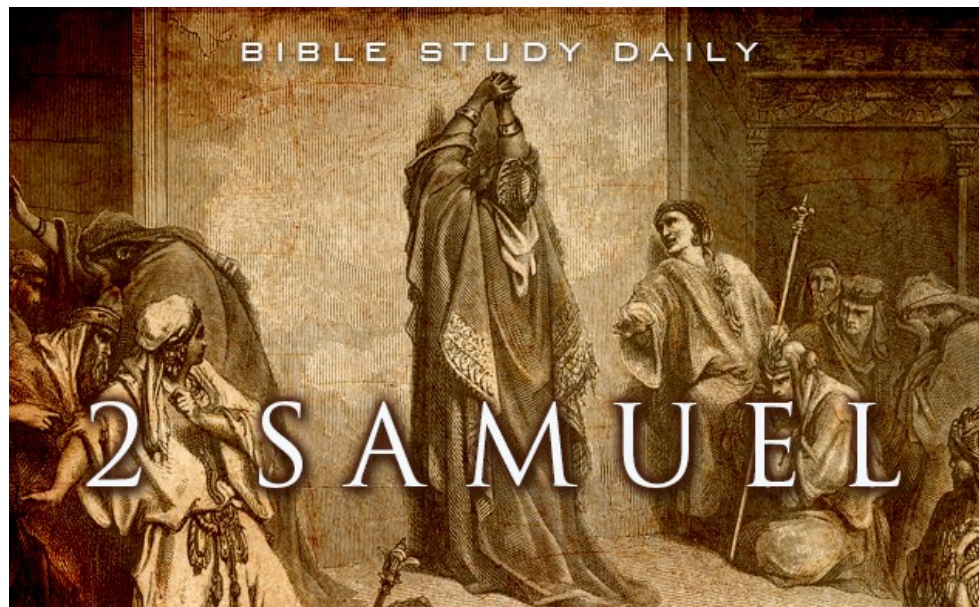




BIBLE STUDY DAILY



This document contains the introduction to the book of 2 Samuel as well as my study notes for the book.

Name

The title “2 Samuel” is derived from the name of Samuel who was a prophet and the central character reporting the events of this time period. Originally the books of 1 Samuel and 2 Samuel were a single book known simply as Samuel. However when the books were translated into Greek (about 150 B.C.) the books of Samuel and Kings were combined into one large book (titled First, Second, Third, and Fourth Kingdom). Later 1 and 2 Samuel were again separated from the books of Kings. Note: in the Latin and Vulgate Bibles they are referred to as First, Second, Third, and Fourth Kings.

Author

The book of 2 Samuel does not specifically name an author. 1 Chronicles 29:29 states that the prophets Nathan and Gad were alive at this time recording events in Israel’s history, so it is possible that they may have contributed to 2 Samuel.

Genre

History

Literary Form

Historical Narrative

Time Frame

The record of 2 Samuel begins at following the death of Saul, tracking David’s rise to power, his reign as king over Judah and Israel. 2 Samuel ends with details of Absalom’s (David’s son) rebellion against his father, and David’s last days.

Emphasis

The book of 2 Samuel emphasizes

David’s grief over Saul’s death.

David’s rise to power and reign as king of Judah.

David’s military victories.

The uniting of the northern and southern kingdoms.

Absalom’s rebellion against David

Outline

Chapters 1-10 record David’s military victories, while chapter 11-24 record his personal defeats. The turning point comes in chapter 11 and David’s sin of adultery.

1) David’s response to Saul’s death 1:1 – 4:12

- 
- 2) David's reign as king over Judah and Israel 5:1 – 15:6
 - 3) Absalom's rebellion and David's final days as king 15:7 – 24:25

What I Noticed Today (2 Samuel 1-2)

2 Samuel 1

2 Samuel 1 continues from 1 Samuel 31. David learns of the death of Saul and Jonathan who had been killed in battle.

In verses 1-10 a man claiming to be an Amalekite brought the news of Saul's death to David. He claimed to have killed Saul and offered Saul's crown and armband as proof.

