

Meadgate Spring 2019
The Early Kings

Session 6 – David (Part 2)

Bible background – 2 Samuel chapters 1 – 10 – David finally becomes king

It can be confusing to keep track of all the characters introduced in the opening chapters of 2 Samuel. This should help!

Character	Relation	Position	Whose Side?
Joab	Son of Zeruiah, David's half sister	One of David's military leaders and, later, commander in chief	David's
Abner	Saul's cousin	Saul's commander in chief	Saul and Ishbosheth's, but made overtures to David
Abishai	Joab's brother	High officer in David's army—Commander of "the Thirty"	Joab and David's
Asahel	Joab and Abishai's brother	High officer—one of David's 30 select warriors ("mighty men")	Joab and David's
Ishbosheth	Saul's son	Saul and Abner's selection as king	Saul's

The book of 2 Samuel opens with the terrible news of the deaths of both Saul and Jonathan. David is clearly distraught by the news, even though Saul has been David's enemy for so long. He punishes the Amalekites who brings news of the deaths, acknowledging that he had struck the final blow to Saul "the lord's anointed". It is an awesome thing to inflict damage on those God has anointed. David testifies of both Saul and Jonathan,

"How the mighty have fallen" (2 Sam. 1:27). David accords honour to his enemies.

David's family

It is worth noting here that David had many sons. The first 6 of these were born in Hebron (1 Chronicles 3:1-5)

- 1) Amnon
- 2) Daniel
- 3) Absalom
- 4) Adonijah
- 5) Shephatiah
- 6) Ithream.

Next, we have the thirteen sons born to David in Jerusalem:

- 7) Shimea
- 8) Shobab
- 9) Nathan
- 10) Solomon

- 11) Ibhar
- 12) Elishama,
- 13) Eliphelet
- 14) Nogah
- 15) Nepheg
- 16) Japhia
- 17) Elishama
- 18) Eliada
- 19) Eliphelet

David and Bathsheba's first son only lived 7 days, and is not mentioned by name (2 Sam 12:18)

Some of these will be highly significant later on, but remember that at this point, the nation has no concept of a hereditary monarchy – they do not expect a son to succeed his father as king

North and South

At this stage in the OT, the fledgling nation was still divided into Judah (the South) and Israel (the North). In fact, it was only under Saul, David and Solomon that Israel and Judah were united for a brief time).

THE LIFE OF DAVID: A Man after God's own heart									
1041 B.C.			1011				971 B.C.		
DAVID'S 70 YEARS									
David as Subject (30 Years)					David as King (40 Years)				
As a son to his father		As a servant to King Saul			King over the South		King over all 12 tribes		
		His rise over Saul	Rejected by Saul	Refuge with Philistines	Growing Success		Growing Crisis		
		17-18	19-26	27-31					
Psalms	1 Samuel				2 Samuel				1 Kings
23	17	19:1-10		31	7	11	14-18	24	2:10
↑ David the Shepherd	↑ Kills Goliath	↑ Protected by Jonathan		↑ Saul and Jonathan killed at Gilboa	↑ Promise of Christ	↑ Sins with Bathsheba	↑ Absalom's Rebellion	↑ David's Census	↑ David Dies

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David moves on to Hebron, and is crowned King of **Judah**, but Abner, who had commanded Saul's army, decides to crown Ishbosheth king in the North (**Israel**):

*" (Abner) made him king over Gilead, Ashuri and Jezreel, and also over Ephraim, Benjamin and all Israel. **10** Ishbosheth son of Saul was forty years old when he became king over Israel, and he reigned two years. The house of Judah, however, followed David."*

2 Sam 2:9-10

Abner is a thorn in David's side for a considerable time, and there is significant jealousy between **Abner**, Saul's commander and **Joab**, David's commander. Abner appears to switch sides, and comes to an agreement with David (2 Sam 3:13) Abner tells David:

"Make an agreement with me, and I will help you bring all Israel over to you."
2 Sam 3:12

