account the fact that two hundred Jerusalemites had – as it would have appeared to David – thrown in their lot with Absalom (v. 11). To avoid encirclement (cf. 17:13) and to preserve life (14), therefore, the city was abandoned forthwith.

Deffinbaugh: I believe the author has indicated his organizational structure in this portion of Scripture, and that it is both chronological and geographical. When David flees from Jerusalem, he will head to the north and west. He will go as far as the wilderness, on the western side of the Jordan River, and there he will await word concerning Absalom's plans. When he learns that Absalom will pursue and attack, David crosses the Jordan and heads farther north. The structure of our text is arranged according to stops David makes on his way from Jerusalem to the wilderness. The first scene is in Jerusalem, where David gets the report from Hebron and makes the decision to flee. Likewise, the last scene is in Jerusalem, where Absalom has arrived, and where he possesses David's ten concubines who have been left behind. The second scene is at "the last house," as David is leaving Jerusalem. The third is at the brook Kidron, and the fourth is on the ascent of the Mount of Olives. The fifth scene takes place just over

the summit of the Mount of Olives, and the sixth at Bahurim. At each place, there will be an encounter with a “friend” or a true friend of David.

Redpath: From the example of this group of men who in the day of David’s rejection walked loyally with him into a future that was unknown, whose hearts had been softened, and out of whose lives there flowed the rivers of devotion, I am suggesting to you these simple, basic things that lie at the heart of Christian experience: total surrender to the will of God, sacrifice for the purpose of God in the life, and satisfaction in the presence of Christ day by day.

Charles Brown:

Introduction: Political climate in ancient Israel very similar to tactics in today’s political campaign. Absalom engaged in a political conspiracy; but didn’t rush into a violent bloody coup; he plotted to win people’s hearts;

I. (:1-12) Absalom showed his political savvy:

- He made sure he exuded a royal presence – chariot and horses – very impressive; traveled in style; looked like a real king. He already had the good looks; now he adds the royal entourage; made sure he got noticed
- He worked hard – started the day early, working his political strategy
- Practiced deception
- most winsome aspect of his political strategy was his identification with the common man – I am one of you – just an everyday Joe; cf. activities and photo opps of today’s candidates
- Stolen popularity; not earned – “stole the hearts” = a Hebrew idiom – refers more to the mind than the heart – idiom used in Gen. 31 – Jacob in his trickery and deception; pretended to be someone he really wasn’t; a big fraud

Very serious threat David is faced with; this conspiracy has everything going for it; David is in very precarious spot; long forgotten are his glory days, his heroic exploits; Absalom has painted him as the cold and distant ruler; Absalom is the fresh and new face that will breathe new life into leadership; King David was a made a king by the Lord; Absalom crowned himself; David is still clearly the good guy;

Followed by several reminders of David’s greatness – because the Lord is with him; David need not fear even if many encamped against him – **Psalm 3**; the threat may be strong, but the Lord is stronger

II. (:13-23) Scene shifts to wilderness =

- A. place where faith is tested; significant location; cf. testing of Jesus; David has opportunity to prove his faith once again; How will his faith handle the testing? Why does David decide to flee Jerusalem? Is he a coward? Why doesn’t he stay and fight? Saving the city of God; to keep others from being hurt; looking out for the welfare of his people; see David’s compassion for his loyal friends – these are Philistines with families;
- B. Lord provided support for David in form of loyal friends; the Lord cares for His

wilderness people; a faithful friend who will stick closer than a brother; his own son had rebelled against him; what an encouragement to David to keep these 600 Philistines on his side; Lord gave David just what he needed at just the right time;

C. Also look at model of commitment from perspective of Ittai; costly and whole-hearted devotion; that is how we are called to follow Christ; supreme level of fidelity to

D. David as shadow and type of Christ; David portrayed as suffering servant of the Lord; rejected king of Jews – crossed over brook Kidron; there he prayed outside of the camp; Kidron Valley to Mount of Olives; John 18:1; Matt. 26 – the trail of tears; the way of suffering; will bring his followers into eventual glory and triumph; stay close to the true king even through the veil of tears

III. (:23-37) – Encounter other Friends who remained loyal to David

A. The true worship of the Lord must accompany the true King of Israel; priest and king belong together; David refuses to employ the ark as a good luck charm; David rests in the sovereignty of the Lord; David simply wants to submit to God; do what pleases Him; David has not yet lost his wisdom; can still outwit his crafty son Absalom;

B. Having Ahithophel on your side was huge – what's David to do? He prayed – what else can you do? David hasn't prayed much recently – another positive indicator that David is turning around – God sent Hushai; Lord didn't do anything supernatural here – just His normal providence to sustain His pilgrim people; David confident that the Lord would do what is right; sometimes appears that the whole world is crashing down against us; the tide is rising; but don't despair – the Lord sends a ray of hope; we need to perceive God's hand at work in our ordinary life; latch onto those little things that the Lord sends our way; such wisdom is not obtained apart from prayer

“my glory and the lifter of my head” – Psalm

TEXT: 2 Samuel 16:1-23

TITLE: HUMILIATION MARKS DAVID'S JOURNEY INTO EXILE

BIG IDEA:

FOUR INCIDENTS THAT HIGHLIGHT THE DEPTHS OF HUMILIATION FOR KING DAVID AS HE FLEES INTO EXILE

INTRODUCTION:

Concept of humbling oneself before the Lord:

- Sometimes we have no choice – the Lord works out our circumstances to humble us.
- Sometimes we have a choice and can lash back in anger and pride or choose the course of humbling ourselves.

How do we humble ourselves before God?

King David embarks upon a journey of humiliation (both forced and chosen) as he flees into exile and his rebellious son Absalom assumes the throne in Jerusalem.

Remarkable instances of the Lord's Providence at work. Who is more concerned about David and the kingdom? God has a lot at stake. He is able to use even the impure motives and sinful acts of men to accomplish His purposes. David demonstrates meekness in receiving the lessons that God has for him.

In His sovereignty, God was using these very difficult times to bring David to greater maturity in his faith and practice. God was using "evil" to bring about David's "good." Cf. Joseph with his brothers in **Gen 50:20**; **Romans 8:28** is certainly being acted out in the life of David, and especially in our text. Included in the "all things" which God employs to accomplish our "good" and His glory are the trials and tribulations of this life. God did not allow these painful things to happen in order to destroy David, but to draw him near, to **make him humble and dependent**.

I. (:1-4) INCIDENT #1 – DAVID ESTRANGED FROM MEPHIBOSHETH BY THE CONNIVING OF ZIBA – OPPORTUNISTIC DECEPTION -- VULNERABLE TO AMBITIOUS POLITICKING

A. (:1) Beware of Cunning Men Bearing Gifts

"Now when David had passed a little beyond the summit, behold, Ziba the servant of Mephibosheth met him with a couple of saddled donkeys, and on them were two hundred loaves of bread, a hundred clusters of raisins, a hundred summer fruits, and a jug of wine."

B. (:2) Question the Motives

"And the king said to Ziba, 'Why do you have these?' And Ziba said, 'The donkeys are for the king's household to ride, and the bread and summer fruit for the young men to eat, and the wine, for whoever is faint in the wilderness to drink.'"

David wanted to know what was going on with these lavish gifts

C. (:3) Question the Commitment to Faithfulness

“Then the king said, ‘And where is your master’s son?’ And Ziba said to the king, ‘Behold, he is staying in Jerusalem, for he said, Today the house of Israel will restore the kingdom of my father to me.’”

David wanted to know why Ziba was not still faithfully ministering to Mephibosheth

Ryrie: Ziba’s accusation of Mephibosheth’s disloyalty was, according to 19:24-28, false. He was evidently trying to commend himself in the eyes of David.

Gordon: Ziba displays the calculated practicality of an opportunist who realizes David’s vulnerability to every sympathetic gesture of support.

D. (:4) Don’t Be Gullible = Accepting Answers at Face Value Without Some Investigation

“So the king said to Ziba, ‘Behold, all that belongs to Mephibosheth is yours.’ And Ziba said, ‘I prostrate myself; let me find favor in your sight, O my lord the king.’”

Was this a rash decision on David’s part or was he truly suspicious and just playing along with Ziba at this point?

19:24-30

Pink: David grievously misjudging one who was affectionately attached to him. David was unwarrantably influenced by "appearances." He gave ear to an unconfirmed slander against an absent one. He at once believed the worst, without affording the accused any opportunity to vindicate himself. He was one to whom David had shown much kindness in the past, and now that a servant brought to him an evil report, the king accepted the same, concluding that the master had turned traitor. It is true that human nature is lamentably fickle, and that kindness is often rewarded with the basest of ingratitude; yet all are not unthankful and treacherous. We must not allow the wickedness of some to prejudice us against all. We should deal impartially and judge righteously of everyone alike: yet only divine grace—humbly and earnestly sought—will enable us to remain just and merciful after we have been deceived and wronged a few times.

Constable: David accepted Ziba's report too quickly without getting all the facts perhaps because Ziba showed himself to be a friend of David by sustaining him in his flight. We sometimes accept a friend's analysis of the motives of another person too quickly if we do not bother to get all the facts. Here David slipped because he too willingly accepted the complimentary words of a friend.

Transition: **Gordon:** But if Ziba sinned in the way of smooth treachery, Shimei, the next person with whom David came in contact, sinned not less in the opposite fashion, by his outrageous insolence and invective.

II. (:5-14) INCIDENT #2 -- DAVID SUBMITS TO THE BRAZEN ATTACKS FROM SHIMEI – BRAZEN DEFAMATION – VULNERABLE TO ABUSIVE ATTACKS

A. (:5-8) Brazenness of Shimei In Blasting David

1. (:5a) His Vested Allegiance – to Household of Saul

“When King David came to Bahurim, behold, there came out from there a man of the family of the house of Saul whose name was Shimei, the son of Gera”

2. (:5b) His Verbal Attacks

“he came out cursing continually as he came”

3. (:6) His Arrogant Attacks

“And he threw stones at David and at all the servants of King David, and all the people and all the mighty men were at his right hand and at his left.”

4. (:7-8) His Judgmental Assessment

“And thus Shimei said when he cursed, ‘Get out, get out, you man of bloodshed, and worthless fellow! The Lord has returned upon you all the bloodshed of the house of Saul, in whose place you have reigned; and the Lord has given the kingdom into the hand of your son Absalom. And behold, you are taken in your own evil, for you are a man of bloodshed!’”

B. (:9-12) Meekness of David Exemplified in His Remarkable Restraint

1. (:9) Opportunity to Silence Shimei

“Then Abishai the son of Zeruiah said to the king, ‘Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? Let me go over now, and cut off his head.’”

Abishai = Joab’s brother (2:18)

2. (:10-12) Remarkable Restraint

a. (:10) Submitting to the Lord’s Discipline

“But the king said, ‘What have I to do with you, O sons of Zeruiah? If he curses and if the Lord has told him, Curse David, then who shall say, Why have you done so?’”

Pink: God has foreordained all that comes to pass in this world, but this does not mean that He regards the wickedness of men with complacency, or that He condones their evil. No indeed. In their zeal to clear God of being the Author of sin, many have denied that He is the Ordainer and Orderer of it. Because the creature cannot comprehend His ways, or perceive how He is the Author of an act without being chargeable with the evil of it, they have rejected the important truth that sin is under the absolute control of God, and is as much subject to His moral government, as the winds and waves are directed

by Him in the material sphere.

The subject is admittedly a difficult one, and if we are spared, we hope to write more at length upon it in the future. Meanwhile, we content ourself by giving a quotation from the Westminster Confession: "God's providence extendeth itself to all sins of angels and men, and that not by a bare permission, but such as hath joined with it a most wise and powerful bounding, and other wise ordering and governing, in a manifold disposition unto His own holy ends; yet so as the sinfulness thereof proceedeth only from the creature, and not from God" (chap. 5). The holiness of God is no more sullied by directing the activities of evil men, than the beams of the sun are defiled when they shine upon a filthy swamp. The hatred of his heart belonged to Shimei himself, but it was God's work that that hatred should settle so definitely on David, and show itself in exactly the manner and time it did.

b. (:11) Seeing the Bigger Picture –
Argument from the Greater to the Lesser

"Then David said to Abishai and to all his servants, 'Behold, my son who came out from me seeks my life; how much more now this Benjamite?"

c. (:12) Seeking the Lord's Favor and Restoration

"Let him alone and let him curse, for the Lord has told him. Perhaps the Lord will look on my affliction and return good to me instead of his cursing this day."

Gordon: Even in the bleakest of situations David dares to hope in divine mercy.

C. (:13-14) Wearisomeness of Ongoing Humiliation

1. (:13) Shimei Dogs David Along the Way

"So David and his men went on the way; and Shimei went along on the hillside parallel with him and as he went he cursed, and cast stones and threw dust at him."

2. (:14) Rest at the End of a Tiresome Journey

"And the king and all the people who were with him arrived weary and he refreshed himself there."

III. (:15-19) INCIDENT #3 – DAVID'S FRIEND HUSHAI FORCED TO SWEAR ALLEGIANCE TO ABSALOM (IN ORDER TO FUNCTION IN JERUSALEM AS A SPY) – FEIGNED DISLOYALTY

A. (:15) Triumphal Entry of Absalom

"Then Absalom and all the people, the men of Israel, entered Jerusalem, and Ahithophel with him."

B. (:16) Profession of Loyalty by Hushai

“Now it came about when Hushai the Archite, David’s friend, came to Absalom, that Hushai said to Absalom, ‘Long live the king! Long live the king!’”

Constable: In our text, we find out who David's real friends are. The amazing thing is that many of them are not even Jews, but Gentiles. A number of his true friends became his friend while he was facing adversity, fleeing for his life.

C. (:17) Suspicious Interrogation by Absalom

“And Absalom said to Hushai, ‘Is this your loyalty to your friend? Why did you not go with your friend?’”

D. (:18-19) Assurance of Loyalty by Hushai

1. (:18) Allegiance Not a Personal Choice

“Then Hushai said to Absalom, ‘No! For whom the Lord, this people, and all the men of Israel have chosen, his will I be, and with him I will remain.’”

Not a matter of friendship

2. (:19) Track Record of Faithful Service

“And besides, whom should I serve? Should I not serve in the presence of his son? As I have served in your father’s presence, so I will be in your presence.”

IV. (:20-23) INCIDENT #4 – DAVID’S CONCUBINES VIOLATED BY HIS SON ABSALOM IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COUNSEL OF AHITHOPHEL (MAKING THE RIFT BETWEEN DAVID AND ABSALOM PERMANENT) – HUMILIATING DEFILEMENT

A. (:20-21) Strategic Counsel of Ahithophel

1. Soliciting Counsel

“Then Absalom said to Ahithophel, ‘Give your advice. What shall we do?’”

2. Shocking Counsel

“And Ahithophel said to Absalom, ‘Go in to your father’s concubines, whom he has left to keep the house;’”

3. Shrewd Counsel

“then all Israel will hear that you have made yourself odious to your father.”

4. Successful Counsel

“The hands of all who are with you will also be strengthened.”

B. (:22) Shamelessness of Absalom

“So they pitched a tent for Absalom on the roof, and Absalom went in to his father’s concubines in the sight of all Israel.”

Ryrie: In ancient times the appropriation of the royal harem demonstrated possession of the throne (cf. 3:7). The deed would also remove any possibility of reconciliation between Absalom and David.

C. (:23) Supreme Respect for Counsel of Ahithophel

“And the advice of Ahithophel, which he gave in those days, was as if one inquired of the word of God; so was all the advice of Ahithophel regarded by both David and Absalom.”

Gordon: But the oracular word remains the standard of measurement, and we should be wrong to conclude that this verse implies a devaluation of the oracle in favour of a wisdom ethos.

CONCLUSION: **Philippians 2:3-7** – example of Christ followed by Timothy and Epaphroditus – common thread = unselfish service towards others at great cost to themselves (**Mark 10:42-44**)

Pathway of humbling ourselves before God is the pathway of serving others; if we do not humble ourselves; God has ways of humbling us ... submit to His Providence and Power; God just wants us to be in a position where He can shower more grace upon us .. for God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble – Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God and He will exalt you in His timing

* * * * *

DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

- 1) What are some of the practical ways we can humble ourselves before the Lord?
- 2) How much truth was there in the insults hurled at David by Shimei? How much was Shimei just totally out of line? How was David a supreme example of meekness in this situation?
- 3) When has the Lord turned humiliation into an occasion for thanksgiving in your life?
- 4) In what sense was the advice of Ahithophel similar to following the counsel of the Word of God?

* * * * *

QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Davis: The patience and restraint that David showed on this occasion was most amazing

indeed. One should recall the very opposite attitude when encountered by the slanderous words of Nabal (I Sam. 25:2 ff.). On that occasion he was prepared to take the life of that man without hesitation. It will be remembered that through the wisdom of Abigail he was spared the embarrassment of meaningless retaliation. That lesson had been well learned and the patience exhibited on this occasion indicated that David had committed the whole affair into the hands of his God. It is also possible that David regarded the charges of Shimei as justified to the extent that he had committed murder with regard to Uriah.

Blaikie: As David proceeds on his painful journey, there flows from his heart a gentle current of humble, contrite, gracious feeling. If recent events have thrown any doubt on the reality of his goodness, this fragrant narrative will restore the balance. Many a man would have been beside himself with rage at the treatment he had undergone. Many another man would have been restless with terror, looking behind him every other moment to see if the usurper's army was not hastening in pursuit of him. It is touching to see David, mild, self-possessed, thoroughly humble, and most considerate of others. Adversity is the element in which he shines; it is in prosperity he falls; in adversity he rises beautifully. After the humbling events in his life to which our attention has been lately called, it is a relief to witness the noble bearing of the venerable saint amid the pelting of this most pitiless storm.

Blaikie: Unlike though David and Jesus were in the cause of their sufferings, yet there is a remarkable resemblance in their bearing under them. The meek resignation of David as he went out from the holy city had a strong resemblance to the meek resignation of Jesus as He was being led from the same city to Calvary. The gentle consideration of David for the welfare of his people as he toiled up Mount Olivet was parallel to the same feeling of Jesus expressed to the daughters of Jerusalem as He toiled up to Calvary. The forbearance of David to Shimei was like the spirit of the prayer – *“Father, forgive them: for they know not what they do.”* The overawing sense that God had ordained their sufferings was similar in both. David owed his sufferings solely to himself; Jesus owed His solely to the relation in which He had placed Himself to sinners as the Sin-bearer.

Deffinbaugh: Shimei's accusations are interesting. Look at his words carefully. He accuses David of being a *“man of bloodshed.”* We immediately think in terms of Uriah and his death, ordered by David himself. But that is not what Shimei mentions specifically. He speaks of David's shedding of blood in terms of Saul and his house (verse 8). I am inclined to view Shimei as being entirely out of line, calling David (God's anointed king) a *“worthless fellow,”* and accusing him of the blood of Saul and his family, for which he was not responsible.

Deffinbaugh: There was never any doubt that God would bring about that which He had spoken through Nathan. The author of our text does not want us to miss the fact that this event is, in part, the fulfillment of Nathan's words. David sinned with one woman, taking her as his wife when she was the wife of another. Now, Absalom takes ten wives of David and makes them his own wife by sleeping with them. David sinned in private;

Absalom purposely made a spectacle of his sin, so that all Israel would know what he was about. David's humiliation in this is great. Let us never deceive ourselves into thinking that our sin is worth the price.

Deffinbaugh: Our text calls our attention to the comforting truth of God's sovereignty. To be sovereign is to have all authority and to be in complete control. God is sovereign over all creation. God is sovereign over men. Nothing can thwart God's plans, purposes, and promises. God told David what would happen as a result of his sin, and in our text we see it happening. It should come as no surprise. God also promised David that he would not die, and that his kingdom would be everlasting. Therefore, we see God protecting the life of David, even in the midst of his suffering. God provided for David through some very unexpected means, but especially through friends, many of whom were not even Israelites.

In His sovereignty, God employed even David's enemies, even those who were ungodly, to bring about His purposes and promises. God raised up Hushai to thwart the counsel of Ahithophel. He used Gentile mercenaries to fight with and for David. He even used a loud-mouthed enemy of David -- Shimei -- to humble David, even though his motives and message were wrong. God used all this to chasten David and to bring about his recovery.

In His sovereignty, God was using these very difficult times to bring David to greater maturity in his faith and practice. God was using "evil" to bring about David's "good." Romans 8:28 is certainly being acted out in the life of David, and especially in our text. Included in the "all things" which God employs to accomplish our "good" and His glory are the trials and tribulations of this life. God did not allow these painful things to happen in order to destroy David, but to draw him near, to make him humble and dependent.

It is easy to get caught up in the sorrow of this flight from Jerusalem and to be overcome with the tears that are shed. But there is a good side to all the sorrow as well. When we look at David's response to these events in the darkest hours of his life, we see some qualities which were lacking elsewhere. We see here in David a brokenness and a humility which is not always evident in his successes. The "David" who was so eager to kill Nabal and all his male servants for being rude to him is now willing to endure the insults of Shimei, because he knows there is an element of truth in what his enemy is saying. David is willing to learn from an enemy and to patiently endure persecution and affliction.

