

Studies in the life of
DAVID
A man after God's own heart

INTRODUCTION

The biblical account offers so much rich detail about the life and reign of David that he defies easy description. King Saul's servant had this to say about the shepherd from Judah [1 Sam. 16:17-18] "So Saul said to his servants, 'provide me now a man who can play well, and bring him to me.' Then one of the servants answered and said, 'Look I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, who is skilled in playing, a mighty man of valor, a man of war, prudent in speech, and a handsome person, and the lord is with him.'"

Another summary statement, and perhaps the best, was Samuel's report of the Lord's assessment: he was "a man after God's own heart" [1 Sam. 13:14]. This was a radical contrast to Saul, David's predecessor, who repeatedly departed from God's ways.

David by no means was a perfect man. But despite his flaws, he kept turning toward the Lord for guidance, help and forgiveness. He was God's choice to solidly establish a monarchy to last forever [2 Sam. 7:12-16].

PERSONALITY PROFILE: DAVID

HOME: Bethlehem during his youth [see Luke 2:11]; probably Gibeath while he served Saul, Ziklag during much of the time while Saul pursued him [see 1 Sam. 30:1], Hebron during the first seven years of his reign [see Gen. 23:19], Jerusalem during the rest of his reign. [see 1 Chronicles 11:4-5].

FAMILY: Was a son of Jesse, a descendant of Judah, he had seven brothers and two sisters [1 Sam. 16:10; 1 Chr. 2:13-16] married to numerous wives and concubines, including Saul's daughter Michal [1 Sam. 18:27], Abigail [1 Sam. 25:42], and Bathsheba [2 Sam. 11:27], father of numerous sons and daughters [1 Sam. 3:2-5, 5:13-16, 1 Chr. 3: 1-5] including Absalom [see 2 Sam. 13:1] and David's successor, Solomon [see 2 Sam. 12:24], ancestor of JESUS [Matt. 1:6, Luke 3:31]

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

BEST KNOWN TODAY AS: The king under whom the Israelite monarchy was firmly established, most significant ancestor of JESUS CHRIST.

OVERVIEW OF KING DAVID'S LIFE

DAVID (*Day' vihd*) Personal name probably meaning, "favorite" or "beloved." The first king to unite Israel and Judah and the first to receive the promise of a royal messiah in his line. David was pictured as the ideal king of God's people. He ruled from about 1005 to 965 B.C.

Selection as King When Saul failed to meet God's standards for kingship (1 Sam. 15:23, 35; 16:1), God sent Samuel to anoint a replacement from among the sons of Jesse, who lived in Bethlehem (1 Sam. 16:1). God showed Samuel He had chosen the youngest who still tended sheep for his father (16:11-12). David's good looks were noteworthy.

In Saul's Court David's musical talent, combined with his reputation as a fighter, led one of Saul's servants to recommend David as the person to play the harp for Saul when the evil spirit from God troubled him (1 Sam. 16:18). Saul grew to love David and made him armorbearer for the king (16:21-22).

At a later date the Philistines with the giant Goliath threatened Israel (1 Sam. 17). David returned home to tend his father's sheep (17:15). Jesse sent David to the battlefield with food for his warrior brothers. At least one brother did not think too highly of him (17:28). Saul tried to persuade David, the youth, from challenging Goliath; but David insisted God would bring victory, which He did.

Saul's son Jonathan became David's closest friend (1 Sam. 18:1). David became a permanent part of Saul's court, not returning home (18:2). Saul gave David a military commission, which he fulfilled beyond expectations, defeating the Philistines and winning the hearts of the people. This stirred Saul's jealousy (18:8). Moved by the evil spirit from God, Saul tried to kill David with his spear; but God's presence protected David (18:10-12). David eventually earned the right to marry Michal, Saul's daughter, without being killed by the Philistines as Saul had hoped (18:17-27). With the help of Michal and Jonathan, David escaped from Saul and made contact with Samuel, the prophet (19:18). Jonathan and David made a vow of eternal friendship, and Jonathan risked his own life to protect David (1 Sam. 20).

Independent Warrior David gathered a band of impoverished and discontented people around him. He established relationships with Moab and other groups and gained favor with the people by defeating the Philistines (1 Sam. 22-23), but all Saul's efforts to capture him failed. God protected David, and David refused to injure Saul, instead promising not to cut off Saul's family (24:21-22).

Abigail of Maon intervened with David to prevent him from punishing her foolish husband Nabal. God brought Nabal's death, and David married Abigail. He also married Ahinoam of Jezreel, but Saul gave Michal, David's first wife, to another man (1 Sam. 25).

After again refusing to kill Saul, the Lord's anointed, David attached himself to Achish, the Philistine king of Gath. Saul finally quit chasing him. Achish gave Ziklag to David, who established a headquarters there and began destroying Israel's southern neighbors (1 Sam. 27). Despite the wishes of Achish, the other Philistine leaders would not let David join them in battle against Saul (1 Sam. 29). Returning home, David found the Amalekites had destroyed Ziklag and captured his wives. David followed God's leading and defeated the celebrating Amalekites, recovering all the spoils of war. These he distributed among his followers and among the peoples of Judah (1 Sam. 30).

King of Judah Hearing of the deaths of Saul and Jonathan, David avenged the murderer of Saul and sang a lament over the fallen (2 Sam. 1). He moved to Hebron, where the citizens of Judah crowned him king (2 Sam. 2). This led to war with Israel under Saul's son Ishbosheth. After much intrigue, Ishbosheth's commanders assassinated him. David did the same to them (2 Sam. 4).

King of Israel The northern tribes then crowned David king at Hebron, uniting all Israel under him. He led the capture of Jerusalem and made it his capital. After defeating the Philistines, David sought to move the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem, succeeding on his second attempt (2 Sam. 6). He then began plans to build a temple but learned from Nathan, the prophet, that he would instead build a dynasty with eternal dimensions (2 Sam. 7). His son would build the Temple.

David then organized his administration and subdued other nations who opposed him, finally gaining control of the land God had originally promised the forefathers. He also remembered his promise to Jonathan and cared for his lame son Mephibosheth (2 Sam. 9).

A Sinner David was a giant among godly leaders, but he remained human as his sin with Bathsheba and Uriah showed. He spied Bathsheba bathing, desired her, and engineered the death of her faithful warrior husband, after committing adultery with her (2 Sam. 11). Nathan, the prophet, confronted David with his sin, and David confessed his wrongdoing. The newborn child of David and Bathsheba died. David acknowledged his helplessness in the situation, confessing faith that he would go to be with the child one day. Bathsheba conceived again, bearing Solomon (2 Sam. 12:1-25).

Family Intrigue Able to rule the people but not his family, David saw intrigue, sexual sins, and murder rock his own household, resulting in his isolation from and eventual retreat before Absalom. Still, David grieved long and deep when his army killed Absalom (2 Sam. 18:19-33). David's kingdom was restored, but the hints of division between Judah and Israel remained (2 Sam. 19:40-43). David had to put down a northern revolt (2 Sam. 20). The last act the Books of Samuel report about David is his census of the people, bringing God's anger but also preparing a place for the Temple to be built (2 Sam. 24). The last chapters of 1 Chronicles describe extensive preparations David made for the building and the worship services of the Temple. David's final days involved renewed intrigue among his family, as Adonijah sought to inherit his father's throne, but Nathan and Bathsheba worked to insure Solomon became the next king (1 Kings 1:1-2:12). David died at the age of seventy [2 Sam. 5:4] and was buried in the city of David. [1 Kings 2:10] about 960 B.C.

Prophetic Hope David thus passed from the historical scene but left a legacy never to be forgotten. He was the role model for Israelite kings (1 Kings 3:14; 9:14; 11:4, 6, 33, 38; 14:8; 15:3, 11; 2 Kings 14:3; 16:2; 22:2). David was the "man of God" (2 Chron. 8:14), and God was "the God of David thy father" (2 Kings 20:5). God's covenant with David was the deciding factor as God wrestled with David's disobedient successors on the throne (2 Chron. 21:7). Even as Israel rebuilt the Temple, they followed "the ordinance of David king of Israel (Ezra 3:10). God's prophets pointed to a future David who would restore Israel's fortunes. "of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever" (Isa. 9:7). Jeremiah summed up the surety of the hope in David: "If ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season; Then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne. As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured: so will I multiply the seed of David my servant" (Jer. 33:20-22). For further references, compare Jeremiah 33:15, 17, 25-26; Ezekiel 34:23-24; 37:24-25; Hosea 3:5; Amos 9:11; Zechariah 12:6-10.

In the New Testament The New Testament tells the story of Jesus as the story of the Son of God but also as the story of the Son of David from His birth (Matt. 1:1) until His final coming (Rev. 22:16). At least twelve times the Gospels refer to Him as "Son of David." David was cited as an example of similar behavior by Jesus (Matt. 12:3); and David called Him, "Lord" (Luke 20:42-44). David thus took his place in the roll call of faith (Heb. 11:32). This was "David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfill *all* my will" [Acts 13:22]

Structure of the lesson

The theme of David is summed up in [1 Sam. 13:14], the only one in all scripture to be called “A man after God’s own heart.” This single individual is mentioned more than any other Old Testament character in the pages of the New Testament. Poet, musician, courageous warrior, and national statesmen, David distinguished himself as one of God’s greatest men. In battle he modeled invincible confidence. In decisions, he judged with wisdom. In loneliness, he wrote with transparency and quiet trust. In friendship he was loyal to the end. Whether a humble shepherd boy or a musician before King Saul, he remained faithful and trustworthy. Even in his position to the highest position in the land, David modeled integrity and humility. What a man of God!

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

The emphasis of this lesson is not only on study of the passage and getting a clearer understanding of the principles it sets before us, but also on how to practically apply these principles in our lives today. It is important to complete the entire lesson each week to gain the most from them.

These lessons will then be discussed in a group to which you will be assigned. It is important for you to participate in sharing your answers, but the leader will not require you to share if you don’t wish to share a particular answer for personal reasons.

Three important features of these lessons are Scripture memory, a thought for the day, and an additional challenge section each week. It is important to hide God’s Word in our hearts through memory. A simple system is used in these lessons to memorize one verse per week. A thought for the day is noted before each day’s study. Use this encouraging thought to reflect on daily. The challenge section will be optional, designed for you to even more practically apply a particular principle learned that week. It is highly suggested that you do this to help you best grow as a result of these lessons.

Finally, we ask that you don’t rely on any resource books, commentaries, etc. for your answers. The lessons are designed for you to spend time alone with the Lord each day, learning from Him and not the opinions of others. Daily ask the Lord to speak to you and teach you through His Word, and then go about doing the lessons. If you wish to pursue further study of these passages on your own, that is fine; just don’t depend on outside sources for doing these lessons. The lessons themselves are based on the New King James Version of the Bible, but feel free to use any other translations.

Our prayer is that these lessons will be a blessing to you, and that they will stimulate you to further growth as you build, guard, and live for the Lord. His Word is our foundation. All others

will fade away! Invest your life in those things that will count for eternity, not in those things that will pass away.

Lesson Outline

<u>Date</u>	<u>Lesson</u>	<u>Passage</u>	<u>Theme</u>
	Introduction	Overview	Life Of David
	One	1 Sam. 16	
	Two	1 Sam. 17-21	
	Three	1 Sam. 22-25	
	Four	1 Sam. 26-31	
	Five	2 Sam. 1-5	
	Six	2 Sam. 6	
	Seven	2 Sam. 7	
	Eight	2 Sam. 8-9	
	Nine	2 Sam. 10-12	
	Ten	2 Sam. 15-19	
	Eleven	2 Sam. 20-24	
	Twelve	1 Kings. 1:1-11	

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**Lesson 1 - 1 Samuel 16
The obedient Son - The humble Servant**

We enter now into a study of the life of David, “the man after God’s own heart.” As Saul is a picture of the carnal life, so David is a picture of the spiritual life of the believer who walks by faith in the Lord. It is true that David sinned. Unlike Saul, however, David confessed his sins and sought to restore his fellowship with God.

Day One

Thought for the Day

There is nothing more wonderful in the entire Bible than the Lord's prayer.

Lord, thank You that Your lesson on prayer includes a short, simple example for me to follow. Help me to learn that content is more important than length. May I never bore You with my empty words.

Read 1 Samuel 16: 1-3 and answer the following questions

1. What was Samuel doing when the Lord called him to anoint the next king (16:1)?

2. Why was Samuel afraid to carry out the Lord’s instructions (16:2)?

3. What provision did God make to give the appearance of normality to Samuel’s journey (16:2-3)?

4. What did God promise to do when Samuel arrived at Jesse’s house (16:3)?

5. How did the elders of Bethlehem feel about Samuel’s arrival in their town (16:4)?

6. What did Samuel command the people of Bethlehem to do (16:5)?

Scripture Memory: Matt. 25:21 “His lord said to him, ‘Well done , good and faithful servant, you were faithful over a few things. I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’”

Day Two

Thought for the Day

Do not hesitate to state that the only hope for men is to believe the gospel of Christ.

Lord, I can't help thinking that if I truly believed what I say I believe that I would be more useful to You. Help me to get my heart, mind and strength all working together in harmony with Your plan. If I truly know You and love You I'll never be embarrassed to say so.

Read 1 Samuel 16:6-13 and answer the following questions.

1. Why did Samuel think that Eliab might be the son God had chosen (16:6)?

What mattered to God in choosing the next king for Israel (16:7)?

2. What answer did Samuel give as each son in turn came before him (16:8-10)?
3. Why did Samuel ask Jesse if he had any other sons (16:11)?
4. When he learned of the existence of another son, what did Samuel command (16:11)?
5. How is David described in his meeting with Samuel (16:12)?
6. What did God say to Samuel regarding David (16:12)?

7. What was the result of the anointing of David by Samuel (16:13)?

Scripture Memory: Write by memory. Review this verse several times today.

Matt.25:21 _____

Day Three

Thought for the Day

Satan is happy when the Church regards men as Christian simply because they do good works.

Lord, I know you are more concerned with my heart than with my behavior. Doing good things can produce a false sense of security that threatens my spiritual life. Help me to reach the point where my only motive for doing good is my love for You.

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

1. Why was Samuel reviewing the sons of Jesse one by one?
2. What qualities should we look for in our leaders, particularly in the church?
3. Why was it important for Samuel to anoint David, although he was too young to assume the kingship at that time?
4. Why might the people of Bethlehem have been afraid to have Samuel there?
5. What commands of God should we be prepared to obey even if they arouse the authorities against us?

Scripture Memory: Write by memory .Review this verse several times today.

Matt.25:21 _____

Day Four

Thought for the Day

One of the most essential things about a Christian is that he always realizes he is in the presence of God.

Lord, sometimes I feel as if I am the rope in a game of tug-of-war between You and Satan. I know I don't belong to him but for some reason I keep handing him one end of the rope. Make me a lifeline to those who need to be rescued from him so I will be so tied up with good things I'll have no opportunity to play Satan's deadly games.

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

1. What were two unfortunate characteristics of Saul's spiritual life after his disobedience (16:14)?
2. How did Saul's attendants explain his moods to him (16:15)?
3. What solution did Saul's servants propose for his periods of suffering (16:16)?
4. How did Saul locate a musician to play for him (16:18)?
5. How did Saul's servant describe David (16:18)?
6. What message did Saul send to Jesse (16:19)?
7. How did Jesse respond to the king's request to send his youngest son (16:20)?
8. How did Saul respond to David when David joined Saul's court (16:21)?

9. What further message did Saul send to Jesse after David's arrival (16:22)?

10. What relationship developed between Saul and David (16:23)?

Scripture Memory: Write by memory .Review this verse several times today.

Matt.25:21 _____

Day Five

Thought for the Day

We seem to have forgotten that God has done most of His deeds in the Church throughout its history through remnants.

Lord, sometimes I get so caught up in the culture and climate of my country that I forget You don't need a moral majority or any other kind of majority to accomplish Your work. Forgive me for this worldly way of thinking.

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

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

2. Why did Saul have trouble with depression?

3. Why were Saul's attendants eager to find a solution to his moodiness?

4. What was good or bad about the way Saul relied on David's music to help him get out of his sour moods?
5. What else do you think Saul could have done about his moodiness?

6. Which of David's characteristics discussed in this passage reflect well on his upbringing and his own discipline and accomplishment?

7. What was the highest praise of David given by the servant of Saul?

Scripture Memory: Write by memory .Review this verse several times today.

Matt.25:21 _____

Day Six

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Thought for the Day

As we get further away from God life becomes more complicated and involved. The truly religious life is always simple.

Lord, thank You for simplicity. When my life becomes too complex give me the courage to say no to everything that takes my attention away from You.

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

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

3. Toward what individual in your life could you resolve to look at the heart rather than outward appearances?

In what concrete way could you include children in your worship at home or at church this week?

Scripture Memory: Write by memory. Review this verse several times today.

Matt.25:21 _____

Weekly Challenge [Optional]

Very early in David's life he learned to know the living God as his shepherd. Long before God exposed David to the public, he had met difficulties in the line of his occupation and learned by hard yet necessary experience that he could do all things through God who strengthened him. [Phil. 4: 13] When many people who had fled from the lion or the bear to save their own lives, David called upon God for help. David proved God's love and power in his own simple life in such a way that by the time his life crisis arrived, it was almost second nature to meet difficulties head on in the name of the living God. Perhaps it was during these early years when David as Young shepherd wrote Psalm 23

Read Psalms 23 and answer the following questions

1. What can you do to celebrate God's goodness and provision?
2. How could you comfort or encourage a friend who is struggling with fear or grief?
3. What good things, experiences, and people do you want to thank God for now?

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Lesson 2 – 1 Samuel 17-21

The Victorious Solider [1 Sam: 17]

The story of David and Goliath is familiar and carries with it many practical lessons for the Christian life. All of us face giants of one kind or another, but we may overcome them through the power of God. Goliath was probably ten feet tall, with armor weighing over 150 pounds. He was “the Philistine” (17:8), their great champion, and so terrifying was he that he threw the Jewish army into panic (v. 11). Had Saul been a godly leader, he would have claimed Deut. 20 and led his army to victory; but when people are out of fellowship with God, they can only lead others into defeat.

David arrived with provisions for his brothers, and immediately he was interested in the challenge of the giant. David had proved the power of God privately in the fields caring for his sheep; now he would demonstrate this power publicly to the glory of God. Note how throughout this entire episode, **David gives glory to the Lord.**

The practical lesson here is that God gives victory in response to our faith. God had tested David privately with a lion and a bear; now he was to test him openly with a giant. If we are faithful in the private battles, God will see us through the public testings. Too often God's people faint at the smallest test that comes their way, little realizing that the “little tests” are but preparation for the bigger battles that are sure to come (Jer. 12:5).

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

Just as David was sent by his father to the battlefield, so Christ was sent by the Father to this world. Goliath illustrates Satan in his pride and power. Read carefully Luke 11:14-23. Satan is the strong man guarding his goods (people under his control), and Christ is the Stronger Man who overcomes him. Christ invaded Satan's kingdom, overcame his power, took his armor, and now is dividing his spoils by saving lost souls and making them children of God. This is what David did that day: he overcame the strong man and allowed Israel to divide the spoils (vv. 52-54).

Day One

Thought for the Day

You start praying by saying nothing; you recollect what you are about to do.

Lord, speak to me as I wait silently for You. Tell me what is most important to You before I get caught up in telling You what is important to me.

Read 1 Sam. 17 and answer the following questions:

1. What was happening just as David arrived where the army was camped? (17:20-23)
2. In David's view, why should the Israelites not have been intimidated by Goliath? (17:26)
3. How confident was young David when he met the king? (17:32)
4. What was David's answer to the Philistine champion's boasting? (17:45-47)
5. What viewpoint on spiritual warfare can give courage to the seemingly helpless?
6. In the story of David and Goliath, what 'weapons' were the most powerful?

Scripture Memory: Psalms 23: 1-3 “The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His namesake.

Day Two

Thought for the Day

Every prayer recorded in the Bible starts with petition.

Lord, thank You that truth, goodness, justice, mercy, and love are essential aspects of Your character and that they can come only from You. Make me aware that apart from You they do not and can not exist. May I praise You today for all that is good and trust You to make the world right in your time and in Your way.

1 Sam: 18-21

These chapters form the transition between David's service in Saul's court and his exile as a fugitive. They explain how David was moved from being Saul's favorite to being Saul's foe. The main issue is David's faith, and we can see in these chapters how this man of God all but lost his confidence in God because of the trials that came to his life.

David's greatest test of faith was not when he faced Goliath; it was when he had to serve daily in Saul's court.

Read 1 Sam. 18:1-30 and answer the following questions:

1. How did the officers and people of Israel respond to David's successes and promotions? (18:5)
2. What chorus was heard in the streets when Saul and David returned from the battle in which Goliath was slain? (18:7)
3. How did Saul feel about David's popularity? (18:8-9)
4. What two facts irritated Saul most about David? (18:28)
5. Why was Saul afraid of David even though Saul was king?
6. What were some evidences that "the Lord was with David"?

Scripture Memory: Psalms 23: 1-3 - Insert the missing words by memory if possible.

The Lord is my _____, I shall not want. He makes me to _____ down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still _____; He restores my _____; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His _____ sake.

Day Three**Thought for the Day**

Some people have never had a real conviction of sin, and because of that they have never plainly seen their utter absolute need of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Lord, why is it that other peoples sins seem so much worse than mine? Help me to take my sin seriously, to see where waywardness eventually ends, and to have the sense to be afraid when I wander from Your side. Make me realize that sin is not a detour I can take just for the pleasure of it; it is the way to death.

Saul's plan to murder David was no longer a secret, for now the king's servants were commanded to slay him. But Saul had been unable to kill David in previous attempts (18:11, 25), and now it appeared that his anger was past and David could return to the court. Here we see David's faith wavering, for instead of trusting God and seeking His will, he trusts in human beings.