David agrees, providing that Michal, Saul's daughter, is brought to him. David had been previously married to her as a reward for bravery (1 Sam 17:25, 18:24-27), but later, Saul, in one of his jealous rages, had taken Michal away and forced her to marry Paltiel (1 Sam 25:44). There could be several reasons David wanted her back:

- He genuinely loved her (but see 1 Sam 6:20-23 for problems with this view)
- Maybe marriage (or re-marriage) to Saul's daughter might strengthen his claim to rule all Israel

Paltiel was another victim of Saul's jealousy

Ishbosheth agreed to Michal's return, and Abner discusses making David king of Israel with the elders of Israel. A feast is given for Abner, but after Abner is sent on his way, Joab returns, highly suspicious of Abner's actions. Eventually, Joab kills Abner:

"Joab and his brother Abishai murdered Abner because he had killed their brother Asahel in the battle of Gibeon."
2 Sam 3:30

David mourns for Abner – but is technically guiltless over his death.

POINTS TO PONDER



- *How do you trust the deputies?*
- *When David got others to do his "work", is he avoiding responsibilities?*
- *Are these actions the actions of a king?*
- *Could they be interpreted in a different way?*

Chapter 4 – Ishbosheth is murdered

Ishbosheth, son of Saul "lost courage" (1 Sam 4:1) on hearing of Abner's death, causing great alarm. Two men, leaders of raiding bands (Baanah and Recab) of the tribe of Benjamin, took it upon themselves to "rid" David of the "problem" of a surviving son of Saul. They killed Ishbosheth in his bed, bringing his head to David at Hebron. Instead of rejoicing, David demanded their lives instead, ordering the messengers killed.

NOTE

It is highly dangerous to assume the wishes of a king. Too many messengers have already died as a result of thoughtless acts, intended to try and ingratiate themselves into the king's good graces.

We are briefly introduced here to Mephibosheth, a grandson of Saul, and the son of David's best friend Jonathan (1 Sam 4:4). His story will resurface in 2 Samuel chapters 9 and 19.

David becomes King over the united nation of Judah and Israel

"All the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and said, "We are your own flesh and blood."² In the past, while Saul was king over us, you were the one who led Israel on their military campaigns. And the Lord said to you, 'You shall shepherd my people Israel, and you shall become their ruler.'"

³ *When all the elders of Israel had come to King David at Hebron, the king made a compact with them at Hebron before the Lord, and **they anointed David king over Israel.***

⁴ *David was thirty years old when he became king, and he reigned for forty years.⁵ In Hebron he reigned over Judah for seven years and six months, and in Jerusalem he reigned over all Israel and Judah for thirty-three years."*

2 Sam 5:1-5

"David captured the fortress of Zion, the City of David..."

2 Sam 5:7

"...David then took up residence in the fortress and called it the City of David. He built up the area around it, from the supporting terraces inward.

¹⁰ *And he became more and more powerful, because the Lord God Almighty was with him.¹¹ Now Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, along with cedar logs and carpenters and stonemasons, and they built a palace for David.¹² And **David knew that the Lord had established him as king over Israel** and had exalted his kingdom for the sake of his people Israel."*

2 Sam 5:9-12

We now move into a time when both Judah and Israel acknowledge David as sole ruler of the United Monarchy.

David has a threefold agenda:

1. *Subdue his enemies – in fulfilment of the task the nation had left incomplete on entering the Promised Land (Judges 2:1-4). This would protect the nation militarily*
2. *He needed to subdue the enemies to unify the nation*

3. *He wanted to unify the nation spiritually by building a Temple for God, and hopefully abolish idolatrous influences*

On hearing of David's advancement as king of both Judah and Israel, the Philistines decided to attack their former enemy again;

"In the Valley of Rephaim... David enquired of the Lord, "Shall I go and attack the Philistines? Will you hand them over to me?" The Lord answered him, "Go, for I will surely hand the Philistines over to you."

2 Sam 5:18-19

David is victorious over the Philistines. He decided to bring the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem – it had been briefly in Philistine captivity (1 Sam 4:1-7:2), and after returning to Israel, it had been kept in the home of Abinadab for 20 years.