Donald Cantrell: The Danger of Throwing Rocks

I - The Reality & Truth Of Those That Throw Rocks

- A) A Dreaded Fact & Obstacle
- B) A Dangerous Force & Opposition
- C) A Dim Future & Outcome

II - The Record & Testimony Of One That Threw Rocks

- A) His Half Truth - Cried Out Against David
- B) His Helpless Target - David Refused To Fight Back
- C) His Heavy Toil - David Grew Weary Of This Assault

III - The Reasons & Temptation Of Some To Throw Rocks

- A) People With Self Insecurities
- B) People With No Self Control
- C) People With To Much Time On Their Hands
- D) People With A Holier Than Thou Attitude
- E) People That Desire To See Others Fall & Fail

IV - The Result's & Tragedy Of Those Hit By The Rocks

- A) They Feel Utterly Helpless & Lack Of Power
- B) They Feel Unfathomable Hurt & Lot's Of Pain
- C) They Feel Unconquerable Haunting & Loads Of Pressure

V - The Remedy & Test For Us Not To Throw Rocks

- A) You Cannot Win Arguing With A Nut
- B) Worry Will Not Solve Any Issue - Matthew 6:34
- C) Cast It Upon The Lord - I Peter 5:7
- D) Use All Of Your Available Resources - Hebrews 4:16
- E) Leave The Vengeance Up To The Lord - Romans 12: 19

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David Silversides: The Kind Providence of God

A. (:1-4) Ziba: Flattery brings David to a wrong judgment of someone else

Comes to bring genuine help; at some risk; if Absalom had succeeded in his rebellion, things would not have gone well for Ziba in the end

Ingratiates himself at Mephibosheth's expense; misrepresents ambition of Mephibosheth; we all look better when contrasted to someone else who looks bad; Heightens his own apparent loyalty to David

19:24 – the truth is revealed – My servant deceived me; slandered me

David falls for this flattery – Prov. 18:13 – should have checked out the information;

Should have reserved judgment; mitigating factors – under pressure; needed friends;

even under pressure beware of accepting slander without corroboration; Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment

B. (:5-14) Shimei: Cursing brings David to a right judgment of himself

- misrepresentation or misinterpretation of God's providence

- correctly sees David's afflictions as coming from the Lord

- his bitterness determines his interpretation of providence; resented Saul's displacement; holds David as responsible for the overthrow of the house of Saul – but David never lifted up his hand against the Lord's anointed; decides that David's present afflictions must be a punishment for the way he treated Saul and his house; consumed and blinded by bitterness; no thought for his own safety; don't jump to conclusions about why God is working in this way or that way when we don't really know

- David recognizes Shimei's misrepresentation as coming from God's providence in His dealings with David – even though he was wrong and false
- David not yielding to manipulative influence of Abishai – gives 3 reasons for rejecting his plan of rash retribution:
 - sinful acts of men and angels still ordained by God; within the plan and purpose and foreordination of God (Satan could do nothing against Job without God's permission) Prov. 16:4; Acts 2:23; Gen. 15:19-20 – Joseph not taking revenge on his brothers; their intention was evil, but it was the plan of God; nothing happens by chance; nothing happens independently of plan and purpose of God; quells David's spirit of revenge; David sees the chastening hand of God behind curses of Shimei to humble him
 - God's providence was showing in other ways how great David's sin really was; his son's rebellion was a far greater chastisement than anything that Shimei was doing to him; David's sins were being exposed and reprovved publicly before all Israel
 - the curse of the enemy depends on the providence of the Lord to have any effect; no need to fear the curse itself; Ps. 109:28; we have nothing to fear from the curses of men
- learn to see the hand of the Lord even in the injustice done to us by man; they are still accountable to God for their sin; the idea that God is helpless and His children are subject to random chance events is appalling
- be humbled by virtue of our real sins

C. (:15-23) Hushai: The Lord's kindness even in the midst of pain

Was Hushai justified in what he said? Did he tell lies? Lying is never justified ever?? What about spies?? Rahab the harlot; he certainly is ambiguous; gave the impression one way; David's man in the providence of God is there in Absalom's court;

- polygamy did not excuse adultery which was still viewed as very wrong; seen as a claim to the throne in their culture – taking the concubines of the king; no possibility now of reconciliation between David and Absalom; 12:11 fulfillment of prophecy; all of this was intentionally painful to David; Jer. 29:11 God acts in kindness towards David

TEXT: 2 Samuel 17:1-29

TITLE: NARROW ESCAPE ENGINEERED BY THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD

BIG IDEA:

THE SOVEREIGN GOD PROVIDENTIALLY PROTECTS THE MESSIANIC LINE OF DAVID

INTRODUCTION:

Remember what is at stake in preserving David here. He is on the run and vulnerable to being wiped out by the forces now united under the leadership of Absalom. But the Providence of God intervenes such that the normal strategy of pursue and annihilate is delayed to the point that David is able to refresh and strengthen his troops in preparation for battle.

REVIEW:

- Promise of God – 2 Samuel 7
- Birth of Solomon – 2 Samuel 12:24-25
- Prayer of David – 2 Samuel 15:31
- Key Verse: Proverbs 21:1 [Apple family illustration]

5 KEY PRACTICAL LESSONS FOR US:

I. (:1-4) AGGRESSIVE PLAN OF AHITHOPHEL SHOULD HAVE DOOMED DAVID. THE FUTILITY OF OPPOSING GOD

A. (:1) Strategic Strike Force Can Move Quickly

“Furthermore, Ahithophel said to Absalom, ‘Please let me choose 12,000 men that I may arise and pursue David tonight.’”

B. (:2) Surprise Attack Will Isolate David for the Kill

“And I will come upon him while he is weary and exhausted and will terrify him so that all the people who are with him will flee. Then I will strike down the king alone,”

This approach will save much needless bloodshed; there will be no appetite or opportunity for a prolonged civil war; By killing David before he has a chance to regroup and prepare his defenses the battle will be over before it starts.

C. (:3) Slaying David Will Unify the Nation Under Leadership of Absalom

“and I will bring back all the people to you. The return of everyone depends on the man you seek; then all the people shall be at peace.”

It is not as if the peace of the land is a high priority for the rebel who has mounted this coup against the king and his loyal followers.

D. (:4) Shrewd Counsel Well Received

“So the plan pleased Absalom and all the elders of Israel.”

It is only the Providence of God that could frustrate such a logical and strategic plan put forth by a counselor who was viewed as speaking words on a par with God. No problem for Absalom killing God’s Anointed = his very father.

Study Psalm 2

II. (:5-14) SUBVERSIVE PLAN OF HUSHAI GAINED DAVID PRECIOUS TIME. THE POWER OF PRAYER

Illustration: What happens to your prayers? Cf. helium balloons going up in the air

A. (:5-6) Opportunity for Hushai to Mislead Absalom

“Then Absalom said, ‘Now call Hushai the Archite also, and let us hear what he has to say.’ When Hushai had come to Absalom, Absalom said to him, ‘Ahithophel has spoken thus. Shall we carry out his plan? If not, you speak.’”

Usually it is wise to seek alternate opinions and weigh the value of different counsel. But sometimes in the multitude of counselors there is found much error! Once the correct counsel has been received it can be dangerous to entertain other options. (cf. how some Christians search out counsel that is appealing to them.) This was a unique case where God was at work to confuse the minds and work out His providential plan.

Hushai had worked his way into Absalom’s good graces for just such a time as this.

B. (:7) Negative Assessment of Ahithophel’s Plan

“So Hushai said to Absalom, ‘This time the advice that Ahithophel has given is not good.’”

Not speaking against Ahithophel in general ... just *“this time”*

Tricky deal since no one was accustomed to speak against wisdom of Ahithophel.

C. (:8-10) Scare Tactics Based on Reputation of David and His Valiant Men

1. Overstating the Danger

“Moreover, Hushai said, ‘You know your father and his men, that they are mighty men and they are fierce, like a bear robbed of her cubs in the field.’”

2. Possibility of a Counter Trap

“And your father is an expert in warfare, and will not spend the night with the people. Behold, he has now hidden himself in one of the caves or in another place; and it will be when he falls on them at the first attack, that whoever hears it will say, ‘There has been a slaughter among the people who follow Absalom.’”

3. Fighting Reputation of David and His Men

“And even the one who is valiant, whose heart is like the heart of a lion, will completely lose heart; for all Israel knows that your father is a mighty man and those who are with him are valiant men.”

D. (:11-13) Appeal to Superior Numbers and Vanity of Absalom

1. (:11a) Wait for United Front of Superior Numbers

“But I counsel that all Israel be surely gathered to you, from Dan even to Beersheba, as the sand that is by the sea in abundance”

2. (:11b) Wait for Absalom to Personally Lead Troops into Battle

“and that you personally go into battle”

3. (:12) Anticipation of Complete Slaughter

“So we shall come to him in one of the places where he can be found, and we will fall on him as the dew falls on the ground; and of him and of all the men who are with him, not even one will be left.”

4. (:13) No Possibility of David Finding Safe Refuge

“And if he withdraws into a city, then all Israel shall bring ropes to that city, and we will drag it into the valley until not even a small stone is found there.”

Deffinbaugh: We might be inclined to minimize the difficulty of Hushai's task, as though Absalom and the elders of Israel must embrace Hushai's counsel no matter how foolish it might be. We are therefore inclined to think of Hushai's counsel as groundless and foolish, but accepted by Absalom and his servants because their eyes are blinded to the truth of the matter.

I would like to suggest that Hushai is given great wisdom by God, and that his plan makes perfect sense, when viewed from Absalom's point of view. . .

Hushai challenges the assumptions on which Ahithophel's plans are based, and thus the plans as well. He proposes a very different David, and thus a very different plan. Hushai insists that Ahithophel has dangerously underestimated David and his ability to defend himself and his kingdom. Hushai reminds Absalom and the elders of Israel about the kind of man David is. David is no mental weakling; he is a tough and seasoned warrior. Absalom's rebellion will not break David's spirit; it will antagonize him. He will be like a she-bear, deprived of her cubs. David will be fighting mad and fighting ready. If Ahithophel comes into the wilderness to attack David, they will fight him on his turf. After all, David has spent years hiding from Saul in the wilderness. Does Ahithophel really think David can easily be found sitting among the rest of the people? He will be hiding out, and when Ahithophel and his small army arrive, David will pounce on them, giving them a humiliating defeat. It will be Absalom's soldiers who will lose heart and run, not David or his men.

E. (:14) Providence of God Working Behind the Scenes

“Then Absalom and all the men of Israel said, ‘The counsel of Hushai the Archite is better than the counsel of Ahithophel.’ For the Lord had ordained to thwart the good counsel of Ahithophel, in order that the Lord might bring calamity on Absalom.”

When we say “God is for us” – this is what we mean – all of those occasions where God is working behind the scenes to engineer a good outcome for us

III. (:15-22) DANGEROUS LOGISTICS INVOLVED IN SPIES REPORTING TO DAVID – THE URGENCY OF BOLDLY TAKING ACTION

A. (:15-16) Urgent Instructions to the Priests for David

“Then Hushai said to Zadok and to Abiathar the priests, ‘This is what Ahithophel counseled Absalom and the elders of Israel, and this is what I have counseled. Now therefore, send quickly and tell David, saying, Do not spend the night at the fords of the wilderness, but by all means cross over, lest the king and all the people who are with him be destroyed.’”

Providence of God at work; but much dangerous activity involved on the part of David’s friends as well

B. (:17) Usual Intelligence Channels to Relay Messages to David

“Now Jonathan and Ahimaaz were staying at Enrogel, and a maidservant would go and tell them, and they would go and tell King David, for they could not be seen entering the city.”

C. (:18-20) Undercover Tactics -- Narrow Escape

1. (:18a) Dangerous Exposure

“But a lad did see them, and told Absalom”

2. (:18b) Desperate Evasion

“so the two of them departed quickly and came to the house of a man in Bahurim, who had a well in his courtyard, and they went down into it”

3. (:19) Designed Camouflage

“And the woman took a covering and spread it over the well’s mouth and scattered grain on it, so that nothing was known.”

4. (:20) Daring Misdirection

“Then Absalom’s servants came to the woman at the house and said, ‘Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan?’ And the woman said to them, ‘They have crossed the brook of water.’ And when they searched and could not find them, they returned to Jerusalem.”

D. (:21-22) Delivering the Message

1. (:21) Urgent Call to Action

“And it came about after they had departed that they came up out of the well and went and told King David; and they said to David, ‘Arise and cross over the water quickly for thus Ahithophel has counseled against you.’”

2. (:22) Quick Response by David

“Then David and all the people who were with him arose and crossed the Jordan; and by dawn not even one remained who had not crossed the Jordan.”

IV. (:23) SURPRISING SUICIDE OF AHITHOPHEL HIGHLIGHTS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE REJECTION OF HIS COUNSEL – THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SMARTS AND WISDOM

A. Perception of His Fate

“Now when Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed”

B. Preparations for His Death

“ he saddled his donkey and arose and went to his home, to his city, and set his house in order,”

C. Performance of the Deed

“and strangled himself; thus he died and was buried in the grave of his father.”

Blaikie: The character of Ahithophel was a singular combination. To deep natural sagacity he united great spiritual blindness and lack of true manliness. He saw at once the danger to the cause of Absalom in the plan that had been preferred to his own; but it was not that consideration, it was the gross affront to himself that preyed on him, and drove him to commit suicide. . . In his own way he was as much the victim of vanity as Absalom. The one was vain of his person, the other of his wisdom. In each case it was the man’s vanity that was the cause of his death.

V. (:24-29) PREPARATIONS FOR BATTLE REFRESH AND ENCOURAGE DAVID -- THE ABUNDANT PROVISION OF GOD

A. (:24a) Mobilization of David’s Forces

“Then David came to Mahanaim.”

Deffinbaugh: This is indeed a city with a history. It was Jacob who gave this city its name. As he was returning to the land of promise, fearful of what would happen when he met his brother Esau, Jacob was met by angels, prompting Jacob to say, “This is God’s camp.” And so it was that Jacob named that place Mahanaim (meaning “two camps”.)

B. (:24b-26) Mobilization of Absalom’s Forces

“And Absalom crossed the Jordan, he and all the men of Israel with him. And

Absalom set Amasa over the army in place of Joab. Now Amasa was the son of a man whose name was Ithra the Israelite, who went in to Abigail the daughter of Nahash, sister of Zeruiah, Joab's mother. And Israel and Absalom camped in the land of Gilead."

C. (:27-29) Munchies and Supplies For David's Hungry, Weary Troops

"Now when David had come to Mahanaim, Shobi the son of Nahash from Rabbah of the sons of Ammon, Machir the son of Ammiel from Lo-debar, and Barzillai the Gileadite from Rogelim, brought beds, basins, pottery, wheat, barley, flour, parched grain, beans, lentils, parched seeds, honey, curds, sheep, and cheese of the herd, for David and for the people who were with him, to eat; for they said, 'The people are hungry and wear and thirsty in the wilderness.'"

Pink: There is something striking and touching in connection with each of the three men mentioned here, who brought such a lavish present to David. "Shobi was the brother of him, concerning whom David had said, "I will show kindness to Hanun the son of Nahash" (10:2) so, with the measure he had meted out to this Gentile, it is measured to him again. Ah, has not God promised that he who watereth others, shall himself be watered! "Machir the son of Ammiel of Lodebar" was the man who had given shelter to Mephibosheth (9:5): the king had relieved him of this trust by giving Mephibosheth a place at his own table (9:11), and now Machir shows his gratitude by providing for David's table. Concerning "Barzillai" we read that he was "a very aged man, even four score years old" (19:22), yet he was not too aged to minister now unto David's needs. He will come before us again in the sequel.

* * * * *

DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

- 1) What type of narrow escapes has the Lord engineered for you? How significant is it that the Lord Himself personally leads us into battle and fights on our behalf?
- 2) How do you evaluate advice to determine what is good and what is not so helpful?
- 3) Why was Ahithophel so quick to lose hope and take his own life?
- 4) What opportunities do we have to provide refreshment and encouragement for the Lord's troops who are serving to the point of exhaustion on the front lines of the battle?

* * * * *

QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Davis: The two major points of Hushai's counter proposal were that:

- (1) a larger army was needed than Absalom had at his command at this time. In other words, an encounter with David with such a small army would result in a humiliating

defeat for the young king.

(2) He played on the arrogance and pride of the king by suggesting that the king himself lead the army into battle. This appeal to his vanity worked, and the result was that David had the additional time needed to organize his own forces in defense of his throne (17:5-23).

Blaikie: The next piece of Ahithophel's counsel was a masterpiece alike of sagacity and of wickedness. He proposed to take a select body of twelve thousand out of the troops that had already flocked to Absalom's standard, and follow the fugitive king. That very night he would set out; and in a few hours they would overtake the king and his handful of defenders; they would destroy no life but the king's only; and thus, by an almost bloodless revolution, they would place Absalom peacefully on the throne. The advantages of the plan were obvious. It was prompt, it seemed certain of success, and it would avoid an unpopular slaughter. So strongly was Ahithophel impressed with the advantages that it seemed impossible that it could be opposed, far less rejected. One element only he left out of his reckoning – that *“as the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord God is round about His people from henceforth even for ever.”* He forgot how many methods of protecting David God had already employed. From the lion and the bear He had delivered him in his youth, by giving strength to his arm and courage to his heart; from the uncircumcised Philistine He had delivered him by guiding the stone projected from his sling to the forehead of the giant; from Saul, at one time through Michal letting him down from a window; at another, through Jonathan taking his side; at a third, by an invasion of the Philistines calling Saul away; and now He was preparing to deliver him from Absalom by a still different method: by causing the shallow proposal of Hushai to find more favour than the sagacious counsel of Ahithophel.

Gordon: At Mahanaim David receives practical support from three men of substance. *Shobi* (27) is described as a son of Nahash, which could mean that he was a member of the Ammonite royal family (cf. 10:2); he may even have been David's appointee in Rabbah following the Israelites' capture of the city (cf. 12:26-31). *Machir* had previously extended his hospitality to Mephibosheth (9:4), which must mean that originally he had supported Saul. The kindness of *Barzillai* greatly impressed David who later would have had him live in Jerusalem at royal expense (19:31-39).

Deffinbaugh: How would you like to be in Hushai's sandals? He knows Absalom doubts his loyalty, because he has been David's friend (16:16-19). He must know that Absalom and all the elders have already given their approval to Ahithophel's plan. In addition, he knows Absalom's confidence in Ahithophel is great, for his counsel is as though one had “inquired of the word of God” (16:23). Hushai also is David's friend, and he knows David's life may depend on the response he gives to Absalom. Would you not agree that this is certainly a predicament fittingly called “mission impossible”?

...

David flees from Jerusalem while Absalom is not far behind, ready to occupy Jerusalem and the throne. Absalom asks for Ahithophel's counsel after he arrives in Jerusalem, and Ahithophel gives it -- in two parts. The first part is his recommendation to Absalom as

to what he should do -- possess David's wives. The second part pertains to what Ahithophel personally proposes to do for Absalom -- take command of 12,000 men immediately, set out in pursuit of David this very night, and then overtake him in a way that terrifies David and his followers. Ahithophel volunteers to personally kill David alone, thus minimizing bloodshed, and then consolidate the kingdom in short order.

If we take note of the pronouns in the text above, we will see that Ahithophel has a recommended course of action for Absalom and a recommended course of action for himself. I believe Ahithophel intends for these to be undertaken simultaneously, and not sequentially. The plan Ahithophel recommends is thus: (1) Absalom will devote himself to the task of possessing David's wives, in the sight of all Israel. (2) While Absalom is thus occupied, Ahithophel will take command of 12,000 men and set out in hot pursuit of David, whom they will overtake, and he will personally kill David, thus making the possession of the kingdom complete, in very short order.

Ahithophel's counsel is exceedingly "shrewd" in several ways. First, it would have worked, barring the direct intervention of God. Second, it offered an appealing course of action to Absalom. He, not unlike his father David, can stay home from the battle and "make love" while Ahithophel and his army are making war with David. Absalom can quickly enter into his possession of the throne, yet without the dangers or discomforts of going into battle. As an added incentive, he can indulge himself with David's wives in a way that gets back at David and hurts and humiliates his father. Only David will be killed, who is Absalom's real enemy.

Pink: But why should Ahithophel have proceeded to such desperate measures? Ah, my reader, there is something here which needs to search our hearts. That upon which he had chiefly doted was now turned to ashes, and therefore he no longer had any further interest in life: his household "gods" were, so to speak, stolen from him, his "good thing" was gone, and therefore his temple lay in ruins. Hitherto his counsel was regarded "as if a man had enquired at the oracle of God" (16:23), but the advice of Hushai was now preferred before his. The high esteem in which he had been held for his political acumen, his wisdom in the affairs of state, was everything to him, and when Absalom passed his advice by (17:14) it was more than the pride of his heart could endure. To be slighted by David's usurper meant that he was now a "back number"; to be thus treated before the people was too humiliating for one who had long been lionized by them.

David Silversides: Invincible Grace

That which is outside of the people of God cannot frustrate God's purposes for His people. Hushai had been placed in Absalom's court in the providence of God to act as a mole, an informer. He was to be the means of subverting the counsel of Ahithophel.

I. (:1-4) Ahithophel fights against God's grace to His people

David's Seed = the Lord Jesus Christ – God determined to bring great blessing to all people. Ahithophel set himself against David.

A. Ahithophel willing to serve Abasalom the rebel rather than serving the Lord's

anointed because he was the Lord's anointed. No interest to serve the interests of the kingdom of God; served where and when it was convenient and expedient; no service out of conviction.

B. Ahithophel had great gifts but no saving grace. (like Judas)

A rebel has to act quickly; he could kill David quickly with minimal loss of life; this was the least difficult way to deal with the situation; David's death was essential; his counsel read the situation well;

C. Absalom had no problem with a plan involving killing his own father

II. (:5-14) God destroys the enemies of His grace to His people

He destroyed Absalom by his own hand. Absalom wanted a second opinion and that was fatal to him. In human terms, there was no reason for him to do that; no proven track record; no reason for Hushai to be trusted; not the reputation for cleverness and shrewdness that Ahithophel had; but God's Providence at work

Magnificent Speech and Answer to Prayer (:5-13)

Lord uses what is less than ideal and perfect; Hushai's boldness – counsel of Ahithophel not good at this time; Hushai is rising his life here; Lord could have used other means; boldly seize opportunities which if not grasped will not come again;

(vs. 8-10) emphasized the strength of the opposition;

(vs. 11) suggests victory if there is delay – take time; don't rush into battle; gather the forces; but a rebel cannot afford caution; delay was disastrous for Absalom;

(vs. 11) appeals to Absalom's pride – his father was known as a man of war; he wanted to outdo his father; but everything was image rather than substance for him; Absalom worshipped himself and wanted others to do the same; wanted recognition

(vs. 14) Decree of God that Absalom would be his own executioner by listening to Hushai rather than Ahithophel – according to the Lord's good plan; nothing just happens;

III. (:15-22) God's gracious deliverance of David

Used imperfect means of the lie

IV. (:23) -- Ahithophel shrewd enough to despair but still not wise unto salvation

He realized that Absalom was finished; so he knew that he was finished; clever and shrewd more than his peers; but still did not seek the Lord; not many wise are called;

God has chosen the foolish things of the world ...