Read 1 Sam.19: 1-24 and answer the following questions:

1. What were some of Jonathan's reasons that Saul should not harm David? (19:4-5)
2. What incident occurred inside Saul's house? (19:9-10)
3. What plan did Saul set in motion when he was unable to kill David with his spear? (19:11)
4. What happened to each delegation that Saul sent to capture David? (19:20-21)
5. Why did Saul want to murder a man who did him no wrong?
6. How did God protect David when Jonathan and Michal were no longer able to do so?
7. Why might someone hate a person who has done nothing but good for him or her?

8. What is the likely outcome when we allow senseless anger or hatred to dictate our actions?

Scripture Memory: Psalms 23: 1-3 Insert the missing words by memory if possible

The _____ is my _____; I shall not _____. He makes me to _____ in green pastures; He leads me beside the _____. He _____ my _____; He leads me in the paths of _____ for His _____.

Day Four

Thought for the Day

Without the work and authority and power of the Holy Spirit there would never be a single believer in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Lord, thank You that Your Spirit works within me to accomplish Your purposes. When I am tired and discouraged because I seem to be accomplishing so little, remind me that it is Your work, not mine, and that it will be done according to Your schedule not mine.

These chapters do not record a very beautiful picture, for in them we see the man of faith faltering and failing in his faith. Instead of waiting to seek the Lord's will, David flees in fear and tries to "scheme" his way out of his problems.

Read 1 Sam. 20:1-42 and answer the following questions:

1. What was the difference between David and Jonathan's perceptions of Saul's behavior? (20:1-2)
2. What situation did David and Jonathan set up to test Saul's intentions toward David? (20:5-7)
3. What promise did Jonathan make to David before God? (20:12-13)
4. What promise did Jonathan ask David to make to him? (20:14-15)
5. Why did Jonathan and David weep in their last meeting together? (20:41-42)

6. How do you think Jonathan felt about being caught between his father and his friend?
7. What does it say about Jonathan that he chose to remain loyal to David, even to the point of working against his own father's commands?
8. What is good or bad about forming loyalties that can surpass loyalty to family?

Scripture Memory: Psalms 23: 1-3 Insert the missing words by memory if possible.

The _____ is my _____; I _____ not _____. He _____ me to _____
_____ in green pastures; He leads me beside the _____. He _____ my
_____; He _____ me in the _____ of _____ For His _____.

Day Five

Thought for the Day

The whole atmosphere of the Bible is spiritual, and the more we read it, the more we shall be delivered from the rational level and raised to a higher level where we see things on the spiritual plane.

Lord, I suppose I shouldn't be surprised that it is unnatural for me to think spiritually. Help me to develop my spiritual attributes so I can relate to you on a whole new level.

Read 1 Sam. 21:1-15 and answer the following questions:

1. How did David explain the fact that he was alone? (21:2)
2. For what provision did David ask Ahimelech? (21:3)
3. How did David's answer reassure Ahimelech and enrich his tale of a secret mission? (21:5)

4. How might the story have turned out differently if David had told the priest that he was fleeing from Saul?
5. What popular saying about David was known among the people of Gath? (21:11)
6. Why was David afraid when he realized that his reputation had preceded him? (21:12)
7. How did David employ his cleverness to avoid harm at the hands of Achish, king of Gath? (21:13-15) What vague distinction did David and Abiathar have in common? (22:23)
8. Why did David find himself in a dangerous situation in the very place he had sought refuge from Saul?
9. Why was David's gimmick (pretending to be insane) effective in getting Achish to dismiss him as a threat?

Scripture Memory: Psalms 23: 1-3 Insert the missing words by memory.

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. _____
_____ of
righteousness For His name sake.

Day Six

Thought for the Day

The way to know yourself a sinner is not to compare yourself with other people, it is to come face to face with the law of God.

Lord, I know it is both futile and foolish to compare myself to other people, but I do, nevertheless, because it makes me feel good to find people I consider being worse sinners than I am. Help me to stop trying to feel good about myself and to start trying to glorify You.

Practical Application

1. How can you move from cowering to courage the next time you find yourself the underdog?
2. In what concrete way can you confront a “giant” problem or trouble with faith?
3. What concrete step could you take to counteract bitterness the next time you find yourself wishing harm on someone near you who is prospering?
4. What can you do to prepare for the next time your loyalty to God is tested?
5. How can you resolve to strengthen your commitment to God so that it could withstand even the agendas of your closest family or friends?
6. How could you cultivate an attitude that would enable you to maintain your composure even if you were persecuted and pursued?

Scripture Memory: Psalms 23:1-3 Write the scripture by memory.

Weekly Challenge [Optional]

Psalms 1 is like much of the wisdom writings in the Old Testament in that it draws a sharp contrast between good and evil, right and wrong, godliness and ungodliness. The choice is one or the other, there can be no middle ground. Psalms 1 presents well known fork in the road in which we must make moral choices today that has long term [indeed eternal] consequences. The question is, which road are you taking? If you find yourself.....

- **Paying more attention to the advice of those who do not believe in God than of those who fear Him.**
- **Behaving pretty much as unbelievers do.**

- **Making hostile statements about God and the things of God.**
- **THEN BEWARE! You may already be far down the road of unrighteousness. If so, then do whatever it takes to turn back, because the end of the road is destruction.**

Read Psalms 1 and answer the following questions:

1. What specific steps can you take in the next few weeks to demonstrate your delight in God's Word?
2. What concrete action can you take to avoid an unrighteous behavior?
3. What righteous attitude or action would you like to cultivate in your life over this next week?

*Studies in the life of
David
A man after God's own heart*

Lesson 3 - 1 Samuel 22-25

David is now completely separated from Saul's court and is considered an outlaw and a rebel. Psalm 34 grew out of his narrow escape from Achish (1 Sam. 21:10-15) and perhaps best expresses David's trials and triumphs during his exile period. "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all" (Ps. 34:19, NKJV). God was with David and helped him

Day One

Thought for the Day

If only every Christian were living the Sermon on the Mount, the great revival for which we are praying and longing for would already have started.

Lord, I want to take Your words seriously. I want to live what You preached. I want my life to attract people to You not to myself. Open my eyes to see how frightening a place the world is when You are not a part of it. Open my heart to receive and feel Your compassion and concern for the many who do not yet know You.

I. GOD GUIDED DAVID'S STEPS (22)

David assembled a loyal band of followers at the cave of Adullam, a crowd of 400 men that eventually grew to 600 (23:13). His experiences in the cave are found in Ps. 54 and 142. David would want to protect his brethren since Saul might want to slay them as well as David. Certainly this "motley crew" illustrates the kind of people who flee to Christ for refuge: people in distress or in debt (because of our sins); people discontented with life. David's band was small and despised, *but to them belonged the kingdom!* David was able to get protection for his parents at Moab since his family (through Ruth) came from there. How thoughtful of David to care for his loved ones; see John 19:26-27.

This period of persecution in David's life was a part of the preparation for the throne. He was already a great soldier; now he needed to suffer in the wilderness to learn *not* to trust men but to trust the Lord. All of us need "wilderness testings" to bring us closer to the Lord and to make us better equipped to serve Him. Saul's persecution of David is an illustration of the conflict between the flesh and the Spirit. It also pictures Satan's persecution of the church today: Saul was not the king, yet he was reigning; David was the king, but he was not yet on the throne. Satan seems to be "reigning" today, but Christ is King and one day He will take His rightful throne.

Saul's murder of the innocent priests at Nob shows to what extent people will go once they have rejected the Lord. Saul was a liar and a murderer, just like Satan (John 8:44). Doeg was an

Edomite, a descendant of Esau (Gen. 25:30), so his hatred for David and the priests is but another stage in the battle between Esau and Jacob. David's presence at Nob brought death to these people, so his deception only resulted in tragedy. Saul was unwilling to slay the Amalekites (chap. 15), yet he had no problem slaying innocent priests. This slaughter was a fulfillment of God's prophecy to Eli that his house would be judged; see 2:30-36. Saul was able to slay the priests, but he was not able to prevent Abiathar from fleeing to David with the ephod, the instrument for determining the will of God. What use had Saul for the ephod? He was determined to do his own will! Abiathar later became a help to David; see 23:9; 30:7.

Read 1 Sam. 22 and answer the following questions:

1. With what reasoning did Saul appeal to his officials to support him rather than David? (22:7-8)
2. What accusation did Saul make against the priests at Nob? (22:13)
3. On what grounds did Ahimelech maintain that he was innocent of aiding rebellion against Saul? (22:14)
4. Why, according to Ahimelech, did he not suspect that David was at odds with Saul? (22:15)
5. Why did David find himself in a dangerous situation in the very place he had sought refuge from Saul?
6. Do you think loyalty is more or less important than the discernment of right and wrong? Why?

Scripture Memory: Psalms 23: 4-6.

- 4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.
- 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over.

6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Day Two

Thought for the Day

There is no qualification concerning particular sins .All the sins of those who believe on Him have been blotted out as a thick cloud.

Lord, thank You that salvation is not a job that I must complete. Help me to accept Your finished work. Keep me from digging up old sins and bringing them back to You again and again. Doing that is not an act of repentance, it is an indication of doubt. For it says I do not trust Your promise.

God Guards David's Life

It was important that David live, for it was he who would deliver Israel, establish the kingdom in glory, and become the father of Christ in the flesh (Rom. 1:3). Satan used Saul to seek to kill David, but God was too strong for the enemy. As long as David sought the mind of the Lord, God gave him protection and victory

The Philistines were David's enemy and the enemy of Israel, so it was right for him to fight them. When the child of God is in the will of God, he may expect the help of God. So intense was Saul's hatred that he did not thank God for David's victory, but instead came to fight the victor himself. And the men of Keilah did not protect their deliverer; rather, they tried to turn him over to Saul! How wicked is the human heart untouched by the grace of God!

Read 1 Sam. 23: 1-13 and answer the following questions:

1. What was David's first response to the news that an Israelite town was being attacked by an enemy? (23:2)
2. Why were David's men hesitant to follow him into battle? (23:3)
3. How did God reassure David when he came the second time for guidance? (23:4)
4. What action did Saul take immediately upon learning of David's whereabouts at Keilah? [23:8]

5. What was good about the way David made his decisions?
6. What would be difficult or easy about believing that God would deliver a city with a ragtag band of misfits?
7. Why is it important to seek God's guidance before embarking even on an errand of mercy?

Scripture Memory: Psalms 23: 4-6. Insert the missing words by memory if possible.

- 4 Yea, though I walk through the _____ of the shadow of death, I will _____ no evil; for You are with me; Your _____ and Your staff, they comfort me.
- 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my _____; You anoint my head with _____ my cup runs over.
- 6 Surely goodness and _____ shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the _____ of the LORD forever.

Day Three

Thought for the Day

At their best and highest, the great minds and the profoundest thinkers never get beyond the realm of speculation and supposition.

Lord, I like to think myself as wise, but I have trusted some pretty ridiculous schemes and some shady characters. Help me to move away from my tendency to trust human wisdom and to move toward You. Help me to see Your plan for what it truly is: the only hope for a lost world.

Victory in the wilderness

What patience David had, to be able to endure daily danger and persecution! He was a master strategist and could have tricked Saul into defeat, but he preferred to wait for God to give the victory. How moving it was when Jonathan met him in the wilderness (at the risk of his own life) to reassure him and encourage him. Sad to say, Jonathan was never allowed to reign with David, for he was slain in battle with his father. The righteous often suffer because of the sins of others.

Ziph was in Judah and its inhabitants should have been loyal to David; but instead they betrayed their rightful king to Saul. Read Ps. 54 for David's prayer to God for deliverance. The rock stood between David and Saul (23:26), just as the cloud stood between Israel and the Egyptians. It seemed that Saul would finally capture his man, but an invasion from the Philistines forced Saul to return home. Certainly God is in control of circumstances and delivers His own at the right time.

Read 1 Sam. 23: 14-29 and answer the following questions:

1. What was accomplished when David and Jonathan met in secret? (23:16)
2. What did the two friends, Jonathan and David, do before they parted ways? (23:18)
3. How would you compare the way Saul and David arrived at their respective decisions about what to do next?
4. Why do you think Saul continued to try to kill David, although he knew David was God's anointed?
5. What are some of the ways that Christians can help one another "find strength in God"?
6. Who are some friends you can encourage?

Scripture Memory: Psalms 23: 4-6. Insert the missing words by memory if possible.

- 4 Yea, though I _____ through the _____ of the shadow of _____, I will _____ no evil; for You are with me; Your _____ and Your staff, they comfort me.
- 5 You prepare a _____ before me in the presence of my _____; you anoint my head with _____ my cup _____ over.
- 6 Surely goodness and _____ shall follow me all the _____ of my life; and I will dwell in the _____ of the _____ forever.

Day Four

Thought for the Day

If you want to be blessed of God you have to be absolutely honest, You have to realize He knows everything, and there is nothing hidden from Him.

Lord, it is difficult for me to think of You as both a holy and just God and the lover of my soul, as both a holy fire and a heavenly Father. Thank You that you want what is best for me; and thank You what is best for me is **YOU**.

GOD GIVES DAVID GRACE

“He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city” (Prov. 16:32). God gave David the grace needed to show kindness to his enemy, and this is even greater than defeating the giant Goliath. Saul’s men had been lying about David and telling Saul that David was trying to slay him (24:9). If Psalm 7 fits into this event, as many students believe, then Cut the Benjamin was chief of the liars. This experience gave David opportunity to prove to Saul and the leaders that he was not trying to slay Saul, but that he honored the king even though the king was out of the will of God.

Saul came into the cave to rest and relieve himself, probably laying his outer garment down as he entered. The cave was large and very dark, so he did not see David and his men hiding in the rocks. David was able to cut Saul’s garment and not be detected. Certainly this would have been the time to kill his enemy! In fact, some of David’s men insisted that God had arranged the circumstances so that David might so act (v. 4). It is important that we always test circumstances by the Word of God. So tender was David’s heart that he repented openly of his rash deed of cutting Saul’s robe; for he had not shown proper respect for the Lord’s anointed. David, “a man after God’s own heart,” was willing for God to take care of Saul (Rom. 12:19-21).

David and his men were safe in the cave, and Saul’s men would not dare to attack them; so David boldly stepped out to speak to Saul once the king had gone some distance away. How shocked Saul must have been to hear the voice of his son-in-law! David explained that Saul was listening to lies (v. 9) and that he could have lost his life in the cave but for David’s kindness (vv. 10-11). The piece of the robe was evidence enough that David was telling the truth. “I am but a flea, a dead dog!” said David. “To what advantage is it for you to chase me? But I am not going to kill you or trick you, for the Lord will fight my battles and plead my cause.” What a gracious spirit God gave to David. Oh, that we might have this same attitude toward our enemies today.

Picture the pitiful Saul as he stands before one who is his better. Saul’s weeping and his admission of guilt were but shallow, passing emotions; they did not really come from his heart. He was only too glad to acknowledge David’s kindness. After all, David had spared his life! And Saul was concerned primarily for his own family, that, when David did become king, he would not slay them. Verse 20 indicates the perversity of Saul’s heart: he admitted that David was the rightful king, yet he persisted in opposing him!

David kept his promises to Saul and even vindicated Saul’s honor after Saul’s death. This beautifully illustrates Christ’s words in Matt. 5:10-12. For David to show kindness to Saul, and to pray for him, was a greater victory than to overcome the Philistines. We can be sure, if we obey the Lord, that He will take care of our enemies for us in His good time.

Read 1 Sam. 24 and answer the following questions:

1. What did David’s men tell him when they discovered Saul alone in the cave? (24:4)

2. What action did David take while Saul was unaware? (24:5)
3. What arguments did David give to prove that he was not conspiring against the king? (24:9-11)
4. For David, what was the authoritative proof that he was not an evil man? (24:13). On what terms did Saul and David part after their meeting in the cave? (24:22)
5. How do you think Saul would have behaved toward David if their situations had been reversed?
6. What was the single most important reason David had for not harming Saul?
7. When does restraint speak more loudly than action?
8. In what way does God expect us to honor a position even when the person filling it is unrighteous?

Scripture Memory: Psalms 23: 4-6. Insert the missing words by memory if possible.

- 4 Yea, though I _____
- 5 You prepare a _____ before me in the presence of my _____; you anoint my head with _____ my cup _____ over.
- 6 Surely goodness and _____ shall follow me all the _____ of my life; and I will dwell in the _____ of the _____ forever.

Day Five

Thought for the Day

It is a fatal tendency to divide Christians into two groups the religious and the laity.

Lord, the idea that I am called to be a saint is a bit frightening. It also seems like quite a stretch. I really am quite ordinary. Help me to realize that being ordinary is really a great advantage; it

will keep me from taking credit for anything You accomplish through me. I want to be available to you, Lord. Make me alert to every opportunity.

Read 1 Sam. 25 and answer the following questions:

1. What favor did David ask of Nabal through his representatives? (25:6-8)
2. Why did David feel that Nabal should be willing to give him gifts? (25:7-8)
3. How did David react to the message from Nabal? (25:13)
4. What action did Abigail take when she heard about Nabal's blunder? (25:18-19)
5. How did David view the fact that Abigail came out to meet him? (25:32-34)
6. Why is or isn't it fair to assume that someone to whom we have done good should be willing to return the favor?
7. In what way is it preferable to let God vindicate you rather than to avenge yourself of wrongs done to you?

Scripture Memory: Psalms 23: 4-6. Insert the missing words by memory if possible

- 4 Yea, though I _____
- 5 You prepare a _____
- 6 Surely goodness and _____ shall follow me all the _____ of my life;
and I will dwell in the _____ of the _____ forever

Day Six

Thought for the Day

If we have seen our need and go to God and confess it, God will give us His own Son's righteousness.

Lord, thank You that I do not have to rely on my own righteousness, for than I would be truly hopeless. Remind me of all the people who are depending on their own goodness and do not realize their hopelessness. Fill me with compassion and love for them and remove all hatred from my heart.

Practical Application

1. How could you offer protection this week to someone who has been subjected to persecution or testing?
2. What verse of scripture could you memorize to remind yourself that you succeed by God's strength rather than your own?
3. What friend or acquaintance can you help find strength in God this week?
4. How could you prepare yourself not to "finish off" your enemy should you get a chance?
5. In what situation might it be wise to let your actions speak louder than your words?
6. In what way could you shoulder responsibility for something that is going wrong in your home or place of work and by doing so, "REDEEM" the situation?

Scripture Memory: Psalms 23: 4-6. Write the scripture by memory.

Weekly Challenge [Optional]

PSALMS 8

Hidden in this beautiful psalm's poetic description of man's place in creation lies much teaching for practical people today.

You have noted that there are two types of inscriptions in the psalms: historical and musical. For example, at the beginning of Ps. 8 we read, "To the chief Musician upon Gittith, a psalm of David." *Gittith* means "winepress" and probably referred to the use of the psalm in the harvest season. However, some Bible students have concluded that the musical directions belong at the end of the preceding psalm, as seen in Hab. 3. This means that *Muth-labben* at the beginning of Ps. 9 really belongs at the end of Ps. 8.

The term *Muth-labben* means "death of the son" or "death of the champion," and could refer to David's slaying of Goliath (1 Sam. 17). It is easy to see young David alone with God that evening after he had killed the giant, looking up to heaven and marveling at God's concern for His own. David was but a "babe and suckling" compared to the giant, yet God used the babe to silence the enemy. Note that in 1 Sam. 17:4 Goliath is called "a champion" and that he proudly challenged the fearful Jews for forty days (17:16). When David offered to silence the enemy, Saul said, "You are but a youth" (17:33, NKJV)—a babe, a suckling. Note another parallel between 1 Sam. 17 and Ps. 8 in "the fowl of the air" and "the beasts of the field" (1 Sam. 17:44 and Ps. 8:7-8). Also, Ps. 8 glorifies the "name of the Lord" (8:1, 9), and David defeated Goliath in the "name of the Lord" (17:45).

Here we have youthful David praising the Lord for the great victory that He gave. "What is man that You are mindful of him?" Why would God pay any attention to a shepherd boy? What a wonderful type of Jesus Christ we see in David: (1) both were born at Bethlehem; (2) both were shepherds; (3) both were rejected temporarily by their brethren; (4) both faced an enemy in the wilderness and won; (5) both were exiles before being made kings; (6) both took a bride while in exile; and (7) both were beloved—for the name David means "beloved."

Do you know that your job is an extension of God's rule over the world? That's what Psalm 8 means when it says that God has given people dominion or authority over his works [Ps. 8:6]. The psalmist is looking back to his creation account [Gen. 1:26-30], where God made people in His image to be His coworkers in overseeing the creation. Consider what that means:

1. You bear the very image of God. Like Him; you are a person, which means you have dignity and value. You matter. Who you are and what you do is significant. God has created you for a reason, which gives your life ultimate meaning and purpose.
2. You are created to be a worker. God is a worker, and since you are made in His image, your work expresses something of who He is and what He wants done in the world. Work reflects the work that God does. That means your work has dignity and value. It matters to God.
3. You are God's coworker. Gen. 1:26-30 makes it clear that God wants people to manage the world. He gives us authority to defeat the earth, to cultivate and develop it, bring it under control, use it to meet our needs, explore its wonders, and learn to cooperate with

its natural laws. He also gives us dominion over every plant and animal for similar purposes.

Your job can help accomplish that commission as you use your God given skills and opportunities. He views your work as having not only dignity, but purpose and direction as well. He wants you to accomplish meaningful tasks as you labor with a godly work ethic. He wants you to bring Him glory as a faithful manager of the resources and responsibilities He has placed under your control. By approaching work from this perspective, you can find fulfillment and motivation as a partner with God Himself.