The full story is found in **2 Samuel Chapter 6**.

Notes:

1. *It is dangerous to handle holy things that you are not prepared for. Uzzah lost his life for trying to stop the Ark falling off a cart as it was being transported, as it was considered an "irreverent act" (2 Sam 6:7)*
2. *David learned a very sharp lesson about moving the Ark of the Covenant, and did so only after pausing for 3 months, then making sure that the onward journey was punctuated by excessive praise and worship, as well as sacrifice*
3. *Be very careful about criticising those who praise might be different to yours! Michal criticized David for exuberant worship, and she was punished with childlessness. It is clear she had also become a bitter woman, and showed contempt for the king. Unchecked bitterness and resentment can destroy relationships.*

2 Samuel Chapter 7

David is "given rest from all his enemies around him (2 Sam 7:1), and decides to build a Temple for God, rather than have the Ark of the Covenant remain in a "tent" (the Tabernacle). In speaking to the prophet Nathan about this, Nathan rashly tells the king to "go ahead, for the Lord is with you" (2 Sam 7:3).

2 Sam 7:4-16 tells us the result of such a rash comment, not checked out with God beforehand! God says:

- He has not demanded anything other than the Tabernacle
- God Himself will provide a place for "my people Israel"
- David will not be the one to build it
- One of David's children will build the Temple

- The throne of David will be established forever



POINTS TO PONDER

- *What would your response to these statements have been?*
- *Which part do you think David would have homed in on?*

David demonstrates that his heart is turned towards God, for his response is one of thankfulness for the promise of the enduring establishment of his family and a dynasty (2 Sam. 7:18-29)

Mephibosheth

In the light of David's reaction to God's promise to him and his family, David wonders if he can follow through on a promise of his own (2 Sam 9:1):

"David asked, "Is there anyone still left of the house of Saul to whom I can show kindness for Jonathan's sake?" ² *Now there was a servant of Saul's household named Ziba. They called him to appear before David, and the king said to him, "Are you Ziba?" "Your servant," he replied.*

³ *The king asked, "Is there no-one still left of the house of Saul to whom I can show God's kindness?" Ziba answered the king, "There is still a son of Jonathan; he is crippled in both feet."*

⁴ *"Where is he?" the king asked. Ziba answered, "He is at the house of Makir son of Ammiel in Lo Debar."*

2 Sam 9:1-4

The child Mephibosheth, son of Jonathan, had barely managed to survive immediately after hearing the news that his grandfather and his father had both died on the same day. An awesome trauma for any five-year old. His nurse, assuming that Saul's enemies would seek out the child to kill him, picked him up and fled the palace, but dropped him on the way, resulting in permanent lameness (2 Sam 4:4). David remembers his promise to Jonathan – to show kindness to Jonathan's family , and checks to see if there is anyone of that family still living. One of Saul's servants, Ziba, is brought before David, and tells him of the existence and location of the young prince

Note:

1. Ziba does not call this young man by name, only lists his most obvious problem – he is lame.
2. Inference is – *it does not matter now. He is of no use to you or anyone. You have no need to even remember a promise made so long ago*
3. Mephibosheth is living in Lo Debar – lit. means “**no pasture**”. Desert, arid, dry and dusty. A backwater place.
4. David demands that Mephibosheth is brought to the palace, and is given full rights and honour.
5. When you can sit at a king’s table, being lame is actually nowhere near as important as it might have been.

David has kept his promise.

Mephibosheth lives in the place with David for the next 17 years. The story of Ziba and Mephibosheth gets quite complicated when David’s son Absalom rebels – the story continues in 2 Samuel 16:1-4; 19:24-30). The story demonstrates that Ziba was politically motivated, and untrustworthy. Mephibosheth is still a broken, humble man who does not actually expect to be treated well.