Saw all that he had lived for slipping out of his grasp

What were the other suicides in Scripture: Saul; his armor bearer; Judas ...

Didn't end it all; after death the judgment

15:31 – David's prayer abundantly answered – frustrating counsel of Ahithophel

V. (:24-29) God graciously prepares David for Victory

David encouraged by support from these key men

Overall Lesson:

- the futility of fighting against God – despite cleverness = foolishness; wisdom is different

- If God be for us, who can be against us?? God fulfilled His purposes for David and his seed

Trevor Rimes: God Overrules for David's Sake

Eaton Bray Baptist Chapel • Bedfordshire, United Kingdom

<http://www.sermonaudio.com/sermoninfo.asp?SID=12107105736>

What actually happens when we pray? Are you just hoping for the best? Cf. helium balloons that drift up into the air and vanish – we don't know what happens to them; they vanish into thin air?? Are we clear and confident that God has heard and will answer in due time?

Here we see how God answered David's prayer

Cf. the sword of Damocles – hanging over his head descended by a single hair; God has purposed to bring disaster upon Absalom – he was unconscious of this fact ... cf. wrath of God hanging over the head of people; everything seems to be going their way; world is full of conspirators – cf. prime minister of Pakistan assassinated this week;

Is. 54:17 – no weapon formed against God's people shall ultimately prosper; cf. God bringing down the Berlin Wall;

Appealed to pride of Absalom

God decrees everything that comes to pass; yet He is never the author of sin; Prov. 21:1 David betrayed by Ahithophel – his own familiar friend who had accompanied him to the house of God; a type of Judas Iscariot – Why did he take his own life? His pride received a most terrible blow; he lost that which was most precious to him = his reputation for wisdom; What is at the center of your life? What does your life revolve around?

TEXT: 2 Samuel 18:1-33

TITLE: *SLAYING OF ABSALOM – DAVID’S LEADERSHIP DEFICIENCIES
OVERSHADOW ISRAEL’S KINGDOM VICTORY*

BIG IDEA:

**GODLY LEADERSHIP FOCUSES ON KINGDOM PRIORITIES AT THE
EXPENSE OF ANY PERSONAL AGENDA –
THE DEFEAT OF THE REBELS COMES WITH THE HEARTACHE OF THE
MALICIOUS SLAYING OF ABSALOM BY JOAB IN DEFIANCE OF THE
KING’S COMMAND**

INTRODUCTION:

David’s concern for Absalom overshadows the impressive military kingdom victory over the rebellious troops of Israel. His command to take it easy on his son is flagrantly disobeyed by Joab who personally finishes off the helpless Absalom. The messengers relay the news to King David whose heartache and grief intensifies in abject longing.

5 LEADERSHIP LESSONS FOR US:

**I. (:1-5) GODLY LEADERS MUST BOLDLY PURSUE KINGDOM
PRIORITIES BY FAITH**

**LAME LEADERSHIP -- DAVID STAYS HOME -- DEPLOYING HIS TROOPS
WITH CAVEAT TO SPARE ABSALOM’S LIFE**

A. (:1-2) Faith Slipping

What did David’s faith look like when it was active and vibrant?

We have almost forgotten how that figure looked and acted.

Faith eroded and undermined by a number of factors:

- Multiplying of wives and concubines
- Rash decisions without seeking the counsel of the Lord
- Sexual sin with Bathsheba compounded by Deceit of Cover-up and the murder of Uriah
- Allowed Joab to gain a foothold over him
- Failure to discipline his family
- Loss of support of the people of Israel creating a confidence crisis
- Removed from the capital of Jerusalem with its focus on temple
Worship

1. (:1) Organizing the Troops

“Then David numbered the people who were with him and set over them commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds.”

Is anything wrong here?? Certainly an issue in Chap. 24:1-3

Looks like the expedient and wise course of action

2. (:2) Ordaining Chief Commanders

a. (:2a) Three Main Generals

“And David sent the people out, one third under the command of Joab, one third under the command of Abishai the son of Zeruiah, Joab’s brother, and one third under the command of Ittai the Gittite.”

b. (:2b) David Less Than Aggressive

“And the king said to the people, ‘I myself will surely go out with you also.’

Very different than boldly taking the leadership position

B. (:3-4) Following the Counsel of the People

“But the people said, ‘You should not go out; for if we indeed flee, they will not care about us, even if half of us die, they will not care about us. But you are worth ten thousand of us; therefore now it is better that you be ready to help us from the city.’ Then the king said to them, ‘Whatever seems best to you I will do.’ So the king stood beside the gate, and all the people went out by hundreds and thousands.”

C. (:5) Favoring Natural Affection Over Kingdom Responsibility – Key Verse -- Ordering Leniency for Absalom = Spare His Life

“And the king charged Joab and Abishai and Ittai, saying, ‘Deal gently for my sake with the young man Absalom.’ And all the people heard when the king charged all the commanders concerning Absalom.”

Very discouraging thing for these troops to hear as they prepared to risk their lives in battle

Must understand the position that Absalom was in = a rebel against the kingdom of God; deserving many times over of judgment and the death penalty; this instruction would greatly compromise their ability to defeat the enemy; at best it would raise the level of difficulty and increase the number of their casualties

Natural affection is a good thing – **Rom. 1:31** – but not the only thing to consider
What did Christ teach about the relationship between natural affection and kingdom priorities??

Matt. 10:34-39

II. (:6-8) GOD’S PROVIDENCE PRODUCES REMARKABLE KINGDOM VICTORIES

LIGHTNING STRIKE -- BATTLE RESULTS IN THE GREAT SLAUGHTER OF THE REBELLIOUS ISRAELITE TROOPS

A. (:6) Forest Fighting

“Then the people went out into the field against Israel, and the battle took place in the forest of Ephraim.”

B. (:7) Decisive Defeat

“And the people of Israel were defeated there before the servants of David, and the slaughter there that day was great, 20,000 men.”

C. (:8) Tough Terrain

“For the battle there was spread over the whole countryside, and the forest devoured more people that day than the sword devoured.”

Pink: Most evident was it on which side the Lord was. All was confusion and destruction in the ranks of the apostate. The anointed eye may discern the hand of God as manifest here as, on a former occasion, it has been at Gideon: as there the "hailstones," so here the "wood" devoured more than the sword. No details are given so it is useless to conjecture whether it was pits and bogs or the wild beasts that infested those forests: sufficient that it was God Himself who fought against them—conquering them by a much smaller force than their own, and then, their being pursued by His destructive providences when they sought to escape the sword.

III. (:9-15) SUBMISSION TO GOD-ORDAINED AUTHORITY PROTECTS AGAINST IMPURE MOTIVES AND SELFISH AMBITION

LAME DUCK – ABSALOM’S VULNERABILITY HIGHLIGHTS THE KING’S COMMAND – TWO CONTRASTING REACTIONS

Talk about lame duck politicians – here we have the ultimate lame duck politician

A. (:9) Hanging High – Watershed Decision Time

“Now Absalom happened to meet the servants of David. For Absalom was riding on his mule, and the mule went under the thick branches of a great oak. And his head caught fast in the oak, so he was left hanging between heaven and earth, while the mule that was under him kept going.”

Blaikie: Dreadful miseries must have overwhelmed him. He does not appear to have made any attempt to rally his troops. Riding on a mule, in his haste to escape, he probably plunged into some thick part of the wood, where his head came in contact with a mass of prickly oak . . . when the hour of calamity came to Absalom, it found him alone. . .

Pink: A more melancholy and tragic spectacle can scarcely be imagined than Absalom dangling from the boughs of that tree. Deserted by his fellows, for they had one and all left him to his fate; abandoned by God, now that the cup of his iniquity was filled; a prey to remorse, for though utterly heartless and conscienceless, his thoughts now must have been of the gloomiest nature. Quite unable to free himself, he was compelled to wait, hour after hour, until someone came and put an end to his wretched life. What an unspeakably solemn object lesson is this for the young people of our day! how clearly the fearful end of Absalom demonstrates the Lord’s abhorrence of rebellion against parents! God’s Word tells us that it is the fool who "despiseth his father’s instruction" (Prov. 15:5), and that "whoso curseth his Father or his mother, his lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness" (Prov. 20:20); and again, "The eye that mocketh at his father, and

despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it" (Prov. 30:17).

B. (:10-13) Finder's Fee – Wisely Refraining from Disobeying the King's Command

1. (:10) Intelligence Report

"When a certain man saw it, he told Joab and said, 'Behold, I saw Absalom hanging in an oak.'"

2. (:11) Emotional Interrogation

"Then Joab said to the man who had told him, 'Now behold, you saw him! Why then did you not strike him there to the ground? And I would have given you ten pieces of silver and a belt.'"

3. (:12-13) Savvy Explanation

"And the man said to Joab, 'Even if I should receive a thousand pieces of silver in my hand, I would not put out my hand against the king's son; for in our hearing the king charged you and Abishai and Ittai, saying, Protect for me the young man Absalom! Otherwise, if I had dealt treacherously against his life (and there is nothing hidden from the king), then you yourself would have stood aloof.'"

C. (:14-15) Butchering Brutally – Unprincipled Joab Slays the Helpless Absalom in Defiance of the King's Command

1. (:14) Attacked Unmercifully by Joab

"Then Joab said, 'I will not waste time here with you.' So he took three spears in his hand and thrust them through the heart of Absalom while he was yet alive in the midst of the oak."

2. (:15) Finished off in Humiliating Fashion by Joab's Armor Bearers

"And ten young men who carried Joab's armor gathered around and struck Absalom and killed him."

Everybody had a chance to get a piece of this despised rebel

Blaikie: We need not suppose that he was altogether indifferent to the feelings of David; but he may have been seized by an overwhelming conviction that Absalom's death was the only effectual way of ending this most guilty and pernicious insurrection, and so preserving the country from ruin. Absalom living, whether banished or imprisoned, would be a constant and fearful danger.

IV. (:16-18) THE MONUMENTS TO HUMAN PRIDE AND ACHIEVEMENT MEAN NOTHING IN LIGHT OF ETERNITY

LASTING LEGACY – CONTEMPT AND HUMILIATION RATHER THAN GLORY AND HONOR – FUTILITY OF FIGHTING GOD

A. (:16) Bloodshed Minimized

“Then Joab blew the trumpet, and the people returned from pursuing Israel, for Joab restrained the people.”

B. (:17) Buried With Contempt and Humiliation

“And they took Absalom and cast him into a deep pit in the forest and erected over him a very great heap of stones. And all Israel fled, each to his tent.”

Blaikie: The purpose of this seems to have been to show that Absalom was deemed worthy of the punishment of the rebellious son, as appointed by Moses; and a more significant expression of opinion could not have been given. The punishment for the son who remained incorrigibly rebellious was to be taken beyond the walls of the city, and stoned to death. It is said by Jewish writers that this punishment was never actually inflicted, but the mode of Absalom’s burial was fitted to show that he at least was counted as deserving of it.

C. (:18) Boasting Reduced to Shame –

Absalom’s Striving for Glory and Honor Becomes Monument of Shame

“Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and set up for himself a pillar which is in the King’s Valley, for he said, ‘I have no son to preserve my name.’ So he named the pillar after his own name, and it is called Absalom’s monument to this day.”

Cf. Tower of Babel incident – **Gen. 11:1-9** – great study in human pride and efforts at achievement apart from submission to God

Same lesson that David’s son Solomon would learn and comment on in **Eccles 2:18-23**

Same lesson that **Nebuchadnezzar** himself would learn

V. (:19-33) GOD’S LIBERATING GOOD NEWS SHOULD TAKE PRIORITY OVER ANY PERSONAL AGENDA -- EVEN NATURAL AFFECTIONS
LIBERATING GOOD NEWS RECEIVED AS LAMENTABLE TRAGEDY -- THE BATTLE REPORT DEVASTATES DAVID (DESPITE THE KINGDOM VICTORY)

Cf. Lord’s Prayer: *“Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven”*

A. (:19-23) Ahimaaz Outraces the Cushite to Report to the King

1. (:19-20) Unwise Desire on the Part of Ahimaaz

“Then Ahimaaz the son of Zadok said, ‘Please let me run and bring the king news that the Lord has freed him from the hand of his enemies.’ But Joab said to him, ‘You are not the man to carry news this day, but you shall carry news another day; however, you shall carry no news today because the king’s son is dead.’”

2. (:21) Joab Commissions the Cushite

“Then Joab said to the Cushite, ‘Go, tell the king what you have seen.’ So the Cushite bowed to Joab and ran.”

3. (:22-23) Ahimaaz Persists in His Desire

“Now Ahimaaz the son of Zadok said once more to Joab, ‘But whatever happens, please let me also run after the Cushite.’ And Joab said, ‘Why would you run, my son, since you will have no reward for going?’ ‘But whatever happens,’ he said, ‘I will run.’ So he said to him, ‘Run.’ Then Ahimaaz ran by way of the plain and passed up the Cushite.”

B. (:24-27) Anticipation of Good News on the Part of King David

1. (:24a) David Waiting at the Gate for Good News

“Now David was sitting between the two gates”

2. (:24b-27) Interaction with the Watchman – Expecting Good News

C. (:28-33) Good News Gone Bad

1. (:28-30) Ahimaaz Ducks the Question by Lying

“And Ahimaaz called and said to the king, ‘All is well.’ And he prostrated himself before the king with his face to the ground. And he said, ‘Blessed is the Lord your God, who has delivered up the men who lifted their hands against my lord the king.’ And the king said, ‘Is it well with the young man Absalom?’ And Ahimaaz answered, ‘When Joab sent the king’s servant, and your servant, I saw a great tumult, but I did not know what it was.’ Then the king said, ‘Turn aside and stand here.’ So he turned aside and stood still.”

2. (:31-32) The Cushite Delivers the Full Report

“And behold, the Cushite arrived, and the Cushite said, ‘Let my lord the king receive good news, for the Lord has freed you this day from the hand of all those who rose up against you.’ Then the king said to the Cushite, ‘Is it well with the young man Absalom?’ And the Cushite answered, ‘Let the enemies of my lord the king, and all who rise up against you for evil, be as that young man!’”

3. (:33) King David is Devastated

“And the king was deeply moved and went up to the chamber over the gate and wept. And thus he said as he walked, ‘O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would I had died instead of you, O Absalom, my son, my son!’”

DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

1) Why was David wrong to number the troops in 24:1 but it was a good thing to do here? What type of organizational and military skills did David bring to this engagement that were lacking on the part of the less experienced Absalom?

2) What was the basis of the confidence for Absalom and then for David? How could they both feel that they were going to be victorious? How confident are we in entering into spiritual battle?

3) Should David have responded to the news in more joyous fashion since God had granted his followers such an impressive victory? Why was Joab increasingly at odds with the wishes and mindset of David? Was he right or wrong to finish off Absalom in defiance of the king's command?

4) What type of natural forces were at work in this forest environment to benefit the troops of David as opposed to those of Absalom? Why was this such an ideal setting for the conflict?

* * * * *

QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Davis: In preparation for the encounter David divided his men into three companies (v.2). The three-pronged attack was a common military maneuver of this period (cf. Judg. 7:16; 1 Sam. 11:11; 13:17). David gave specific instruction that Absalom, his son, should not be harmed if he participated in the battle (v. 5). As it turned out, the newly, and probably poorly, organized armies of Absalom were no match for the seasoned soldiers of David.

Gordon: Two memorials sum up the life-story of Absalom. Whereas his inordinate personal vanity had driven him to the unusual-- for an Israelite -- expedient of erecting a stele in his own honour, already in his lifetime, at his death he was accorded the memorial of the infamous (cf. Jos. 7:26; 8:29).

Blaikie: It is interesting to observe that David fully expects to win. There is no hint of any alternative, as if Absalom would not fall into their hands. David knows that he is going to conquer, as well as he knew it when he went against the giant. The confidence which is breathed in the third Psalm is apparent here. Faith saw his enemies already defeated. . . In a pitched battle, God could not give success to a godless crew, whose whole enterprise was undertaken to drive God's anointed one from this throne. Temporary and partial successes they might have, but final success it was morally impossible for God to accord. It was not the spirit of his own troops, nor the undisciplined condition of the opposing host, that inspired this confidence, but the knowledge that there was a God in Israel, who would not suffer His anointed to perish, nor the impious usurper to triumph over him.

Deffinbaugh: It is ironic, is it not, that it would be Joab who would kill Absalom? It was Joab who had orchestrated amnesty for Absalom and brought him back to Jerusalem. It was Joab who obtained greater freedom for Absalom and brought him into the king's presence. And yet, for all Joab had done for Absalom, this man set out to take the throne away from his father, and to set another as commander over Israel's forces. It

was likewise Joab who, under orders from David, had Uriah killed in battle, without raising a word of protest. And now, this military commander who would kill a righteous man at David's request would kill David's own son in direct violation to his orders. There is a saying: "What goes around, comes around." Somehow that seems fitting here. David, who abused his almost absolute authority to take Uriah's wife and then his life is powerless to save his own son from death at the hand of Joab (or anyone else).

The text adds a kind of epitaph to the account of Absalom's death. The author informs us that at one time Absalom had no sons, and fearing that he would be forgotten, built a pillar for himself in the valley of the kings. By this, he thought, he would preserve his name. As it turned out, Absalom did have sons, but in his desire to possess his father's throne, he was able to be king but for a few days, and now he will be remembered as the traitor who died, hanging from a tree, the most ignoble death of all. His pillar in the valley of the kings would never erase the memory of his folly and death. . .

The good news which Ahimaaz wanted to proclaim to David was that God had given him the victory by defeating the army of Absalom and by Absalom's death.

The problem is that David is not inclined to accept this report as good news. Notice that when each of the two messengers approach David, they indicate to him that they have good news for him. David does not ask about the outcome of the battle, but only about the well-being of his son, Absalom. Good news for David would be that Absalom is still alive. Good news for every other man involved in the war with Absalom and his men that day would be that his army has been defeated, and the trouble-maker has been removed.

Joab knows his king well. He knows that David will not take the news of Absalom's death well. That is why he is reluctant to send Ahimaaz to David with the news of his death. That is also why Ahimaaz hedges his answer to David's specific question about Absalom's well-being. And so it is that when the triumphant soldiers return to Mahanaim, they do not find their king at the gate to greet them and to express his appreciation. Instead, they learn that David is grieving over the death of his son. Now, instead of feeling proud of what they have done, David's men feel ashamed.

Pink: "The triumphing of the wicked is short." Yes, and so it proved with David's wretched son. Absalom had laid his plans carefully, executed them zealously, and had carried them out without any compunction (2 Sam. 15:1, 2, 5). He had taken a mean advantage of his father's indisposition and had stolen the hearts of many of his subjects from the king. He aspired to the kingdom, and now determined to seize the throne for himself (15:10). He had assembled his forces at Jerusalem, and had the powerful Ahithophel to counsel him. He had ruthlessly determined that his father's life must be sacrificed to his ambition, and had now gone forth at the head of the army to accomplish his death (17:24). His triumph seemed to be assured, but unknown and unsuspected by himself, he was going forth to meet his own tragic but fully merited doom.

Pink: No one can read carefully the sacred narrative without perceiving that in the latter years of his reign David was little more than a nominal king. He seems to have come thoroughly under the power of Joab, the captain of his armies: on the one hand he was too suspicious to trust him, and on the other too weak to dismiss him. It is both interesting and instructive to trace out the occasion and cause whereby Joab established such a despotic control over his royal master. Nor is this by any means a complicated task: "David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah. And he wrote in the letter, saying, Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten, and die" (2 Sam. 11:14, 15). By making Joab the partner and secret agent of his guilty plot concerning Uriah, David sold himself into his hands; in that fatal letter he forfeited his liberty, surrendering it to this unscrupulous accomplice.

By temperament Joab was a daring and energetic man: a bold fighter in lawless times. The faction of Saul's house was so strong that at the beginning of his reign David could scarcely call the throne his own, or choose his servants according to his own pleasure. Joab was an able warrior, and though he sometimes avenged his own private quarrels at the expense of his sovereign's honor, thereby vexing him at heart, yet he was too strongly entrenched to be displaced. Nevertheless, at that time David was not afraid to open his mouth and rebuke him for his slaying of Abner. Nay, he openly asserted his authority by compelling Joab to rend his clothes, put on sackcloth, and mourn before this very Abner (2 Sam. 3 :28-31)—a most humiliating experience for one of his own proud heart, and which made it unmistakably manifest that David was as yet supreme in his own dominions.

David Silversides: Following God with our Motives and Emotions

Context: the Lord preserving His kingdom under David and the seed of David = Christ; Must see the overall purpose of God = promoting His kingdom and His promised Messiah

1. Unprincipled Love (:1-5)

David did not go in person to this battle either; but not because of spiritual sluggishness; he was willing to go, but followed advice of the army; did not want to give momentum to the rebellion; blameworthy charge of David to spare his son; right to be free of personal malice and vindictiveness; but he so doted on his handsome and impressive son that David forgot he was charged with fighting the battles of the Lord; Absalom was fighting against the Lord Himself; a rebel and a wicked man who despised the covenant of God; failed to act as a ruler under God; Absalom deserved to die long ago; should have incurred the death penalty long ago; David discouraged the army of the Lord; these men were risking their lives; Behaving only as a natural father rather than as God's anointed king; whenever natural affection and partiality affect the judgment of God's leaders, leads to discouragement

2) Principled Action (:6-13)

20,000 men slain because of pride and rebellion of Absalom; everyone assumes that it was his long hair that got tangled; but the text doesn't say that; stuck between the branches; great regard for the king's authority; I would have put my life in jeopardy with the king and Joab would not have supported me; man was right to submit even to

the misguided orders of the king

3) Unprincipled Hatred (:14)

Joab had none of the scruples that this soldier had; he was man of action; he had a hold over David; had done David's dirty work in murder of Uriah; Joab was right that Absalom needed to be killed; Absalom deserved to be put to death; but his motive was sinful: disobeyed the king; had been the very one who had brought Absalom back from exile when it suited him – now ready to kill him; not motivated by zeal for God's honor or for justice; just a matter of rough and ready expediency; came to right conclusion for wrong reasons

4) A Lesson in Futility (:18)

14:27 had sons born at some point – evidently they must have died; built this pillar as a memorial to himself; but his name went down in shame; wicked and proud and vain man; despised the promises of God and his father, the Lord's anointed; concerned with a memorial; Psalm 49:11 men want to be well remembered after their death; they arrange the externals and yet make no preparation for their eternal welfare beyond this world

5) Unprincipled Love Again (:19-33)

Why did Joab not send Ahimaaz? Text does not say; maybe Joab still doesn't understand David; he thinks that the news of Absalom's death would endanger Ahimaaz's life; chap 1:11-16; 4:5-12; sentence of death on professed murderers – not for bringing report of death; not just killing the messenger; ungodly men don't understand godly men; thinks that David must think the way that he does; David's lamentations over Absalom were out of place; forgot his calling; the Lord used unprincipled Joab to correct David; should have been time of great rejoicing as the Lord preserved His kingdom and His promised seed; Natural affection is right and the absence of it is not good (Rom. 1:31), but even natural affection must be regulated by the Word of God and subordinated to the Honor of God; only God deserves our supreme devotion; David failed in this regard; notice the Lord's gracious providence to still accomplish His will; Absalom killed in the Providence of God – even though Joab did not act righteously

TEXT: 2 Samuel 19:1-43

TITLE: KINGDOM RESTORATION AMIDST KINGDOM RIVALRIES

BIG IDEA:

KINGDOM RESTORATION REQUIRES CAREFUL DIPLOMACY AMIDST QUARRELING FACTIONS

INTRODUCTION:

Kingdom restoration is at hand. The rebel forces have been defeated and Absalom has been killed. It is time for the various tribes of Israel to consider their response to receiving back into power the one who truly is their anointed king. Now is the time for David to demonstrate the effectiveness of his leadership. With many rival factions and thorny problems left over from the mess of civil war, David must make wise decisions to re-establish his authority and pull the kingdom back together.