Read Psalms 8 and answer the following questions:

1. What theme or themes hold this psalm together? (8:1)
2. How did David describe the Lord? (8:1-9)
3. What are some responsibilities that all of us have? (8:5-8)
4. What can we learn from David about the attitude we should have about ourselves?
5. How has this psalm changed your attitude toward nature and God?

*Studies in the life of
David
A man after God's own heart*

Lesson 4 – 1 Samuel 26-31

We come now to the tragic end of Saul's life. The man who "stood higher than any of the people" (10:23) now falls to the earth in a witch's house (28:20) and then falls dead on the battlefield (see 2 Sam. 1:19). Perhaps the best way to study these sad events is to notice the obvious contrasts between David and Saul.

Day One

Thought for the Day

The gospel is concerned about one thing only, the soul. Though a man may be right in many respects it is of no avail if he is wrong in the center.

Lord, help me to get it through my head that my goodness is worthless and that You want nothing from me, least of all my money and my act of service, if You do not have my heart. Take my heart and fill it with Your love.

Why David returned to the wilderness of Ziph when he had experienced trouble there before is difficult to understand (23:19). Perhaps it's just an illustration that he, like all men of clay, made mistakes. It has been suggested that David's polygamous marriage (25:42-44) hindered his close fellowship with the Lord, since such a marriage was not in God's will. Of course, Saul pursued David! Saul's tearful confession in 24:17-21 did not last, for it was not from his heart.

Abishai was David's nephew (1 Chron. 2:15-16) and was a courageous warrior (2 Sam. 10:10). Later, Abishai was to save David's life from the giant (2 Sam. 21:17). However, Abishai was involved in the murder of Abner (2 Sam. 3:30), a crime that grieved David. God put a deep sleep upon the camp (v. 12) so David and his nephew were not in danger. The word "trench" in v. 7 indicates a barricade of baggage and wagons. Once again, Satan used others to tempt David to slay Saul (v. 8, and see 24:4), but David resisted the temptation. Vengeance was in the hands of the Lord.

David's message to Saul was actually a plea for him to return to the Lord. "If God has led you to pursue me because of some sin in my life, then I will offer a sacrifice with you and get the matter settled," he said. "But if men are cursing me, then you can be sure God will settle the matter for me." Listen to Saul's empty confession in v. 21: "I have sinned! I have played the fool!" Yes, he had—but he still did not repent! We play the fool when we run ahead of the Lord when we fail to obey completely (chap. 15); when we turn our back on our godly friends (David and Samuel); when we seek guidance from the devil (chap. 28); and when we refuse to repent even when we know we are wrong. "Be sure your sins will find you out!"

Read 1 Sam. 26 and answer the following questions:

1. How did David manage to avoid falling into the trap Saul set for him? (26:3-4)
2. Where did David and Abishai find Saul? (26:7)
3. What did Abishai assume when he realized that Saul was sleeping and vulnerable? (26:8)
4. Why did David prevent Abishai from killing Saul? (26:9)
5. How had the Lord intervened for David when he entered Saul's camp at night? (26:12)
6. When David was a safe distance away, what message did he have for Abner? (26:13-16)
7. By pursuing David, what precious right was Saul denying to David? (26:20)
8. When David penetrated Saul's camp at night, what was his mission?
9. What would be wise or foolish about sparing an enemy rather than finishing him off?
10. Why might the repentance of an enemy be of greater value than the defeat of that enemy?

Scripture Memory: Psalm 1:1-3

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he

meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper.

Day Two

Thought for the Day

We cannot add to the greatness of God, but we can make the greatness of God appear greater to others.

Lord, thank You that I can reflect Your greatness and magnify Your glory. Give me a burning desire to display before the world Your splendor.

Chapters 27 and 29-30 deal with David's victories as he sought the mind of the Lord, while chapter 28 pictures Saul's terrible defeat as he sought aid in a witch's house. Of course, David was not always walking in the will of the Lord, for it seems that his faith failed him when he went back to Gath to live under the protection of the enemy (chap. 27). He had gotten into trouble there before (21:10-15), but now he was the leader of a strong band of 600 men and his reception was much better. Still, David's sojourn in enemy territory forced him to lie to the king (27:10-12), and when the Philistines did gather (29:1), David was almost forced to fight against his own people! When we lean on the wisdom of the flesh, we always end up in trouble. It was only the grace of God that kept David from having to slay his own people.

Read 1 Sam. 27: 1-12 and answer the following questions:

1. Where did David and his men settle when they left Israel? (27:2-3)
2. What request did David make of Achish, king of Gath? (27:5)
3. What was David's reason for killing all the people wherever he raided? (27:11)
4. What was Achish's primary reason for trusting David? (27:12)
5. Why did David want to create the impression in Gath that he was raiding Israelite territory?
6. What is the place of strategy and cunning in the life of the believer?

Scripture Memory: Psalm 1:1-3

Blessed is _____ who walks not in the _____ of the ungodly, nor stands in the _____ of sinners, nor sits in the seat of _____; but his delight is in the _____ of the Lord, and in His law he _____ day and night. He shall be like a tree _____ by the rivers of water, that brings forth its _____ in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does _____.

Day Three

Thought for the Day

To say “I am good enough” sounds very modest, but it is a denial of the faith. The essence of salvation is to say that He is good enough and that I am in Him.

Lord, keep me from falling into the trap of false humility. Admitting my deficiencies may make others think I am modest, but all it really says is that I’m still focused on myself. Help me to focus on You so much that the imprint of Your image is on everything I see.

The contrast between chapters 28 and 30 is striking: Saul had departed from the Lord and therefore had no divine guidance (28:6), while David looked to the Lord for courage and direction (30:6-9). “Seek the Lord while He may be found” (Isa. 55:6, NIV) was a warning Saul did not heed. God enabled David not only to recover all his possessions and people, but also to gather the loot collected by the enemy. We appreciate his gracious spirit in sharing the spoils with those who tarried by the supplies, and also his kindness in sending gifts to the elders of Judah. The latter action probably had some political meaning as well.

It is quite another picture when we look at Saul’s midnight visit to the witch’s house (chap. 28). Samuel was dead, but even when he was alive; his ministry was not really appreciated by Saul. How sad when people discover their real friends too late. Saul’s only recourse was to visit a witch, and this was prohibited by the Law (Lev. 20:6). It is alarming to what ends people will go when they have turned their back on the Lord. There have been endless debates over the matter of Samuel’s appearance at the call of the witch. It seems likely that: (1) Samuel’s coming was of the Lord and not because of the witch’s art; (2) the witch was surprised when Samuel appeared; and (3) Samuel came because he had a special message for the king from the Lord. The witch could not have impersonated Samuel (in league with someone else) since she did not know Saul was coming. Nor is it possible that Satan could have accomplished this feat, since God would not allow Satan to deliver such a weighty message, nor would the Lord put His approval on a practice His Word condemned. The witch becomes a mere spectator once Samuel is on the scene. It is likely that Saul heard Samuel’s words (v. 20) but did not see Samuel’s form (vv. 12-14). Back in 15:35 and 16:1, Samuel’s separation from Saul had been accomplished and the king would see him no more.

It is unbelievable that King Saul, a man chosen by God, could ever participate in so wicked a deed; yet the record is there—“let him who thinks he stands take heed, lest he fall” (1 Cor. 10:12). Saul walked in darkness, not in light; he disguised himself (yet was actually revealing his true character); he allowed a woman to break the law; he brought shame and defeat upon his nation, his army, his family, and himself.

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

1. What was the status of mediums and spiritists in Israel in the days of Samuel and Saul? (28:3)
2. What new danger struck terror in the heart of Saul? (28:5)
3. Where did Saul turn for guidance when he got no word from God? (28:7-8)
4. What was Samuel's reply to Saul about his fortunes in the battle to come? (28:16-19)
5. What did Saul reveal about himself when he chose to consult a medium?
6. In what circumstances might you be tempted to make yourself the exception to your own rule?
7. What's wrong with consulting spiritists and mediums?

Scripture Memory: Psalm 1:1-3

Blessed is _____ who walks not in the _____ of the _____, nor stands in the _____ of _____, nor sits in the seat of _____; but his delight is in the _____ of the Lord, and in _____ he _____ day and night. He shall be like a tree _____ by the rivers of _____, that brings forth its _____ in its season, whose _____ also shall not wither; and whatever he does _____.

Day Four

Thought for the Day

It is not right to say some are meant to be poor in spirit and some are meant to mourn, and so on. Every Christian is meant to be all of them.

Lord, I tend to take a break after every little spiritual victory and pat myself on the back after some little accomplishment like being a peacemaker or showing meekness. Help me to realize that Christianity is not a one-act play. It's a lifetime drama that demands that I be in character every moment of every day.

Read 1 Sam. 29: 1-11 and answer the following questions:

1. Where did David and his men find themselves as the Philistines lined up against Israel? (29:2)
2. What was the fear of the other commanders about David's presence at the front? (29:4-5)
3. What was Achish's final decision about David's involvement in the battle? (29:9-10)
4. Why didn't David's presence among their troops make sense to the Philistine generals?
5. What is good or bad about taking the advice of the many over the few?
6. How is it possible to see God's providence at work when others reject us?

Day Four cont.

Read 1 Sam. 30: 1-31 and answer the following questions:

1. What was the reaction of David and his troops to the destruction of their city? (30:4)

2. What was the attitude of the troops toward David when they returned to find their families gone? (30:6)

3. Why did some of David's men stay behind at the Besor Ravine? (30:9-10)

4. What did some of David's men want to do about the 200 troops who had not gone into battle? (30:22)

5. What was David's perspective on the sharing of the spoils of war? (30:23-25)

6. What were some positive leadership qualities exhibited by David on the occasion of the recovery of the plunder of Ziklag?

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

Scripture Memory: Psalm 1:1-3

Blessed is _____ who _____ not in the _____ of the _____, nor _____ in the _____ of _____, nor _____ in the seat of _____; but his _____ is in the _____ of the Lord, and in _____ he _____ day and night. He shall be like a tree _____ by the rivers of _____, that brings forth its _____ in its season, whose _____ also shall _____; and whatever he does _____.

Day Five

Thought for the Day

Instead of asking " Why this? Isn't it strange?" We must do what the prophet did: take the problem to God and leave it with HIM.

Lord, I know I spend too much time trying to handle problems that I don't fully understand and that only You can solve. Give me wisdom to know when to act and when to wait on You. And give me patience to sit still when a problem does not call for my attention.

While David was sending gifts to his friends, Saul and his family were being stripped on the battlefield! “To be carnally minded is death” (Rom. 8:6). Gilboa had been the scene of some great victories in the days of Deborah (Jdg. 4-5) and Gideon (Jdg. 7); but this day it would be the scene of a tragic defeat. God had abandoned Saul, and the only thing left for the rebellious king was death. How sad that his innocent son, Jonathan, had to suffer because of the father’s sins.

Read 2 Sam. 1:1-10 for another account of the death of Saul. It is not difficult to harmonize the two accounts. Saul saw that he was defeated; he did not want to fall into the hands of the enemy alive, because they would only humiliate him. Therefore, he tried to take his own life by falling on his sword. This, however, did not kill him; and he was yet alive, leaning upon his spear (2 Sam. 1:6), when the Amalekite came along and finished the work. (However, it must be noted that there are those who believe the Amalekite in 2 Sam. 1 was not telling the truth, but only giving this story to David to explain why he possessed Saul’s royal crown and bracelet. Perhaps he thought that David would reward him because he “did Saul a favor” by killing him.) There is an important lesson in Saul’s death: because Saul refused to slay all of the Amalekites (15), one of them ended up killing him. The sin that we fail to deal with eventually causes our downfall. Saul lost his crown: “Behold, I come quickly! Hold fast what you have that no one take your crown” (Rev. 3:11).

How the enemy rejoiced at the death of Saul. What triumph it brought to the temples of their false gods? Saul did not glorify his God either in life or death (Phil. 1:20-21). It was commendable that the heroic men of Jabesh-gilead rescued the desecrated bodies of the royal family and gave them decent burial. They burned them, probably to prevent any future insults. Saul had once rescued these people (chap. 11), and this was one way they could repay him. David later put the bones in a tomb (2 Sam. 21:12-14). When he became king at Hebron, David showed his appreciation to these brave men for honoring their late king (2 Sam. 2:5-7).

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

1. What happened to Saul and his sons in the fierce battle with the Philistines? (31:2-3)
2. Why did Saul ask his armor-bearer to finish him off with his sword? (31:4)
3. What did Saul do when his armor-bearer refused to kill him? (31:4)
4. What toll did this one battle take on Israel’s leadership? (31:5-6)
5. What did the valiant men of Jabesh-gilead do in response to the Philistines’ treatment of their leaders’ bodies? (31:11-13)

6. In your opinion, what circumstances make Saul's desire to die quickly either understandable or cowardly?

7. Why do you think Saul's armor-bearer was unwilling to kill him?

8. In what ways can having to deal with death or a terminal illness be a blessing in disguise?

Scripture Memory: Psalm 1:1-3

_____ is _____ who _____ not in the _____ of the _____, nor _____ in the _____ of _____, nor _____ in the _____ of _____; but his _____ is in the _____ of _____, and in _____ he _____ day and night. He shall be like a tree _____ by the rivers of _____, that brings forth its _____ in its _____, whose _____ also shall _____; and _____ he does _____.

Day Six

Thought for the Day

Our desire as Christians is that God's name shall be glorified. But the moment we start we realize that there is opposition.

Lord, the kingdom of darkness affects me in ways I don't even know. The enemy is so deceitful that he can get me doing things I truly believe are good for Your kingdom but which really only further my own idea of what your kingdom is. Give me a true picture of You and of Your kingdom so that satan cannot deceive me and so I do not work for him instead of You.

Practical Application

1. What could you keep in a prominent place to remind yourself that your loyalty to God transcends all others?

2. How can you begin to work toward balancing your desire to know the future with your respect for God and His laws?

3. How can you remind yourself to check your own obedience before you impose a rule on someone else?

4. How can you improve your judgment of the character of other people?

5. The next time you find yourself obsessed with an issue of fairness, how can you check your heart for greed and uncharitable thoughts?

6. What reminders can you use to pray for your church and civil leaders this coming week?

7. What small action on your part could make life more worth living for someone whose prospects are bleak?

Scripture Memory: Psalm 1:1-3

Weekly Challenge [optional]

Psalms 15 presents a summary of what God expects of His people. The question under discussion is: who is good enough to meet with God? [Ps. 15:1] The answer is interesting in that rather than giving a list of do's and don'ts, this psalm describes godliness in the terms of character. The qualities extend to personal issues of integrity and honesty, our relationships with others, and the way we handle money. This passage shows that we should worship not only in terms of our inward, personal needs, but also in light of our outward, public responsibilities. It also shows that religion is a matter of character as well as conduct.

Many people would like to enjoy a close, personal relationship with God. But such intimacy begins with a lifestyle of integrity. David lists several criteria for evaluating one's character. Significantly, almost all of them relate to workplace issues.

An Integrity Inventory

Psalm 15 lists ten marks of integrity. Read Psalms 15 and ask the question “How does my life compare?”

The person of integrity...	How about you?
1. Walks uprightly.	What is your basic ethical commitment? Are you out to honor the Lord or to serve yourself?
2. Works righteousness.	What is the end result of your work? Are you promoting good in the world – or evil?
3. Speaks the truth.	Are you in the habit of telling “little white lies” when it is necessary or convenient?
4. Does not backbite.	Do you tear down others behind their back?
5. Does no evil to a neighbor.	What is your policy on office politics? Do you believe in “doing unto others before they do unto you”?
6. Does not take up a reproach against a friend.	How loyal are you? When everyone is down on a colleague, do you jump on the bandwagon, or do you offer support and seek fair play?
7. Honors those who fear the Lord, not the ungodly.	What is the character of your best friends? What is their attitude toward God and the things of the Lord?
8. Keeps his word, even when it is costly.	Are you trustworthy and reliable? Is your word your bond, or is there always a question as to whether you will follow through?
9. Does not practice usury.	Do you make it harder or easier for poor people to gain the resources necessary to support themselves?
10. Does not take bribes.	What would it take to get you to compromise your integrity?

*Studies in the life of
David*
A man after God's own heart

Lesson 5 – 2 Samuel 1-5

These chapters describe the events leading up to David's coronation as king of Israel. You will want to read 1 Chron. 10:1-14, 11:1-19, and 14:1-8 for parallel accounts.

Day One

Thought for the Day

Would you like to be rid of spiritual depression? Then say farewell once and forever to your past.

Lord, it is You alone who has saved me from sin and who can keep me from sin. My own resolve is worthless, as are my good intentions and even my honest efforts. Help me to rest in You and in Your finished work, because it is when I try to add to it that I fall miserably and end up discouraged.

DAVID SORROWS OVER SAUL'S DEATH

A lesser saint would have rejoiced that his enemy was slain, but David was a man after God's own heart and felt keenly the tragedy of Saul's sin. Of course, David's dear friend Jonathan was also dead; the sin of a disobedient father had brought judgment upon innocent people. We have already noted the lessons of Saul's death in our study of 1 Samuel, but it would be profitable to consider some of the other details.

Note that an Amalekite brought the news and claimed to be the one who finally took Saul's life. Had Saul obeyed the Lord in 1 Sam. 15 and slain *all* of the Amalekites, this would not have happened. The sin we fail to slay is the one that slays us. See Deut. 25:17-19.

David's lamentation is touching; see Prov. 24:17. This "Song of the Bow" connects with Jonathan's use of the bow (1 Sam. 20:20). There are no unkind words about Saul in this song. David's chief concern is that the Lord's anointed has been slain and the Lord's glory has been dimmed. He is anxious that the unsaved enemy not rejoice over this victory. "How are the mighty fallen!" is his theme (vv. 19, 25, 27). In 1 Sam. 10:23, Saul "stood higher" than any other man, but now he had fallen lower than the enemy!

Read 2 Sam. 1:1-27 and answer the following questions:

1. According to the messenger, what was his own role in Saul's demise? (1:5-10)

2. How did David and his men react to the messenger's story? (1:11-12)
3. What reaction did the messenger expect when he came to David with the news of Saul's death?
4. What's wrong with taking justice into our own hands even when the offender clearly deserves punishment?
5. What order did David give regarding the lament for Saul and Jonathan? (1:18)
6. What figures of speech did David use to describe Saul and Jonathan's valor in battle? (1:22)
7. What advantage was there in David's memorializing only Saul's good qualities?
8. What is the value of remembering the past with all of its joy and sorrow?

Scripture memory: Psalms 1:4-6

- 4 The ungodly are not so, but are like the chaff which the wind drives away.
- 5 Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.
- 6 For the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

Day Two

Thought for the Day

The result of worrying about the future is that you are crippling yourself in the present, you are lessening your efficiency with regard to today.

Lord, thank You that You see the past, the present, and the future all at one time and You knew the end before You started the beginning. How foolish then for me to worry. If I am obedient today I have no reason to fear tomorrow.

The murder of Asahel

Joab, Abishai, and Asahel were all sons of David's half-sister Zeruiah (1 Chron. 2:16 and 2 Sam. 17:25). Thus, they were David's nephews as well as valued men in his army. David first reigned over Judah, his own tribe, with his headquarters at Hebron. However, Abner, the commander of Saul's army, had made Saul's son Ishbosheth the king over the other tribes. He relocated the capital over the Jordan River in Mahanaim to protect himself and the new king from David's men. Of course, Abner had personal interest in the household of Saul since he was Saul's cousin (1 Sam. 14:50). It was to his advantage to see Ishbosheth reign, but he was deliberately rebelling against God's Word when he crowned him. God had made it very clear that David alone was to rule Israel. Perhaps Christians today are like the Jews of that day: we permit our King to reign over only a part of our lives, and the result is conflict and sorrow. Abner's murder of Asahel was the prelude to the "long war" between the two kings (3:1). As we shall see, the two remaining brothers avenged this death, much to David's grief.

Read 2 Sam.2:1-32 and answer the following questions:

1. What two specific questions did David ask of the Lord following Saul's death? (2:1)

2. What message did David send to the men of Jabesh Gilead? (2:5)

3. What piece of news did David want the men of Jabesh Gilead to hear from him directly? (2:7)

4. How should a godly leader step into leadership? Why

4. Even when the answer seems obvious, why should we seek God's guidance?

6. Why is a civil war often the most fierce and brutal kind of war?

7. Where did the armies of Israel and Judah meet one another? (2:12-13)
8. How did Abner propose to deal with the rivalry between the kings? (2:14)

9. Which side prevailed in the fighting between the armies of Saul's son Ishbosheth and David? (2:17)

10. Why did Joab decide to call off his pursuit of Abner and his men? (2:27-28)

Scripture Memory: Psalms 1:4-6 Insert the missing words by memory if possible.

- 4 The _____ are not so, but are like the _____ which the wind drives away.
- 5 Therefore the ungodly shall not _____ in the judgment, nor _____ in the congregation of the righteous.
- 6 For the _____ knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the _____ shall perish

Day Three

Thought for the Day

The gospel is not man's idea or result of man's effort and seeking. It is the revelation of what God thinks and says concerning life.

Lord, thank You that Your plan for the universe is more wondrous than any devised by human minds. And thank You Your plan for my life is far greater than I can even imagine. Thank You for revealing Yourself to me. Thank You for including me in Your plan.

The murder of Abner

David's many wives were chosen in direct violation of Deut. 17:15-17. Some students believe that this expression of David's lust eventually led to the many family problems that plagued his later days. Amnon violated his half-sister Tamar (chap. 13); Absalom rebelled against David and tried to capture the crown (chaps. 13-18); and Adonijah tried to wrest the kingdom from Solomon (1 Kings 1:5ff). Abner had problems with lust too; for he took one of Saul's concubines and incurred the displeasure of the pretended king. This led to a disruption between Abner and Ishbosheth. Abner tried to make a peaceful agreement with David, but the "sons of Zeruah" plotted against him and killed him (vv. 26-30). While Joab did the actual killing, it is likely that his brother was in on the plans. Joab's hands were stained with blood before his own death came; for he not only killed Abner, but also Absalom (2 Sam. 18:14) and Amasa (2 Sam. 20:10). David asked his son Solomon to deal with Joab, and he did (1 Kings 2:5-6, 28-34). How different history would have been had Abner lived, it is difficult to tell. Certainly Joab held unusual power over David, particularly after he assisted the king in his murderous plot against innocent Uriah (11:14). Note, however, David's godly conduct in the matter of Abner's death.