**POINTS TO PONDER**

- *Are there promises you have not kept?*
- *Are you in a position to make restitution?*
- *Would others consider you trustworthy?*

COFFEE**Bible background – 2 Samuel chapters 11-24**

The second half of 1 Samuel marks a considerable turn in David’s fortunes.

Twelve small words start to set the scene for a series of problems for the King:

“In the spring, at the time when kings go off to war...” 2 Sam 11:1

The New Living Translation reads “when kings **normally** go out to war...”. David is trusting his commanders to do the work that a king would normally be expected to do. He is distancing himself, and as such, stays behind when he should have been leading his men.

David and Bathsheba

"In the spring, at the time when kings go off to war, David sent Joab out with the king's men and the whole Israelite army. They destroyed the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But David remained in Jerusalem.

2 *One evening David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof of the palace. From the roof he saw a woman bathing. The woman was very beautiful,**3** and David sent someone to find out about her. The man said, "Isn't this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite?"*

4 *Then David sent messengers to get her. She came to him, and he slept with her. (She had purified herself from her uncleanness.) Then she went back home.*

5 *The woman conceived and sent word to David, saying, "I am pregnant."*

6 *So David sent this word to Joab: "Send me Uriah the Hittite." And Joab sent him to David.**7** When Uriah came to him, David asked him how Joab was, how the soldiers were and how the war was going.**8** Then David said to Uriah, "Go down to your house and wash your feet." So Uriah left the palace, and a gift from the king was sent after him.**9** But Uriah slept at the entrance to the palace with all his master's servants and did not go down to his house.*

10 *When David was told, "Uriah did not go home," he asked him, "Haven't you just come from a distance? Why didn't you go home?"*

11 *Uriah said to David, "The ark and Israel and Judah are staying in tents, and my master Joab and my lord's men are camped in the open fields. How could I go to my house to eat and drink and lie with my wife? As surely as you live, I will not do such a thing!"*

12 *Then David said to him, "Stay here one more day, and tomorrow I will send you back." So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day and the next.*

13 *At David's invitation, he ate and drank with him, and David made him drunk. But in the evening Uriah went out to sleep on his mat among his master's servants; he did not go home.**14** In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it with Uriah.**15** In it he wrote, "Put Uriah in the front line where the fighting is fiercest. Then withdraw from him so that he will be struck down and die."*

16 *So while Joab had the city under siege, he put Uriah at a place where he knew the strongest defenders were.*

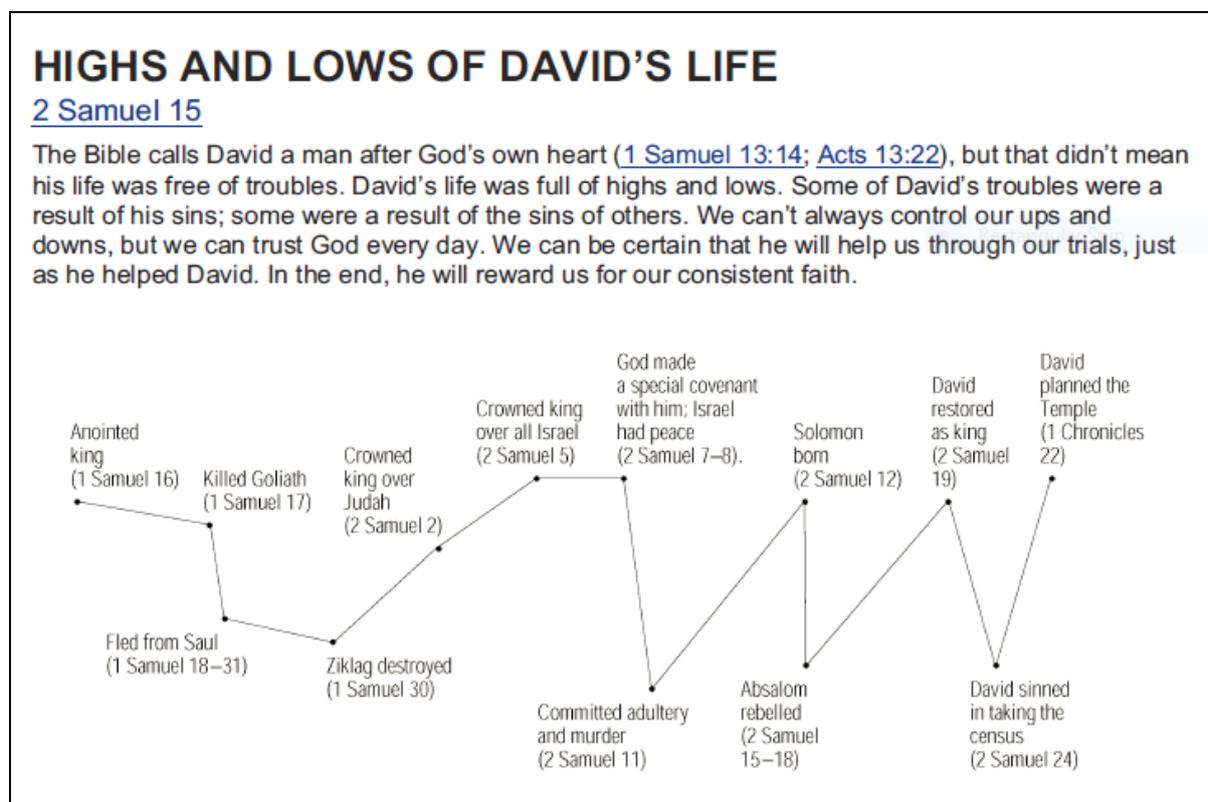
17 *When the men of the city came out and fought against Joab, some of the men in David's army fell; moreover, Uriah the Hittite died."*