I. (:1-8a) ADJUSTING PERSPECTIVE -- DAVID REBUKED BY JOAB FOR PUTTING HIS PERSONAL LOSS ABOVE THE SACRIFICE OF HIS TROOPS

(cf. my phrase about someone who is constantly sour: “He needs an Attitude Adjustment!” Here we find that David needs a “Perspective Adjustment!”)

A. (:1-3) Sweet Victory Turned Sour

1. (:1) Personal Loss Consumes David’s Focus

“Then it was told Joab, ‘Behold, the king is weeping and mourns for Absalom.’”

2. (:2) People Unable to Enjoy Their Victory

“And the victory that day was turned to mourning for all the people, for the people heard it said that day, ‘The king is grieved for his son.’”

3. (:3) Public Celebration Replaced by Private Humiliation

“So the people went by stealth into the city that day, as people who are humiliated steal away when they flee in battle.”

B. (:4) Self Pity of David

“And the king covered his face and cried out with a loud voice, ‘O my son Absalom, O Absalom, my son, my son’”

C. (:5-7) Scathing Rebuke by Joab

1. (:5) The Charge – Ignoring Your Loyal Troops

“Then Joab came into the house to the king and said, ‘Today you have covered with shame the faces of all your servants, who today have saved your life and the lives of your sons and daughters, the lives of your wives, and the lives of your concubines’”

This should have been a time for great celebration and reward for those

who had risked so much on David's behalf

2. (:6) The Callousness – Insensitivity to Your Loyal Troops
“by loving those who hate you, and by hating those who love you. For you have shown today that princes and servants are nothing to you; for I know this day that if Absalom were alive and all of us were dead today, then you would be pleased.”

Deffinbaugh: David is wrong to instruct his commanders not to harm Absalom. Absalom should have died several times over. He should have died for the premeditated murder of Amnon, against the law. He should have died for his rebellion against his father (prior to this text). And he should have died for high treason, in seeking to kill God's anointed king and appoint himself as king. How can David expect his army to fight against Absalom's army and not fight against Absalom? As David once used his authority to condemn a righteous man (Uriah) to death, he now seeks to use his authority as king to keep a revolutionary from the death penalty he deserves. David's perspective is completely messed up. It takes Joab's sharp rebuke to bring him out of his mental stupor.

3. (:7) The Crisis – Irreversible Damage if David Fails to Act
“Now therefore arise, go out and speak kindly to your servants, for I swear by the Lord, if you do not go out, surely not a man will pass the night with you, and this will be worse for you than all the evil that has come upon you from your youth until now.”

- D. (:8a) Strategic Access to the King
“So the king arose and sat in the gate. When they told all the people, saying, ‘Behold, the king is sitting in the gate,’ then all the people came before the king.”

David pulls himself out of his pity party just in time to avert catastrophe. He grants the people access and re-establishes key relationships.

II. (:8b-15) APPEALING FOR ACCEPTANCE -- DAVID LOBBIES JUDAH TO RECEIVE HIM BACK TO JERUSALEM

- A. (:8b-10) Situation Ripe for David's Return to Jerusalem
 1. (:8b) Dispersion of Rebel Troops (who had followed Absalom)
“Now Israel had fled, each to his tent.”
 2. (:9-10) Discontent Regarding Reticence to Receive David Back
“And all the people were quarreling throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, ‘The king delivered us from the hand of our enemies and saved us from the hand of the Philistines, but now he has fled out of the land from Absalom. However, Absalom, whom we anointed over us, has died in battle. Now then, why are you silent about bringing the king back?’”

B. (:11-15) Political Overtures by David Win Over the Men of Judah

1. (:11-12) Appeal to Religious and Political Leaders

“Then King David sent to Zadok and Abiathar the priests, saying, ‘Speak to the elders of Judah, saying, Why are you the last to bring the king back to his house, since the word of all Israel has come to the king, even to his house? You are my brothers; you are my bone and my flesh. Why then should you be the last to bring back the king?’”

Ryrie: The elders of Judah were reticent to invite David to return, perhaps because of the part they had played in Absalom’s insurrection (cf. 15:10-11).

2. (:13) Appeal to Amasa to Replace Joab as New Military Leader

“And say to Amasa, ‘Are you not my bone and my flesh? May God do so to me, and more also, if you will not be commander of the army before me continually in place of Joab.’”

Ryrie: David replaced his commander Joab with Amasa, the commander of Absalom’s army (17:25), to secure the allegiance of the rebel army and to discipline Joab for slaying Absalom.

3. (:14) Political Popularity Restored

“Thus he turned the hearts of all the men of Judah as one man, so that they sent word to the king, saying, ‘Return, you and all your servants.’”

4. (:15) Meeting at the Jordan

“The king then returned and came as far as the Jordan. And Judah came to Gilgal in order to go to meet the king, to bring the king across the Jordan.”

III. (:16-39) ADJUDICATING RIGHTEOUSNESS -- DAVID DEMONSTRATES GODLY LEADERSHIP UPON HIS RETURN TO POWER – TYING UP LOOSE ENDS WITH 3 KEY PEOPLE

A. (:16-23) David Shows Mercy and Restraint in Sparing the Life of **Shimei**

1. (:16-20) Shimei Pleads for His Life

a. (:16-17) Rush to Make Amends

“Then Shimei the son of Gera, the Benjamite who was from Bahurim, hurried and came down with the men of Judah to meet King David. And there were a thousand men of Benjamin with him, with Ziba the servant of the house of Saul, and his fifteen sons and his twenty servants with him; and they rushed to the Jordan before the king.”

b. (:18a) Desperate Attempt to Serve the King’s Household

“Then they kept crossing the ford to bring over the king’s

household, and to do what was good in his sight.”

c. (:18b-20) Desperate Confession and Plea for Mercy

“And Shimei the son of Gera fell down before the king as he was about to cross the Jordan. So he said to the king, ‘Let not my lord consider me guilty, nor remember what your servant did wrong on the day when my lord the king came out from Jerusalem, so that the king should take it to heart. For your servant knows that I have sinned; therefore behold, I have come today, the first of all the house of Joseph to go down to meet my lord the king.’”

Ryrie: *house of Joseph* = A reference to the tribe of Ephraim (the offspring of Joseph’s son), a large tribe and representative of the ten northern tribes.

2. (:21) Abishai Lobbies for Execution

“But Abishai the son of Zeruiah answered and said, ‘Should not Shimei be put to death for this, because he cursed the Lord’s anointed?’”

3. (:22-23) David Chooses the Path of Temporary Mercy and Restraint – Swearing a Blessing in Response to the Swearing of Curses

“David then said, ‘What have I to do with you, O sons of Zeruiah, that you should this day be an adversary to me? Should any man be put to death in Israel today? For do I not know that I am king over Israel today?’ And the king said to Shimei, ‘You shall not die.’ Thus the king swore to him.”

David understood his position of supreme authority and did not need to show off that power by executing vengeance on this day of celebration. Instead he chose the path of mercy and restraint. By later instructing Solomon to set conditions for his existence, David made Shimei the cause of his own execution.

Zondervan Pict. Encycl: Shimei’s fate was determined by his own response to Solomon’s restrictions. Before his death David instructed Solomon to see to it that Shimei received the punishment befitting his deeds. Solomon brought Shimei to Jerusalem and warned him that he would be put to death if he ever left the city. Things went well for Shimei for three years, but when his slaves ran away he left the city to retrieve them. Upon his return, Solomon carried out the threatened penalty; Shimei was slain (1 Kings 2:42-46).

B. (:24-30) David Shows Wisdom and Skepticism in Responding to the Tale Told by **Mephibosheth**

Apparently David could not tell for sure whether Ziba or Mephibosheth was giving him the straight scoop, so he split the difference and moved on. Perhaps this was a rash decision on his part ... difficult to know whether he had the means to check out

he veracity of Mephibosheth's story.

1. (:24) Physical Evidence

"Then Mephibosheth the son of Saul came down to meet the king; and he had neither cared for his feet, nor trimmed his mustache, nor washed his clothes, from the day the king departed until the day he came home in peace."

2. (:25) Probing Question

"And it was when he came from Jerusalem to meet the king, that the king said to him, 'Why did you not go with me, Mephibosheth?'"

3. (:26-28) Persuasive Response

a. (:26) Good Intentions

"So he answered, 'O my lord, the king, my servant deceived me; for your servant said, I will saddle a donkey for myself that I may ride on it and go with the king, because your servant is lame.'"

b. (:27) Submissive Spirit

"Moreover, he has slandered your servant to my lord the king; but my lord the king is like the angel of God, therefore do what is good in your sight."

c. (:28) Appreciative Heart

"For all my father's household was nothing but dead men before my lord the king; yet you set your servant among those who ate at your own table. What right do I have yet that I should complain anymore to the king?"

4. (:29) Perplexing Compromise

"So the king said to him, 'Why do you still speak of your affairs? I have decided, You and Ziba shall divide the land.'"

One would have thought that the king would have weighed the evidence and found either in favor of Ziba or Mephibosheth. Maybe he was bound by some extent to his earlier poor judgment (16:4) to believe the unsubstantiated report of Ziba and he could not completely renege on that commitment. Or maybe he was uncertain whom to believe in light of contradicting testimony.

Ryrie: David either:

- (1) made a bad judgment
- (2) was trying to keep from alienating Ziba, or
- (3) did not believe Mephibosheth to be totally innocent

5. (:30) Professing Loyalty

"And Mephibosheth said to the king, 'Let him even take it all, since my

lord the king has come safely to his own house.’”

Blaikie: The temper of the Benjamites was very irritable; they had never been very cordial to David, and Ziba was an important man among them. There he was, with his fifteen sons and twenty servants, a man not to be hastily set aside. For once the king appeared to prefer the rule of expediency to that of justice. To make some amends for his wrong to Mephibosheth, and at the same time not to turn Ziba into a foe, he resorted to this rough-and-ready method of dividing the land between them. But surely it was an unworthy arrangement. Mephibosheth had been loyal, and should never have lost his land. He had been slandered by Ziba, and therefore deserved some solace for his wrong.

Deffinbaugh: Once again, it is a day of rejoicing and reunion. David will give both men the benefit of the doubt and make a judgment which benefits both and might facilitate their reconciliation.

C. (:31-39) David Shows Appreciation and Generosity in Rewarding the Loyalty of **Barzillai**

1. (:31-32) Long-Term Loyalty Demonstrated by Barzillai

a. (:31) Present Loyalty – Escorting David over the Jordan

“Now Barzillai the Gileadite had come down from Rogelim; and he went on to the Jordan with the king to escort him over the Jordan.”

b. (:32) Past Loyalty – Sustaining David while in Exile

“Now Barzillai was very old, being eighty years old; and he had sustained the king while he stayed at Mahanaim, for he was a very great man.”

2. (:33-38) Generous Reward Promised by David

a. (:33) Generous Offer

“And the king said to Barzillai, ‘You cross over with me and I will sustain you in Jerusalem with me.’”

b. (:34-35) Realistic Rejection – doesn’t make sense at this stage of life

“But Barzillai said to the king, ‘How long have I yet to live, that I should go up with the king to Jerusalem? I am now eighty years old. Can I distinguish between good and bad? Or can your servant taste what I eat or what I drink? Or can I hear anymore the voice of singing men and women? Why then should your servant be an added burden to my lord the king?’”

c. (:36-37) Reasonable Counter Proposal

“Your servant would merely cross over the Jordan with the king. Why should the king compensate me with this reward? Please let your servant return, that I may die in my own city near the grave

of my father and my mother. However, here is your servant Chimham, let him cross over with my lord the king, and do for him what is good in your sight.”

d. (:38) Generous Commitment

“And the king answered, ‘Chimham shall cross over with me, and I will do for him what is good in your sight; and whatever you require of me, I will do for you.’”

3. (:39) David and Barzillai Pursue Their Separate Destinies

“All the people crossed over the Jordan and the king crossed too. The king then kissed Barzillai and blessed him, and he returned to his place.”

Deffinbaugh: David wishes to show his gratitude to this old fellow and invites Barzillai to accompany him to Jerusalem, where the king promises to abundantly provide for him. Barzillai graciously declines David's offer. He is too old, he admits, to appreciate the difference between filet mignon and mush, or between the concert soprano voice of one of David's musicians and his own singing in the shower. David's delicacies would be wasted on him, and besides, he does not have all that much time left. He prefers to stay in his own home, near the place where his parents are buried, and where he, before long, will be buried as well.

Barzillai does not wish to personally benefit from the generous offer David makes him, but he does propose an alternative. Barzillai commends a young man, Chimham, to the king, asking David if he will confer his blessings on this lad, as if upon him. From what we are told in 1 Kings 2:7, we know David intends not only to keep his promise to Barzillai in his lifetime but to continue it after his own death. David instructs Solomon to continue to be kind to Barzillai's sons (note the plural). I take it then that Chimham is a son of Barzillai, and that either at this time or later he is joined by another son or more. David generously provides for these men as Barzillai has cared for him.

IV. (:40-43) ALARMING DISSENSION -- JEALOUS FACTIONS LOBBY FOR POSITIONS OF POWER IN THE RECONSTITUTED REGIME

A. (:40) Picture of Unity

“Now the king went on to Gilgal, and Chimham went on with him; and all the people of Judah and also half the people of Israel accompanied the king.”

B. (:41-43) Insight Into Discord

1. (:41) Complaint by Tribes of Israel – Why Did You Ignore Us?

“And behold, all the men of Israel came to the king and said to the king, ‘Why had our brothers the men of Judah stolen you away, and brought the king and his household and all David’s men with him over the Jordan?’”

2. (:42) Retort by Men of Judah – What’s the Big Deal?

“Then all the men of Judah answered the men of Israel, ‘Because the king is a close relative to us. Why then are you angry about this matter? Have we eaten at all at the king’s expense, or has anything been taken for us?’”

3. (:43) Continued Bickering – Who is Closer to David?

“But the men of Israel answered the men of Judah and said, ‘We have ten parts in the king, therefore we also have more claim on David than you. Why then did you treat us with contempt? Was it not our advice first to bring back our king?’ Yet the words of the men of Judah were harsher than the words of the men of Israel.”

Laney: Quarreling soon broke out between the northern tribes of Israel and the people of Judah. The men of Israel were annoyed by the fact that David’s supporters in Judah made it to the Jordan and helped the king cross over without sharing the privilege with them (19:41-43). The harsh words that were exchanged between the men of Israel and Judah were an evidence of the discontent that gave rise to Sheba’s rebellion.

* * * * *

DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

- 1) How prepared are we to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as He returns to take up His rightful throne. Have we demonstrated the loyalty of a Barzillai and will we be rewarded accordingly?
- 2) How did this rivalry between the ten tribes of Israel in the north and Judah in the south develop over time? What were some of the key points of contention? How much was motivated by selfish ambition? How do we avoid rivalries and selfish ambition tearing apart the Church of Christ?
- 3) Why did David opt for the method of diplomacy to be received back into power into Jerusalem rather than just taking what was rightfully his by force?
- 4) In what ways did David demonstrate surprising generosity as a political leader (especially for his times)? How generous are we in our dealings with others?

* * * * *

QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Moore: God’s holy nation would not officially split into a Northern Kingdom (Israel) and a Southern Kingdom (Judah) until after the death of Solomon, but the tribe of Judah already functioned in many ways as a separate people. David realized the tribes of Israel were in a quandary because they had alienated their king and pledged allegiance to a leader who was now dead. David responded by appealing to his own tribe, Judah,

suggesting they lead the way for Israel in restoring the throne to its rightful king.

Mittelstaedt: Joab let David know he faced a real crisis here. Unless he shook off his self-centered grief and got out among his men and encouraged them, he would lose their loyalty and support. And that would be a greater loss than anything he had ever known. . . David did just that. Nothing so helps us deal with our own grief and self-pity as to become involved in the lives of others.

Davis: The return of David to Jerusalem and his restoration to the throne was not a simple process. The bitter sentiments of some of the people against David as encouraged by Absalom were slow to die out. It took considerable diplomatic communication to restore David in the eyes of many of his countrymen (19:9-40). In addition to this problem there was the developing political division between Israel in the north and the tribe of Judah to the south. This division had been developing over a long period of time. The viewpoints in this strife came out in the open as David prepared to return to Jerusalem and resume his authority. The two political parties were attempting to gain favor and recognition in the royal court.

Gordon: The Jordan also becomes a *symbol* in that not to have been invited to escort the king across the river is interpreted by the northern tribes as certain proof of their inferior standing in David's estimation. It is for this reason that there is no neat and tidy conclusion to the Absalom episode – that, indeed, the aftermath of one rebellion sees the instigation of another (ch. 20).

Blaikie: In the main, Joab was no doubt right; but in his manner there was a sad lack of consideration for the feelings of the king. He might have remembered that, though he had gained a battle, David had lost a son, and that, too, under circumstances peculiarly heart-breaking. Faithful in the main and shrewd as Joab was, he was no doubt a useful officer; but his harshness and want of feeling went far to neutralize the benefit of his services. . .

Another step was taken by David, of very doubtful expediency, in order to secure the more cordial support of the rebels. He superseded Joab, and gave the command of his army to Amasa, who had been general of the rebels. In more ways than one this was a strong measure. To supersede Joab was to make for himself a very powerful enemy, to rouse a man whose passions, when thoroughly excited, were capable of any crime. But on the other hand, David could not but be highly offended with Joab for his conduct to Absalom . . . Most probably the reason why the men of Judah hung back was that they were afraid lest, if David were restored to Jerusalem, he would make an example of them; for it was at Hebron, in the tribe of Judah, that Absalom had been first proclaimed, and the people of Jerusalem who had favoured him were mostly of that tribe. But when it became known that the leader of the rebel forces was not only not to be punished, but actually promoted to the highest office in the king's service, all fears of that sort were completely scattered. It was an act of wonderful clemency. It was such a contrast to the usual treatment of rebels! But this king was not like other kings; he gave gifts even to the rebellious. There was no limit to his generosity. Where sin

abounded grace did much more abound.

Dean Rhine: How do you welcome a king returning to his throne? [He examines the different people and groups who receive the king and David's response in each case.]

TEXT: 2 Samuel 20:1-26

TITLE: FOOLISH REBELS DESTINED TO LOSE THEIR HEADS

BIG IDEA:

DESTRUCTION WILL BE THE DESTINY OF THOSE WHO REBELLIOUSLY REJECT THE INHERITANCE OF THE LORD AND SEEK TO ESTABLISH THEIR OWN DOMINION

INTRODUCTION:

A foolish man (as portrayed in the Book of Proverbs) is one who has lost his head. When confronted with life choices, the fool rejects the counsel of wisdom and the path of righteousness to strike out on his own course of self will and rebellion. His path and experiences may be varied, but his destiny is determined. Here we see one such fool Sheba who rejects the inheritance of the Lord and the rule of God's anointed to try to establish his own dominion. In the end he loses his head. No surprise – but this sad scenario is played out time and again in the lives of so many.

I. (:1-3) FOOLISH REBELLION OF SHEBA

A. (:1) Trumpeting of Rebellion – Declaration of Independence by Sheba

“Now a worthless fellow happened to be there whose name was Sheba, the son of Bichri, a Benjamite; and he blew the trumpet and said, ‘We have no portion in David, Nor do we have inheritance in the son of Jesse; Every man to his tents, O Israel!’”

Mittelstaedt: His claim was that David's heart and interest were solely with Judah. . . Sheba touted himself as a leader who would work for the good of all Israel. After all, he was of the tribe of Benjamin, the same family that had given Israel its first king.

B. (:2) Test of Loyalty -- Division Between Israel and Judah

“So all the men of Israel withdrew from following David, and followed Sheba the son of Bichri; but the men of Judah remained steadfast to their king, from the Jordan even to Jerusalem.”

C. (:3) Testimony of Shame -- David's Sad Return to Jerusalem

“Then David came to his house at Jerusalem, and the king took the ten women, the concubines whom he had left to keep the house, and placed them under guard and provided them with sustenance, but did not go in to them. So they were shut up until the day of their death, living as widows.”

Blaikie: The only way of disposing of the m was to put them in ward, to shut them up in confinement, to wear out the rest of their lives in a dreary, joyless widowhood. All joy and brightness was thus taken out of their lives, and personal freedom was denied them. They were doomed, for no fault of theirs, to the weary lot of captives, cursing the day, probably, when their beauty had brought them to the palace, and wishing that they could exchange lots with the humblest of their sisters that breathed the air of freedom.

Mittelstaedt: We find David's treatment of these women to be harsh and uncaring. It is a reminder for us that our sins can affect so many others in so many different ways.