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

1. What gradually happened in the war between the rival kings David and Ishbosheth? (3:1)
2. Why do you think Joab was persuaded to stop pursuing the Israelites even though he was winning?
3. What had Abner been doing during the war between David and Ish-Bosheth? (3:6)
4. What did Abner urge the elders of Israel to do? (3:17-18)
5. What was the most persuasive argument for the people of Israel to declare David their king?
6. What is unwise about setting yourself in opposition to the revealed will of God?
7. How did David react to the news of Abner's death? (3:28)
8. How did the people of Judah who followed David react to Abner's death? (3:34)
9. Why did most of the people approve of David's reaction to Abner's death? (3:36-37)
10. Why were the people watching to see if David's grief over Abner was sincere?
11. What behaviors on your part could convince others of your sincerity better than words?

Scripture Memory: Psalms 1:4-6 Insert the missing words by memory if possible.

- 4 The _____ are not so, but are like the _____ which the _____ drives away.
 5 Therefore the _____ shall not _____ in the judgment, nor _____
 in the congregation of the _____.
 6 For the _____ knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the _____
 shall _____.

Day Four

Thought for the Day

The gospel can take the proudest man by nature and make him a man who is poor in spirit.

Lord, when I think I am most humble I probably am the most proud. What an irony. But on days when I get a glimpse of Your glory, I realize how poor I really am in spiritual understanding.

The murder of Ishbosheth

This was the turning point: when Ishbosheth died, the way was wide open for David to rule over the entire nation. However, it must be noted that David did not approve of the method the sons of Rimmon used, and he had the murderers slain because of their crime. David knew that God was able to elevate him to the throne; he would not do evil that good might come from it (Rom. 3:8). These three murders are evidence that David's road to the throne was a bloody one. What a contrast to our Savior who shed His own blood, and not the blood of others, to gain His throne! See 1 Chron. 22:8 for God's evaluation of David's career.

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

1. How was Jonathan's son rescued after Saul and Jonathan were killed in battle? (4:4)

2. How did Recab and Baanah manage to murder Ishbosheth without being detected? (4:5-6)

3. What did Recab and Baanah expect when they went directly to David with the head of Saul's son? (4:7-8)

4. What similar incident did David recount for Recab and Baanah? (4:9-10)

5. Why were the leaders of Israel's raiding bands even more guilty than the man who reported Saul's death to David raids? (4:11)

6. How did David go about making an example of the men who had planned to please him? (4:12)

7. Why did the two leaders assume that David would want Ishbosheth dead?

Scripture Memory: Psalms 1:4-6 Insert the missing words by memory if possible.

- 4 The _____ are not so, but are like the _____ which the _____ drives away.
- 5 Therefore the _____ shall not _____ in the _____ nor _____ in the congregation of the _____.
- 6 For the _____ knows the way of the _____, but the way of the _____ shall _____.

Day Five

Thought for the Day

There are many ways of forgetting our troubles for a while, but the question is, "Do they give understanding, do they really help us to see through our troubles?"

Lord, thank You for the understanding I can gain from Your word. I know I cannot rely on temporary feelings or fleeting pleasures. I need the solid foundation of the truth of Your Word to permeate my entire life.

DAVID SUCCEEDS TO SAUL'S THRONE

David had reigned seven years in Hebron over the tribe of Judah; now he was to reign over the entire nation for thirty-three years, making a total of forty years. This was David's third anointing—Samuel had anointed him at home in Bethlehem, and the men of Judah had anointed him at Hebron (2:4). See Ps. 18 for David's song of victory after God had defeated all his foes and given him peace. This is a good Psalm to read when you are in trouble, for it shows how the Lord brings us out and leads us into a place of greater blessing. Certainly David did not enjoy his many trials, but he could look back and thank God for them.

The king now needed a capital city, and he chose Jerusalem. This stronghold had not been captured previously (Josh. 15:63; Jdg. 1:21) and the Jebusites were arrogant and defied David to attack. "The lame and the blind could defeat you!" they taunted, but David and his men turned their taunts into cries of defeat.

First Chron. 11:5-8 tells us that Joab was the man God used to open the city. There are students who feel that David's men crept into the city unawares through the water system, but some archaeologists maintain that the *water system was not located at that point*. It seems clear from the text that David did use the water tunnel as his means of entry and that Joab carried out the king's master plan.

No sooner was David established in his own city than the old enemy, the Philistines, returned. How true this is in our personal lives: Satan waits for the "peace after the storm" to attack us again. David knew that the Lord's will was the only way to victory, so he immediately consulted Him. Note that the second attack (vv. 22-25) was different from the first, and that David was wise enough to seek God's guidance again. God led him in a new way. We must take care not to keep "carbon copies" of the Lord's will, but to seek Him anew for each new decision.

Certainly it was God's will that David reign over the entire nation, just as it is His will that Christ be Lord over all of our lives. Any part that is left outside His will is going to rebel and cause trouble. We are "bone of His bone, and flesh of His flesh" (5:1; Eph. 5:30), and we ought to invite Him to reign over us. Only then will we have complete peace and victory.

David's road to the throne covered many years and many trials, but throughout that journey he put God first and never sought vengeance or retaliation against Saul. God saw to it that David was protected and promoted according to His time and plan. He will do the same for us if we will but trust Him.

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

1. What was different about the Lord's response to David's second inquiry? (5:23-24)
2. Why did David continue to prosper and grow more powerful? (5:10)
3. What honor did David receive from a foreign king? (5:11)
4. How did David interpret the honors he was receiving? (5:12)
5. In what different ways could David have responded to an honor such as gifts sent from a foreign king?
6. What was David's first instinct when he heard about the Philistines amassing against him?

7. Why was it a good thing that David did not assume that the second battle would go exactly like the first?

8. What are the potential pitfalls of success in the life of the believer?

Scripture Memory: Psalms 1:4-6 Insert the missing words by memory if possible.

- 4 The _____ are not so, but are like the _____ which the _____ drives away.
- 5 Therefore the _____ shall not _____ in the _____ nor _____ in the _____ of the _____.
- 6 For the _____ knows the _____ of the _____, but the _____ of the _____ shall _____.

Day Six

Thought for the Day

The glory of the gospel is that when the Church is absolutely different from the world, she invariably attracts it.

Lord, I want to be different and make a difference. Help me to resist the temptation to fit into the world's mold. Help me, instead, to be molded into Your likeness.

Practical Application

1. What story of a faithful and valiant saint could you share with your friends or children this week?

2. In what matter do you need to seek God's guidance today?

3. What current grievance against another person would you do well to leave to God's judgment?

4. In what way can you resist defending yourself and let God deliver you?

5. What could serve as a concrete reminder that your successes are an indication of God's grace?

4. How can you develop the habit of asking for God's help instead of taking it for granted?

Scripture Memory: Write by memory. Review this scripture several times today Psalm 1:4-6

Weekly Challenge [Optional]

PSALM 5

The Wicked and the Righteous Compared

Have you established the healthy pattern of beginning every day in prayer? In this morning psalm, David turns his face toward God in the first, third and fifth verse, and turns back on the "workers of iniquity" in the second and fourth.

Read Psalm 5 and answer the following questions:

1. Why do you think personal crises motivate people to pray more?

2. What attitude did David have in presenting his request to the Lord? (5:7)

3. How did David deal with the offenses against him? (5:9-10)

4. What attitude should believers have and why? (5:11-12)

5. How are faith and prayer connected?

6. What steps can you take to keep up a consistent habit of prayer?
7. What have you learned about the character of God from this psalm?

8. What is one step you can take in the next week to improve your prayer habits?

Studies in the life of
DAVID
A man after God's heart

Lesson 6 – 2 Samuel: 6

You will want to read 1 Chron. 13, 15, and 16 as you study this chapter, since they give additional information about this important event in the life of David. Psalm 132:1-6 tells of David's intense desire to honor the Lord by returning the ark of the covenant to its proper place. For nearly twenty years, the ark had been in Kirjath-jearim (Baale of Judah, see 1 Sam. 6:21-7:2); so David prepared a special tent for it in Jerusalem (1 Chron. 15:1) and prepared to return the sacred ark to its home. It took more than three months for him to finish the task (6:11).

David's first act as king over all of Israel was to move to Jerusalem and set it up as his capital. His next major move was even more significant, as he "arose and went with all the people who were with him to Baale Judah [Kirjath Jearim], to bring up from there the ark of God." David was a very wise leader, realizing quickly that the basis of his rule must not be political only but, more importantly, centered in the worship of and obedience to the Lord. This realization would not only make a great difference in his ability and success as a ruler, but also as a man and, even more, it would reach out and make a difference in the lives of each one of those he would rule. What a great blessing was the leadership of this Godly man, David.

Day One

Thought for the Day

We cannot prevent thoughts from coming into our mind, but if we welcome them and agree with them they become sin.

Lord, I know I do not always think about that which is true and pure. Cause me to turn my mind toward You so you can clear out all the thoughts that don't belong there.

DAVID DISPLEASES THE LORD

Certainly it was a noble desire on David's part to bring the ark to Jerusalem, but it is possible to have "zeal without knowledge" and do a good work in a wrong way. To begin with, David did not consult the Lord; he consulted his political leaders (1 Chron. 13:1-4; note 2 Sam. 5:19 and 23). It appears that his main motive was to unify the nation under his rule rather than to glorify the Lord. Note in 1 Chron. 13:3 that David criticizes Saul for neglecting the ark. Perhaps this statement had something to do with the behavior of Saul's daughter, Michal, as recorded in 6:20ff. All the leaders and all the congregation agreed to David's plan, but this did not make the subsequent actions right.

David's next mistake was to ignore God's Word. Instead of asking the Levites to bear the ark on their shoulders (Num. 3:27-31; 4:15; 7:9; 10:21), he followed the worldly example of the Philistines and put the ark on a new cart (1 Sam. 6). God would permit the Philistines to use this method, since they were not His covenant people, instructed in the Word. But for the Jews to

ignore the divine commands and imitate the heathen nations, was to invite disaster. How many Christians and local churches today “conform to the world” (Rom. 12:2) instead of “following the pattern” given by God from heaven? (Ex. 25:40) All of the people were enthusiastic and joyful, but this did not make their method right in the eyes of God. Israel wanted to be “like the other nations” (1 Sam. 8:5), and it led to tragedy.

Naturally, the human method of doing God’s work eventually fails: the oxen stumbled and the ark was in danger of falling! This led to the third mistake: a man who was not a Levite touched the ark (see Num. 4:15). God had to judge him immediately or else sacrifice His glory and permit His Word to be violated. David’s reaction to this sudden judgment reveals that his heart was not completely right with God in the matter; for, first he was angry, then he was fearful. Instead of pausing and seeking God’s will to discover the reason for the judgment, David stopped the procession and quickly disposed of the ark. First Chronicles 26:1-4 indicates that the family of Obed-edom belonged to the Levitical family and could safely care for the ark. One mistake led to another! How important it is to determine God’s will and then follow God’s way in accomplishing that will.

Read 2 Sam. 2: 1-5 and answer the following questions:

1. What was the mission on which David and his men went to Baalah of Judah? (6:2)
2. How was the ark being transported from the house of Abinadab? (6:3-5)

To get an understanding of the significance of the ark and exactly what it represented to the people of Israel, read **Exodus 25: 10-22** and answer the following questions:

3. From verses 10 and 11, of what materials was the ark to be made and what were the dimensions? [Note: a cubit is approximately 1.50 feet]
4. What was to be placed in the ark, according to verse 16?
5. From Deuteronomy 10:3-5, what exactly was this testimony?
6. Hebrews 9:4 gives us a complete list of the contents of the ark. What was ultimately packed in the ark?

7. The mercy seat was to be the lid, or the covering of the ark. Describe the mercy seat from Exodus 25:17-21.
8. As beautiful as the ark and mercy seat would be to look at, their real glory and beauty would be God Himself. What two things did God say He would do there?
9. Exodus 25:8 tells us God's purpose for the construction of the tabernacle in which the ark was to rest. What was His purpose?

Scripture memory: Psalms 19:14 Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, oh Lord, my strength and my redeemer.

Day Two

Thought for the Day

All our petitions should fall under one of three headings, food, forgiveness, and guidance.

Lord, sometimes it seems like I am so busy worrying about the details that I fail to see the big picture. At other times I'm trying to think so big I forget that even the smallest things matter to You. Give me Your perspective on all things.

Read 2 Sam. 6: 6-11 and answer the following questions:

1. What prompted Uzzah to reach out and hold onto the ark? (6:6)
2. How did God judge Uzzah's action of reaching out for the ark? (6:7)
3. What was David's emotional reaction to the death of Uzzah? (6:8)
4. After the death of the priest, what change of plans did David make out of fear? (6:9-10)
5. Why was Uzzah's action irreverent even though he was trying to protect the ark?

6. If you had been present on the day of Uzzah's death, how would you have felt about having the ark brought to your home?
7. What was God's response to David's anger and fear?

Scripture memory: Psalms 19:14 Insert the missing words by memory if possible.

Let the _____ of my mouth and the _____ of my heart be acceptable in Your _____, oh Lord, my strength and my redeemer.

Day Three

Thought for the Day

The gospel has but one preliminary test, How do we stand with God?

Lord, I know I worry too much about what others think and how I appear in their eyes. Keep me in the schoolroom of Your presence so that my total concern is my standing with You.

DAVID DISPLAYS HIS ZEAL

During the three months' interim, David undoubtedly searched his heart and confessed his sins. He certainly turned to the Law to discover God's instructions for carrying the ark (1 Chron. 15:1-2, 12-13). God was blessing the household of Obed-edom, and David wanted that blessing for the whole nation. This time he prepared the tent and also saw to it that the Levites were properly prepared for their task.

It is thought that Ps. 24 may have been composed to celebrate this event. From 1 Chron. 16:7ff we discover that Ps. 105 also grew out of this happy event. David was used of God to give expression to the joy of his heart, and his song glorified the Lord. The king laid aside his royal robes and led the procession in the humble garments of a Levite. The Levites took six paces and then paused, waiting to see if God would accept them; when no judgment came, they offered sacrifices and then proceeded the rest of the way to Jerusalem.

It is obvious that David's "dancing" before the Lord was a spontaneous expression of his joy that the ark of God was restored to the people. Was it undignified for David to act in this way? Certainly not! While his actions are not given as examples for us to follow, we dare not go to the other extreme and rule out all outward expressions of joy and praise in our worship of God! While some believers may carry such activities to extremes, others may be guilty of grieving the Spirit by a false sobriety. Finally, David's "dancing" is in no way an excuse for modern "dancing;" for his actions were done before the Lord to glorify Him.

David blessed the people and gave them gifts to celebrate the return of the ark. Years before “the glory had departed”; now the Lord of Hosts (God of armies) was back in the midst of His people again. No wonder David rejoiced!

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

1. What persuaded David to go back for the ark after three months? (6:12)
2. How was the public procession handled differently the second time? (6:13)
3. What was the mood of David and the people as they transported the ark? (6:14-15)
3. What news came to David that sparked afresh his desire to bring the ark of God to the City of David?
5. Do you think David wanted this blessing for himself or for his people?
6. Can you think of any reasons that bringing the ark to the capital of the nation would bring blessings to the people of Israel?
7. Are there any things that you can do in your home, or with your friends, or even individually that would have this same affect?
8. During the three months that the ark was with Obed-Edom, David did some personal study of God’s law. From 1 Chronicles 15:2, 13-15 what did we learn?
9. What else did David do this time that showed his desire to move forward in God’s way?
2 Sam. 6:13

Scripture memory: Psalms 19:14 Insert the missing words by memory if possible.

Let the _____ of my _____ and the _____ of my _____ be acceptable in Your _____, oh Lord, my _____ and my redeemer.

Day Four

Thought for the Day

The promises of God never fail. But they refer to necessities only, and our idea of necessity is not always God's.

Lord, in this world of never enough, help me to understand, in my heart, that the abundance You provide is always enough.

Read 2 Sam. 2:16-19 and answer the following questions:

1. How did Michal react when she saw David dancing before the Lord? (6:16)
2. We must stop for a moment and wonder why Michal was an on-looker rather than a participant on this occasion. What might this indicate about her regard for spiritual things?
3. In what way is Michal described in verse 16 that serves as a reminder of where she came from and how she was raised?
4. How did David culminate the celebration when the ark reached Jerusalem? (6:17-19)
5. What two things did David do for the people of Israel? (6:18-19)

Scripture memory: Psalms 19:14 Insert the missing words by memory if possible.

Let the _____ of my _____ and the _____ of my _____ be _____ in Your _____, oh Lord, my _____ and my _____.

Day Five**Thought for the Day**

What is your supreme desire? Are you out for the benefits and blessings of the Christian life and salvation, or do you long to know God and become more and more like the Lord Jesus?

Lord, help me to thirst for eternal righteousness rather than hunger for earthly benefits.

DAVID DISCIPLINES HIS WIFE

We have noted before that Michal, Saul's daughter, was never a suitable wife for David. She belonged to Saul's family and never really exhibited any faith in the God of Israel. First Samuel 19:13 indicates that she worshiped idols. David did not take her as his wife because of the leading of the Lord; he "won her" by slaying Goliath (1 Sam. 17:25) and by fulfilling Saul's murderous requirements (1 Sam. 18:17-27). This life-time alliance with the family of Saul meant trouble from the very beginning, as all ungodly alliances do (2 Cor. 6:14-18). The conflict between David and Saul is an illustration of the battle between the flesh and the Spirit, and for David to be united to Michal meant yielding to the flesh.

It takes little imagination to see why Michal despised her husband. Certainly her sinful attitude had been growing within for years. She resented being married to her father's armor-bearer as the "prize" for victory. She resented the fact that David had other wives (see 3:2-5; 5:13-16), all of whom were chosen after her marriage to David. Her father had died shamefully, and his enemy now reigned victoriously over all Israel. Of course, beneath all these reasons lay the basic reason: she was an unbeliever who did not understand or appreciate the things of the Lord (1 Cor. 2:14-16). She wanted David to display his royal power in great pomp and ceremony; he preferred to take his place with the common people and glorify the Lord.

Her harsh words to David after a great time of praise must have cut him deeply. It is usually true that Satan has a "Michal" to meet us whenever we have been rejoicing in the Lord and seeking to glorify Him. Her wicked words revealed a wicked heart, and David knew that she must be dealt with. "If your hand offends you, cut it off!" He realized that Michal would never help him in the work of the Lord; therefore, he put her away and refused to give her the privileges of marriage. For a Jewish woman to die without children was, of course, a great shame to her. David answered this fool according to her folly (Prov. 26:5).

When others criticize us, and we know our hearts and motives are right, we should not get discouraged. Had David been like some saints, he would have said, "All right, I just won't serve the Lord anymore! Even my wife doesn't appreciate it!" No, instead, we find in the next chapter that David planned to do even more and build a temple for the Lord. This is the proper spirit for the Christian, to honor the Lord regardless of what obstacles Satan may put in the way.

Read 2 Sam. 6:20-23 and answer the following questions:

1. What was Michal's response to David when he returned home after the celebration? (6:20)

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

3. What became of Michal after this incident in which she "despised" David? (6:23)

4. Why was Michal so upset by David's behavior in the procession?

4. How can we combine proper reverence before God with unparalleled joy and celebration?

Scripture memory: Psalms 19:14 Write by memory. Review this scripture several times today

Day Six

Thought for the Day

If you are refusing forgiveness to anybody I suggest that you have never been forgiven.

Lord, search my heart. Am I holding any hard feelings toward another? Help me to keep short accounts and to forgive as I have been forgiven by Your mercy and grace.

Practical Application

1. How can you express your wholehearted joy this week before the Lord?

2. What is an appropriate response for someone who finds your worship practices undignified?

3. What scripture verse ministered to you this week? Why

4. What did you learn this week about:
 - A. God's holiness?

- B. The difference His presence can make?
5. How do you intend to apply what you learned this week?

Scripture memory: Psalms 19:14 Write by memory. Review this scripture several times today

Weekly Challenge [Optional]

Psalm 132: The Pilgrim Song

This psalm is part of a collection known as the “Songs of Ascents,” which were sung during festival processions, as when the pilgrims ascended to Jerusalem, celebrating the bringing of the ark of the covenant into the city, and rejoicing in God who had chosen Zion for his dwelling place. The stanzas follow a progression of events beginning in verse 1-5 with a prayer for David, then in verse 6-10 with David’s concern for the presence of God, and verses 11-18 deal with God’s reward to David, pointing to the time when Jesus Christ would come to His temple, sit upon David’s throne and make the glory of the second house greater than the former had ever been.

1. What do you think the psalmist is referring to when he says, “Lord, remember David and all his affliction?”

2. According to verses 3-5, what is David willing to forfeit?

3. Has God revealed anything that you (like David) would be willing to sacrifice for the furtherance of His work?

Verse 17 says: “I will prepare a place for My anointed.” In the Scripture we find that David is often promised “a lamp”. (You may want to see 1 Kings 11:36 and 15:4, 2 Kings 8:19, and 2 Chronicles 21:7.) In Christ this lamp was given. His coming shed a glory on David’s house, on the temple, and on David himself, such as had never previously illumined them.