2 Sam 11:1-17

In the episode with Bathsheba, David allowed himself to fall deeper and deeper into sin. Specifically:

1. He abandoned his purpose as king by staying home from war (11:1)
2. He focussed on his own desires (11:3)
3. When temptation came, he looked into it, rather than turning away from it (11:4)
4. He sinned deliberately (11:4)
5. He tried to cover up his son by deceiving others (11:6-15)
6. He committed murder to continue the cover-up (11:15,17)

Eventually the sin was exposed and punished (2 Sam 12:9-14), and David had to live with the dire consequences of these actions.



Joab, fighting on behalf of the king, sends word with a messenger to inform him that Uriah has died in battle. Note David's reaction to the news:

"Say this to Joab: 'Don't let this upset you; the sword devours one as well as another. Press the attack against the city and destroy it.'

2 Sam 11:25

Compare this with the deep grief David shows for Saul, Jonathan and Abner. This reaction is callous and insensitive. David sounds like he has become callous to his own sin. Covering up the sin of adultery with the sin of murder has desensitised his spirit, to both God's law, and

to the rights of others. Bathsheba, in contrast, mourns him. However, she later is brought to the palace, becomes one of David's wives, and bears him a son (1 Sam 11:27)

How do you tell a king he is wrong?

It is never easy to call someone out when they have done wrong. How much harder when that man is the king? We often struggle to confront those in authority, and need to be very sure of our ground when we do so. Nathan, God's prophet, has already messed up once with David (telling him to go ahead with plans for a Temple when God has not given permission). It is worth bearing this in mind when you read Chapter 12.

Nathan approaches the problem with great skill and tact, creating a story to make David aware of what he had actually done. David initially did not recognize himself as the villain of Nathan's story of the rich man who used the sheep of a poor man to entertain a traveller.



POINTS TO PONDER

- *Do you condemn character flaws in others?*
- *Which friends or family members do you find it easy to criticize?*
- *What would happen if you could truly understand their feelings?*
- *If you condemn others, might you also be condemning similar traits in yourself?*

Nathan accuses the king, and pronounces a staggering judgement:

"Why did you despise the word of the Lord by doing what is evil in his eyes? You struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and took his wife to be your own. You killed him with the sword of the Ammonites.