II. (:4-14) RELENTLESS PURSUIT OF SHEBA

A. (4-10) Joab Relieves Amasa of Command of the Troops

1. (:4-5) Amasa Fails to Deliver on Time

"Then the king said to Amasa, 'Call out the men of Judah for me within three days, and be present here yourself.' So Amasa went to call out the men of Judah, but he delayed longer than the set time which had appointed."

Blaikie: Whether he found the people unwilling to go out again immediately to war, or whether they were unwilling to accept him as their general, we are not told, but certainly he tarried longer than the time appointed.

Wiersbe: The most logical explanation for Amasa's delay was that the men didn't trust him and were unwilling to follow him and risk their lives.

2. (:6-7) Abishai Charged With Same Mission = Hunt Down Sheba

"And David said to Abishai, 'Now Sheba the son of Bichri will do us more harm than Absalom; take your lord's servants and pursue him, lest he find for himself fortified cities and escape from our sight.' So Joab's men went out after him, along with the Cherethites and the Pelethites and all the mighty men; and they went out from Jerusalem to pursue Sheba the son of Bichri."

Gordon: David's fear was that Sheba and his partisans would be able to entrench themselves in some of the fortified cities of Israel and so require a major effort to root them out, *and cause us trouble.*

3. (:8-10) Joab Slays Amasa to Regain Military Leadership

a. (:8) Sneaky Approach

"When they were at the large stone which is in Gibeon, Amasa came to meet them. Now Joab was dressed in his military attire, and over it was a belt with a sword in its sheath fastened at his waist; and as he went forward, it fell out."

Ryrie: Joab apparently contrived to let his sword fall out of its sheath so that as he picked it up, seemingly innocently, he could stab the unsuspecting Amasa.

b. (:9) Deceptive Pretense

"And Joab said to Amasa, 'Is it well with you, my brother?' And Joab took Amasa by the beard with his right hand to kiss him."

Ryrie: Taking hold of someone's beard and kissing his cheek was a customary Oriental greeting.

c. (:10) Savage Butchery – Slow, Agonizing Death

“But Amasa was not on guard against the sword which was in Joab's hand so he struck him in the belly with it and poured out his inward parts on the ground, and did not strike him again; and he died”

Pink: We have also seen how that, at length, David made a determined effort to strip Joab of his power, by removing him from the head of the army. Accordingly Amasa was selected as the one to replace him. But the king's design was thwarted, frustrated by one of the vilest deeds chronicled in the Scriptures. Under pretense of paying obeisance to the new general, Joab thrust him through with the sword. Such an atrocity staggers the thoughtful, making them to wonder why God suffers such outrages to be perpetrated. This is indeed one of the dark mysteries of divine providence—why the Lord permits such monsters of wickedness to walk the earth. Faith is assured that He must have some sufficient reason. Though often God giveth "no account of His matters" (Job 33:13), yet His Word does indicate, more or less clearly, the general principles which regulate His governmental dealings.

c. (:10b) Renewed Focus on the Mission at Hand

“Then Joab and Abishai his brother pursued Sheba the son of Bichri.”

B. (:11-14) Distraction of Amasa Set Aside So Pursuit Could Continue

1. (:11) Call to Rally Behind Joab's Military Leadership

“Now there stood by him one of Joab's young men, and said, ‘Whoever favors Joab and whoever is for David, let him follow Joab.’”

2. (:12) Shocking Sight of Slain Amasa – Distracting Spectacle

“But Amasa lay wallowing in his blood in the middle of the highway. And when the man saw that all the people stood still, he removed Amasa from the highway into the field and threw a garment over him when he saw that everyone who came by him stood still.”

3. (:13) Renewing the Pursuit

“As soon as he was removed from the highway, all the men passed on after Joab to pursue Sheba the son of Bichri.”

4. (:14) Unifying the Troops

“Now he went through all the tribes of Israel to Abel even to Bethmaacah and all the Berites; and they were gathered together and also went after him.”

III. (:15-22) CALCULATED EXECUTION OF SHEBA SPARES THE CITY OF ABEL

- A. (:15) Potential for Huge Collateral Damage -- Siege Against City of Abel
“And they came and besieged him in Abel Bethmaacah, and they cast up a mound against the city, and it stood by the rampart; and all the people who were with Joab were wreaking destruction in order to topple the wall.”

Ryrie: The purpose of the mound, was to help them reach the top part of the wall, break through, and gain entrance to the city.

- B. (:16-21) Wise Intervention to Spare the City

1. (:16-17) Dialogue Established

“Then a wise woman called from the city, ‘Hear, hear! Please tell Joab, Come here that I may speak with you.’ So he approached here, and the woman said, ‘Are you Joab?’ And he answered, ‘I am.’ Then she said to him, ‘Listen to the words of your maidservant.’ And he answered, ‘I am listening.’”

2. (:18-19) Destruction Decried

“Then she spoke, saying, ‘Formerly they used to say, They will surely ask advice at Abel, and thus they ended the dispute. I am of those who are peaceable and faithful in Israel. You are seeking to destroy a city even a mother in Israel. Why would you swallow up the inheritance of the Lord?’”

3. (:20-21) Diplomacy Prevails

“And Joab answered and said, ‘Far be it, far be it from me that I should swallow up or destroy! Such is not the case. But a man from the hill country of Ephraim, Sheba the son of Bichri by name, has lifted up his hand against King David. Only hand him over, and I will depart from the city.’ And the woman said to Joab, ‘Behold, his head will be thrown to you over the wall.’”

Apparently not many troops had accompanied Sheba to Abel. Anyway, once you cut off the head of the serpent you have destroyed it.

- C. (:22) Mission Accomplished -- Delivering the Head of Sheba to Joab

“Then the woman wisely came to all the people. And they cut off the head of Sheba the son of Bichri and threw it to Joab. So he blew the trumpet, and they were dispersed from the city, each to his tent. Joab also returned to the king at Jerusalem.”

(:23-26) CONCLUSION – LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE RECONSTITUTED KINGDOM

- A. (:23) Military Leadership

1. Joab

“Now Joab was over the whole army of Israel,”

2. Benaiah

“and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and the Pelethites;”

B. (:24a) Director of Public Works

“and Adoram was over the forced labor”

C. (:24b) Recorder

“and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was the recorder;”

D. (:25a) Scribe

“and Sheva was scribe”

E. (:25b-26) Priestly Leadership

1. Zadok and Abiathar

“and Zadok and Abiathar were priests; “

2. Ira = David’s Chaplain

“and Ira the Jairite was also a priest to David.”

DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

1) How does a “*worthless fellow*” manage to attract any type of following? How is it that a group of men will sometimes be dominated by the most outspoken and crude representative?

2) How much easier would it have been for David to exercise proper discipline in his own spiritual life and in his family early on rather than to endure all of the prolonged consequences of his moral sins and family neglect later on? He constantly struggled to bring the kingdom back to a position of unity and tranquility.

3) How was Joab repeatedly able to reassert his leadership and avoid being set aside?

4) What women were influential in David’s kingdom agenda – like the wise counselor from Abel?

QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Davis: The return of David to Jerusalem was marked not only by victory and rejoicing, but also by tragedy and revolt. Joab, who did not appreciate competition for his position, took the life of Amasa the military general under Absalom (20:4-12). Joab also pursued a man by the name of Sheba who evidently tried to organize another revolt against the throne. Sheba probably assumed that if Absalom could achieve success, he could use the same forces and the same sentiments to his own end. However, Sheba was captured and slain, thus removing the final threat to the security of the throne (20:13-22).

Blaikie: There is nothing to indicate that the kingdom was weakened in its external relations by the two insurrections that had taken place against David. It is to be observed that both of them were of very short duration. Between Absalom's proclamation of himself at Hebron and his death in the wood of Ephraim there must have been a very short interval, not more than a fortnight. The insurrection of Sheba was probably all over in a week. Foreign powers could scarcely have heard of the beginning of the revolts before they heard of the close of them. There would be nothing therefore to give them any encouragement to rebel against David, and they do not appear to have made any such attempt. But in another and higher sense these revolts left painful consequences behind them. The chastening to which David was exposed in connection with them was very humbling. His glory as king was seriously impaired. It was humiliating that he should have had to fly from before his own son. It was hardly less humiliating that he was seen to lie so much at the mercy of Joab. He is unable to depose Joab, and when he tried to do so, Joab not only kills his successor, but takes possession by his own authority of the vacant place. And David can say nothing. In this relation of David to Joab we have a sample of the trials of kings. Nominally supreme, they are often the servants of their ministers and officers. Certainly David was not always his own master. Joab was really above him; frustrated, doubtless, some excellent plans; did great service by his rough patriotism and ready valour, but injured the good name of David and the reputation of his government by his daring crimes. The retrospect of this period of his reign could have given little satisfaction to the king, since he had to trace it, with all its calamities and sorrow, to his own evil conduct.

Deffinbaugh: The next item of business for David is the rebellion that is under way, led by Sheba. David knows speed is of the essence. He does not dare allow Sheba time to gather a following, organize his army, and find fortified cities in which to hide or from which to fight. The sooner David's army can overtake Sheba and deal with him, the better. And so David summons his new commander, Amasa⁹¹ and instructs him to go muster the military forces of Judah, and then pursue and subdue Sheba as quickly as possible.

For some unexplained reason Amasa does not assemble the armed forces of Judah in the three-day time frame David sets down. You can imagine how uneasy David must be, knowing that every hour Sheba is free, the threat to his kingdom increases. It must pain David greatly to finally admit Amasa is not coming, at least not for a while, and to call for Abishai, the brother of Joab and long-time pain-in-the-neck for David (see 1 Samuel 26:6-11; 2 Samuel 16:9-12; 19:21-22). David would not ask Joab to do the job,

for it would appear to be an admission that he has erred in firing Joab and replacing him with Amasa. But when Abishai goes out from Jerusalem, leading David's select warriors (the Green Berets or Navy Seals of his day) in pursuit of Sheba, he is accompanied by Joab.

Deffinbaugh: We should also recognize that all of these difficulties were ultimately for David's good, and for the good of God's people. His difficulties should teach us that sin does not pay. On the other hand, David's difficulties also served to humble David, and to make him more dependent upon God. Notice how these painful points in David's life produced a humility and graciousness in him that may not have been as evident earlier in his life. He graciously forgave Shimei for his sins against him. Was this not prompted, in part at least, by the forgiveness David had experienced from God for his sin? We see it also in David's response to Mephibosheth. David has learned to receive, as well as to give, from lovely friends like Barzillai.

Mittelstaedt: This list (vv. 23-26) is practically identical to the listing of officials given in 8:15-18. The implication here is that order had once again been restored and the kingdom returned to the stability it once had enjoyed. There are a few additions to the earlier list. Adoniram was now minister of labor and public work projects, and Ira the Jairite was David's personal priest.

TEXT: 2 Samuel 21:1-22

TITLE: CAUSE FOR RELIEF AND REJOICING

BIG IDEA:

THE PROVIDENCE AND POWER OF GOD SUSTAINED DAVID AND HIS KINGDOM – THREE EXAMPLES

INTRODUCTION:

This look at the latter years of David's reign picks up on some key aspects of the Lord's Providence and Power in preparation for David's glorious hymn of praise in Chapter 22. (*"And David spoke the words of this song to the Lord in the day that the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul"* 2 Sam. 22:1) We see the wisdom and diplomacy of David in responding to the discipline of the Lord by humbly seeking the path of restoration rather than becoming stiff-necked and rebellious. Despite numerous failures and the severe consequences of sin, David never lost his focus on trying to orient his heart to pursuing after his God. His family story speaks to us of restoration and forgiveness and being used by God in spite of his many blemishes. We also see the courage and military exploits of David and his key warriors as they faced untold dangers on every side; yet found the power of God to be sufficient to uphold them, deliver them and establish His kingdom.

THE KINGDOM PURPOSES OF GOD FACE MORE SEVERE THREATS FROM SIN WITHIN THE CAMP THAN FROM GIANTS OUTSIDE THE CAMP – PROVIDENCE AND POWER OF GOD STILL SUFFICIENT

(:1-14) FINAL DELIVERANCE FROM THE SINS OF SAUL

I. (:1-14) NEGOTIATED EXCHANGE OF SAUL'S SONS FOR RELIEF FROM DISCIPLINARY FAMINE – FINAL DELIVERANCE FROM SINS OF SAUL

A. (:1) Famine Attributed to Sins of Saul (Breaking Covenant with Gibeonites)

"Now there was a famine in the days of David for three years, year after year; and David sought the presence of the Lord. And the Lord said, 'It is for Saul and his bloody house, because he put the Gibeonites to death.'"

(cf. NCAA sanctions against schools which feel the pain long after the offending coaches have departed.)

Ryrie: David recognized this famine as divine chastening (cf. Deut. 28:47-48) and asked God the reason. The sin was that Saul, zealous to exterminate the heathen from Israel, had slain some of the Gibeonites with whom Israel had made a treaty (cf. **Josh. 9:3-37**).

- Look behind the trial to the underlying cause ... may be sin ... may be strengthening (sermon series on James, testing – case of Job)
- Time does not hide our sin or erase our sin; we will face the consequences

- God treats covenant commitments as serious business
- Seeking the presence of the Lord = Key for David
- God's Sense of Justice Demands Atonement for Wrongs

B. (:2-6) Costly Settlement of Grievance

1. (:2-3) Soliciting Acceptable Terms

“So the king called the Gibeonites and spoke to them (now the Gibeonites were not of the sons of Israel but of the remnant of the Amorites, and the sons of Israel made a covenant with them, but Saul had sought to kill them in his zeal for the sons of Israel and Judah). Thus David said to the Gibeonites, ‘What should I do for you? And how can I make atonement that you may bless the inheritance of the Lord?’”

Humility of David in soliciting this response from lowly Gibeonites
 Their status in the kingdom = lowly servants; fortunate not to
 have been extinguished back in the days of Joshua

2. (:4-6) Striking the Deal

“Then the Gibeonites said to him, ‘We have no concern of silver or gold with Saul or his house, nor is it for us to put any man to death in Israel.’ And he said, ‘I will do for you whatever you say.’ So they said to the king, ‘The man who consumed us, and who planned to exterminate us from remaining within any border of Israel, let seven men from his sons be given to us, and we will hang them before the Lord in Gibeah of Saul, the chosen of the Lord.’ And the king said, ‘I will give them.’”

Num. 35:30-34

- Not seeking financial compensation
- Not trying to take matters into their own hands – going through proper channels of national justice

Why would David agree to this request? **Deut 24:16**

“Fathers shall not be put to death for their sons, nor shall sons be put to death for their fathers; everyone shall be put to death for his own sin”

Interesting context – verses right above that speak of not oppressing your servants

Blaikie: What the Gibeonites asked had a grim look of justice; it showed a burning desire to bring home the punishment as near as possible to the offender . . . Seven was a perfect number, and therefore the victims should be seven. Their punishment was, to be hanged or crucified, but in inflicting this punishment the Jews were more merciful than the Romans; the criminals were first put to death, then their dead bodies were exposed to open shame. They were to be hanged *“unto the Lord,”* as a satisfaction to expiate His just displeasure. They were to be hanged *“in Gibeah of Saul,”* to bring home the offence visibly to him, so that the expiation should be at the same place as the crime.

C. (:7-9) Selection and Execution of Required Victims

1. (:7) Mercy for Mephibosheth

“But the king spared Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan the son of Saul, because of the oath of the Lord which was between them, between David and Saul’s son Jonathan.”

Example of faithfulness to covenant oath

2. (:8) Selection of the Seven Sons of Saul

“So the king took the two sons of Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, Armoni and Mephibosheth whom she had born to Saul, and the five sons of Merab the daughter of Saul, whom she had born to Adriel the son of Barzillai the Meholathite.”

3. (:9) Harvest Festival Execution

“Then he gave them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they hanged them in the mountain before the Lord, so that the seven of them fell together; and they were put to death in the first days of harvest at the beginning of barley harvest.”

Wiersbe: This happened during barley harvest in the middle of April, and the seven corpses were exposed for about six months, until the rains arrived and the drought ended in October. ???

OR: until the rains came ending the famine – showing that the Lord had accepted this sacrifice

D. (:10-14a) Respect for the Dead of Saul’s Family

1. (:10) Carcass Protection

“And Rizpah the daughter of Aiah took sackcloth and spread it for herself on the rock, from the beginning of harvest until it rained on them from the sky; and she allowed neither the birds of the sky to rest on them by day nor the beasts of the field by night.”

24 hour job – quite a commitment on her part

Blaikie: Unburied corpses were counted to be disgraced, and this, in some degree, because they were liable to be devoured by birds and beasts of prey. Rizpah could not prevent the exposure, but she could try to prevent the wild animals from devouring them. The courage and self-denial needed for this work were great, for the risk of violence from wild beasts was very serious. All honour to this woman and her noble heart! David appears to have been deeply impressed by her heroism.

2. (:11-13) Bone Retrieval

“When it was told David what Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, the concubine of Saul, had done, then David went and took the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son from the men of Jabesh-gilead, who had stolen them from the open square of Bethshan, where the

Philistines had hanged them on the day the Philistines struck down Saul in Gilboa. And he brought up the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son from there, and they gathered the bones of those who had been hanged.”

David showing that he was not taking any personal revenge on the house of Saul

3. (:14) Proper Burial

“And they buried the bones of Saul and Jonathan his son in the country of Benjamin in Zela, in the grave of Kish his father”

Any application to growing trend towards cremation?? Do we need to show such respect for the bones of the dead?

E. (:14b) Famine Averted by Submission to David

“thus they did all that the king commanded, and after that God was moved by entreaty for the land.”

Lesson about how God responds when people repent, humble themselves before Him, and seek Him in prayer ...

Gordon: Strangely, the preoccupation of these verses is with the honourable burial of the remains of Saul and Jonathan, as if David hoped to forestall criticism for the harsh treatment of Saul’s family by this act of piety towards the memory of its most senior members. It would not have been the first time that he had tried to make political capital out of the bones of Saul and Jonathan (cf. 2:4-7).

LESSONS ABOUT ATONEMENT: share the gospel from this passage !

- God’s Presence and God’s Favor = What is Most Important in Life
 - Covenant Relationship Dictates Certain Acceptable Behavior to Maintain the Relationship
 - Covenant Breaking = Serious Business
 - Sin Alienates from God’s Presence and God’s Favor – Separates us from God
 - Judgment of Famine designed to awaken our conscience and show us our need for reconciliation
 - Key Question; How Can I Make Atonement?
 - Answer determined by offended party – not the invention of the sinner
 - Atonement cannot be purchased or earned by good works
 - Substitutionary Death involved – the shedding of blood; death and burial
- (No picture of resurrection here; limited analogy)

(:15-22) ONGOING DELIVERANCE FROM THE GIANTS OUTSIDE THE CAMP

II. (:15-17) NARROW ESCAPE FROM DEATH SIGNALS END OF DAVID’S

ACTIVE MILITARY CAREER – TRANSITION TIME IN THE KINGDOM

There will always be giants attacking the people of God; already looked at the giants of sin from within . . .

Movie – Slaying of the Giants – Football story – giants of fear and unbelief

Here dealing with Giants without –cf. the spies sent to scope out the promised land; came back and reported, there are giants living in the land

A. (:15) Exposed in Battle

“Now when the Philistines were at war again with Israel, David went down and his servants with him; and as they fought against the Philistines, David became weary.”

B. (:16) Targeted for Death

“Then Ishbi-benob, who was among the descendants of the giant, the weight of whose spear was three hundred shekels of bronze in weight, was girded with a new sword, and he intended to kill David.”

C. (:17a) Rescued by Abishai

“But Abishai the son of Zeruiah helped him, and struck the Philistine and killed him.”

David was thus indebted to Abishai, the brother of Joab.

D. (:17b) Retired From Active Combat

“Then the men of David swore to him, saying, ‘You shall not go out again with us to battle, that you may not extinguish the lamp of Israel.’”

Mittelstaedt: The first warrior came very close to killing David. He is identified as Ishbi-Benob, a powerful man whose arms were strong enough to hurl a seven and a half pound spear. David himself went down to fight against the Philistines, and he became exhausted. He was emotionally and physically drained. Had it not been for the alert reaction of Abishai, David’s fearless officer, the king might have fallen in battle.

III. (:17-22) NOBLE EXPLOITS IN KILLING THE FOUR SONS OF THE GIANT OF GATH – FINAL DELIVERANCE FROM THE PHILISTINES

A. (:17) Ishbi-benob Killed by Abishai

“But Abishai the son of Zeruiah helped him, and struck the Philistine and killed him. Then the men of David swore to him, saying, ‘You shall not go out again with us to battle, that you may not extinguish the lamp of Israel.’”

B. (:18) Saph Killed by Sibbecai

“Now it came about after this that there was war again with the Philistines at Gob; then Sibbecai the Hushathite struck down Saph, who was among the descendants of the giant.”

C. (:19) Goliath Killed by Elhanan

“And there was war with the Philistines again at Gob, and Elhanan the son of Jaare-oregim the Bethlehemite killed Goliath the Gittite, the shaft of whose spear was like a weaver’s beam.”

Various explanations:

- David did not really kill Goliath -- unacceptable
- This was a totally different Goliath – just same name -- unlikely
- parallel account inserts the phrase: “brother of Goliath” – omitted here
1 Chron. 20:5 *“and Elhanan the son of Jair killed Lahmi the brother of Goliath the Gittite,”*

D. (:20-21) Freak Giant Killed by Jonathan

“And there was war at Gath again, where there was a man of great stature who had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot, twenty-four in number; and he also had been born to the giant. And when he defied Israel, Jonathan the son of Shimei, David’s brother, struck him down.”

E. (:22) SUMMARY

“These four were born to the giant in Gath, and they fell by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants.”

Blaikie: Why have these passages been inserted in the history of the reign of David? Apparently for two chief purposes. In the first place, to give us some idea of the dangers to which he was exposed in his military life, dangers manifold and sometimes overwhelming, and all but fatal; and thus enable us to see how wonderful were the deliverances he experienced, and prepare us for entering into the song of thanksgiving which forms the twenty-second chapter, and of which these deliverances form the burden. In the second place, to enable us to understand the human instrumentality by which he achieved so brilliant a success, the kind of men by whom he was helped, the kind of spirit by which they were animated, and their intense personal devotion to David himself.