4. How does God enlighten **you**? See Psalm 119:105, 119:130, Proverbs 6:23

Studies in the life of
DAVID
A man after God's heart

Lesson 7 - 2 Samuel: 7

Two phrases in this chapter summarize the main lesson: “your seed” (v. 12) and “your throne” (v. 16). This Davidic covenant (also given in 1 Chron. 17) is important to the program of God, because in it God promises certain special blessings to the Jewish nation through David. In His covenant with Abraham (Gen. 15), God had promised a seed, a land, and a blessing to all nations through Israel. In this covenant, God reveals that the promised Messiah would come through David's line (Rom. 1:3) and would rule from David's throne over the promised messianic kingdom.

Day One

Thought for the Day

We draw up our plan of life and think we can explain everything, but just as we have done so we see a glorious, golden sunset that moves us to the very depth of our being in a way we cannot explain.

Lord, I get so frustrated when my own plans don't work out or when someone interferes with them. Help me to see that my solutions are not always Your resolutions. Give me Your sunset-touch.

A NOBLE PURPOSE

The days of exile and danger are over, and David is enjoying rest and blessing in his own house. The king is fellowshiping with the prophet Nathan, and they are discussing the things of the Lord.

David always had a love for the house of God (Ps. 132), and his desire was to build a beautiful house for the Lord. God would not permit this (1 Chron. 22:8), but He would acknowledge David's love, inasmuch as this desire was in his heart (1 Kings 8:18). Nathan did not know God's express will in the matter, so he merely commended David and encouraged him to do what was in his heart. Both David and Nathan kept their hearts open for God's leading; and, when the Lord spoke, they listened and obeyed. We ought always to encourage one another in spiritual matters and provoke one another to good works (Heb. 10:24-25).

David truly was “a man after God's own heart,” for he had the Word of God and the house of God uppermost in his heart. Would that more of God's people were like him!

Read 2 Sam. 7:1-3 and answer the following questions:

1. What two things are we told about David as we begin our study?

2. In his newly acquired state of rest and prosperity, what is it that David has noticed (use his exact words) and what is his desire to do?
3. Read Rom. 8:5 and share how you see this verse in action in David's life.
4. In what sense can prosperity be both comfortable and uncomfortable?
5. What contrast bothered David after he was well established in Jerusalem? (7:1-2)
6. What was Nathan's initial reaction to David's instinct to build a house for the ark of God? (7:3)

Haggai 1:1-11 tells us how the word of the Lord came to the prophet Haggai, calling him to reveal to God's people the reason for their continual lack.

7. What are God's words to these people in verse 7?
8. In what way could God be asking you to rebuild His temple today? "See verse 8" (it may not have to do with money, maybe it has to do with commitment, time, priorities, or goals.)

Write Matt. 6:21 _____

How can you apply this verse to your life today?

9. Where was David's treasure?
10. Where is your treasure?

Scripture memory: Psalms 18:2 “The Lord is my rock and my fortress, and my deliverer, my God, my strength, in whom I will trust, my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.”

Day Two

Thought for the Day

The man of the world is very confident as to his own capacity. The Christian is truly aware of his own limitations

Lord, could it be that my self-confidence reveals my worldliness? The world says self-confidence is a virtue, You say it is sin. I confess that I often behave as if I believe the world more than I believe You. Keep me from falling into the trap of thinking the way the world thinks. And keep me alert so I will know when today’s popular philosophies contradict Your timeless truth.

A WONDERFUL PROMISE

Nathan must have been meditating on the Word “in the night” (Ps. 119:55) when God spoke to him. How often God speaks to us when it is dark! See Gen. 15 “You have visited me in the night” (Ps. 17:3). God gave Nathan a message for the king, and this message involved several important factors.

God’s grace

How gracious God was to “dwell in a tent” during the years since the nation had come out of Egypt! He had not asked for an elaborate temple, as housed the gods of Egypt. No, He had “humbled Himself” and dwelt in the tabernacle, journeying with His people and going before them to open the way. John 1:14 says, “And the Word (Christ) became flesh and tabernacled among us.” Another evidence of God’s grace was His treatment of David. God had called him from the pastures and put him on the throne. God had given him victory over all his enemies. God had brought Israel into a place of blessing and they would not be moved again

Read 2 Sam. 7:4-9 and answer the following questions:

1. In verse 5 Nathan was told to go and speak God’s word to David. What question does the Lord ask David in this verse?

2. It is not revealed in this verse why David would not be the one to build God’s house, but in 1 Chronicles 28:2-3 we see the reason. What does it say?

3. According to the word Nathan received from the Lord, how did God feel about the fact that no permanent house of worship had been built? (7:5-7)

4. What did God remind David about how he had achieved his current prosperity? (7:8-9)
5. Why is it significant that Nathan heard from God immediately after he had spoken with David?
6. What gentle correction did God include with His promises to David?
7. What was God's intention in making David powerful and prosperous?

Scripture memory: Psalms 18:2 Insert the missing words by memory if possible.

The Lord is my _____ and my fortress, and my _____, my God, my _____ in whom I will trust, my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

Day Three

Thought for the Day

If you take your problem to God, you have no right to mope over it any longer.

Lord, my eyes keep turning toward my problems rather than toward You. I keep asking You to change my situation when I should be asking You to change my attitude. Help me to stop demanding answers from You and to start resting in Your promises.

God's purpose

Please note that the word "house" has a double meaning in this passage: (1) a material house, the temple, v. 13; and (2) a human house, David's family, vv. 11, 16, 19, 25, 27, 29. It is customary to speak of a royal family as a "house," such as the "House of Windsor" in Great Britain. David wanted to build God a house of stone, but God was going to build David a royal house, a family that would reign on his throne.

The terms of this covenant are important because they involve the purposes of God in sending Jesus Christ to the world. We must note, first, that some of this covenant was fulfilled in Solomon, David's successor on the throne; see 1 Chron. 22:6-16. God did put Solomon on the throne, in spite of the wicked plots of others in the family, and God did enable Solomon to build the beautiful temple. When Solomon and his descendants sinned, God kept His promise (v. 14) and chastened them; see Ps. 89:20-37. It must be noted as well that there are some matters in this covenant that can apply only to Jesus Christ. God states that the throne would be forever (v. 13) and that David's house and kingdom would be forever (v. 16). But David does not have a

descendant upon his throne today. In fact, there is no throne in Jerusalem. Did God not fulfill His promises? God states in Ps. 89:33-37 that He would never break His covenant with David, even though He might have to chasten David's children.

The ultimate fulfillment of these promises is in Jesus Christ. Read carefully the message of the angel to Mary in Luke 1:28-33, and note that God promises Christ the throne and the kingdom of David. Some "spiritualize" these verses and apply them to the church today; but if the rest of the angel's message is to be taken literally, what right do we have to spiritualize the throne and the kingdom? Led by the Spirit, Zacharias states clearly that Christ would fulfill the covenants made to the fathers (Luke 1:68-75). It is our conviction that Christ will fulfill this Davidic covenant when He sits on David's throne and rules during the millennial kingdom (Rev. 20:1-6). It is then that all the great kingdom promises in the OT Prophets will be fulfilled. The apostles in Acts 15:13-18 understood that God would build David's house (tabernacle) again *after* God was finished visiting the Gentiles and calling out a people for His name (the church).

Read 2 Sam. 7:10-17 and answer the following questions:

1. What promise did God make concerning His people, Israel? (7:10-11)
2. What was God's covenant with the house of David? (7:11-12, 16)
3. What was God's will concerning the building of a house for His Name? (7:13)
4. How long did God promise to establish the throne of David? (7:13)
5. What relationship did God promise to have with David's son and his descendants? (7:14)
6. How did God promise to treat David differently than He had treated Saul? (7:15)
7. What did Nathan do after God had revealed these things to him in the night? (7:17)
8. What statement sums up the worst that happened to King Saul?
9. What is the most reassuring aspect of God's covenant with the house of David?

10. How is God's punishment consistent with His unfailing love?

Scripture memory: Psalms 18:2 Insert the missing words by memory if possible.

The Lord is my _____ and my _____, and my _____, my God, my _____ in whom I will trust, my _____ and the horn of my _____, my stronghold.

Day Four

Thought for the Day

Our supreme desire should be to have a right relationship with God, to know Him, and to have uninterrupted fellowship and communion with Him.

Lord, the enticements and distractions of this world never let up. They follow me whenever I go and meet me at every destination. They are on my right and on my left. And many appear to be noble and worthy causes. Those are the worst ones, because I don't realize until I am fully involved that they are keeping me from You. Keep me from doing what I think is good if it isn't what You say is best.

A HUMBLE PRAYER

David received the message from Nathan, then went in to pray, asking God to fulfill His Word (vv. 28-29). How much more we would receive from lessons and sermons if only we spent time with God afterward and "prayed the message in."

God enjoys giving His children "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." David had asked permission to build an earthly temple; God responded by promising him an eternal kingdom! This tremendous act of grace left David humbled before the Lord, and in his prayer, the king praises the greatness of the Lord.

He realized the privileged position of Israel (vv. 22-24). Oh, that God's people today would understand how great God is and what great things He has done for His own! Yet David's concern was not that his name be praised, but that the name of the Lord be magnified (v. 26; see Phil. 1:20-21). "You have spoken; now perform the promises!" prayed David. Like Abraham, David was "fully persuaded that what He had promised, He was able also to perform" (Rom. 4:21).

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

Read 2 Sam. 7:18-22 and answer the following questions:

1. After David heard Nathan's word from God, what did he do? (7:18)
2. What was David's attitude toward the blessings he was currently enjoying? (7:18)
3. What was even more amazing to David than his current prosperity? (7:19)
4. Why did David find himself almost speechless before God? (7:20-21)
5. What attributes of God did David begin to praise? (7:22)
6. How did David demonstrate that he understood the uniqueness of God's covenant with him?
7. Why is it important to thank God for the good things we enjoy?
8. What are the benefits of praising God?

Scripture memory: Psalms 18:2 Insert the missing words by memory if possible.

The _____ is my _____ and my _____, and my _____, my God, my _____ in whom I will trust, my _____ and the _____ of my _____, my _____.

Day Five

Thought for the Day

The Holy Spirit alone can give us assurance of salvation.

Lord in a world where self-assurance is considered a virtue, I need Your assurance. In a world where seeing is believing, I want to walk by faith, not by sight. In a world of uncertainty, I am certain of one thing; I desperately need the reality of Your presence in my life.

Read 2 Sam. 7:23-29 and answer the following questions:

1. What did David proclaim to be unique about Israel? (7:23)
2. Who was the initiator in the relationship between God and Israel? (7:24)
3. What request did David make of God in the midst of his praises?
4. What testimony did David envision coming out of the blessing of his family? (7:26)
5. According to David, where did he find the courage to pray to God? (7:27)
6. How did David demonstrate his confidence in God and His word? (7:28-29)
7. What did David ask of God at the end of his prayer? (7:29)
8. In what way had God used Israel to “make a name for himself”?
9. Why is it appropriate to ask God for things He has already promised?
10. In what sense does it take courage to approach God in prayer?

Scripture memory: Psalms 18:2 Insert the missing words by memory if possible.

The Lord is _____

Day Six

Thought for the Day

Some people know enough about Christianity to spoil their enjoyment of the world but not enough to feel happy about themselves.

Lord, may my life be a clear witness of Your grace and power. May my words and my actions make it clear that I am a child of the King.

Practical application

1. How might God be intending to bless others through His blessing to you personally?
2. What is the most important [temple] you can offer God? And what is the one thing you can do to offer it?
3. In what area of life could you benefit by praying that God's will do as he has promised?
4. In the coming week, how could you cultivate a sense of awe at God's goodness?
3. For what great gifts or blessing do you want to thank God for now?
6. What scripture verse ministered to you this week? Why?
7. Read Romans 8:5 and share how you see this verse in action in David's life?

David once again proves himself to be a man after God's own heart. Not simply because of his desire to please God and be obedient to His will [as we have seen all along], but because he is a

man who thinks about God and considers His kingdom. David is a man who is watching to see that God's kingdom [not his own] is exalted here on earth. How amazing this must of seemed to everyone.....except of course God, who already knew about His chosen one.

8. Look up the following verses, which could be said to describe this man of God, and write their main thought, using David's name within your answer:

Matthew 5:6 [EXAMPLE] David hungered and thirsted for righteousness and was satisfied

Matthew 6:20

Matthew 6:33

Luke 12:15

Ephesians 4:1

2 Timothy 2:21

Proverbs 11:18

Proverbs 23:26

Go back over each of your answers from above and rewrite their main thought, only this time write the words, 'DO I' before each sentence making it a question. Reflect on what you have learned.

Weekly challenge [optional]

Psalm: 37

Look at how people get ahead who cheat, lie and steal. What good does it do to live a life of integrity? Psalm 37 speaks about that complaint. It assures us that the prosperity of wrongdoers is temporary. Ultimately, God will reward those who delight in Him.

Read Psalm 37 and answer the following questions:

1. What are some of the dangers in trying to get rich?
2. What did David expect to happen to the wicked? (37:1-40)
3. What specific list of actions did David advise God's people to take? (37:3-8, 27, 30-31, 34)
4. What will be the results of trusting in the Lord? (37:3-40)
5. How is David's comparison of the righteous and wicked in this psalm relevant to us today?
6. What are the benefits of trusting in the Lord and seeking righteousness?
7. What is one thing you can do to entrust your life, family, and future to God?

Studies in the life of
DAVID
A man after God's heart
Lesson 8 - 2 Samuel 8-9

The book of 2 Samuel describes David's campaign against the Edomites (or Syrians.) in terms of a victory (2 Samuel 8:13-14), but Psalm 60 which was written in conjunction with this engagement, presents it as more as a defeat. It is unclear at what point David composed the Psalm, but it provides a larger perspective on an event in which David 'made himself a name'.

Day One

Thought for the Day

There is only one Mediator, and He is complete in and of Himself. Nothing must be added to Him and His perfect completed work.

Lord, when I really stop and think about the fact that I have direct access to the Lord of glory, the thought is almost more than I can bear. The weight of its glory sends me to my knees in thankfulness and praise.

Read 2 Sam .8:1-8 and answer the following:

1. How did David fare in his battles with Israel's traditional enemies, the Philistines? (8:1)

2. How did David ensure the fear and subjection of the Moabites? (8:2)

3. From what king did David capture soldiers, horses, and chariots? (8:3-4)

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

5. What was the result of David's encounter with the Arameans? (8:5-6)

6. What valuable plunder did David take from Hadadezer? (8:7-8)

7. Which of David's activities as a conquering ruler were unusual or unexpected?

8. What strategies assured David of expanded territory and continual income?
9. Why was David so successful?

Scripture memory: Psalm 95:6-7 Oh come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our God our maker. For He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand.

Day Two

Thought for the Day

The world will do its best to get me down; it will do its utmost to ruin your spiritual life.

Lord, I confess that sometimes the world does get me down. At times I do become discouraged, cynical, and despairing. Father; help me to lift my eyes from the horizontal to the vertical. Help me to look up instead of down.

David made a name for himself in the valley of salt (2 Sam.8: 13-14), probably the wasteland plain southwest of the Dead Sea. But while his exploits greatly increased his reputation among his people, they were sowing lasting bitterness elsewhere that would come back to haunt his son Solomon. The name David earned came at the expense of the lives of 18,000 Syrians, who probably were people of Edom. God explicitly commanded His people not to “abhor” The Edomites, since they were descended from the same ancestor, Jacob. (Deut. 23:1-8), yet David’s general Joab, carried out a six month campaign of genocide until he had cut down every male in Edom.(1 Kings 11:15-16). This delighted the Israelites, who had long hated the Edomites. However, an Edomite boy named Hadad watched the slaughter before his slaves escaped with him to Egypt. He never forgot what he had seen. Years later after David had died and his son Solomon had turned away from the Lord, God allowed Haded to come back to Palestine, where he became a continual thorn in Solomon’s side.

Read 2 Sam. 8:9-17 and answer the following questions:

1. From what king did David receive gifts because of his victory over a common enemy? (8:9-10)
2. What did David do with the valuable articles and precious metals he captured in his campaigns? (8:11-12)

3. What spectacular victory spread David's fame even farther than it already had? (8:13)
4. How did David reinforce his sovereignty in Edom? (8:14)
5. What qualities characterized David's reign over the united Israel? (8:15)
6. What dangers are inherent in sudden, overwhelming success?
7. What are some of the ways that one powerful ruler can acknowledge another?

Scripture Memory: Insert the missing words by memory if possible.

Psalm 95:6-7 Oh come, let us _____ and bow down, let us _____ before the Lord our God our _____. For He is our _____, and we are the people of His _____, and the sheep of His hand.

Day Three

Thought for the Day

We must so live that unbelievers will be compelled to say: Would to God I could be like that and go through this world as that person does.

Lord, help me to remember that my life is a book others are reading. Help me to live in such a way that others see You and not me.

This chapter presents a moving illustration of the salvation we have in Christ. David's treatment of Mephibosheth is certainly that of a "man after God's own heart."

MEPHIBOSHETH—THE LOST SINNER

He was born in a rejected family

As the son of Jonathan, Mephibosheth was a member of a rejected family. He was a son of a prince, yet was living in dependence on others away from the city of Jerusalem. Every lost sinner

today is born in sin, born into Adam's family, and is thus under condemnation (Rom. 5:12 Eph. 2:1-3).

He experienced a fall and could not walk

Mephibosheth was lame in both his feet (vv. 3, 13) and thus could not walk. All people today are sinners because of the fall of Adam (Rom. 5:12), and they cannot walk so as to please God. Instead of walking in obedience, sinners walk "according to the course of this world" (Eph. 2:2). They may try to walk to please God, but no amount of self-effort or good works will save them.

He was missing the best

Mephibosheth lived at Lo-debar which means "no pasture." That is a fitting description of this present world—no pasture, no place for the souls to be satisfied. Sinners are hungry and thirsty, but this world and its pleasures cannot satisfy.

He would have perished without David's help

We would never have heard of Mephibosheth were it not for the gracious steps David took to save him. His name was written down in God's Word because David reached him and helped him.

The lost sinner is in a tragic situation. He has fallen; he cannot walk to please God; he is separated from home; he is under condemnation; he cannot help himself.

DAVID—THE GRACIOUS SAVIOR

David made the first move

Salvation is of the Lord! He must take the first steps, because the lost sinner will not by nature seek God (Rom. 3:10-12). David sent for poor Mephibosheth, just as God sent Christ to this earth to "seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10).

David acted for Jonathan's sake

This grew out of the loving covenant that David had made with Jonathan years before (1 Sam. 20:11-23). David had never seen Mephibosheth, yet he loved him for Jonathan's sake. We are not saved because of our own merit; we are saved for the sake of Christ. We are forgiven for His sake (Eph. 4:32). We are accepted "in the beloved" (Eph. 1:6). It was part of that "everlasting covenant" (Heb. 13:20-21) that the Father should save for Jesus' sake all that trust the Savior.

It was an act of kindness

In v. 3, David calls it "the kindness of God." Christ shows His kindness to us in saving us (Eph. 2:7; Titus 3:4-7). David's throne was a throne of grace, not a throne of justice. Mephibosheth had no claim upon David; he had absolutely no case to present. Had he appeared before that throne asking for justice, he would have received condemnation.

David called him personally and he came

David sent a servant to bring him (v. 5), but the servant then stepped out of the way to make room for the king. Nobody is saved by a preacher or evangelist; all the servant can do is usher the sinner into the presence of Christ. Note how Mephibosheth fell humbly before David, for he knew his place as a condemned man. How tenderly David said, “Mephibosheth.”

David took him into his own family

Like many sinners today, Mephibosheth wanted to work his way into forgiveness (vv. 6, 8), but David made him a son (v. 11). The Prodigal Son wanted to be a servant too, but no one can earn salvation (Luke 15:18-19). “Beloved, now are we the sons of God!” See 1 John 3:1-2 and John 1:11-13.

David spoke peace to him

“Fear not!” were David’s words of grace to the trembling crippled man; and “Fear not!” is what Christ says to every believing sinner. “There is therefore now no condemnation . . .” (Rom. 8:1). Through the Word of God before us and the Spirit of God within us, we experience peace.

David provided for his every need

Mephibosheth would no longer live at “no pasture”; for now he would eat daily at the king’s table. Furthermore, the servant Ziba and his sons became servants to Mephibosheth. And David gave to Mephibosheth all of the inheritance that belonged to him. So Christ satisfies the spiritual and material needs of His family. He has given us an eternal inheritance (Eph. 1:11, 18; 1 Peter 1:4ff; Col. 1:12). If he gave us our rightful inheritance, we would go to hell! But in His grace He has chosen us to share His inheritance with Him, for we are “joint-heirs with Christ” (Rom. 8:17).

David protected him from judgment

In 2 Sam. 21:1-11, we see that God sent a famine to the land to chastise His people. When David sought God’s will, it became evident that the famine came because of the wicked way Saul treated the Gibeonites. There is no record of Saul’s exact treatment of them in the Bible, but since Israel had made a treaty with these people (Josh. 9), Saul’s actions were a direct violation of the truth and were a sin against God. God had waited many years to reveal this sin and send this judgment; “Be sure your sins will find you out.” See Ex. 21:23-25. It is not for us in this age of grace to judge these people for asking for the sacrifice of seven of Saul’s descendants; it is sufficient that God permitted this to happen. Note that David deliberately spared Mephibosheth (v. 7). There was another Mephibosheth among Saul’s descendant’s (v. 8), but David knew the difference! There are many today who profess to be God’s children, and perhaps we cannot always tell the difference; but when the Day of Judgment comes, God will reveal those who are truly His.

Of course, as we study this illustration, we must keep in mind that the salvation we have in Christ supplies “much more.” David rescued Mephibosheth from physical danger and supplied his physical needs, but Christ has saved us from eternal hell and daily meets our physical and spiritual needs. We are not sons of some earthly king; we are the very children of God.