Note: The man's false claim that he killed Saul differs from what is recorded in 1 Samuel 31:3-6.

In verses 11-16 David tore his clothes and he mourned Saul and those who had died until evening. David had the man who claimed to have killed Saul brought to him and questioned him. The man said he was an Amalekite. David, referring to Saul as the "Lord's anointed" ordered the Amalekite executed for killing Saul.

In verses 19-27 as a demonstration of his deep respect for Saul and Jonathan, David composed a lament in their honor that was to be recorded in the book of Jashar (a book referred to in Joshua 10:13) and taught to all who lived in Judah. It was known as the "Song of the Bow."

2 Samuel 2


In 2 Samuel 2, a conflict arises between David and Abner.

In verses 1-8 David inquired of the Lord whether he should go up to any cities in Judah and God answered yes, go up to Hebron. So David took his family and his army to Hebron and settled there.

- David was anointed as the king over the house of Judah.
- David learned that it was the men of Jabesh-gilead who had buried Saul and his sons.
- David sent messengers to the men of Jabesh-gilead blessing them for burying Saul and his sons and announced they had nothing to fear from him being named king in Saul's place.

In verses 8-11 at the same time Abner, Saul's cousin (1 Samuel 14:50), moved Saul's oldest surviving son, Ish-bosheth (who was 40 years old) to Mahanaim and made him king over Gilead, Asher, Jezreel, Ephraim, and Benjamin (all of the territory of the Israelites except for Judah).

Note: This action set in play a division between the northern and southern tribes of Israel.



In verses 12-32 Abner and his soldiers marched out against Joab and David's soldiers by the pool of Gibeon.

- Abner suggested a battle between 12 representatives of each group.
- When they killed each other, a broader civil war ensued in which only 19 men of David's army were killed, while 360 of Abner's men were killed.
- Despite all the ill will between Saul and David, David maintained great respect for Saul as "the Lord's anointed." Despite Saul's many faults, David only spoke well of Saul.
- Abner, in direct contradiction to God's will, established Ish-bosheth as king. Failure to submit to God's will led to division among the tribes, and the death of many soldiers.

Some thoughts for further consideration:

- *We would do well to hold those whom God's places into leadership with high regard, as David did with Saul. The challenge I think, is understanding in our time, "who really is God's anointed?"*
- *We would also do well to consider the impact of creating division among God's people. Abner went directly against God's will causing division. The same thing happens today when people create division in the church!*

What I Noticed Today (2 Samuel 3-5)

2 Samuel 3

The war between the house of Saul and the house of David continued.

Note: If the war between the house of Saul and David lasted throughout the reign of Ish-bosheth then it went on for about two years (2 Samuel 2:10).

In verse 1: David became stronger, and the house of Saul became weaker.

In verses 4-5 David had six wives and fathered six sons (one son per wife) in Hebron.

In verses 6-11 During the time that David was in Hebron, Abner (Ish-bosheth's general) became stronger.

- Ish-bosheth accused Abner of sleeping with one of Saul's concubines, which was a privilege of only the king.
- We don't know whether or not Abner did sleep with the concubine, but the result was that Abner switched sides, went to David, and proclaimed his loyalty to David.

In verses 12-16 Abner sent messengers to David offering to make a covenant with him and hand the entire land of Israel over to David.

- David agreed to make a covenant with Abner but required that his wife Michal be restored to him.
- David then sent messengers to Ish-bosheth demanding that Michal be returned to him and Ish-bosheth complied.

Note: In Abner's proclamation he described David's land as going from Dan to Beersheba. Dan was the furthest city in the north, and Beersheba was the furthest city in the south. So in effect, Abner was describing David's land as a united Judah and Israel.