* * * * *

DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

- 1) How long does a trial have to persist in our life before we seek the Lord for its significance or for deliverance? Did David wait for three years before earnestly entreating the Lord regarding this famine?
- 2) When has the discipline of the Lord seemed harsh to us? How have we responded to the Lord’s discipline?
- 3) Where have we seen the providential hand of the Lord involved in our pursuits for His honor and for his kingdom?

4) What parallels can we draw and lessons can we learn from the ongoing conflicts between the Philistines and God's people and our own spiritual struggles?

* * * * *

QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Ryrie: This section is a non-chronological appendix to the book and records many events that occurred earlier in David's reign.

Davis: The events described in these verses probably span a period from the revolt of Absalom to the last days of David. It is apparent that the Philistines took the occasion of Absalom's revolt and the subsequent confusion to attack the borders of Israel. The record of these battles is a summary of a number of encounters that took place during this period of time.

Gordon: Chs. 21-24, also dealing with David's reign, comprise a variety of material which has not been integrated into the narrative of the preceding chapters. On the contrary, the symmetrical (concentric) arrangement of the several sections in the 'appendix' gives it an integrity of its own; it is anything but a haphazard assortment of traditions relating to David. At its centre stand two poetic pieces celebrating respectively Yahweh's delivering acts on behalf of David (22:1-51), and the covenantal relationship between Yahweh and the house of David upon which so much of Israel's hope for the future is based (23:1-7). These, we are reminded, are the secret of David's greatness. The lists of heroes and heroic exploits that frame the poetic centre-piece represent human instrumentality, but not the underlying reality, which is Yahweh.

Blaikie: In the concluding part of Samuel the principal things recorded are two national judgments, a famine and a pestilence, that occurred in David's reign, the one springing from a transaction in the days of Saul, the other from one in the days of David. Then we have two very remarkable lyrical pieces, one a general song of thanksgiving, forming a retrospect of his whole career; the other a prophetic vision of the great Ruler that was to spring from him, and the effects of His reign. In addition to these, there is also a notice of certain wars of David's, not previously recorded, and a fuller statement respecting his great men than we have elsewhere.

Gordon: We are given the impression that the execution of the men at the time when the first-fruits of the barley harvest would normally be offered represents a sacrifice which is intended to have a similar effect to that of Hiel in I Kings 16:34 and of the Moabite king in II Kings 3:27. (**Hertzberg**)

Deffinbaugh: Due to the sin of Saul and his bloody house, the Gibeonites had been wronged. It would seem that they cried out to God for justice, and a curse (the famine) came upon the land. It did not happen in Saul's day, but in a later day. (This may be because Saul would not have sought the reason for the famine or taken the necessary

steps to rectify this situation.) Now, to resolve the matter, an atonement must be made (the execution of seven of Saul's descendants). Then the Gibeonites must bless the Israelites so that God could once again bless His people. . .

I am impressed that our text foreshadows the gospel in so many ways. Not only does it remind us that God relates to men by means of His covenants, but it speaks to us particularly of the New Covenant. Saul's sins had to be atoned for or God's blessings could not be enjoyed. Saul's sin brought adversity in the form of a famine. Money could not atone for this sin, but only the shedding of blood. It was the shedding of this blood which brought about atonement and appeased both God and the Gibeonites. . .

I see some emphasis here on the next generation. Saul has passed off the scene, as have his sons. These are the sons who could have challenged David's son Solomon for the throne. But God providentially removed them. David here retires from his military career, and it will not be long until he steps down as Israel's king, giving way to his son Solomon. Rizpah shows special concerns for the bodies of her sons, protecting them from the birds and the beasts. And Goliath, though dead, is succeeded by his offspring, who continue to walk in their father's (oversized) footsteps. We seem to be moving from one generation to the next. . .

There is also a sense of closure in that things left undone, things not dealt with under Saul's administration, are now made right by David. The sin of Saul and his bloody house against the Gibeonites has been atoned for, and the land can once again enjoy God's blessings. Not only are the seven "sons" of Saul given a proper burial, but so are Saul and his sons, who had only been given a hasty burial at Jabesh-gilead. And the army of Israel has reached the point where David need no longer fight their battles for them, or even with them. There are many mighty men who are able to carry on where David left off.

This to me is a very important lesson in leadership. Often people want leaders who will do their job for them. The greatness and contribution of a leader are judged by how big a hole is left when he steps aside. In biblical terms, this should be an insult to a godly leader. The task of leaders is not to do everything, but to facilitate ministry, to train, equip, and encourage others who will take our place and do even better than we have. If this is what Christian leadership is to be, then David was a great leader. Under Saul, not one man was willing to stand up to Goliath. In David's ministry, there were many willing and able to do so. David is now free to step aside (first as commander of the military and later as king) because he has done his job well-- he has helped to create a lower level of leadership that is ready to take his place. Most dictators dread the fact that there are others like this, and seek to eliminate them because they are seen as competition. This is not so with David. It should not be so with us either.

Gil Rugh: Insights Into David's Reign

Intro to chaps 21-24

(:1-14) The Revenge of the Gibeonites on the family of Saul; Josh 9 – they didn't

inquire of the Lord; 400 years have gone by; Saul had slaughtered many of the Gibeonites; not given any information about this; Saul's intention was somewhat good – but still not the right thing to do; Time doesn't alter God's Word – that old covenant still binding; Can't bring back to life the Gibeonites that Saul had killed; Someone needs to die to make this right; Execution carried out under the direction and protection of David; the law said "*a life for a life*"; to make an atonement the proper price had to be paid; "*sons shall not be punished for sins of father*"?? -- but sons may have been prominently involved; "*Saul's bloody house*" may have had direct involvement against Gibeonites; from end of April until rains that came to break the famine instead of normal Oct fall rains?; bodies hanging there and decaying as a testimony and reminder;

(:15-22) some of the war heroes in Israel; distinguished themselves in various ways; the retirement of David from active military leadership in battle; 1 Chron. 20:5 = parallel account – killed the brother of Goliath – some words left out;

David Silversides: The Arm of the Lord

Lord's Judgment and Mercy – both serve to vindicate David;

I. The Lord Remembers (:1-2)

The same Saul who failed to slaughter the Amalekites when God told him to; slaughtered the Gibeonites when he was not supposed to; not zeal for God ... but desired to be an impressive king; showing strong action; the Lord had not forgotten the covenant; Saul dishonored the great name of God because the oath was taken in the great name of God; men think that time will cover their sins and minimize them; David inquired of the Lord; saw the Providence of the Lord rather than just chance involved; today we deny the prime cause of God; "This is the finger of God" – Ex. Explanation of pagan magicians; commentators today never think of the finger of God

II. (:3-8) The Lord Requires

Rejected monetary compensation (Num. 35:31); *take no satisfaction*; do not ask for freedom from servitude; 7 male descendents – 2 sons and 5 grandsons; 7 indicates complete justice to remove national guilt; this action was approved of God; Deut. 24:16; this national sin had to be publicly punished before judgment was removed; no hope personally apart from atonement of Christ; basis for God to be both just and the justifier ...

III. The Lord's Honor Paramount (:10-14)

Deut. 21:22 – raises a question – the body of the guilty man was not to remain hanging on the tree after nightfall lest God's curse come upon the land; curse had already come upon the land in this case; when rain came it was evident that the curse had been removed from the land – other way around; better to deal with sin expeditiously! Death penalty = handing over the guilty one to the curse of God; Body is made by God – proper to show respect – what does this say about cremation? David not motivated by personal contempt for house of Saul;

IV. (:15-22) The Lord's Mercies

Does not leave His people to fight alone against the forces of this world; David was as brave as ever, but getting older and could not protect himself; He was Israel's light because the Lord was His light (22:29)

Four more giants slain by David's men

Some lessons from this chapter:

- How the Lord views covenants – obligations; what constitutes a lawful covenant . . .
 - still stands even if rashly entered into, as long as it is lawful (not sinful)
 - rulers took the oath, therefore the entire nation was bound by it even though all were not pleased with the oath
 - subsequent generations can be bound by this covenant
- When a nation will not avenge evil in its midst, will not the Lord take the matter back directly into His own hands; Lord appoints rulers as His ministers to punish evil doers; otherwise He holds the nation guilty for tolerating evil in its midst
- The thing to fear for the people of God are not the Giants of the world outside but sin within the church and within our own hearts; walk in faith and walk humbly with our God

A. W. Pink: The Life of David series

God's longsuffering – granted them many years to repent before He brought discipline; passage of time does not remove or lessen the guilt of sin;

solemn thing for nation to go back against its word when it has promised to protect a weak and helpless people;

Atonement is made for the express purpose of turning away the displeasure of the Lord; Deut. 21:23 – hanging speaks of cursing; nobility of David's conduct in these circumstances; humility in consulting with Gibeonites; his fairness to recognize the validity of the covenant; claims of justice superceded all other personal considerations of kindness toward house of Saul;

Is 26:10 – man does not respond to God's longsuffering and patience; but continues to add upon their sins; Ps 50:21; sooner or later God will reprove; exhibiting His holiness and exercising His retributive justice;

However shocking this incident may appear to us; must view it from God's perspective;

TEXT: 2 Samuel 22:1-30

TITLE: SONG OF PRAISE FOR DELIVERANCE AND SECURITY -- PART I

BIG IDEA:

DAVID'S EXPERIENCE OF GOD'S POWER AND PROVIDENCE ON HIS BEHALF EVOKES THIS SONG OF PRAISE AND WORSHIP – 6 WAYS THAT GOD HAS DEALT WITH US – LEADING US TO PRAISE AND WORSHIP HIM

Background: Ex 14-15 – Deliverance by the power of God in the Exodus; anger of God poured out against the Egyptian pursuers; God's people rescued from an impossible situation; Very similar Song of Praise; **Deut. 31:30**

1 Sam. 2 – Song of Hannah – number of verbal similarities and common themes

This hymn of praise mirrors very closely **Psalm 18** so I will pattern my outline after my Psalms commentary for this section.

Very important to keep in view that David is a type of Christ, the ultimate seed of David.

I. (:1-4) WE ARE PROTECTED --

INTRODUCTION: THE IMAGES OF GOD'S PROTECTION LEAD TO PRAISE AND WORSHIP -- PRAISE FOR THE ROCK OF SALVATION

A. (:1) Context – Deliverance

1. From External Enemies (like the Philistines)

“And David spoke the words of this song to the Lord in the day that the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies”

Timing of David writing this song of worship

Wiersbe: It's unlikely that this song was written just after the defeat of Saul and the beginning of David's reign in Hebron. From verse 51, we infer that David wrote this psalm after God made His dynastic covenant with him (2 Sam. 7) and gave him the victories recorded in 2 Samuel 8 and 10. We further infer from verses 20-27 that he wrote the psalm before his terrible sins in connection with Bathsheba and Uriah (2 Sam. 11-12), for he could never have written verses 20-27 after that sad episode. The emphasis in this psalm is on what the Lord in His grace and mercy did for David.

???? But David certainly not trusting in his own righteousness; language ultimately fulfilled in person of Christ who could point to His own righteousness

2. From Internal Strife -- Saul

“and from the hand of Saul.”

B. (:2-3) Relationship: Secure Under the Loving Protection of the Savior –

Visualize how the Lord protects us in His loving Providence and His powerful care
“my rock” strength; stability when everything is unstable

“my fortress” protection; impenetrable; hiding place when attacked

“my deliverer” the one who rescues from danger

T. Michael Crews: They’re Playing Our Song

Everybody needs a **refuge**. You need someplace you can go to escape the worries and fears of life. You need to have some place of safety where you don’t have to be afraid—somewhere you can catch your breath, get your strength, so you can back out and face this cold, cruel world. The Lord wants to be your Refuge. He wants you to come to Him and let Him hide you in His love and care, and shelter you.

Everybody needs a **rescuer**. No matter how careful or cautious you are, trouble will always find you. Often trouble will overwhelm you. Bills pile up, your health starts to fail, your home gets shaky, and before you know it, you seem to be drowning in problem. And don’t forget about the biggest problem we all have: what do to with the guilt of our sins. Who will rescue us from disaster and death? The Lord wants to be your Rescuer. He wants you to cry out to Him when you get in over your head and you’re going down for the last time. He wants to reach down to wherever you are and save you.

“my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge”

“my shield” deflects the arrows of the wicked

“the horn of my salvation” speaks to power and authority

“my stronghold and my refuge” cf. traveling around out in Tucson and Phoenix

“my savior, Thou dost save me from violence”

Ryrie: *the horn of my salvation*. The figure denoting power is borrowed from animals whose horns are for protection and defense.

James Drake:

“The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them” (Deut. 33:27).

“And he said, The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer” (2 Samuel 22:2).

“The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower” (Psalm 18:2).

“Unto thee will I cry, O Lord my rock; be not silent to me: lest, if thou be silent to me, I

become like them that go down into the pit" (Psalm 28:1).

"Our soul waiteth for the Lord: he is our help and our shield" (Psalm 33:20).

"He only is my rock and my salvation; he is my defence; I shall not be greatly moved" (Psalm 62:2).

"Be thou my strong habitation, whereunto I may continually resort: thou hast given commandment to save me; for thou art my rock and my fortress" (Psalm 71:3).

"I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust" (Psalm 91:2).

"But the Lord is my defence; and my God is the rock of my refuge" (Psalm 94:22).

"My goodness, and my fortress; my high tower, and my deliverer; my shield, and he in whom I trust; who subdueth my people under me" (Psalm 144:2).

"The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe" (Proverbs 18:10).

"Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him" (Proverbs 30:5).

"The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him" (Nahum 1:7).

C. (:4a) Response: Call Upon the Lord – Why?

"Call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised."

This is the simple prescription for deliverance from enemies

Brings to mind choruses we sing

D. (:4b) Result: Deliverance – From Whom?

"I am saved from my enemies"

II. (:5-7) WE ARE BELOVED --

THE TIMELINESS OF GOD'S ATTENTIVENESS -- OUR DESPERATE CRIES FOR DELIVERANCE FIND GOD TO BE ATTENTIVE -- CRY FOR HELP EVEN WHEN DELIVERANCE SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE

We find grace to help just in the nick of time; just when we need it; when the situation is humanly impossible

A. God's Anointed was in a Tough Jam

"the waves of death encompassed me"

"the torrents of destruction overwhelmed me"

"the cords of Sheol surrounded me"

“snares of death confronted me”

B. God Hears Our Desperate Cries for Help

1. Desperate Cries for Help

*“In my distress I called upon the Lord,
Yes, I cried to my God”*

2. God Hears

*“And from His temple He heard my voice,
And my cry for help came into His ears.”*

**III. (:8-16) WE WILL BE AVENGED --
THE UNLEASHING OF GOD'S ANGER – LEADS TO AWE-INSPIRED
WORSHIP; FEAR OF GOD
WHEN OUR SUPERGOD GETS ANGRY HE UNLEASHES HIS
SUPER POWERS –**

ALL NATURE QUAKES WHEN GOD GETS ANGRY – WATCH OUT!

What happens when God gets Angry? (language of theophany)

A. (:8) The Earth Shakes in Anticipation of God's Angry Rebuke

*“Then the earth shook and quaked;
The foundations of heaven were trembling
And were shaken, because He was angry.”*

B. (:9) God Breathes Smoke and Fire

*“Smoke went up out of His nostrils,
And fire from His mouth devoured;
Coals were kindled by it.”*

C. (:10-11) God Springs Quickly Into Action

*“He bowed the heavens also, and came down
With thick darkness under His feet.
And He rode upon a cherub and flew;
And He sped upon the wings of the wind.”*

D. (:12-13) God's Brightness Hides Behind a Cloak of Darkness as He Approaches

*“And He made darkness canopies around Him,
A mass of waters, thick clouds of the sky.
From the brightness before Him coals of fire were kindled.”*

E. (:14) God Announces His Arrival with Displays of Power

*“The Lord thundered from heaven,
And the Most High uttered His voice.”*

F. (:15) God Routs the Enemy

“And He sent out arrows, and scattered them,

Lightning, and routed them.”

- G. (:16) The Earth Submits to God’s Angry Rebuke
*“Then the channels of the sea appeared,
The foundations of the world were laid bare.
By the rebuke of the Lord,
At the blast of the breath of His nostrils.”*

**IV. (:17-20) WE HAVE BEEN RESCUED --
THE COMPLETENESS OF GOD’S DELIVERANCE --
THE LORD RESCUES HIS ANOINTED EVEN FROM THE MOST
POWERFUL ENEMIES**

A. The Danger

*“out of many waters”
“from my strong enemy”
“from those who hated me, for they were too strong for me”
“They confronted me in the day of my calamity”*

B. The Deliverance

*“He sent from on high”
“He took me”
“He drew me out”
“He delivered me”
“the Lord was my support”
“He also brought me forth into a broad place”
“He rescued me”*

C. The Delight

“because He delighted in me”

**V. (:21-28) WE WILL BE REWARDED --
THE CONSISTENCY OF GOD’S JUSTICE --
THE LORD REWARDS THE RIGHTEOUS BUT PUNISHES THE
PERVERSE**

A. The Lord Rewards the Righteous According to Their Righteousness

1. (:21) Principle Stated

*“The Lord has rewarded me according to my righteousness;
According to the cleanness of my hands He has recompensed me.”*

2. (:22-24) Testimony of Personal Holiness

*“For I have kept the ways of the Lord,
And have not acted wickedly against my God.
For all His ordinances were before me,
And as for His statutes, I did not depart from them.*

*I was also blameless toward Him,
And I kept myself from my iniquity.”*

3. (:25) Principle Restated

*“Therefore the Lord has recompensed me according to my
righteousness,
According to my cleanness before His eyes.”*

4. (:26-27a) Examples of the Lord’s Justice

a. *“With the kind Thou dost show Thyself kind”*

b. *“With the blameless Thou dost show Thyself blameless”*

c. *“With the pure Thou dost show Thyself pure”*

5. (:28a) Testimony to the Lord’s Mercy

“And Thou dost save an afflicted people”

B. (:27b, :28b) The Lord Punishes the Perverse According to Their Sin

1. *“And with the perverted Thou dost show Thyself astute.”*

2. *“But Thine eyes are on the haughty whom Thou dost abase.”*

**VI. (:29-30) CONCLUSION – WE HAVE BEEN TRANSFORMED --
THE ADEQUACY OF GOD’S NEW CREATION**

A. (:29) The Darkness Yields to God’s Light

*“For Thou art my lamp;
And the Lord illumines my darkness”*

B. (:30) Obstacles Present No Problem to God’s Warriors

*“For by Thee I can run upon a troop;
By my God I can leap over a wall”*

Mittelstaedt: When life is hard, we are to remember that the Lord is our Strength. Those who don’t know David that well often picture him as a man of superhuman strength. He is spoken of as the young man who single-handedly slew the giant Goliath. The truth is that David was by no means strong in himself. The key to David’s strength and greatness was that he allowed the Lord to be his strength. *“It is God who arms me with strength and makes my way perfect. He makes my feet like the feet of a deer and enables me to stand on the heights. . . You give me your shield of victory; you stoop down to make me great.”* How like God, to bend low and lift us up, so that when we are at our weakest point we are the strongest, all because of him. David’s experience was that of the Apostle Paul, who wrote: *“I can do all everything through him who gives me strength”* (Philippians 4:13).

REVIEW:

PROTECTED
BELOVED
AVENGED
RESCUED
REWARDED
TRANSFORMED

* * * * *

DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

- 1) Do you think David penned this psalm before or after his fall with Bathsheba and subsequent difficulties with Absalom, etc.? When he makes reference to the “cleanness of his hands” -- how would that mesh with some of the great stains recorded in these latter chapters?
- 2) How does the Lord transform our difficulties and trials into opportunities to extol His mercy and strength and grace? How do we view the hard times in our life? Do we take the opportunity to give God the glory?
- 3) Are we taking advantage of the refuge God provides us to escape the fear and anxiety that otherwise would overwhelm us if we tried to tackle life’s challenges on our own?
- 4) Do we have the same type of confident expectation towards the future that David expressed here?

* * * * *

QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Gordon: Thematically the psalm echoes and enlarges upon much that is in Hannah’s Song (1 Sa. 2:1-10). Each climaxes with a reference to Yahweh’s faithfulness to his anointed king, but with the difference that, since the dynastic oracle has supervened (7:8-16), it is now the whole Davidic succession which is the object of his favour. Fittingly, the next section takes up this theme of the “everlasting covenant” between Yahweh and David (cf. 23:5).

Blaikie: Outline

- I. Introduction: the leading thought of the song, an adoring acknowledgment of what God had been and was to David (vv. 2-4).
- II. A narrative of the Divine interpositions on his behalf, embracing his dangers, his prayers, and the Divine deliverances in reply (vv. 5-19).

III. The grounds of his protection and success (vv. 20-30)

IV. References to particular acts of God's goodness in various parts of his life, interspersed with reflections of the Divine character, from all which the assurance is drawn that that goodness would be continued to him and his successors, and would secure through coming ages the welfare and extension of the kingdom. And here we observe what is so common in the Psalms: a gradual rising above the idea of a mere earthly kingdom; the type passes into the antitype; the kingdom of David melts, as in a dissolving view, into the kingdom of the Messiah; thus a more elevated tone is given to the song, and the assurance is conveyed to every believer that as God protected David and his kingdom, so shall He protect and glorify the kingdom of His Son for ever.

Deffinbaugh: Other OT poetic songs:

- Song of Israel by the sea (Exodus 15: 1-18)
- Song of Moses (Deuteronomy 32:1-43)
- Song of Deborah (Judges 5)
- Song of Hannah (1 Samuel 2:1-10)
- Song of Habakkuk (Habakkuk 3:1-19)

A summation of 2 Samuel 22:

- 1-3 I praise God because He is the One who keeps me safe.
4-20 When I call on Him, He rescues me. I was in a lot of trouble; I called on God, and He heard me, and saved me.
21-29 God saved me because of my righteousness.
30-46 God saved me by giving me the strength to fight and to prevail over my enemies.
47-50 Praise God!
51 God save(s) the king, His King, His anointed one.