Second Samuel 16:1-4 illustrates this difference. When David fled from Jerusalem during the rebellion of his son Absalom, Ziba the servant met him and made an accusation against Mephibosheth. David believed the accusation and rashly gave all of Mephibosheth's land to the servant. However, when David returned to Jerusalem later, he met Mephibosheth and learned the truth (2 Sam. 19:24-30). Ziba had lied. He had promised to supply an animal for Mephibosheth to use to escape with David, but had not kept his promise. Ziba had slandered an innocent man, and David had believed the slander. Of course, this could never happen between a believer and Jesus Christ. "Who shall bring a charge against God's elect who is he who condemns?" (Rom. 8:33-39, NKJ) Satan may accuse us and slander us, but Christ will never change in His love for His promises or us to us.

We can see in Mephibosheth the attitude the believer ought to have concerning the "return of the King." This exiled lame man lived for the day his king would return! He had no thought for his own comfort; rather, he waited and prayed for the return of the one who had loved him and rescued him from death. So overjoyed was Mephibosheth at the return of David that he even forfeited his land.

Read 2 Sam. 9:1-4 and answer the following questions:

1. What commitment did David remember when he was established in the kingship of Israel? (9:1)
2. From whom did David seek information about Saul's survivors? (9:2)
3. Verse 3 describes Jonathan's son, Mephibosheth, as being crippled in both feet. Read 2 Samuel 4:4 and note how this happened.
4. Why do you think Mephibosheth's nurse fled with him at the news of Saul's death? (For a comparable story see 2 Kings 11:1-3)
5. From this realization, what kind of feeling's and thoughts do you think Mephibosheth might have had growing up and would still have as an adult around David?
6. Which relative of Saul did David learn about from the servant Ziba? (9:3)
7. Where did David find Jonathan's son living? (9:4)

8. Why was it especially important to David to find the surviving members of Saul's family?

Scripture Memory: Insert the missing words by memory if possible.

Psalm 95:6-7 Oh come, let us _____ and bow down, let us _____ before the _____ our God our _____. For He is our _____, and we are the _____ of His _____, and the sheep of His _____.

Day Four

Thought for the Day

The gospel alone exposes and deals with the fundamental problem of man and his needs. It alone diagnoses accurately, it alone has the remedy.

Lord, when I see many around me trying to cure the sickness of the soul with programs and politics, I am reminded again that You truly are the Great Physician. Only You can make people whole.

Read 2 Sam. 9:5-8 and answer the following questions:

1. When brought from his home and presented before David, what was Mephibosheth's reaction? What do you think he was feeling? (9:6)
2. After calling him by name, what were David's first three words to Mephibosheth? (9:7)
3. Did David know Mephibosheth? Who did David know and love, and what reason is Mephibosheth given for David's kindness to him?
4. What promises did David make to Mephibosheth? (9:7)
5. How did Mephibosheth expect to be treated by David? (9:8)
6. Why did Mephibosheth have reason to be afraid of David?

7. Why is it important to carry through on promises made, even if the person to whom you made them is dead and gone?

Scripture Memory: Insert the missing words by memory if possible.

Psalm 95:6-7 O come, let us _____ before the _____ our God our _____. For He is our _____, and we are the _____ of His _____, and the _____ of His _____.

Day Five

Thought for the Day

A man may be clever. He may hold idealistic views on most subjects. He may perform many charitable acts. But the question still is: What are his motives? Is he right at the center?

Lord, it is so easy to do the right thing for the wrong reason. I know I do things out of pride and a desire for praise. I know I do things that will make me look good in front of others. Lord, keep my motives pure.

Read 2 Sam. 9:9-13 and answer the following questions:

1. What commands did David give to Ziba concerning Mephibosheth? (9:9-10)
2. What kind of treatment did Mephibosheth receive in David's house? (9:11)
3. How would another generation of Saul's family continue in Israel? (9:12)
4. Why did Mephibosheth live in Jerusalem from this time onward although his family's lands were elsewhere? (9:13)
5. What special provision did David make because of Mephibosheth's disability?
6. Why is it a bad idea to hold a grudge against the heirs or associates of a person who has persecuted you?

7. Why is it a greater honor to ask someone to eat with you than simply to give him or her a meal?

Scripture Memory:

Psalm 95:6-7 _____

Day Six

Thought for the Day

Hunger and thirst are not passing feelings. They are something deep and profound that go on until they are satisfied.

Lord, when I feel the wrong things, I am always hungry for more. When I feed on Your truth through a steady diet of prayer and Bible study, my hunger and thirst are satisfied. Thank You for Your provisions.

Practical application

1. What could you do to dedicate the fruits of your successes to the Lord?
2. In your positions of leadership (home, church, work) what can you do to ensure that you are just and right toward the people God has entrusted to you?
3. What promise from the past can you take steps to fulfill today?
4. What scripture verse ministered to you this week? Why?

Except for the grace of David, Mephibosheth, as Saul's grandson, had a death sentence over him. As descendants of Adam, and fellow partakers of his sin, we too are in need of grace. In Romans, 5 there is a contract painted for us of the sin that Adam brought into the world and its consequence, death, and grace which was given through Christ and the free gift of life.

5. Briefly state what we are told in each of the following verses about the gift of grace that is ours in Jesus.

Romans 5

Verse 16

Verse 17

Verse 18

Verse 19

Verse 20

Verse 21

The contrast for Mephibosheth was between death and life. It is the same for us. Born in Adam only, we are sentenced to death. Born again in Christ, we are given life.

You and I have done nothing to earn the grace, which has been given to us by God, through Christ. We are like Mephibosheth, born into a family which, without grace would be condemned to die. How truly surprised he must have been when he realized that, not only was he not going to be killed, but even more amazing he was going to be loved and blessed- not because of anything he had done, but because of the grace of David, and his love for his father Jonathan. So we too have been “accepted in the beloved”. Blessed by the grace of God because of His love for His Son Jesus.

Scripture Memory:

Psalm 95:6-7 _____

Weekly Challenge [Optional]

A DAY OF WORSHIP

Psalms 96:8-9

For most Christians, Sunday is a day for going to church. However, once an hour or two of formal church attendance is over, Sunday often becomes little more than a day off from the routine of the week. People use it for recreation and entertainment, or to catch up on chores and

errands. Is that what it means to “give to the LORD the glory due His name,” and to “worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness” (Ps. 96:8–9)?

True worship means focusing on the Lord rather than ourselves. The Israelites were commanded to devote one day out of seven to focus on God (Ex. 20:8–11). To do that, they were told to cease from their normal labors, just as God ceased, or paused, from His work of creation on the seventh day (Gen. 2:1–3).

Christians are not bound to keep the Sabbath (see at rom. 14:5–13), but they are commanded to worship the lord together (Heb. 10:19–25), and traditionally this has occurred on the first day of the week (1 cor. 16:2). The point of making Sunday an anchor in the weekly rhythm is to remind us of who we are in relation to god. Worship and stopping from labor help to redirect our focus from ourselves to god. Used for these purposes, Sunday reminds us of our dependence on god for the gift of life, the skills by which we work and live, and the privilege of using all that god has given us as resources on loan. Practically speaking, we can use Sunday for its intended purpose by:

- Ceasing from our work and getting away from the routines of labor.
- Pausing to reflect on what has happened during the previous week, and interpreting our experience through the eyes of faith (see at gen. 45:5–8).
- Engaging in activities that help to restore and nurture our inner life.
- Praying through the many areas of our life, focusing on god rather than just on ourselves, by making extensive use of scripture as we form our prayers.
- Joining together with other believers to worship the lord, praise his name, and celebrate life together.

Read Psalms 96 and Answer the following questions:

1. For you, what can cause church worship services to become stale or boring?
2. What instructions for worship are given in this psalm? (96:1-3, 7-10)
3. What does this psalm reveal about God's character? (96:1-13)
4. How can the nations demonstrate their fear of the Lord? (96:10-13)
5. What kind of worship does God desire?

6. How can you declare the Lord's glory to others?

7. Who is one person you could tell about God's goodness?

Studies in the life of
DAVID
A man after God's heart
Lesson 9 - 2 Samuel 10-12

2 Samuel 10 is actually a more detailed description of 2 Samuel 8:11-12, where Aram and Ammon are mentioned as having been subdued by David. This chapter will provide us the details of this war, why it occurred, and how Israel prevailed.

Day One

Thought for the Day

The trouble with the world today is that people only look at the beginning; they give no thought to the ultimate outcome

Lord, keep my eyes fixed on Your eternal objective. Keep me from being distracted by the fleeting attractions that surround me every day. Keep me in the narrow way.

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

1. Why did David send a delegation to Hanun, king of the Ammonites? (10:1-2)

2. What suspicion was planted in Hanun's mind by his nobles? (10:3)

3. What did Hanun do to the men David had sent to him? (10:4)

4. From 2 Samuel 10:1-19 briefly describe the battle plan that was made against these enemy forces.

As Christians we too are in a battle, simply because we have aligned ourselves with the person of Christ.

5. Look up the following scriptures and describe some of the ways we find ourselves in battle, and answer the following questions:
 - A. Matthew 5:10 What are we told in this scripture will be ours if we are persecuted?

- B. Matthew 5:11-12 Have you ever had this experience? If so, share your experience with your group. What does the word say should be your reaction to this kind of persecution?

 - C. 1 Peter 3:14 What is the result of our suffering for righteousness? Are we told to be afraid? What does this verse say?

 - D. Ephesians 6:11-12 Who is our struggle against? How are we to stand in the battle? (See Eph. 6:13-18 for a description of our battle gear)
6. How does Paul encourage us in our battle as Christians in the following verses?
- A. Eph. 6:10

 - B. 1 Cor. 16:13
7. How do these words of encouragement compare with Joab's exhortation to the Israelites as they readied for battle?
8. How can knowledge of God's character make us more courageous in the challenges we face?

Scripture Memory: Psalm 139:23-24 Search me o God, and know my heart; try me, and know my anxieties; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

Day Two

Thought for the Day

There is no question about it, the Christian life is the life, if only everyone lived like that!

Lord, if only I lived out every day what I believe....I want to, but the things and people and circumstances often sidetrack me. There is no question about it; the Christian life is the only way to live! Help me to stay on track.

The Bible honestly records the sins of God's people, but never in such a way that sin is made acceptable. Unlike many so-called "true-to-life" books today, the Bible states the facts and draws out the lessons, but allows nothing for the imagination to dwell on. There are some things "it is a shame to speak of" (Eph. 5:12), and the events in this chapter must be studied with a Spirit-directed mind and heart, "considering ourselves, lest we also be tempted" (Gal. 6:1).

DAVID AND BATHSHEBA

It was not a passionate youth who deliberately walked into this sin, but a man of God who had now reached middle age. It is easy to see how David got into this sin: (1) he was self-confident, after enjoying victories and prosperity; (2) he was disobedient, staying home when he should have been on the battlefield; (3) he was idle, lying in bed in the evening; (4) he was self-indulgent, giving freedom to his desires when he should have been disciplining himself; and (5) he was careless, allowing his eyes to wander and yielding to the "lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes" (1 John 2:16). The Christian soldier must never lay aside the armor (Eph. 6:10ff).

James 1:13-15 perfectly describes David's case: (1) his desires were activated by the sight, and he failed to curb them; (2) desire conceived the sin in his imagination; (3) his will surrendered and this led to sin; (4) his actions led to death. He did not "watch and pray" as Matt. 26:41 commands; nor did he deal decisively with his "wandering eye" (Matt. 5:29 and 18:9).

David could have defeated this temptation (for it is not a sin to be tempted) by recalling God's Word (Ex. 20:14), or by considering that Bathsheba was a man's daughter and a man's wife (v. 3). In fact, she was married to one of the bravest soldiers in David's army (23:39), and she was also the granddaughter of Ahithophel, who later rebelled against David and sided with Absalom (23:34 and chaps. 16-17). David had many wives already, and God would have given him more (12:8). It is too bad that the record of this godly man was marred forever by "the matter of Uriah the Hittite" (1 Kings 15:5). Of course, we must admit that the woman shared in the guilt, but David, being the king, surely is more to blame.

DAVID AND URIAH

"When desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin!" warns James 1:15 (NKJV). How true these words are in David's experience. Instead of calling on the Lord and confessing his sin, the king sent for the husband and tried to trick him into going home. This, of course, might have covered the sin. But Uriah was a better man than his king, and he refused to go home! Compare David's self-indulgence in vv. 1-2 with Uriah's discipline in v. 11. Then, his first plan having failed, David tried a new scheme and made the man drunk. But even under the influence of wine, Uriah was a more disciplined man than sober David!

Sin was still growing: David decided to have the man murdered and then to take his wife. Joab was more than willing to cooperate, since this would give him opportunity later to take advantage of the king. Uriah carried his own death warrant to the battlefield that day. The plan worked and the brave soldier was killed in battle. David "put on a front" and waited until the

week of mourning was over; then he married the widow. Some in the court may have thought highly of David for comforting Bathsheba in this way, but the Lord thought otherwise.

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

1. Where was David while the Israelite army was engaged in battle against the Ammonites? (11:1)
2. How did David misuse his authority as king in relation to the woman he observed? (11:3-5)
3. What ploy did David try to get Uriah to go home to his wife? (11:13)
4. How did David receive the news of the battle when he realized that his purposes had been accomplished with regard to Uriah? (11:25)
5. How did one sin lead to another and another in David's case?
6. Why do you suppose Joab put a whole group of men in peril instead of following David's suggestion about abandoning Uriah?
7. Why does one sin often lead to other sins?
8. How does a position of authority overestimate the human tendency to take what we want?

Scripture Memory: Insert the missing words by memory if possible:

Psalm 139:23-24 Search me O God, and know my _____; try me, and know my _____; and see if there be any _____ way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

Day Three**Thought for the Day**

The way to understand the Scriptures and all theology is to become holy.

Lord, guide me into a deeper understanding of Your Word through the outworking of that understanding in a holy life.

DAVID AND THE LORD

At least a year passed, during which time David covered his sins. Read Ps. 32 and 51 for descriptions of David's feelings during that difficult period. He became weak and sick physically; he lost his joy; he lost his witness; he lost his power. God gave David plenty of time to make things right, but he persisted in hiding his sins. Had he come to the Lord on his own, in sincere repentance, things might have been different later on. Finally, God sent Nathan, not with a message of blessing as in chapter 7, but with a message of conviction. How easy it is to be convicted about other people's sins! But Nathan fearlessly told David, "You are the man!"

We must commend David for bowing to the authority of the Word of God and confessing his sin. He could have slain Nathan. (Note that David even named a son after Nathan, 1 Chron. 3:5; Luke 3:31). God was ready to forgive David's sins, but He could not prevent those sins from "bringing forth death" (James 1:15). God's grace forgives, but God's government must allow sinners to reap what they sow. See Ps. 99:8. "He shall restore fourfold!" David had declared punishment concerning the man in Nathan's story, so God accepted his sentence. The sword never did depart from David's household: the baby died; Absalom killed Amnon, who had ruined Tamar (chap. 13); then Joab killed Absalom (18:9-17); and Adonijah was slain by Benaiah (1 Kings 2:24-25). Fourfold! Add to these trials the awful ruin of Tamar, the shameful treatment of David's wives by Absalom (12:11; 16:20-23), plus the rebellion of Absalom, and you can see that David paid dearly for a few moments of lustful pleasure. He sowed lust and reaped the same; he sowed murder and reaped murders, for "whatever a man sows, that he will also reap" (Gal. 6:7).

Read 2 Samuel 11:1-12 and answer the following questions:

1. In Nathan's story what was special about the ewe lamb belonging to the poor man? (12:1-3)
2. What injustice was perpetrated by the rich man against the poor man in Nathan's story? (12:4)
3. How did David react to Nathan's story? (12:5-6)
4. How did Nathan use the story to convict David? (12:7-9)

5. What judgment did God pronounce on David through Nathan? (12:10)
6. How did God say He would bring David's secret sin into the open? (12:11-12)
7. Why was the parable Nathan told to David so effective?
8. In what sense did David "despise" God by taking Uriah's wife and having Uriah killed?

Scripture Memory: Insert the missing words by memory if possible

Psalm 139:23-24 Search me O God, and _____ my _____; try me, and know my _____; and see if there be any _____ way in me, and _____ me in the _____ everlasting

Day Four

Thought for the Day

There is nothing wrong with having wealth in and of itself; what can be very wrong is a man's relationship to his wealth.

Lord, help me to have the right attitude toward my possessions so that they do not begin to possess me. May I ask myself daily, "Who and what am I living for?"

David's penitence

Immediately the chastening hand of God moved, and the baby became ill. Nathan had said it would die (v. 14), but David still fasted and prayed for the life of the child. He would not even listen to his servants, but at the end of a week, the child died. David's fasting and prayers could not alter the counsel of God. He had committed a sin unto death, and it was wrong to pray about it (1 John 5:14-16). However, we appreciate David's concern for the child and mother, and his faith in the goodness of God. We appreciate too his confidence in God's Word, for he knew the child had gone to heaven (v. 23). While we abhor David's sin and all the trouble it brought, we thank God for this wonderful verse of assurance to sorrowing parents who have lost children in death. (As Vance Havner said, "When you know where something is, you haven't lost it.") "Where sin abounds, grace much more abounds!" Note too that it is wrong to pray for the dead. David stopped praying for the child.

Read 2 Samuel 12:24-31 and answer the following questions:

1. What did David admit after Nathan had spoken? (12:13)
2. According to Nathan, what would be the consequences of David's sin? (12:13-14)
3. What happened in David's family after Nathan left the palace? (12:15)
4. What did David do in response to his son's illness? (12:16-17)
5. Why were the servants afraid to tell David that David's child had died? (12:18)
6. How did David find out that his son was dead? (12:19)
7. How did David act after he knew that God was not going to change His mind and allow the child to live? (12:20)
8. How did David's fasting and prayer before the child died show the quality of his relationship with God?
9. What did David mean when he said, "I will go to him, but he will not return to me?"

Scripture Memory: Insert the missing words by memory if possible:

Psalm 139:23-24 Search _____ O God, and _____ my _____; try me, and know my _____; and see if _____ be any _____ way in _____, and _____ me in the _____ everlasting

Day Five

Thought for the Day

Mankind has been confident that it could succeed without God. But what of the results? Constant failure.

Lord, You have the answers to all my questions. You hold the solutions to all my problems. Keep that truth before me when things look impossible.

David's conquests

This tragic episode began with David pampering himself at home, but it ends with him taking his rightful place on the battlefield and leading the nation to an important victory. It is encouraging to see that God was willing to use David again in spite of his sins. He had confessed his sins; God had forgiven him; now he could fight for the Lord again. It is bad for believers to sin; it is also bad for them to live in the past and think themselves useless even after they have confessed their sins. Satan loves to shackle God's people with memories of sins that God has already forgiven and forgotten. Satan is the accuser (Rev. 12:10; Zech. 3), but Jesus is the Advocate (1 John 2:1-2).

How the grace of God shines in vv. 24-25, for God chose Bathsheba to be the mother of the next king! "Solomon" means "Peaceable"; "Jedidiah" means "beloved of the Lord." God turned the curse into a blessing, for Solomon was the fulfillment of the promise given to David in 1 Chron. 22:9.

This event in David's life ought to be a warning to all Christians to "take heed lest we fall" (1 Cor. 10:12). First Corinthians 10:13 promises a way of escape when we face temptation. However, as in David's case, we cannot overcome temptation if we allow our desires to take over. We need to beware of the beginnings of sin and take care to keep our imaginations clean. The Apostle Paul commands us to "put to death" (mortify) the members of the body that can lead us into sin (Col. 3; Rom. 6). It is necessary for all believers to watch and pray and not make provision for the flesh (Rom. 13:14).

Read 2 Samuel 12:24-31 and answer the following questions:

1. What was the name of the next child of David and Bathsheba? (12:24-25)
2. How was Joab and the army of Israel faring in the war? (12:26-27)
3. What message did Joab send from the front to his commander in chief? (12:28)
4. What was the outcome of David's battle against Rabbah? (12:29-31)

5. How can “getting on with our lives” after a crisis be an acknowledgement of the sovereignty of God?
6. Why is our sense of outrage easily sparked against strangers but difficult to muster in relation to our own actions?

Scripture Memory: Insert the missing words by memory if possible:

Psalm 139:23-24 _____

Day Six

Thought for the Day

God's word is timeless. Help me to submit to it and trust Him to employ His own methods in His own way.

Lord, Your truth is timeless. Help me to submit to You and to trust You to apply Your truth in Your own way in every circumstance of my life.

Practical application

1. What is one thing you can do to increase your knowledge of God's character?
2. How can you be a better judge of character and intentions?
3. How can you develop an ear for parables so that you will recognize your situation when it is appropriate to do so?
4. How can you break the cycle the next time you find yourself committing one sin to cover up another?
5. In what area of your life would you like to develop an unwavering loyalty like Uriah's?
6. What scripture or passage ministered to you this week? Why?

7. What did you learn this week about:
- A. Displeasing God?
 - B. Unconfessed sin?
 - C. Conviction?
 - D. God's chastening?
 - E. Prayer?

Scripture Memory: Insert the missing words by memory if possible:

Psalm 139:23-24 _____

Weekly Challenge (OPTIONAL)

Psalm 139

Our Maker knows us well

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

The poetry of Psalm 139 celebrates the fact that God is present wherever David goes, or ever imagined going (Psalm 139:9), then he looks east toward "the wings of the morning," and west towards the Mediterranean Sea (Psalm 139:9), whenever David thinks of going, he has the certainty that God will be with him in that place. Are you comforted, as David was, by the presence of God? As you look around, do you consciously think about the Lord being there, right where you are?