In verses 17-39 Abner gathered men from Israel and met with David in Hebron. They solidified their covenant and Abner left to gather all the tribes together under David's leadership.

- David and Abner made a covenant together, but this did not sit well with Joab, David's commander (Abner had killed Joab's brother Asahel, see 2 Samuel 2:23).
- Joab followed Abner to Hebron and killed him.

Note: Hebron was a city of refuge so at the very least Joab should have submitted the matter to the city elders for adjudication.

- David was furious when he learned about Joab killing Abner. He swore a curse upon Joab and his family and mourned the passing of Abner.

2 Samuel 4

Ish-bosheth is assassinated.

In verses 1–4 when Ish-bosheth heard about Abner’s death he and the Israelites were dismayed (probably because they finally realized that God was favoring David).

In verses 5-8 two of Saul’s captains (Rechab and Baanah) came and murdered Ish-bosheth, cut off his head, and proudly took it to David. They claimed the assassination was at the Lord’s hand as vengeance for what Saul had done to David.

In verses 9-12 David was furious that they had killed Ish-bosheth and ordered the men who assassinated him killed.

2 Samuel 5

2 Samuel 5 recounts David’s anointing as king of Israel in Hebron.

In verses 1-4 the leaders of all the tribes of Israel assembled at Hebron, made a covenant with David and anointed him king over all the tribes of Israel.


- David was 30 years old when he began to reign and he reigned 40 years; 7 -1/2 years over Judah in Hebron, and 33 years over all Israel in Jerusalem.
- In verses 5-12 David then went to Jerusalem, drove out the Jebusites, and renamed the city, the City of David. David continued to grow in strength because God was with him.

King Hiram of Tyre sent envoys to David with logs, carpenters, and stonemasons who built a palace for David.

In verses 13-16 while in Jerusalem David took for himself more wives and concubines and had more children.

In verses 17-25 once again the Philistines came up against David.

- David inquired of the Lord and was told to go up against the Philistines.
- The Philistines came up against David a second time.
- David inquired of the Lord again and the Lord gave David specific instructions for the battle.
- The Lord actually went before David, while David attacked from the rear. The Lord gave David victory again and David struck down the Philistines all the way from Geba to Gezer (see also 1 Chronicles 14:16, a distance of about 15 miles).



Some thoughts for additional consideration:

- *David trusted in the Lord and followed Him faithfully. As a result, David grew stronger and stronger and was finally able to unite the northern and southern tribes of Judah and Israel into one united nation.*
- *Division and dissension remain among the people of God today. We will never be strong as a people of God until we realize that unity does not come from having a common enemy, but from having and obeying our King!*

What I Noticed Today (2 Samuel 6-9)

2 Samuel 6

David decided to move the Ark from Baale-judah (aka Kiriath-jearim) to Jerusalem

He gathered together 30,000 “choice men” from all of Israel.

Note: We don't know who these men were, but I suspect they were all the priests, tribal leaders, and influential men throughout all Israel.

Note: Unfortunately, David didn't consult with God about his plan, nor did he follow the Levitical laws for the transportation of the Ark (Exodus 25:12-15).

The Ark was placed on a new cart. David and the Israelites were celebrating with all kinds of musical instruments as they walked.

When one of the oxen pulling the cart stumbled Uzziah mistakenly reached out and touched the Ark.

The Lord immediately killed him for his irreverence.

David wisely waited several months before he made a second attempt at bringing the Ark to Jerusalem, and this time, he did it according to the Levitical law (1 Chronicles 15).

As David entered the city of Jerusalem Michah, his wife looked out and saw him dancing before the Lord and she despised him. She confronted David when he returned home accusing him of being vulgar. David said he was celebrating before the Lord. Saul's daughter Michah had no children the rest of her life.

2 Samuel 7

2 Samuel 7 begins with a confusing situation between David and the prophet Nathan.

In verses 1-29 David told Nathan his plan to build a house for God, and Nathan told David to proceed.