David Silversides: Looking Back with Thanksgiving

Don't know at what point he wrote this; called a song (Eph 5:19; Col. 3:16); small variations from Psalm 18; David looks back in a believing and God-glorifying way with thanksgiving;

1. God as His Refuge (:1-4)

David referred to as the servant of the Lord in Ps. 18 which is the final form of this song; pagan kings would have referred to themselves as ultimate authority; the one who enables me to go forth = my deliverer; the more we experience of God the more we can trust Him; horn is symbol of power; lifted up in safety above his enemies; ascribes all honor to God despite his skill as a warrior; 2 Cor. 1:10;

2. God as His Deliverer (:5-20)

- Fellowship of Christ's sufferings (:5-6) – drowning in the floods of the ungodly; Lord

Jesus confronted with death in every respect; full weight of penalty for sins – something that David never experienced; remember David is a type of Christ

- (:7) Called upon the Lord in his distress – the earthly holy place and tabernacle were but a figure of the heavenly temple = the dwelling place of God; did not pray to some unspecified higher power but to the OT God of Israel – very specific
- His deliverance itself (:8-20) – using language of the Exodus from Egypt and giving of the Law on Mt. Sinai – it was this God who delivered David; this God is still as glorious as when He delivered His people from Egypt; indication of God’s wrath; vs 10 – pictorial language but describing the Lord’s real deliverance of David; cherub associated with holiness of God; describing providential deliverance which is real; the work of the Lord; Lord’s servant drowning in flood of wicked; Lord comes and blasts them in His anger and delivers His servant; Ps 46:1

- God is still in the business of delivering His people; will only allow them to suffer for their own good

- Heb. 5:7 – Christ was the Man of Prayer; David was delivered from death; Christ was delivered through death; suffered beyond anything that David suffered

3. God as His Righteous Vindicator (:21-31)

David was godly; not prideful and boastful here; not guilty of those things of which they accused him; upright in God’s covenant as a true believer; not denying that he was imperfect; but he was a believer; also had the imputed righteousness of Christ; this passage is surely prophetic of the Lord Jesus who was altogether righteous in Himself; not a hypocrite; not an apostate; but a believer trusting in the promises of God and accepted in the beloved; so this is not self righteousness

David reflected the light of God; Christ Himself is the light of the world
Complete correspondence between words of God and works of God

4. God the Giver of Victory (:32-46)

David is king; God’s instrument of judgment against the heathen nations; gentleness, lowliness – God’s coming down and helping and strengthening His people; notice how David ascribes little things to God (the details) as well as big things

5. God of All Praise (:47-51)

“It is God” that avenges me ...

Rom. 15:8ff -- that Gentiles might glorify God for His mercies – the covenant promises signified by circumcision confirmed in Christ and open up blessings to the Gentiles

Pat Damiani: The Gospel According to David

This song is also found, with only a few minor changes in the wording, in Psalm 18. Both the inscription of Psalm 18 and the introduction in 2 Samuel 22 seem to indicate that this song was first sung or written by David when God delivered him from the hand of Saul. I can’t prove it for sure, but it seems to me that David probably first wrote this song shortly after he became king of Israel and it so accurately reflects his relationship with God that he repeats the song again near the end of his life. It’s even possible that this song was so special to David that he sang it often in his worship of God.

A lot of commentators have looked at this passage and view it primarily as a prophecy of the Messiah, Jesus Christ. I certainly think that is an appropriate way to view the passage. But I'm convinced that David's song has much more to teach us. In fact, I want to suggest to you that in his song, David very clearly presents the gospel, the Good News, even though it is still over 1,000 years before Jesus will come to earth and complete the gospel through His death and resurrection. So I've titled my message this morning, "The Gospel According to David."

You all know how I like to make things as simple as possible, so I've created an acrostic for the word "G.O.S.P.E.L." to help us grasp and remember this gospel message.

(:1-4) Grasp God's nature
(:5,6) Observe my nature
(:7) Stop trying to rescue myself
(:8-20) Place my trust in what God has done
(:21-46) Excel in my faith as God equips me
(:47-51) Lift my praise to God

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Dr. C. David White

A need for stability (a rock), for a hiding place (a fortress) and for a deliverer

TEXT: 2 Samuel 22:29-51

TITLE: SONG OF PRAISE FOR DELIVERANCE AND SECURITY -- PART 2

BIG IDEA:

**TRANSFORMATION SHOULD LEAD TO VICTORY --
A SUPERGOD MAKES HIS ANOINTED VICTORIOUS LIKE A SUPERMAN**

Review: 5 Ways that God Has Dealt with Us – Showing His Power and Providence

(:1-4)	PROTECTED	The Images of God's Protection
(:5-7)	BELOVED	The Timeliness of God's Attentiveness
(:8-16)	AVENGED	The Unleashing of God's Anger
(:17-20)	RESCUED	The Completeness of God's Deliverance
(:21-28)	REWARDED	The Consistency of God's Justice

Transition:

(:29-30)	TRANSFORMED	The Adequacy of God's New Creation
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We should expect Victory in our Christian lives ... not living lives of defeat and frustration

Rom. 8:31-39 = Tone for today

3 IMPLICATIONS OF TRANSFORMATION: IMPLICATION #1

I. (:29-30) TRANSFORMED – THE ADEQUACY OF GOD'S NEW

CREATION – Transition Verses; Key Verses – The Secret to Victorious Living

God's Transforming Power and Grace at work in our lives

Shifting the focus from God's work on our behalf to our enablement to live victoriously

– How is this possible?

Perspective is that of God's Anointed .. but applies to us as well

A. (:29) Enlightened

We have been transformed from:

the kingdom of darkness and blindness and wickedness and death . . . to . . .

the kingdom of light and understanding and righteousness and life

“For Thou art my lamp;

And the Lord illumines my darkness”

John 12:35-36

It is a terrible thing to stumble around in the darkness; not to have direction;

Not to be able to understand spiritual truth – Natural man cannot understand spiritual things; they are spiritually discerned

B. (:30) Enabled

We have been transformed with supernatural capabilities --

Obstacles Present No Problem to God's Warriors

“For by Thee I can run upon a troop;

By my God I can leap over a wall”

Possessors of the divine nature
Special anointing of the Holy Spirit
Can accomplish great things for God
Look at all that God accomplished through His servant David

*Got any rivers you think are uncrossable?
Got any mountains you can't tunnel through?
God specializes in things thought impossible—
He does the things others cannot do. —Eliason
© Renewal 1973 by Singspiration, Inc.*

2ND IMPLICATION OF TRANSFORMATION:

II. (:31-37) TRANSFORMED: THE PATHWAY OF VICTORY IS SECURE -- 7 WAYS THAT GOD MAKES US VICTORIOUS --

Eternal Security: Rom. 8 passage;

1. (:31a) God Leads Us in the Path of Victory -- God is a Proven Winner
*“As for God, His way is blameless;
The word of the Lord is tested”*

Speaks of completeness; moral integrity; uprightness :24,26,33
Psalm 119

Our way is precarious; suspect; headed for surprising ruin
God commands us to **Follow Him** – Let Him take the lead; He knows where He is going; His Word will guide us on the right path; Why try to figure things out on our own; why trust in ourselves?

When has God steered us wrong?

When has His Word proven unfaithful?

Cf. **Financial advisors** giving us their counsel: Follow my investment tips ...

Look at football coaches – everyone wants to hire a proven winner; someone to take their team to the promised land

2. (:31b-32) God is Our One-of-a-Kind Shield and Rock
*“He is a shield to all who take refuge in Him.
For who is God, besides the Lord?
And who is a rock, besides our God”*

Exclusivity proclaimed here; not many gods or many paths to God

There is only one sure foundation

You can't add our merit or works to His sufficiency ..

3. (:33) God Surrounds Me with Protection and Keeps Me On Track
*“God is my strong fortress;
And He sets the blameless in His way.”*

You can't get into His Way by climbing over the walls or by any attempt to earn brownie points from God

4. (:34) God Equips Me with Security and Keeps Me from Falling

*"He makes my feet like hinds' feet,
And sets me on my high places."*

5. (:35) God Equips Me with Offensive Weapons – I am in a battle

*"He trains my hands for battle,
So that my arms can bend a bow of bronze."*

Fear not; fight valiantly; don't sit on the sidelines
Christ came to bring a sword ... not some peacenik
Reality of spiritual warfare

6. (:36) God Equips Me with Defensive Protection – I am in a battle

*"Thou hast also given me the shield of Thy salvation,
And Thy help makes me great."*

Look at how many teams are good on offense but bad on defense; or vice versa
Who wants to be **Great**? Here's how God makes it happen in your life

7. (:37) God Makes Me Stand Tall as a Winner

*"Thou dost enlarge my steps under me,
And my feet have not slipped."*

3RD IMPLICATION OF TRANSFORMATION:

**III. (:38-46) TRANSFORMATION: THE EXTENT OF VICTORY IS
ABSOLUTE (COMPLETE / COMPREHENSIVE) -- SUPERMAN TAKES NO
PRISONERS --**

Not talking about any partial victory here; the enemies are vanquished

John 10:27-30

A. (:38-43) Total Destruction of Enemies – God's Game plan for Conquering Enemies
– 4 Different Tactics / 1 Very Critical Perspective

Cf. my **Marketing Plan** – great to have some overall high level objectives and some strategies to pursue; but you must also have the specific tactics to make it happen

1. (:38) **Tactic #1 -- Chase and Conquer**

*"I pursued my enemies and destroyed them,
And I did not turn back until they were consumed."*

2. (:39) **Tactic #2 -- Shatter and Subdue**

*"And I have devoured them and shattered them,
so that they did not rise;
And they fell under my feet."*

3. (:40-41) Key = **Totally God's Doing** = Critical Perspective
 - a. Strengthening Me
"For Thou hast girded me with strength for battle"
 - b. Subduing My Enemies
"Thou hast subdued under me those who rose up against me."
 - c. Scaring My Enemies
"Thou hast also made my enemies turn their backs to me"
 - d. Setting Them Up for the Kill (my part was simple)
"And I destroyed those who hated me."
4. (:42) **Tactic #3 -- Isolate and Ignore**
*"They looked, but there was none to save,
Even to the Lord, but He did not answer them."*
5. (:43) **Tactic #4 -- Beat and Bury**
*"Then I pulverized them as the dust of the earth;
I crushed and stamped them as the mire of the streets."*

B. (:44-46) Complete Submission to God's Anointed – God's Anointed Leadership should expect **5 privileges of God-given victory**:

1. Delivered
"Thou hast also delivered me from the contentions of my people"

Sad that this type of deliverance is needed; should be the last thing necessary; we have powerful enemies to fight; we need to be united and on board and laboring together; yet look at how much of David's energies were devoted to civil wars and infighting

2. Exalted
"Thou hast kept me as head of the nations"

We don't have to worry about exalting ourselves

3. Served
"A people whom I have not known serve me."
4. Obeyed
*"Foreigners pretend obedience to me;
As soon as they hear, they obey me"*
5. Submitted to
"Foreigners lose heart,

And come trembling out of their fortresses.”

(:47-51) CONCLUSION: HYMN OF PRAISE

Repeated Refrain of Praise surrounded by 3 Blessings of God’s Love, Power, and Protection – we are secure in God’s Love

Good to be secure – who cares what others think of us ...

A. (:47) Refrain of Praise

*“The Lord lives, and blessed be my rock;
And exalted be God the rock of my salvation”*

I serve a living Savior; He’s in the world today

B. (:48) Blessing #1: God Executes Vengeance for Me

*“The God who executes vengeance for me,
And brings down peoples under me.”*

C. (:49, 51a) Blessing #2: God Delivers Me from my Enemies

*“Who also brings me out from my enemies;
Thou dost even lift me above those who rise up against me;
Thou dost rescue me from the violent man.
“He is a tower of deliverance to His king.”*

D. (:50) Refrain of Praise

*“Therefore I will give thanks to Thee, O Lord, among the nations,
And I will sing praises to Thy name.”*

E. (:51b) Blessing #3: God Shows Lovingkindness to His People

*“And shows lovingkindness to His anointed,
To David and his descendants forever”*

Deffinbaugh: Is David safe and secure because God is his refuge? Yes. In this final verse, David reveals that his confidence and security is much more long-lasting than just during his own lifetime. He knows that as God has shown lovingkindness to him, He will show it to his descendants, and thus these blessings of which he has spoken are eternal. God has not only kept His promise to David, protecting him from those who would destroy him, and establishing his throne, God will also install the One who fulfills the Davidic Covenant, God's anointed One, the Messiah.

Blaikie:

IV. References to particular acts of God’s goodness in various parts of his life, interspersed with reflections of the Divine character, from all which the assurance is drawn that that goodness would be continued to him and his successors, and would secure through coming ages the welfare and extension of the kingdom. And here we observe what is so common in the Psalms: a gradual rising above the idea of a mere earthly kingdom; the type passes into the antitype; the kingdom of David melts, as in a

dissolving view, into the kingdom of the Messiah; thus a more elevated tone is given to the song, and the assurance is conveyed to every believer that as God protected David and his kingdom, so shall He protect and glorify the kingdom of His Son for ever.

Mittelstaedt: When life is hard, we are to remember that the Lord is our Strength. Those who don't know David that well often picture him as a man of superhuman strength. He is spoken of as the young man who single-handedly slew the giant Goliath. The truth is that David was by no means strong in himself. The key to David's strength and greatness was that he allowed the Lord to be his strength. *"It is God who arms me with strength and makes my way perfect. He makes my feet like the feet of a deer and enables me to stand on the heights. . . You give me your shield of victory; you stoop down to make me great."* How like God, to bend low and lift us up, so that when we are at our weakest point we are the strongest, all because of him. David's experience was that of the Apostle Paul, who wrote: *"I can do all everything through him who gives me strength"* (Philippians 4:13).

TEXT: 2 Samuel 23:1-39

TITLE: THE LAST WORDS OF DAVID – LEGACY OF GREATNESS

BIG IDEA:

TWO LASTING MEMORIALS OF GREATNESS FROM THE REIGN OF KING DAVID

INTRODUCTION:

At the end of the day as the sun sets on the reign of David, what does he want people to remember? What is the main legacy of His righteous rule and what can we anticipate in the future as the ultimate Son of David comes to rule in the Messianic Kingdom? What constitutes a righteous kingdom and what are the effects of such a rule? David sets our vision on the fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant and then recognizes the loyal and courageous exploits of his mighty men – attributing their amazing victories to the hand of the sovereign Lord.

Mittelstaedt: These verses are identified as the “*last words of David.*” Obviously, they are not to be regarded as his final utterances (see I Kings 2:2ff), but his last inspired psalm.

What makes someone Great??

Cf. business leaders; cf sports figures; cf politicians; cf. scientists

2 Sam. 5:10 “*David became greater and greater, for the Lord God of hosts was with him.*”

2 Sam. 7:9 “*I will make you a great name*”

Psalms 77:13 “*What god is great like our God?*” **Ps. 135:5**

How did John the Baptist achieve Greatness?

How did Christ advise His disciples to attain to Greatness?

Only the Lord can raise us up to the stature of Greatness.

- by providing Greatness of Leadership – David looking back; David looking forward

- by providing Greatness of Victories

The Lord has destined His people for Greatness – Do we have a **vision for Greatness?**

I. (:1-7) FIRST LASTING MEMORIAL: REMINDER OF THE DAVIDIC COVENANT – GREATNESS OF LEADERSHIP

A. (:1-3a) Prophetic Communication of the Word of God

1. Significance of the Prophetic Communication

“*Now these are the last words of David*”

2. Credentials of the Prophet

a. His Privileged Lineage

“*David the son of Jesse*” – Humble beginnings

b. His Lofty Exaltation

“*And the man who was raised on high*” – Divinely appointed

c. His Divine Empowerment

“*The anointed of the God of Jacob*” – Covenant God

d. His Sensitive Spirit

“And the sweet psalmist of Israel.” Cf. chap 22 song of Thanksgiving

3. Process of Prophetic Communication

a. Inspired by the Holy Spirit

“The Spirit of the Lord spoke by me”

b. Verbal, Plenary Inspiration

“And His Word was upon my tongue.”

Gordon: David is ranked as a prophet in the New Testament (Acts 2:30) by virtue of his inspiration by the Spirit (cf. Mt. 22:43), and also in accordance with a tendency to extend the range of the term

4. Source of the Prophetic Word

*“The God of Israel said,
The Rock of Israel spoke to me.”*

B. (:3b-4) Pleasant Ambiance Associated with a Righteous Ruler

1. Description of His Reign

a. Fair

“He who rules over men righteously”

b. Wise

“Who rules in the fear of God”

Examine our leadership – how fair, how wise? Cf. Clemens hearing this week

2. Pleasant Ambiance Associated with His Reign

a. Perfect Conditions

*“Is as the light of the morning when the sun rises”
“A morning without clouds.”*

b. Prosperous Growth

*“When the tender grass springs out of the earth,”
“Through sunshine after rain.”*

Blaikie: A beautiful influence seems to come over the earth as the Divine Ruler makes His appearance, like the rising of the sun on a cloudless morning, like the appearance of the grass when the sun shines out clearly after rain. No imagery could be more delightful, or more fitly applied to Christ. The image of the morning sun presents Christ in His gladdening influences, bringing pardon to the guilty, health to the diseased, hope to the despairing; He is indeed like the morning sun, lighting up the sky with splendour and the earth with beauty, giving brightness to the languid eye, and colour to the faded cheek, and health and hope to the sorrowing heart. The chief idea under the other emblem, the grass shining clearly after rain, is that of renewed beauty and growth.

Wiersbe: David used a beautiful metaphor to picture the work of the leader: rain and sunshine that together produce useful fruit instead of painful thorns (vv. 4-7). David exemplified this principle in his own life, for when he came to the throne it meant the dawning of a new day for the nation of Israel.

C. (:5) Personal Application: The Davidic Covenant

1. Accreditation of the House of David
"Truly is not my house so with God?"
 2. Abundant Blessings of the Davidic Covenant
 - a. Eternal in Duration and Personal in Scope
"For He has made an everlasting covenant with me."
 - b. Ordered and Secured
"Ordered in all things, and secured"
 - c. Providing Essentials as well as Ecstasy
"For all my salvation and all my desire"
 3. Assurance of Prosperous Growth
"Will He not indeed make it grow?"
- D. (:6-7) Pronouncement of Condemnation on the Wicked
1. (:6) Divine Rejection
"But the worthless, every one of them will be thrust away like thorns. Because they cannot be taken in hand;"

Opposite of Greatness = Worthless

2. (:7) Eternal Perdition
"But the man who touches them Must be armed with iron and the shaft of a spear, And they will be completely burned with fire in their place."

II. (:8-32) SECOND LASTING MEMORIAL: RECOGNITION FOR DAVID'S MIGHTY MEN – GREATNESS OF VICTORIES

- Citing some of their most famous exploits
- Constant Refrain = *"The Lord brought about a great victory."*

"These are the names of the mighty men whom David had"

- A. (:8-12) The Three Main Mighty Men (1 Chron. 11:10-14)
 1. (:8) Josheb-basshebeth a Tahchemonite / Adino the Eznite
"chief of the captains, he was called Adino the Eznite, because of eight hundred slain by him at one time"
 2. (:9-10) Eleazar the son of Dodo the Ahohite
"the son of Dodo the Ahohite, one of the three mighty men with David when they defied the Philistines who were gathered there to battle and the men of Israel had withdrawn. He arose and struck the Philistines until his hand was weary and clung to the sword, and the Lord brought about a great victory that day; and the people returned after him only to strip the slain."
 3. (:11-12) Shammah the son of Agee a Hararite

“Now after him was Shammah the son of Agee a Hararite. And the Philistines were gathered into a troop, where there was a plot of ground full of lentils, and the people fled from the Philistines. But he took his stand in the midst of the plot, defended it and struck the Philistines; and the Lord brought about a great victory.”

Wiersbe: But why risk your life to defend a field of lentils and barley? Because the land belonged to the Lord (Lev. 25:23) and was given to Israel to use for His glory (Lev. 18:24-30). Shammah didn't want the Philistines to control what belonged to Jehovah, for the Jews were stewards of God's land. To respect the land meant to honor the Lord and His covenant with Israel.

What makes someone a hero? What are the characteristics of heroes?

Deffinbaugh: Lessons About Heroes –

Heroes emerge in times of crisis.

Heroes emerge when others fear and fail.

Heroes have been prepared and predisposed to their heroism by their way of life.

Heroes are not frightened by the odds which appear stacked against them.

Heroes are willing to die, if need be.

Heroes work and train very hard, but in the end they look to God for the victory.

Heroes take their duties and responsibilities seriously.

Heroes go above and beyond the call of duty, out of faith, loyalty, and love.

Heroes emerge where heroism is modeled, valued, and rewarded.

Heroes are those who have the courage to identify themselves with God's anointed.

B. (:13-17) The Second Tier of Three Other Mighty Men (Not Named) (1 Chron. 11:15-19)

1. (:13-14) Cornered in the Cave of Adullam

a. (:13) Rallying to David's Side

“Then three of the thirty chief men went down and came to David in the harvest time to the cave of Adullam, while the troop of the Philistines was camping in the valley of Rephaim.”

b. (:14) Refuge in the Stronghold

“And David was then in the stronghold, while the garrison of the Philistines was then in Bethlehem.”

2. (:15) Craving for a Special Drink

“And David had a craving and said, ‘Oh, that someone would give me water to drink from the well of Bethlehem which is by the gate!’”

3. (:16a) Courageous Display of Loyalty

“So the three mighty men broke through the camp of the Philistines, and drew water from the well of Bethlehem which was by the gate, and took it and brought it to David.”

4. (:16b-17) Consecration of the Sacrifice to the Lord

“Nevertheless he would not drink it, but poured it out to the Lord; and he said, ‘Be it far from me, O Lord, that I should do this. Shall I drink the blood of the men who went in jeopardy of their lives?’ Therefore he

would not drink it.”

5. (:17b) Closing Summary

“These things the three mighty men did.”

C. (:18-23) Two Special Commanders (1 Chron. 11:20-25)

1) (:18-19) Abishai – the Commander of the Thirty

“And Abishai, the brother of Joab, the son of Zeruiah, was chief of the thirty. And he swung his spear against three hundred and killed them, and had a name as well as the three. He was most honored of the thirty, therefore he became their commander; however, he did not attain to the three.”