Read Psalm 139 and answer the following questions:

1. How did David describe God's knowledge of him? (139:1-6)

2. What attitude did David have toward himself and the Lord? Why? (139:1-24)

3. How does this passage portray God's omnipresence? (139:8-12)

4. What does this psalm reveal about God's care for His people throughout their lives? (139:15-16)

5. What does this psalm teach us about God's character?

6. In light of this passage, what attitude should we have toward ourselves? toward the Lord?

7. In what area of your life do you desire God's leading?

8. How do you plan to seek the Lord's guidance this next week?

9. How could you remind yourself each day this week of God's presence with you?

*Studies in the life of
David*
A man after God's heart
Lesson 10 – 2 Samuel: 15-19

David continues to reap the sad harvest of his sins, see (2 Sam. 12:10-12). While our God is gracious to forgive when we confess our sins, He will not violate His own holiness by interfering with the tragic results of our sin.

Day One

Thought for the Day

You can be an advocate of Christianity without being a Christian, but you can't be a witness.

Lord, I cannot witness to that which I have not seen. I cannot testify to that which I do not know. Help me to be a reliable and truthful witness of Your power to change lives.

THE REBELLION OF THE PRINCE

Read chapters 13 and 14 to get the complete story. His half-brother Amnon, who was David's oldest son (3:2), ruined Absalom's beautiful sister Tamar. David had committed adultery with Bathsheba; now rape invaded his own household! Absalom had a dual purpose in mind when he found out what Amnon had done: he wanted to revenge Tamar by killing Amnon, but at the same time he would be removing the obvious heir to the throne. It seems that David had no disciplinary influence over his own family. In 13:21 we read of David's anger, but we read nothing of his actions to correct matters. Perhaps the memory of his own sins checked him. Absalom took matters into his own hands and killed Amnon; then he fled to Gentile territory to hide away with the relatives of his mother (13:37 and see 3:3). In chapter 14, Joab interceded for Absalom and tricked David into bringing his wayward son back home.

Absalom wasted little time in building a loyal group of followers. He openly criticized his father's administration and secretly stole the hearts of the people. (Note that the "forty years" of 15:7 is translated "four years" in other versions. If the number forty is the correct number, then we do not know from which event in the past the writer is dating.) After a time, Absalom found his movement strong enough to risk open revolt. It is not surprising that Ahithophel, David's counselor, sided with the rebels, for it was his granddaughter Bathsheba that David had taken (11:3 with 23:34). It looked as though Absalom would be successful and steal the crown from his father.

THE REACTIONS OF THE PEOPLE

While David was reigning in power, his real enemies would not dare to oppose him, but Absalom's revolt gave them what appeared to be a wonderful opportunity to resist the king and get away with it. It was a time of sifting the true from the false.

David's friends

Leaving Jerusalem was a wise move for David, for it would not have taken much force to make him a prisoner in his own palace. Note that the Gentiles in his army, led by Ittai the Gittite, were loyal to their king. Undoubtedly these men had stood with David during his trying years of exile. The two priests, Zadok and Abiathar, also started to follow their king, but David sent them back to the city. This in itself was a step of faith, for David was trusting God to give him victory and return him to his throne. David did not make the mistake Eli's sons made when they rashly took the ark into battle (1 Sam. 4-5); he sent the priests and the ark back to Jerusalem. Of course, the priests could spy for him and send their sons with information. Hushai was also sent back to the city to pose as an ally of Absalom; his counsel could change that of Ahithophel. It is a sad picture as David and his small armies flees the city and crosses the Kidron River. It reminds us of our Lord Jesus as He was rejected in Jerusalem, left the city, and crossed the Kidron to pray in the garden (John 18:1). The "Judas" in David's situation was his former friend Ahithophel; perhaps Ps. 55:12-15 was written at this time. Psalms 3 and 4 were composed during this rebellion, and in them we see where David was putting his faith.

Read 2 Samuel. 15:1-39 and answer the following questions:

1. What symbols of status and power did Absalom acquire? (15:1)
2. How did Absalom flatter the people he met at the gate? (15:3)
3. How did the Israelites react to Absalom? (15:6)
4. How do ambitious people manipulate the truth to their own advantage?
5. How is it possible to reconcile a strong personal ambition with devotion to God?
6. What discouraging message came to David in Jerusalem? (15:13)
7. Why did David feel it was necessary to leave the city? (15:14)
8. How did the king's officials respond to David's orders? (15:15)

9. Why was David so quick to leave Jerusalem without a fight?
10. By letting events take their course, what was David waiting to find out from God?
11. Why might it be a good idea to ask God to search your motives and free you the next time setbacks or problems confront you?

Scripture Memory: Psalm 37:23-24

The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and He delights in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; for the Lord upholds him with His hand.

Day Two

Thought for the Day

If we have a right view of ourselves in this world as pilgrims, we shall immediately take a right view of our gifts and our possessions.

Lord; give me a pilgrim outlook. Help me to travel lightly and to follow carefully the path You have marked out for me. Help me to glorify You with each step I take.

David's enemies

Times of rebellion are times of revelation; you see what people really believe and where they stand. Ziba lied to David about Mephibosheth (see 19:24-30) and David was too quick to pass judgment. Shimei was related to Saul's family and openly showed his hatred for David. David's patience under this trial was wonderful; he knew the Lord would avenge him at the right time. Abishai wanted to cut off the man's head (see Luke 9:54 and 1 Peter 2:23), but David stopped him. David was being disgraced not only in the wilderness, but also back in his own palace. For Ahithophel had counseled Absalom to take David's concubines for himself and thus openly break with his father. This was a fulfillment of the prophecy in 12:11-12.

Today, our Lord Jesus is despised and rejected of men, just as was David during the rebellion. It takes courage for men and women today to remain loyal to the King, but we can be sure that God will reward such loyalty when Jesus returns.

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

1. What did Shimei son of Gera do when David's entourage passed his way? (16:5-6)

2. Why was Shimei so bitter against David? (16:8)
3. How did David's view of the situation differ radically from Abishai's? (16:10)
4. Why is it not wise to take one person's version of events at face value without hearing the other side?
5. What character traits did David exhibit through his reaction to Shimei?
6. What can a person learn from his or her critics?
7. How does our belief in God enable us to respond charitably toward our enemies?
8. What reasons did Hushai give to convince Absalom that he would change his loyalties? (16:18-19)
9. What was Ahithophel's advice on how Absalom should proceed in his bid to become king instead of David? (16:20-22)
10. In what sense was the struggle between Absalom and David more a struggle of wits than of armies?

Scripture Memory: Insert the missing words by memory if possible.

Psalm 37:23-24 The _____ of a good man are _____ by the Lord, and He delights in his way. Though he _____, he shall not be utterly cast down; for the _____ upholds him with His hand.

Day Three**Thought for the Day**

Jesus Christ the Son of God came from heaven and took upon Him human nature perfect and whole. In Him alone are the divine and the human united. And He offers to give us His own nature.

Lord, thank You for sending Your Son to bear my sin at Calvary. Mold me more and more into His image. Keep me centered in Him.

THE RECKONING OF THE LORD

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

Ahithophel dies

There is no question that Ahithophel's plan was the better of the two, but God saw to it that Absalom rejected it. Note Hushai's psychological approach to suggesting that Absalom himself lead the army in battle. This appealed to the man's vanity, but alas, that vanity only led ultimately to his death. When Ahithophel saw that his counsel was rejected, he took his own life. This is another parallel with Christ's experience in the NT, for Judas went out and hung himself.

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

1. What plan of attack did Ahithophel recommend to Absalom? (17:1-4)
2. What was Hushai's reasoning to convince Absalom that Ahithophel's plan was not good? (17:5-10)
3. Why did Absalom choose to follow Hushai's advice? (17:14)
4. Why did the priests' sons end up hiding from Absalom's men? (17:17-18)
5. How did Ahithophel take the news that his advice had not been followed? (17:23)
6. Who led the armies of Absalom to Gilead in pursuit of David? (17:24-26)

7. What evidence do we have that intelligence and even wisdom can be used for either good or evil?
8. How can we filter the advice we receive to ensure that it is according to God's wisdom?
9. Why is teamwork often essential to achieving our objectives?

Scripture Memory: Insert the missing words by memory if possible.

Psalms.37: 23-24 The _____ of a good man are _____ by the Lord, and _____ delights in his way. Though he _____, he shall not be utterly _____ down; for the _____ upholds him with His _____.

Day Four

Thought for the Day

There is nothing so helpless in this world as the bankruptcy of the non-Christian view of life.

Lord, may I never take the hope that is within me for granted. And may I be faithful in sharing the good news of the hope with those who are without Christ.

Absalom dies

The vain prince followed Hushai's advice and led his army into the wood of Ephraim. Certainly he was unprepared to wage war, but "Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall" (Prov. 16:18, NKJV). Absalom caught his head and long hair (14:25-26) in a branch and could not get down. (See Job 20:1-7.) Joab disobeyed David's command (18:5) and killed the rebel; then he sent the news to the king who, when he heard it, wept bitterly. David was a man "after God's own heart" and found "no pleasure in the death of the wicked" (Ezek. 33:11). David's abnormal grief, however, almost cost him the kingdom.

Shimei is pardoned

Many a rebel will try to "change his tune" when the King comes back! David was trying to gather together the fragments of his kingdom, so he could not afford to alienate any of the tribes, but later on, Solomon gave Shimei what he deserved (1 Kings 2:36-46).

Ziba and Mephibosheth are reconciled

It does not speak well of Ziba that he arrived in the company of Shimei (vv. 16-17). Certainly Ziba had lied about his master, and David sought to give a fair judgment. Sad to say, his rash decision before made it difficult to settle matters completely; but we do appreciate David's attitude. We see in Mephibosheth a good example of concern for his absent king.

Barzillai is rewarded

He had met David's company with help in their hour of need (17:27-29); and no doubt this act of kindness had cost him friends, but he was wonderfully rewarded when the king came back! Barzillai did not want to leave his home and die away from his loved ones, so he suggested that Chimham (perhaps a son or grandson) be given the blessing. Jeremiah 41:17 informs us that David gave Chimham land near Bethlehem and that his family lived there for many years.

This entire episode of David's rejection and return certainly illustrates the attitudes people today have toward Christ. There are the loyal few that stand by their absent King, and there are the selfish majority who prefer to rebel. But what will happen when the King comes back? And what are we, His followers, doing to hasten His return? (2 Peter 3:12)

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

1. What command did all the troops hear David giving his commanders as they left the city? (18:5)
2. What was Joab's complaint against the man who reported Absalom's whereabouts? (18:10-11)
3. How did Joab make sure that Absalom was not taken alive? (18:14-15)
4. Why do you suppose Joab chose to ignore David's plea and killed Absalom himself?
5. In what sense was Absalom's death good news for Israel and Judah?
6. What did the watchman report to David, who was waiting inside the city? (18:24-26)
7. What was David's response to the news of the death of his son? (18:33)

8. Why was Joab hesitant to send the son of a priest to David with bad news?

Scripture Memory: Insert the missing words by memory if possible.

Psalms.37: 23-24 The _____ of a good _____ are _____ by the Lord, and _____ delights in his way. Though he _____, he _____ not be utterly _____ down; for the _____ upholds him with His _____.

Day Five

Thought for the Day

The Christian position is clear; we are not meant to be left in a state of doubt and misgiving, of uncertainty and unhappiness.

Lord, when doubts and questions arise, as they do, keep my sight clear. Fit me with the corrective lenses of Your truth. Grant me the certainty that comes with perfect vision.

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

1. Why was the spirit of victory squashed among David's supporters? (19:2-3)
2. What were Joab's accusations against David? (19:5-6)
3. To what extent does God expect a leader to set aside his or her own emotions and work for the good of the group?
4. What do you do when you have to judge between two completely different reports of the same incident?
5. What was the attitude of Shimei, who had cursed David on his way out of the city? (19:19-20)
6. Why did David rebuke Abishai? (19:22)

7. Who came to meet David in an attitude of mourning and waiting? (19:24)
8. How would you characterize the disputing between the people of Israel and Judah once the kingship was restored? (19:41-43)
9. What challenges faced David as he resumed the kingship of both Israel and Judah?

Scripture Memory: Insert the missing words by memory if possible.

Psalms.37: 23-24 _____

Day Six

Thought for the Day

Any attempt to live the Sermon on the Mount in your own strength is proof positive that you have not understood it.

Lord, I confess that without You I am not much of a mountain climber. My pack becomes heavy with doubt and I'm tempted to quit. Without Your strength and wisdom to spot the dangerous places, I cannot reach the heights.

Practical application

1. What ambition in your life should you examine to see if it's submitted to the will of God?
2. How can you entrust yourself to God the next time you face a setback in your life?
3. How do you need to distance yourself from people whose attitudes and methods conflict with? Your own?
4. What decisions will you have to make in the next week for which you could seek wisdom from God?

5. What habits of thought and prayer can enable you to forgive a former enemy?
6. What scripture verse ministered to you this week? Why?

Scripture Memory: Insert the missing words by memory if possible.

Psalms.37: 23-24 _____

Weekly Challenge [Optional]
God's Glory in Creation
Psalms 8

Humanity is the sparkling jewel that crowns creation, but the glory belongs to God. In fact, whatever glory and dignity we human beings enjoy, we owe it to our Creator. This hymn measures the world and all its creatures from their proper point of origin-the Lord.

Read Psalms 8 and answer the following questions:

1. What motivated David to write this Psalm? (8:3)
2. How do people get all of their power and responsibility? (8:3-6)
3. What are some responsibilities that all of us have? (8:5-8)
4. What responsibility do you have in caring for nature?
5. When could you spend a few minutes in the next few days enjoying God's creation?
6. What small step could you take this week to help care for God's creation?
7. How did David describe the Lord? (8:1-9)

Studies in the life of
DAVID
A man after God's own heart

Lesson 11-2 Samuel 20-24

David probably had many enemies among the people of Benjamin, which was Saul's tribe. That could be why Sheba had little difficulty in stirring up opposition to the king (2 Sam. 20:1–2). Perhaps David had an associate of Sheba in mind when he composed Psalm 7, which was written in response to a man named Cush, a Benjamite.

Personal Profile: Sheba

Not to be confused with: The name of a country whose queen visited Solomon (1 Kin. 10:1–13).

Home: Territory of Benjamin.

Family: Son of Bichri of the tribe of Benjamin (Saul's tribe).

Best known today as: The leader of a rebellion against David and the tribe of Judah (20:1–2) after the death of Absalom. David's troops forced Sheba and his army to retreat to the city of Abel, which they then besieged (20:14–15). Sheba was undone by a "wise woman" who convinced the citizens to kill him (20:16–22).

Day One

Thought for the Day

God's will is certain. The point is that we must be looking for His answers and be ready to recognize them when they come.

Lord, how can I know Your will for my life? I guess that's one of the biggest questions in the Christian life. Will I recognize Your will when I see it? Give me Your insight so I can see that Your answers come in many forms and in many ways. If I am looking in the wrong direction, turn me around.

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

1. Who was the troublemaker who started another rebellion against David? (20:1)
2. Why did David give up on his first commander and turn to Abishai? (20:4-6)
3. When Amasa met up with Joab, what was notable about Joab's military dress? (20:8)

4. Where did Joab and Abishai catch up with Sheba and begin a siege? (20:14-15)
5. What message did a wise woman in the city have for Joab? (20:16-19)
6. How did one woman save the city of Abel Beth Maacah from attack? (20:16-22)
7. Why were the people of Abel Beth Maacah unwilling to defend Sheba?
8. Why was it in the best interests of David and Joab to let the rest of the troops go home once Sheba was dead?
9. Why might one wise person be of greater value to a group of people than many strong ones?

Scripture Memory: Psalm 9:10: And those who know Your name will put their trust in You. For You, Lord, have not forsaken those who seek You.

Day Two

Thought for the Day

Martin Luther spent much of his time fasting and praying and sweating, trying to put his life in order. Yet he remained centrally miserable and unhappy until the glorious doctrine about justification by faith suddenly dawned on him.

Lord, I find myself going through the motions, doing all the outward things that are evidences of the Christian life. Yet unless You are the center of my life, everything is out of balance.

The Gibeonites Avenged

The three-year famine in the days of David was the result of Saul's violation of the standing peace treaty that Israel had with the Gibeonites (2 Sam. 21:1; see Josh. 9:15, 19–21). This suggests two things:

(1) Political commitments, such as peace treaties, have spiritual implications. God takes people's words—including the words of governments—seriously and expects people to honor their

commitments. To break a covenant is to sin against the very character of God, who always remains faithful to His promises.

(2) Natural events sometimes have spiritual causes. Famines, floods, diseases, pestilence, and other destructive phenomena of nature can be shown to have natural causes. Nevertheless, scripture offers many illustrations of the fact that God may sovereignty allow and ordain such events for spiritual reasons.

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

1. What bargain did David propose to strike with the Gibeonites in exchange for their blessing on Israel? (21:3-4)
2. What oath did David have to take into consideration in meeting the Gibeonites' demands? (21:7-9)
3. How did the mother of two of the slain Israelites demonstrate her devotion and grief for the dead? (21:10)
4. What gesture of respect did David make toward Saul's family in response to Rizpah's devotion? (21:11-14)
5. How did God respond to David's gestures to right old wrongs? (21:14)
6. How did Israel fare against the giant Philistine warriors, descendants of Rapha? (21:18-22)
7. Based on the case of the Gibeonites, how seriously does God take our oaths, even those made to unbelievers?
8. How do unresolved sins come back to haunt us or successive generations?
9. How were Rizpah's actions more effective than if she had made a verbal plea to the king?

Scripture Memory: Insert the missing words by memory if possible:

Psalm 9:10: And those who know Your _____ will put their _____ in You. For You, Lord, have not _____ those who _____ You.

Day Three

Thought for the Day

Regarding myself as one who has this great privilege of being a caretaker for God, I do not cling to things. They do not become the center of my life and existence.

Lord, help me make good use of that which You have placed in my care. Keep me attached to You and detached from earthly things.

Peace on Every Hand

In 2 Sam. 22 we have a celebration of the peace that God brought to David and the people of Israel. It affirms that the defense of the nation rested not in military might, but in the Lord (2 Sam. 22:2). The words of this composition are duplicated in Psalm 18.

Singing has always characterized people of faith. For example, when David realize that God had given him peace from his enemies, he composed a song to praise the Lord and celebrate His goodness (2 Sam. 22; Ps. 18). This was a pattern established by numerous Old Testament figures:

Mercy to David

David praised the Lord for showing mercy to him and his royal descendants (2 Sam. 22:51). However, by using the word for “mercy” David was speaking of something that had more to do with loyalty than pity.

THE GOD OF MERCY

Scripture shows the Lord to be a God of mercy (Deut. 7:9). But what exactly does it mean by “mercy”?

The Hebrew term for “mercy” (*chesed*) described not simply the emotion of pity, much less the ignoring, excusing, or indulging of wrongdoing. It implied that one could be counted on to faithfully carry out the promises made in a covenant or agreement. Thus God “(kept) covenant and mercy” with His people the Jews in terms of showing loyalty to them—even when they didn’t deserve it.

In the same way, God calls those who fear Him to show mercy (*chesed*) in their dealings with others. For example:

- A. Governments show mercy when they diligently enforce laws that prevent oppression of the vulnerable.
- B. Husbands and wives show mercy to each other when they stick to their vows of marital faithfulness, love, and service despite all the pressures on the marriage from without and within.

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

1. What events prompted David to compose this song of praise? (22:1)
2. What is the weather metaphor with which David described God's power? (22:12-16)
3. How did David describe God's actions on his behalf? (22:17-20)
4. What aspect of God's nature does He make available to His people? (22:31-33)
5. What is David's word picture of a warrior of the Lord? (22:34-37)
6. What was the fate of David's enemies? (22:38-43)
7. What are the reasons for David's resounding song of praise to God? (22:47-51)
8. What aspects of God's character became the subject of David's song of praise?
9. What are some of the images from nature that David used to describe God?
10. In the course of this song, why did David praise God?

Scripture Memory: Insert the missing words by memory if possible:

Psalm 9:10 And _____ who know Your _____ will put their _____ in You. For You, _____, have not _____ those who _____ You.

Day Four

Thought for the Day

We can be orthodox but dead, highly intellectual but useless.

Lord, remind me of my foolishness the next time I smugly think I can lean on my own knowledge and understanding. Apart from You I can do nothing.

DAVID'S MIGHTY MEN

David's rise to power was assured from the outset by the promises of God (1 Chr. 11:10; compare 1 Sam. 13:14; 15:28; 16:12). Nevertheless, the journey from the pastures near Bethlehem to the palace in Jerusalem was long and difficult. Along the way, David attracted a growing movement of loyal supporters who helped him attain the throne. Some of the most important of these followers were known as "mighty men."

These warriors or champions are celebrated for their military victories (2 Sam. 23; 1 Chr. 11), many of which were won after David was crowned king of Israel. But the nucleus of this group came from humble beginnings. When David was fleeing from Saul, renegades from Israelite society began gathering to the young Bethlehemite. Scripture gives three reasons why they found their way to David: distress, debt, and discontent (1 Sam. 22:2). Apparently having nothing to lose, they sided with David, who was also in trouble with the king.

Saul quickly learned of this band, which at first numbered about 400. Suspicious that his own people might defect, Saul chided his servants, "Will the son of Jesse give every one of you fields and vineyards, and make you all captains?" (22:7). In fact, the answer to this question was yes. Under David and his successor Solomon, the land prospered exceedingly (2 Sam. 6:19; 7:1; 1 Kin. 4:25), and many of David's followers became renowned as "mighty men."

During the days of David's flight from Saul, he and his followers acted as raiders, attacking Israel's enemies (1 Sam. 23:5; 27:8–12). These skirmishes served as training exercises for the days ahead. As soon as Saul was dead, David began his ascent to the throne, and his mighty men rose to positions of power along with him. He was crowned king of Judah, and his men followed him to Hebron (2 Sam. 2:3). From there they helped him fight a seven-year civil war with the house of Saul (3:1). Finally, after David had been crowned king over all Israel, his men distinguished themselves by helping him capture Jebus, or Jerusalem, which then became his capital (5:6–10). The mighty men became the nucleus of a very powerful army (5:17–25; 8:1–18).