- But Nathan hadn't bothered to consult with God.
- Later that night the Lord told Nathan, 'no David is not going to build my house, but I will build his!'

Note: Clearly what the Lord was referring to was not a physical house but that he would build the house of David, his descendants.

- Nathan told David all the words of the vision to David.

- David responded to God’s rejection of his plan with a heartfelt and humble prayer of thanksgiving to God.

Note: David referred to himself humbly before God as “your servant” ten times, and to God as “O Sovereign Lord” seven times.

2 Samuel 8

David’s many military victories over Israel’s enemies are recorded in 2 Samuel 8.

David expanded Israel’s territory, and he dedicated the plunder to God (to provide for the building of the Temple). David defeated:

- the Philistines,
- the Moabites,
- the Zobahites, and
- the Arameans.

God was with David wherever he went! Joab was commander of David’s army. Jehoshaphat was the court historian. Zadok and Ahimelech were priests. Seriah was the court secretary. Benaiah and David’s sons were chief officials.

2 Samuel 9

David still had a soft spot in his heart for Saul and his family. 2 Samuel 9 records David seeking out someone from Saul’s family to whom he could show favor.

David asks and is told there is one of Jonathan’s sons who is still alive.

Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, was brought to David.

David restored all of Saul’s property to Mephibosheth and invited him to eat at the King’s table the rest of his life.

Some thoughts for additional consideration:

- *In these chapters we see David make two rash decisions. Neither was wrong, but at issue is how he planned to carry out his decision. The first was in deciding to move the Ark without consulting God or the priests about the proper way to move the Ark. The second was in deciding to build a house for God without consulting God himself.*
- *How often are we like David when we want to do something for the Lord, but God says no or not yet? David provided a great example of how we should respond in his prayer of thanksgiving to God. Ultimately, God's plan was infinitely greater than David's.*
- *Have you ever experienced a time when like David you made rash decisions that were contrary to God's will?*

What I Noticed Today (2 Samuel 10-12)

2 Samuel 10

War erupts with the Ammonites

In verses 1-5 David continued a peaceful relationship with the Ammonites established by Saul (1 Samuel 11:1-11). The peace ended when the king died and was replaced by his son, Hanun.

- Hanun listened to his own advisors by rejecting and humiliating David's emissaries.

In verses 6-14 Hanun realized his actions against David's emissaries had started a war.

- Hanun hired 33,000 Syrian (Arameans) soldiers from Beth-rehob, Zobah, Maacah, and Tob to fight with them against the Israelites.
- David sent Joab out with the army under the command of Joab.
- Joab defeated both the Syrians and the Ammonites, but rather than pursuing them when they retreated he let them go, preferring instead to return to Jerusalem.

In verses 15-19 the Syrians assembled additional forces from across the Euphrates River and came up against Israel a second time.

- David assembled the entire Israelite army and led the army with Joab defeating the Syrians.
- The Syrians made peace with the Israelites and became their subjects.
- After this, the Arameans were afraid to help the Ammonites again.

2 Samuel 11

The story of Bathsheba and David begins in 2 Samuel 11.

In verses 1-12 rather than leading the army out to war, David elected to stay behind, while Joab went out to battle against the Ammonites.

- David saw Bathsheba bathing on her rooftop, inquired about her and learned that she was married to Uriah the Hittite, who is in David's army.
- David had Bathsheba brought to him. He slept with her and she became pregnant.
- To cover up his sin, David schemed to have Uriah brought back from the battle to "report" to him and sleep with his wife.
- In verses 14-27 Uriah didn't sleep with Bathsheba so David hatched yet

another plan to cover his sin.

- David had Joab place Uriah where the fiercest fighting was so that Uriah would be killed in battle.
- Bathsheba learned that her husband had been killed in battle and she mourned for him.
- After her period of mourning, David sent for her and married her. She bore him a son but the Lord considered what David had done as evil.