2. (:20-23) Benaiah – the Commander of David’s Private Guard

a. Impressive Lineage

“Then Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man of Kabzeel, who had done mighty deeds”

b. Exploit #1 – Killed Two Sons of Ariel of Moab

“killed the two sons of Ariel of Moab.”

c. Exploit #2 – Killed a Lion in Dangerous Conditions

“He also went down and killed a lion in the middle of a pit on a snowy day.”

d. Exploit #3 – Killed an Impressive Egyptian Despite Being Overmatched

“And he killed an Egyptian, an impressive man. Now the Egyptian had a spear in his hand, but he went down to him with a club and snatched the spear from the Egyptian’s hand, and killed him with his own spear.”

e. Summary

“These things Benaiah the son of Jehoiada did, and had a name as well as the three mighty men. He was honored among the thirty, but he did not attain to the three.”

f. Impressive Appointment

“And David appointed him over his guard.”

D. (:24-39) The Thirty Listed (1 Chron. 11:26-47)

Deffinbaugh: Importance of Plurality Leadership –

While many are willing to accept the plurality principle from New Testament times onward, some are still predisposed to think that the Old Testament was a “one-man show.” I would beg to differ. God divided responsibility for leading Israel among prophets, priests, and kings. He did not concentrate all power in one office or one man. Indeed, this is where Saul got himself into serious trouble, usurping Samuel’s role by refusing to wait for him, going ahead with the offering of the sacrifices (1 Samuel 13). It was also Elijah’s mistaken impression that “he alone was left,” when this was far from true (see 1 Kings 19). God works through a plurality of people to achieve His

purposes. He is not restricted to one person, or even to a few.

* * * * *

DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

- 1) How much more privileged are we in this post-Pentecost age to have the ministry of the Holy Spirit permanently dwelling within us and gifting all believers for great works of service? What types of awesome victories is the Holy Spirit working out through the channel of our lives?
- 2) What do we learn from the imagery of the light and the tender grass about the nature of the conditions in the coming Messianic Kingdom?
- 3) What type of loyalty and commitment follows closely after a leader who rules in righteousness and recognizes and rewards the contributions of his chief commanders?
- 4) Are we taking every opportunity to build others up and show them recognition for their contributions in ministry and service to the Lord? Who are the members of our spiritual Hall of Fame who have helped us along our Christian walk?

* * * * *

QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Website: The Davidic Covenant is a covenant of Messianic Promise. 1 Chronicles 17:4-15. The kingdom covenant regulating the temporal and eternal rule of David's posterity. It secures in perpetuity a Davidic 'house' or line, a throne, and a kingdom. It was confirmed by divine oath in Ps 89:30-37 and renewed to Mary in Lk 1:31-33. It is fulfilled in the Messiah as the World's Saviour and Israel's coming King (Acts 1:6; Rev 19:16; 20:4-6).

<http://www.yeshuatyisrael.com/covenant.htm>

Wiersbe: God empowers those whom He calls, and He anointed David with His Spirit (1 Sam. 16:12-13). Dr. A. W. Tozer said, "Never follow any leader until you see the oil on his forehead," which explains why so many gifted men came to David and joined his band. It takes more than talent and training to be an effective leader and to be able to recruit and train other leaders. . . . Religious leaders who follow the principles of what the world calls "success" rarely accomplish anything permanent that glorifies God. . . . It's good to be educated by men, but it's even more important to be trained by the Lord. "Our Lord was thirty years preparing for three years' service," wrote Oswald Chambers. "The modern stamp is three years of preparation for thirty years of service."

Mittelstaedt: At least thirty heroes of old are listed for us. In many cases they are only names to us, but they were certainly known and appreciated by David. To name them here is to honor them. Among those included in this honor roll was Uriah the Hittite. He certainly deserves to be included, and he will never be forgotten. His mention here reminds us that David, for all his greatness, was a man of sin in desperate need of God's grace and forgiveness.

Deffinbaugh: Theme of Greatness – Profiles in Courage – This psalm in the early part of 2 Samuel 23 may seem detached from and unrelated to the remainder

of the chapter, which names and honors those mighty heroes who significantly contributed to David's success. In fact, I believe the two sections of the chapter are very much related, as we shall soon see. For the moment, let me simply say that the entire chapter is about greatness. In verses 1-7, we see what it is that makes a great king. In verses 8-39, two sets of great men are named, the "three" and the "thirty." In the process of describing their heroic conduct, we are told what made these men great in the eyes of God.

David Silversides: The Covenant of God as an Inexhaustible Well of Consolation

Purpose of this book: rise of the kingship from Samuel, the last of the judges, to throne of David

1. Death comes to the Great and the Godly

Time when David, as great as he was, would be heard no more; make sure all that our words are goodly words; great men die; the way of all flesh; the reality of physical death; how we need to have more than our earthly plans as our source of consolation

2. The Support of the Everlasting Covenant

a. *The past blessings* of which David speaks (:1-2)

he attributes his rise to God who raised him up on high; the God of Jacob = the God of the Covenant; anointed by the hand of Samuel; attributes the Psalms to the Spirit of God; directly inspired by God

b. *The present need* (:3-4)

David had often found refuge in the mountainous rocks; Lord keeps His people safe from their enemies; a qualification for public office; all authority comes from God; must acknowledge Him as their Lord; limits of their authority prescribed by Him; ungodly rulers make ungodly decisions
A great blessing when this qualification is fulfilled (:4)

blessings of godly government; rule for all govt, but ultimately a prophecy fulfilled in Christ; Ps 72:6; for the one greater than Solomon; the fruitful blessing of Christ's Kingdom; the Dayspring from on High; the bright and Morning star; no darkness in His kingdom; kingdom of grace brings light and refreshment and comfort

c. *The present reality* (:5) Although my house be not so with God

His sin and the effect on his house was terrible

d. *The future certainty* (:5b) Gen. 15:1-6 Abraham laid hold of the promises of God despite his present situation; believes what God has said; Ps. 31:10 . . . *but I trusted in Thee* . . . Hab. 3:17
Grounds for comfort in God and in His Covenant in Christ Jesus for us – even though we see confusion and darkness

Everlasting covenant in 2 respects:

- its promises stand to all generations
- the fulfilling of those promises is everlasting; inheritance incorruptible and undefiled; fades not away

Origin is in eternity past; Ordered in all things – nothing haphazard; covenant has an all sufficient Mediator (Heb 7:22)

Sufficient for the greatest of sinners; it is sure – Heb. 6:18 -- impossible for God to lie

3. The Consolation of the Covenant

Invincible promises (:6)

Wicked (those who opposes God's promises and the fulfillment of them) will be burned because they are so useless and dangerous

The everlasting covenant is to be our support

Fellow laborers – does this go with the numbering of the troops in chap. 24??

Ben Thomas: Champions of Jesus

God called ordinary people to do extra ordinary work and prove God's mighty power through them. He called them champions. The bible is full of the stories of champions. They are ordinary people in the sight of men, but they are champions in the eyes of God.

Are you a champion in the eye of God? In this century if you wanted to make an impact then you need to be champions.

Champions are:

1. Must know to impart the anointing. They are not self-centered people. They cannot be self-centered. In this 21-century the harvest is ready we can not be self-centered and keep our pie and expect the move of God in our midst. We need to be a group of people who are willing to be surrounded by other champions all the time. We all are champions. Campaigns must impart the anointing to other champions.
2. Champion must be strong enough to take any challenges. The greatness people always shown under pressure. Any one can be a great leader under the favorable circumstances. The champions always come out when there are challenges and problems. Champions always look for opportunity in the trials. The trials will not stop them.
3. Champion must be able to focus on a particular goal. Do you have a goal? If I ask you to explain what you wanted to become if you are not able to give me a single answer then you are confused, you are not a champion. God cannot use you in this generation. God wants us to be concentrated on one goal. Not too many goals and not achieve anything with our life.
4. Champions must have discipline. He always has some rule he follows in life. He is not a loose book. He has some ethics, standards, not because some one oversee them but he sees himself as a champion for God.
5. Champions always surrounded with other champions. We know our character by whom we hang out with. Who are your friends? Do you hang out with looser, lazy people, not willing to change, and then you are not a champion. If your friends are not spiritual people who have no interest in the study of Bible you also become like that. You might be spiritual now but you need to watch the friends.

We are champions of this generation. May God give us the wisdom to follow His rules and glorify His name though our life.

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Howard McGlamery: David's Mighty Men

Adino – A man who was outnumbered in battle 800 to one.

Eleazar – A man with a sword

Shammah – He stood when others fled

Abishai – The man who came to the aid of his king.

Beniah – A soldier like no other.

He was in charge of David's personal bodyguard. He was no ordinary soldier.

1. He struck down two of Moab's fiercest Men.
2. He went down into a pit in a snowy day and killed a Lion.
3. He struck down a huge Egyptian (over 7 feet tall) although the Egyptian had a spear and he only had a club.

Reggie Kimbro – David's Last Words

Help us to understand what David was all about; don't find a whole list of David's achievements; it wasn't all about David; it was about his God; and about the Messiah to come; praise for the future – when God has said it = as good as if it has already happened; God's Word is sure

1. David's description of himself – the instrument; the Spirit of God was the speaker and the one at work; Word of God inspired and inerrant; it is God who is speaking

Fourfold Description of David:

- a. Son of Jesse – who is this Jesse – a farmer, a sheep-herder in a very obscure country; David not the eldest or the strongest; least one expected even within this family
- b. Man raised up on high – humility of David – didn't promote himself;
- c. Anointed of the God of Jacob – sovereign purpose of God; ascribing glory to God; not worthy in himself; unworthy not just by virtue of being insignificant, but full of demerit and sin
God loved Jacob – Rom. 9 – how could that be? What do we have that we have not received? Why do we glory as if we hadn't received it?
- d. Sweet psalmist of Israel – beloved singer; unusual combination – king and warrior also a sensitive soul; let the redeemed of the Lord say so!

2. Fourfold Affirmation of God's Word – Passing from the instrument to **the Speaker**

Giant text relating to doctrine of Inspiration; God is the speaker

Look at how people have attacked this doctrine and the evils that have followed

3. The Theme: the Righteous Rule of Christ

These words reach far beyond Solomon; looking forward to days of blessing

Great praise and worthiness

Promise and blessing for God's people

4. (:6-7) The Ungodly are Not So

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On which side will you be found

TEXT: 2 Samuel 24:1-25

TITLE: *STUMBLING DOWN THE HOMESTRETCH – THE CENSUS AND THE PLAGUE*

BIG IDEA:

FOR OUR WORSHIP TO BE ACCEPTABLE WE CANNOT COMPROMISE DEPENDENCE ON THE LORD BY TRUSTING IN THE FLESH

INTRODUCTION:

One has to ask why this disappointing episode where David once again angers the Lord is placed here at the conclusion of 2 Samuel. One would think that by this point the ruler of Israel would have learned the lesson that *“some trust in horses and some in chariots, but we will remember the name of the Lord our God.”* But we find David reacting to some type of national trial (where the Lord had cause to be angry against His people – verse 1) by turning to the arm of the flesh (calling for a census to determine the number of fighting men available) rather than humbling himself before the Lord.

This sad tale of sin and discipline and propitiation and sacrifice paves the way for acquiring the land upon which Solomon will ultimately build the temple. God seeks genuine worshipers who will worship Him in spirit and in truth. This incident cannot be studied apart from a focus on the centrality of worship in God’s program for His people.

I. (:1-9) PRIDEFUL CENSUS -- DAVID CHOOSES THE PATH OF PRIDE RATHER THAN THE PATH OF HUMILITY AND COMPLETE DEPENDENCE ON THE LORD

A. (:1-4) Choice to Rely on the Arm of the Flesh

1. (:1a) Context: Israel in Trouble

“Now again the anger of the Lord burned against Israel”

Text does not specify what sin is involved here. But when God sends the plague as discipline upon the nation it is not only David’s sin that is in view.

2. (:1b) Character Flaw: Pride of David Causes Him to Respond in Anger

a. Schemes of Satan (1 Chron. 21:1) – Satan has a Plan for Your Life

“Then Satan stood up against Israel and moved David to number Israel.”

b. Sovereignty of God coupled with Sin of David

“and it incited David against them to say, ‘Go, number Israel and Judah.’”

3. (:2) Command of David – Take the Census of Fighting Men
“And the king said to Joab the commander of the army who was with him, ‘Go about now through all the tribes of Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, and register the people, that I may know the number of the people.’”

Key issue here is the motivation of David.

4. (:3) Counsel of Joab
“But Joab said to the king, ‘Now may the Lord your God add to the people a hundred times as many as they are, while the eyes of my lord the king still see; but why does my lord the king delight in this thing?’”

Blaikie: It is indeed strange that Joab should have had scruples where David had none. We have been accustomed to find Joab so seldom in the right that it is hard to believe that he was in the right now. But perhaps we do Joab injustice. He was a man that could be profoundly stirred when his own interests were at stake, or his passions roused, and that seemed equally regardless of God and man in what he did on such occasions. But otherwise Joab commonly acted with prudence and moderation. . . he seems to have had a certain amount of regard to the will of God and the theocratic constitution of the kingdom, for he was loyal to David from the very beginning, up to the contest between Solomon and Adonijah.

5. (:4) Coercion of Authority
“Nevertheless, the king’s word prevailed against Joab and against the commanders of the army. So Joab and the commanders of the army went out from the presence of the king, to register the people of Israel.”

Wiersbe: Sometimes God’s greatest judgment is simply to let us have our own way.

B. (:5-9) Campaign to Compile the Census

1. (:5-8) Geographic Coverage – from Aroer back to Jerusalem
“So when they had gone about through the whole land, they came to Jerusalem at the end of nine months and twenty days.”

David had plenty of time to repent of his decision.

2. (:9) Grand Total
“And Joab gave the number of the registration of the people to the king; and there were in Israel eight hundred thousand valiant men who drew the sword, and the men of Judah were five hundred thousand men.”

Ryrie: (Note on 1 Chron. 21:5) The 800,000 from Israel in 2 Sam. 24:9 may not have included the 300,000 listed in 1 Chron. 27, which would make the total (as here) 1,100,000. The 470,000 in Judah may not have included the 30,000 of 2 Sam. 6:1,

which would bring the total (as here) to 500,000. Or perhaps the Chronicles figure represents a round number.

II. (:10-17) PAINFUL PLAGUE -- GOD HUMBLING DAVID WITH STRONG DISCIPLINE MITIGATED BY TENDER MERCY

A. (:10) Conscience Kicks In

1. Troubled Heart

“Now David’s heart troubled him after he had numbered the people.”

2. Confession of Sin

“So David said to the Lord, ‘I have sinned greatly in what I have done.’”

Wiersbe: At least six times in Scripture we find David confessing “I have sinned” (2 Sam. 12:13; 24:10, 17; Ps. 41:4 and 51:4; 1 Chron. 21:8).

3. Petition for Forgiveness

“But now, O Lord, please take away the iniquity of Thy servant,”

4. Acknowledgment of Foolishness

“for I have acted very foolishly.”

B. (:11-14) Consequences Cannot Be Avoided – Choice of Discipline

1. (:11-12a) Confronting the Sinner

“When David arose in the morning, the word of the Lord came to the prophet Gad, David’s seer, saying, ‘Go and speak to David.’”

2. (:12b-13) Presenting the Options

a. Proposition

“Thus the Lord says, ‘I am offering you three things; choose for yourself one of them, which I may do to you.’ So Gad came to David and told him, and said to him”

b. Three Choices

1) Seven Years of Famine – Slow Death

“Shall seven years of famine come to you in your land?”

2) Three Months of Fleeing – Fear and Brutality

“Or will you flee three months before your foes while they pursue you?”

3) Three Days of Plague – Quick Death

“Or shall there be three days’ pestilence in your land?”

c. Call for Response

“Now consider and see what answer I shall return to Him who

sent me.”

3. (:14) Casting Himself On the Mercy of God

“Then David said to Gad, ‘I am in great distress. Let us now fall into the hand of the Lord for His mercies are great, but do not let me fall into the hand of men.’”

Gordon: David expresses the conviction that in wrath Yahweh will remember mercy (cf. Hab. 3:2), that his judgment on his people – *his strange work* (Is. 28:21) – is moderated by compassion.

C. (:15-17) Calamity Runs Its Appointed Course (Abbreviated by God’s Mercy)

1. (:15) 70,000 Die From Land of Israel

“So the Lord sent a pestilence upon Israel from the morning until the appointed time; and seventy thousand men of the people from Dan to Beersheba died.”

2. (:16) Remnant of Jerusalem Spared

“When the angel stretched out his hand toward Jerusalem to destroy it, the Lord relented from the calamity, and said to the angel who destroyed the people, ‘It is enough! Now relax your hand!’ And the angel of the Lord was by the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.”

3. (:17) David Assumes Personal Responsibility

“Then David spoke to the Lord when he saw the angel who was striking down the people, and said, ‘Behold, it is I who have sinned, and it is I who have done wrong; but these sheep, what have they done? Please let Thy hand be against me and against my father’s house.’”

Gordon: There is by now a familiar realism about the presentation of David as saint and as sinner in these final scenes in 2 Samuel. He offends Yahweh, it is true, and his subjects suffer for his unwisdom. And yet . . . this final episode is noteworthy for the way in which it traces David’s advance from despotic self-interest to the solicitude of the shepherd-king who is truly fitted to rule God’s people. He is even willing to suffer (die?) for the sake of the sheep (v. 17)!

III. (:18-25) PLEASING WORSHIP -- DAVID REPENTS -- OFFERING WORSHIP AND SACRIFICE IN OBEDIENCE TO THE LORD’S COMAND

A. (:18-19) Obeying God’s Worship Instructions

“So Gad came to David that day and said to him, ‘Go up, erect an altar to the Lord on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.’ And David went up according to the word of God, just as the Lord had commanded.”

B. (:20-24) Paying for the Opportunity to Sacrifice

1. (:20-21) David Approaches Araunah

2. (:22-23) Araunah Offers the Land for Free

3. (:24) David Insists on Paying Fair Price

“However, the king said to Araunah, ‘No, but I will surely buy it from you for a price, for I will not offer burnt offerings to the Lord my God which cost me nothing.’ So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver.”

C. (:25) Offering Sacrifices

“And David built there an altar to the Lord, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. Thus the Lord was moved by entreaty for the land, and the plague was held back from Israel.”

Ryrie: The threshing floor was on Mount Moriah, a hill in the region of Moriah, where Abraham offered Isaac . . . and where Solomon later built the Temple (2 Chron. 3:1).

* * * * *

DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

- 1) Are we sensitive to those times when we stand in need of God’s discipline? Are we quick to recognize what God is doing and respond?
- 2) Do we become complacent, prideful and self reliant after God has granted us rest from our enemies?
- 3) Do we seek out and listen to the wise counsel of others or do we press ahead in our own stubbornness and folly?
- 4) Do we appreciate the mercy of God and how He even transforms our sin into opportunities to develop our character and bring us greater spiritual blessing?

* * * * *

QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Davis: The book of II Samuel, therefore, concludes on a note of sorrow just as it began. David had enjoyed moments of great success and yet, in spite of his wisdom and political genius, as a father he failed within his own household. David’s greatest heartaches came not from the enemies on the outside, but from his own family. It was not the weak hands of David that failed him, but a weak heart which allowed him to enter into an adulterous relationship with Bathsheba. The results of David’s reign, however, were not all negative. It is very clear from a military and political point of view that David had fully established the kingdom of Israel. He had given its borders recognition and protection. He had achieved international respect and recognition for

Israel in a very brief period of time. This great kingdom soon was to pass into the hands of Solomon, a young man with equal capabilities and gifts.

Mittelstaedt: It was pride that prompted David to order Joab to take a census and give him an accounting of the fighting men available to him in both Israel and Judah. Joab had been with David for a long time, and he knew David pretty well. He could see through David's words, and he understood that David's motives were sinful. Joab therefore offered his king some very good advice that was never heeded. "*May the Lord your God multiply the troops a hundred times over,*" he said. "*But why does my lord the king want to do such a thing?*" "David," Joab seemed to be saying "you're giving the impression Israel's accomplishments and recent victories were all due to you and the superior strength of your army. That's not right! David, don't be foolish! What's the sense of doing such a thing?"

Blaikie: In Samuel we read that "*the Lord's anger was again kindled against Israel.*" The nation required a chastisement. It needed a smart stroke of the rod to make it pause and think how it was offending God. We do not require to know very specially what it was that displeased God in a nation that had been so ready to side with Absalom and drive God's anointed from the throne. They were far from steadfast in their allegiance to God, easily drawn from the path of duty; and all that it is important for us to know is simply that at this particular time they were farther astray than usual, and more in need of chastisement. The cup of sin had filled up so far that God behoved to interpose.

Gordon: Although no reason for Yahweh's displeasure with the census is suggested, the likelihood is that in this case it is David's aspirations after self-sufficiency that are being censured. His "great Babylon" (cf. Dan. 4:30) is in danger of being regarded as his own creation, the victories as no longer simply "*the Lord's*" (cf. 22:35-43; 23:10, 12).

Wiersbe: If you were asked to name David's two greatest sins, you would probably reply, "his adultery with Bathsheba and his numbering of the people," and you would be right. But out of those two great sins, God built a temple! Bathsheba gave birth to Solomon and God chose him to succeed David on the throne. On the property David purchased and on which he erected an altar, Solomon built the temple and dedicated it to the glory of God. What God did for David is certainly not an excuse for sin (Rom. 6:1-2), because David paid dearly for committing those sins. However, knowing what God did for David does encourage us to seek His face and trust His grace when we have disobeyed Him. "*But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more*" (Rom. 5:20). What a merciful God we serve!

Pink: This, it seems to us, is the chief practical lesson inculcated by our present passage. It points a most solemn warning against the dangers of success. If adversity carries with it a measure of menace to the spiritual life, the perils of prosperity are far greater. If through our unwatchfulness the former leads to discontent and murmuring, the latter will, unless we be doubly on our guard, issue in self-complacency and self-sufficiency. It is when we are brought low, by losses and trials, that we are the most cast upon God;

as it is when success crowns our efforts and our barns are well filled, that we are most apt to walk independently of Him. Little wonder, then, that the Lord entrusts few of His people with much of this world's goods. The same applies to spiritual blessings: if earnest of a coming rest are granted, they will be regarded as realities instead of foreshadowings, and then we shall rest before our time to rest be come—instead of continuing to press forward.

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