READ 2 SAMUEL 23:1-39 AND ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

1. To what did David compare a righteous ruler? (23:3-4)

2. What farming analogy did David use to describe how evil persons are treated by God? (23:6)

3. What does it mean to fear God?

4. In what way does having a righteous leader affect the followers?

5. What gifts has God given you for the building up of His Kingdom?

6. What select group is listed in this chapter? (23:8)

7. What story was circulated about Eleazar son of Dodai's endurance in battle? (23:9-10)

8. Which of the mighty men fought alone when everyone else fled?

9. What qualities did all of these people have in common that made them valuable to David?

10. How did the stories of the mighty men parallel some of the incidents in David's own life?

Scripture Memory: Insert the missing words by memory if possible:

Psalm 9:10 And _____ who _____ Your _____ will _____ their _____ in
 You. For You, _____, have not _____ those who _____ You.

Day Five

Thought for the Day

We assert Him, we proclaim Him, we start with Him, because He is the ultimate and the final Authority.

Lord, as I drive to work each morning, I see Your handiwork in the world all around me. I thank You that in the midst of this everyday routine You offer me evidence and opportunity to praise You.

You will want to read 1 Chronicles 21, the parallel account of this great sin in David's life. Here is another example of God permitting Satan to work so that the purposes of the Lord might be fulfilled. See Luke 22:31-34.

SIN

What lay behind David's desire for a national census? Probably it was pride: he had won a number of great victories (1 Chron. 18-20) and perhaps wanted to bask in the glory of success. There was certainly nothing wrong with a census, since the people had often been numbered during their national history; but we must keep in mind that a census that praised men would never glorify God.

Another factor to consider is Ex. 30:11-16. In connection with a census was the matter of the "redemption money" that each one was to give, for this money was a reminder that the people were the Lord's purchased possession. Exodus 30:12 warns that God would plague the nation if the people ignored giving the redemption money, and this is just what happened.

God gave David nearly ten months to change his mind and avoid discipline (v. 8). God even used the wise counsel of Joab to discourage him, but David would not listen. It is too bad that God's children sometimes become stubborn in heart and insist on their own way.

David's sin was not a hasty thing; he carried it out with cool, calculated precision. He was rebelling against God! There is an interesting series of contrasts between this sin and his sin with Bathsheba: (1) this was a sin of the spirit (pride) while the other was a sin of the flesh; (2) here he acted with deliberate persistence, while his sin with Bathsheba came as the result of the sudden overwhelming desires of the flesh; (3) this sin involved the nation, and 70,000 people died; his other sin was a family matter, with 4 people dying. (4) Yet in both sins, God gave David time to repent, but he waited too long.

We may not think that pride and rebellion against God's Word are serious sins, but in David's life they produced greater sorrow and tragedy than did his adultery. We must beware of sins "of the flesh and of the spirit" (2 Cor. 7:1).

SUFFERING

“The wages of sin is death.” Note that David was convicted in his heart before the judgment fell. He was certainly honest with himself and with the Lord, but his conviction and repentance came too late. In 12:13, David said, “I have sinned,” but here he says, “I have sinned *greatly*.” From a human point of view, numbering the people does not seem a greater sin than adultery and murder; yet from God’s point of view, taking the census was a sin greater in its disobedience and consequence. Jesus, when on earth, was forgiving toward the publicans and sinners but severe with the proud and rebellious. Certainly sins both of the flesh and of the spirit are evil, and a person should not be involved in either one, but we dare not underestimate the awful results of pride and stubborn disobedience.

God permitted David to choose his own discipline, and his choice showed the compassion of his heart. (“Seven years of famine” in v. 13 should be “three years” to parallel the three months and three days of the other two punishments.) David chose to fall into the hands of his merciful Lord rather than into the hands of men. At 6:00 A.M. God’s angel came and began to plague the people. By the time of the evening sacrifice (3:00 P.M.) the angel had slain 70,000 people with a plague. David and his elders saw the judging angel, and David immediately interceded for the people. “These sheep, what have they done? Let Your hand be against me!” However, we must remember that God had a definite cause against the entire nation (24:1) and was using David’s sin as the opportunity to judge the people. Perhaps God was punishing the nation for its rebellion against David when many of them followed Absalom.

There is a practical warning here for those in places of authority: the higher the office, the greater the influence for good or for evil. In Lev. 4 we see that, if the high priest sinned, he was to bring a bullock for an offering (v. 3), the same sacrifice that God required if the whole congregation sinned (vv. 13-14)! David’s sin involved the whole nation this time, just as his “family sin” had involved his entire household.

SACRIFICE

Two factors were involved in the halting of the judgment: the mercy of the Lord (v. 16) and the confession and sacrifice of the sinner (v. 17). God sent His servant a message to build an altar at the place where he had seen the angel, the threshing floor of Araunah (or Ornan). David and his elders went immediately to the site and settled the purchase: he paid 600 shekels of gold for “the place” (the entire area, 1 Chron. 21:25) and 50 shekels of silver for the oxen and the threshing floor (2 Sam. 24:24). Ornan would have freely given the whole thing to his king, but David would not accept it. He would not give the Lord another man’s sacrifice! A cheap sacrifice is worse than no sacrifice at all. This is a good principle for us to follow in our own Christian walk.

David immediately offered the oxen as burnt offerings of dedication to the Lord, and the shedding of the blood took care of the sins. Second Chronicles 3:1 informs us that this very same area became the site for Solomon’s temple. God was able to turn the curse into a blessing! It is interesting to note that Solomon was born to Bathsheba, who had been involved in David’s adultery; and yet Solomon became the next king and actually built the temple on the piece of ground associated with David’s greater sin of numbering the people. Such is the amazing working of the grace of God! Certainly we ought not to “do evil that good may come from it” (Rom. 3:8), but we can rest in the confidence that “all things work together for good to them that love God” (Rom. 8:28).

Let us note some practical lessons from this chapter:

We never outgrow temptation

David was not an inexperienced youth when he committed this sin! Had he been “watching and praying” he would not have entered into temptation and sin so easily.

God graciously gives time to repent

He gave David more than nine months to deal with his sins and make matters right. “Seek the Lord while He may be found.”

Sins of the spirit do great damage

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

Our sins involve others

Seventy thousand people died because David disobeyed the Lord.

True confession is a costly thing

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

God will forgive and bring blessing

Let us put ourselves into the hands of the Lord, for great are His mercies toward us!

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

1. How did God use David to punish Israel? (24:1)
2. Who objected to David’s plan and tried to dissuade him? (24:3)
3. How long did it take for the commanders to go throughout the land counting the fighting men? (24:8)
4. How many fighting men did David have in Israel and Judah? (24:9)

5. What did David realize after the census was finished? (24:10)
6. What was David's prayer when he realized his error? (24:10)
7. What punishment did David choose from the three options God put before him? (24:14)
8. How many people died in the plague? (24:15)
9. What does it mean that God "incited" David against Israel when God was angry with Israel?
10. Why was it wrong for David to want to count his fighting men?
11. How did David demonstrate his knowledge of God by the choice he made of the means of punishment?
12. How does God feel when He sees the suffering we bring on ourselves through our sin?
13. What does it mean to offer sacrifices to God today?

Scripture Memory: Insert the missing words by memory if possible:

Psalm 9:10 _____

Day Six

Thought for the Day

It is not what a man does or knows or anything about him that needs to be put right; it is his fundamental relationship to God.

Lord, I worry so much how I look on the outside that I forget what is really important; how I look on the inside.

Practical application

1. Which of God's mighty servants, past or present, can serve as an inspiration for your spiritual life this week? Why?
2. What difficult task lies ahead of you for which you can ask God to give you courage?
3. What steps can you take to help your family be "right with God"?
4. What psalm or hymn can you offer today in heartfelt thanksgiving to God?
5. How can you make your next success an opportunity to praise God for what He has done for you?
6. What unresolved conflict should you address today in order to prosper spiritually in the future?
7. What scripture verse or passage ministered to you this week? Why?

Scripture Memory: Insert the missing words by memory if possible:

Psalm 9:10 _____

Weekly Challenge (OPTIONAL)

Psalm 40

This psalm may be called “The Christmas Psalm” because it looks forward to the birth of Christ. Verses 6-8 are quoted in Heb. 10:5-10 and applied to Jesus Christ. Historically, the psalm grew out of a crisis in the life of David. He was in “a horrible pit” and cried out to God, and God delivered him. In the first half (vv. 1-10), David testifies of God’s mercy and shows his gratitude by yielding himself anew to the Lord. In the closing verses (vv. 11-17) David calls to God for further help as new enemies approach him. What a strength there is in v. 17, —“**The Lord thinks upon me.**”

Read Psalms 40:1-17 And answer the following questions:

1. How did David equip himself to do God’s will? (40:8)
2. How was David involved in proclaiming God’s goodness to others? (40:9-10)
3. How did David ask the Lord to treat those who seek Him? (40:16)
4. How can we guard against the temptation to focus more on outward appearances than inward attitudes?
5. What does remembering God’s faithfulness in the past prompt you to do?
6. How can you equip yourself to do the Lord’s will?
7. What can you do to share your experience of God’s faithfulness with those who do not know the Lord?
8. What steps can you take this next week to store God’s Word in your heart?
9. What offering of praise can you give to God today

10. In the next few days, who is one person you could tell about God's faithfulness to you?

*Studies in the Life of
David
A man after God's own heart*

Lesson 12 – 1 Kings 1:1-53, 2:1-11

The Books of Kings continue the narrative that was begun in the Books of Samuel. In this first chapter David is a senile old man. One of his sons, Adonijah, attempts to seize the throne. David, aroused by Nathan and Bathsheba, orders another son, Solomon, anointed as king of Israel. This is a tremendous chapter that opens 1 Kings.

Day One

Thought for the Day

However wonderful and beautiful and glorious things may be, they all perish.

Lord, everything in this life wears out or dies. My favorite sweater gets holes in it. My beloved pet dies. It is a constant reminder that this world will someday pass away, but Your Kingdom will not.

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

David was now unable to carry on his royal duties, so his son Adonijah took advantage of the situation and proclaimed himself king of Israel. “I will be king!” he announced, all the while realizing that God had appointed Solomon to succeed David (1:17; and see 2:13-15). Adonijah was deliberately rebelling against the will of God. Sad to say, some of David’s confidential advisors fell in with the wicked plot, including Joab (whom David once tried to replace; see 2 Sam. 19:11-15 and 20:4-13) and Abiathar the priest. The treacherous prince followed the example of Absalom by preparing chariots and seeking to impress the people (see 2 Sam. 15:1ff).

However, three loyal servants took matters in their own hands and informed Bathsheba. She, in turn, took the message to King David, knowing that he would not break his oath that Solomon, her son, be crowned the next king. The entire plan worked smoothly, and David made it very clear that he wanted Solomon to take the throne immediately. Zadok, Nathan, and Bathsheba lost no time in putting Solomon on the royal mule and proclaiming him the new king of Israel. Verse 40 suggests that the news was received with great joy by the people of the land. However, when Adonijah and his unsuspecting crowd of admirers heard the news, it threw them into panic, for now their treachery was known. The rebellious prince ran to God’s altar for protection and Solomon promised not to kill him. Too often wicked people flee to God for help without really repenting in their hearts.

Read 1 Kings 1-14 and answer the following questions:

1. What was one of the practical provisions made for David in his old age? (1:1-4)
2. With David in a weakened condition, what did Adonijah decide to do? (1:5)
3. What was at least one reason why Adonijah had grown up to be rebellious and ambitious? (1:6)
4. Which of David's officials supported Adonijah? (1:7)
5. Which of David's officials did not join the rebellion? (1:8)
6. What did Adonijah do in order to establish his influence and build support for his succession? (1:9-10)
7. Which officials and relatives were conspicuously missing from Adonijah's guest list? (1:10)
8. What warning did Nathan the prophet carry to Bathsheba, Solomon's mother? (1:11)
9. What advice did Nathan have for Bathsheba? (1:12-14)
10. Why is it important to the rest of the passage to understand how old and frail David was?
11. To what extent was David responsible for the way his son Adonijah behaved?

12. Why were certain people not asked to Adonijah's sacrifice?

Scripture Memory Psalm 107:1 Oh give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.

Day Two

Thought for the Day

The most terrible thing about sin is that it blinds men to the realization that all they have is temporary. They do not see that their pomp and glory is but for a season.

Lord, will I ever stop wondering why the ungodly prosper? Why good things always happen to bad people? Clear away any envy or jealousy I may be harboring. Give me a heart of compassion for those who are in darkness.

Read 1 Kings 1:15-27 and answer the following questions:

1. Of what promise did Bathsheba remind David? (1:17)
2. What action did Bathsheba urge David to take before the decision was out of his hands? (1:18-20)
3. What did Bathsheba fear if David were to die under the present circumstances? (1:21)
4. Who came into the king's chambers to corroborate Bathsheba's story? (1:22-23)
5. Of what activities in the court did Nathan give a thorough account to the king? (1:24-26)
6. What question did Nathan ask of the king in light of what had transpired in the kingdom? (1:27)

7. Why might Nathan have considered it wise to send Bathsheba to David first?
8. How can it be useful to ask a question about someone's motives, even if you think it might be safe to assume you know what he or she wants?

Scripture Memory: Insert the missing words by memory if possible:

Psalm 107:1 Oh give _____ to the Lord, for He is _____! For His _____ endures forever.

Day Three

Thought for the Day

There is no aspect of life but that the gospel has something to say about it; the gospel is meant to control and govern everything in our lives.

Lord, every room of my life is Your dwelling place and under Your control. May the light of Your presence shine into every corner. May every area of my life be governed by the truth of Your Word.

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

1. What did David command Zadok, Benaiah, and Nathan to do? (1:32-34)
2. When did David intend Solomon's reign to begin? (1:35)
3. How did Benaiah express his approval and his gratitude to David? (1:36-37)
4. What important ceremony was performed for Solomon that had not been done for the rebel, Adonijah? (1:38-39)
5. What circumstances made David's provision for the succession more authoritative and final? (1:46-48)
6. What did Adonijah's guests do when they heard the news of Solomon's coronation? (1:49)

7. How did David demonstrate his kingly skills by the way he handled the dispute between Adonijah and Solomon?

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

9. In what sense was it a compliment or blessing to wish David that his son would be even greater than he had been?

Scripture Memory: Insert the missing words by memory if possible:

Psalm 107:1 Oh give _____ to the _____, for He is _____! For His _____
 _____ forever.

Day Four

Thought for the Day

Sometimes, in a panic, we pray to God; then, after the panic is over, we forget all about it. The men of faith not only prayed, but they expected answers.

Lord, I know all about panic prayers. How many times in moments of fear, frustration, or desperation have I begged Your help, then moved on matter of factly after Your answers came? Forgive me, Father. My only response should be thankfulness and praise.

This chapter records David's final instructions to Solomon before his death and Solomon's wise execution of David's wishes.

David urges Solomon to stay close to the Lord and to the Word of God. His advice to this young man is very important.

There is very little attention ever given to David's legacy to Solomon, but I believe that what David left to him enabled him to become one of the great kings of the earth. In fact, Solomon is probably one of the best-known kings who have ever lived.

1. He transferred the leadership of the nation from the house of Saul and the tribe of Benjamin to Judah and established the royal house of David. This becomes all-important, as we shall see when we get to the New Testament. The Gospel of Matthew opens with the statement, "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham" (Matt. 1:1). Then in Luke 1:31–32 the angel Gabriel said to Mary, "And, behold, thou shall conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shall call his name JESUS. He shall be great,

and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David.” Only a descendant of David is to occupy the throne of Israel.

2. He established Jerusalem as the Holy City and as the religious center and national capital for all Jews. This has continued down to this day. When Israel took the city of Jerusalem from the Arabs in the Six-Day War of 1967, they declared that they had no intention of giving it up because it is a legacy that goes back to David. Jerusalem was David’s favorite city, and he made it the capital for the nation of Israel. Solomon beautified the city by building the temple and making it the religious center of Israel. We should note, however, that it was David who made the preparations for the temple.

3. He stamped out idolatry, practically speaking, and made the worship of Jehovah universal in the land. This was his most important contribution.

4. He made conquests of many nations, which paid tribute to Israel and its king. He extended the borders of the country to Egypt on the south, and to the River Euphrates on the north and east. David is actually the one who extended Israel’s borders farther than they had ever been extended before or since. The peace during the reign of Solomon was possible because David had subdued Israel’s enemies.

5. Although an Oriental monarch with a sizable harem, David’s foreign marriages were largely political and relatively free from religious and moral corruption. Having a harem was the custom of that day, but God did not approve of David’s many wives, and it was largely due to them that he was in hot water all of the time. The many sons that were born to him by these women caused constant dissension inside the palace. It was something that caused David woe and sorrows all of his life. It was Solomon, and not David, who was influenced by a foreign wife. It is true that David committed an awful sin, but it occurred *before* his marriage to Bathsheba. There was not even a breath of scandal after that.

6. David was a poet and musician who endeared himself to the people as the “sweet psalmist of Israel” and gave to us at least seventy-three psalms.

7. David planned the temple, which was to exalt the religious life of the nation and the worship of Jehovah, although he was not permitted to build the Lord’s house.

8. Although there was still rivalry of a sort between the ten tribes of the north and Judah and Benjamin in the south—and had been since the death of Saul and his son—David had no serious difficulty **in uniting all tribes under his rule** and making Jerusalem the national capital.

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

See also 1 Chron. 22-29. David emphasized the spiritual before the political, for he wanted his son to walk in the ways of the Lord. He admonished him to study and obey the Law (see Deut. 17:14-20 and Josh. 1:8). God had made wonderful promises concerning Solomon (2 Sam. 7:8-

17), but He could not fulfill them apart from Solomon's faith and obedience. David also reminded Solomon of the enemies that would oppose him and the friends that would assist him.

Read 1 Kings 2:1-6 and answer the following questions:

1. What did David feel it was important to do before he died? (2:1)
2. With what words of encouragement did David begin his charge to Solomon? (2:2-3)
3. In what sense was Solomon responsible for the continuation of God's promise to David? (2:3-4)
4. What actions from the past did David hold against Joab? (2:5)
5. What did David tell Solomon to do with regard to Joab? (2:6)
6. According to David, what must Solomon do as king in order to prosper?
7. What condition had God built into His covenant with the house of David?

Scripture Memory: Insert the missing words by memory if possible:

Psalm 107:1 _____

Day Five

Thought for the Day

The gospel can satisfy man's mind completely, it can move his heart entirely, and it can lead to wholehearted obedience in the realm of the will.

Lord; keep me from being a lopsided Christian. May my head, my heart, and my will be equally committed and responsive to Your Word and Your work in my life.

Read 1 Kings 2:7-12 and answer the following questions:

1. What did David want to make sure Solomon did for the sons of Barzillai of Gilead? (2:7)
2. What wrong that David suffered did he want Solomon to settle after his death? (2:8-9)
3. What expression does the writer of 1 Kings use to describe David's death? (2:10)
4. How long did David reign over Israel? (2:11)
5. How secure was Solomon's kingship from the beginning? (2:12)
6. Why do you think David did not punish Joab himself?
7. Although David had sworn that he would not execute Shimei, how did he make sure that justice was done?
8. What personal "vote of confidence" did David repeat twice in his charge to Solomon?

Scripture Memory: Insert the missing words by memory if possible:

Psalm 107:1 _____

Day Six

Thought for the Day

The Apostle Peter was naturally aggressive, self-confident, self-assertive. But when he truly saw the Lord, he said, "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord."

Lord, I know that my greatest strengths become my greatest weaknesses when they are not refined by Your purifying fire and tempered by Your grace. Renew a right spirit within me.

Practical application
A Father's Final Charge

A farewell charge like the one that David gave to Solomon (2:1–9) was a fairly common way for fathers in the ancient world to pass on a legacy to their successors. David's last words provide a useful model for parents today to give final instructions to their children. David's charge contained several elements:

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

1. If you are a parent, what charge would you want to leave to your children before you die?
2. What challenges would you want to set before them?
3. What aspects of God's nature and character would you want to fix in their memory?
4. Is their unfinished business that you need to ask them to complete?
5. Are there promises you have made that you want them to honor?
6. Take some time and write down some highpoints the Lord has taught you through the study in the life of David.
7. How can we, as David did, have a heart toward the things of God?

Scripture Memory: Insert the missing words by memory if possible:

Psalm 107:1 _____

Weekly Challenge (OPTIONAL)

Psalm 46

Psalm 46 is made up of three parts that expand on the theme established in the opening lines—that God is our refuge, strength, and helper:

- **God’s protection provides reassurance in a tumultuous world (46:1–3).**
- **God’s presence provides an immovable defense in a hostile world (46:4–6).**
- **God’s peace deserves worship and praise throughout the world (46:8–10).**

Read Psalm 46 and answer the following questions:

1. How does this psalm instruct God’s people to praise the Lord? (47:1, 5-6)
2. How is the Lord described in this psalm? (47:2-9)
3. What makes God happy? (47:5-6)
4. What should motivate God’s people to praise Him? (47:5-9)
5. What relationship should the leaders of the world and the Lord have? (47:7-9)
6. What does this passage teach us about God’s character?
7. How can Christian leaders guard against pride and self-reliance?

8. What kind of relationship does the Lord want to have with us?
9. What steps can we take to obey God's rule in our lives?
10. What area of your life do you hesitate to completely commit to God?
11. What reasons does this psalm give us to praise the Lord?
12. What have you learned from this psalm about how to praise the Lord?
13. What song or verse would you choose to voice your personal praise to the Lord?
14. What one area of your life would you like to give over to God's rule today?

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