Note: David had taken Bathsheba to be his wife. He must have thought he had covered up his sin, but God knew what he had done.

2 Samuel 12

In verses 1-6 God sent Nathan the prophet to confront David by telling him the parable of the rich man taking the poor man's sheep.

- David was enraged and said the rich man deserves to die. Because he showed no pity on the poor man he must pay four times the price of the lamb.

In verses 7-15a Nathan delivered a long and stinging rebuke to David from God.

- This included God's judgement that his child would die.
- David would always have war.
- Evil would come out of his own house.
- His own wives would be taken away and given to someone else (fulfilled when we get to 2 Samuel 16:20).
- David repented of his sin, but the judgement of God against David and his family remained.


In verses 15b-23 Bathsheba's child through adultery by David became ill.

- David pleaded with the Lord to heal the boy. He fasted for seven days before the boy died.
- When David heard that the child had died he worshipped the Lord and ate.

In verses 24-25 David and Bathsheba had another child, Solomon, whose name was also Jedidiah, which means "beloved of the Lord."

In verses 26-31 war with the Ammonites continued. Joab surrounded Rabbah, the Ammonite royal city.

- Joab sent word to David and told him to come and finish taking the city.
- David assembled troops and came to Rabbah.
- David conquered Rabbah and plundered the city.

- 
- He put the people of Rabbah to work making tools for the Israelites.
 - David and the army returned to Jerusalem.

Some thoughts for additional consideration:

- *David placed himself in a position to be tempted by not going out with the army. From the comfort of his home, he became an adulterer, a liar, a schemer, and a murderer. The consequence of this sin may have been covered from man's eyes but it had not escaped God's attention, and there was a price to pay for this sin. Based on Levitical law (Exodus 20:10) both David and Bathsheba should have been stoned.*
- *When we sin and fear being discovered it is not usual to act like David; to lie, scheme, and to seek ways to cover up our sin. While we may be successful in covering our sin from man's eyes, our sin is always present before God. We need to repent of our sin and realize that while God will forgive us, there are still consequences to our sin.*

What I Noticed Today (2 Samuel 13-14)

2 Samuel 13 & 14 reveal dysfunction in David's family.

2 Samuel 13

Amnon raped his sister, Tamar,

In verses 1-20 David's son Amnon (mother Ahinoam) lusted for his half-sister Tamar (mother Maacah).

Note: Some translations of 2 Samuel 13:1 say Amnon "loved" Tamar, but the word used there could also be translated "was infatuated with her." The way this story goes I doubt there was any love involved.

- Amnon schemed to get Tamar into his room, and despite her protestations he raped her. When he was done he threw her out of his room and sent her away in shame.
- Tamar left tore her clothes put ashes on her head and went away crying out (the usual signs of mourning).
- Tamar's brother, Absalom, learned what had happened to Tamar and told her to do nothing. Tamar came and lived in his house as a desolate woman.

Note: This created a very difficult situation for the family. By Levitical law, he was not allowed to marry her (Leviticus 18:11). Rape was a violation of the law (Deuteronomy 22:25-29). However, a man who raped a virgin was required to marry her, pay a bride price, and was never allowed to divorce her (Deuteronomy 22:28-29).


In verses 21-39 Absalom murdered Amnon:

- David was mad when he heard what happened, but did nothing.
- After waiting two years, Tamar's brother Absalom schemed to get Amnon away from Jerusalem and ordered servants to kill Amnon.
- Fearing his father, Absalom fled to Geshur to stay with Talmai, his maternal grandfather (2 Samuel 3:3). He stayed there three years.
- After these three years, David longed to reunite with Absalom because he had finished grieving for Amnon.

2 Samuel 14

David is reunited with Absalom.

In verses 1-12 Joab schemed to reunite Absalom with David by having a wise woman pretend to see David on another matter.