10 *Now, therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you despised me and took the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your own.'*

11 *"This is what the Lord says: 'Out of your own household I am going to bring calamity upon you. Before your very eyes I will take your wives and give them to one who is close to you, and he will lie with your wives in broad daylight.*

12 *You did it in secret, but I will do this thing in broad daylight before all Israel."*

2 Sam 12:9-12

The immediate consequence of this pronouncement is that David repents before Nathan, but the son born to David and Bathsheba becomes fatally ill. David pleads with God for the

child's life, to no avail. Had David realised beforehand the consequences of his actions, he may well have thought twice. During this tragic time, David penned Psalm 51, which gives incredible insight into his feelings at the time.

Psalm 51

“Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions.

2 Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.

3 For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.

4 Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge.

5 Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.

6 Surely you desire truth in the inner parts; you teach me wisdom in the inmost place.

7 Cleanse me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

8 Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice.

9 Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity.

10 Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

11 Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me.

12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.

13 Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will turn back to you.

14 Save me from bloodguilt, O God, the God who saves me, and my tongue will sing of your righteousness.

15 O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.

16 You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings.

17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

18 In your good pleasure make Zion prosper; build up the walls of Jerusalem.

19 Then there will be righteous sacrifices, whole burnt offerings to delight you; then bulls will be offered on your altar.”

More family problems – the Rape of Tamar (2 Samuel 13)

Amnon was David's firstborn son. It is possible he had Amnon lined up to be king after him, although there was no actual tradition of dynastic monarchy yet in Israel. Chapter 13 tells of a traumatic experience when Amnon falls in love with his half sister Tamar. Any sexual relationship between them was strictly forbidden, as it was the sin of incest (Leviticus 18:6-18, also Deut. 22:28-29). Amnon manipulates both Tamar and his friend Jonadab into being in the same room alone with Tamar. Despite her desperate pleas, Amnon rapes her (13:14). Instantly, Amnon changes, and “hates her with intense hatred” (13:15). He tried to push her away. By doing so, he would have made it look as if Tamar had made a shameful proposition

to him, and there were no witnesses on her behalf because Amnon had dismissed the servants. Such an act destroyed her chance of marriage, as she was no longer a virgin. She tore her own richly ornamented robe, put ashes on her head, and fled weeping.

David's 3rd son, Absalom, now enters the drama. Initially he counsels her to "be quiet", and not to "take this thing to heart" (13:20). David hears about it, and is furious, but does **absolutely nothing**. Absalom says nothing either..

Final Points to ponder



- *How is David handling being king?*
- *How does David handle his children – what lessons can we learn?*
- *How does he honour promises?*
- *How do you honour promises?*

Next time – what is Absalom up to?

APPENDIX 1

DAVID'S FAMILY TROUBLES2 Samuel 11

David's many wives caused him much grief. And as a result of David's sin with Bathsheba, God said that murder would be a constant threat in his family, his family would rebel, and someone else would sleep with his wives. All this happened as the prophet Nathan had predicted. The consequences of sin affect not only us but those we know and love. Remember that the next time you are tempted to sin.

Wife	Children	What Happened?
Michal (Saul's daughter)	She was childless	David gave her five nephews to the Gibeonites to be killed because of Saul's sins.
Ahinoam (from Jezreel)	Amnon, David's firstborn	He raped Tamar, his half sister, and was later murdered by Absalom in revenge.
Maacah (daughter of King Talmi of Geshur)	Absalom, third son Tamar, the only daughter mentioned by name	Absalom killed Amnon for raping Tamar and then fled to Geshur. Later he returned, only to rebel against David. He set up a tent on the roof and slept with 10 of his father's concubines there. His pride led to his death.
Haggith	Adonijah, fourth son. He was very handsome, but it is recorded that he was never disciplined	He set himself up as king before David's death. His plot was exposed, and David spared his life, but his half brother Solomon later had him executed.
Bathsheba	Unnamed son	Died in fulfillment of God's punishment for David and Bathsheba's adultery.
Bathsheba	Solomon	Became the next king of Israel. Ironically Solomon's many wives caused his downfall.