- 
- Joab told the woman exactly what to say and she went to see David.
 - The woman told David a story about being a widow with two sons. The two sons argued in the field and one killed the other as they were fighting.
 - David agreed to issue an order to save the woman's son from the avenger of blood.

In verses 12-33 the woman then brought up the issue of the exile of Absalom.

- David confronted the woman asking if she had been put up to appearing before him by Joab. She admitted that Joab had ordered her to tell this story to the king.
- David relented and ordered Joab to allow Absalom to return to Jerusalem, but David to see him until Joab once again interceded on Absalom's behalf.

Some thoughts for additional consideration:

- *There is a lot of scheming and deception going on here, not to mention David doesn't hold his own family members accountable for their actions. David doesn't deal with Amnon, he doesn't seem to do anything for his daughter who was raped, and he doesn't do anything when Absalom takes revenge on his sister by having Amnon killed.*
- *Additionally, David allowed Absalom to return to Jerusalem, with no indication that he had repented of the murder of his half-brother, Amnon.*
- *I suspect sometimes it is easier to make hard decisions for others than it is when it involves your own family. It's easier to proclaim judgment when the judgment doesn't involve your own flesh and blood! God calls us to be leaders in our families, even when it is hard!*

What I Noticed Today (2 Samuel 15-16)

2 Samuel 15

Absalom rebels.

In verses 1-6 David's son, Absalom, began his quest for power.

- He began to gather followers and even sat at the city gate, intercepting people with grievances suggesting their claims were legitimate but the king had no one to hear them, but if he were made a judge he would hear them.

Note: The city gate was traditionally where the elders gathered so it seems unlikely that Absalom's activity would go on unnoticed day-after-day. If the elders did know what was going on did they ever say anything to David? If they did say something to David, why in the world didn't he do something about it?

In verses 7-12 Absalom deceived David, making an excuse to go to Hebron to fulfill a vow.

- Absalom gathered his band of followers in Hebron. 200 other men followed along unaware of Absalom's intentions. Absalom began offering sacrifices and sent for David's advisor Ahithophel.

In verses 13-23 an informer came and told David what Absalom was doing in Hebron.

- When David heard of this he gathered up his servants and fled from Jerusalem in fear of Absalom.
- 600 men came with David as they marched out of the city including Ittai the Gittite (from Gath in Philistia) who swore allegiance to David.

Note: This is the same David that killed Goliath and conquered Israel's enemies, and he can't handle his impudent son?

In verses 24-29 Zadok and Abiathar. Levite priests were carrying the Ark of God out of the city.

- David told them to return with their families and take the Ark back to Jerusalem.
- David also told them he would wait in the wilderness until he got word from them that it was safe to return.

In verses 30-37 David travelled to the Mount of Olives.

- David was told that his advisor, Ahithophel had joined up with Absalom.

- David prayed the Lord would turn the counsel of Ahithophel to foolishness.
- David created a small network of spies to keep track of Absalom. One of the spies, Hushai, arrived back in Jerusalem just as Absalom arrived. Hushai's task was to counteract the advice of Ahithophel who had already aligned himself with Absalom.

2 Samuel 16

Ziba helps David and Shimei curses David.

In verses 1-4 Ziba, Mephibosheth's servant met David with a gift of food and donkeys for transportation.

- He told David that Mephibosheth had stayed in Jerusalem in hopes of regaining his grandfather, Saul's, kingdom.

Note: There is so much lying and conniving going on here we don't know if what Ziba said is true or not. If so, Mephibosheth had turned against the one man who had reached out to restore, protect, and care for him. Regardless,

- David believed Ziba, so he turned Mephibosheth's estate over to Ziba.

In verses 5-14 when David arrived in Bahurim (east of the Mount of Olives) a man named Shimei (a member of Saul's tribe) saw David.

- He cursed David and threw stones at him accusing him of orchestrating or participating in the murder of Saul.
- David's bodyguard, Abishai asked permission to kill Shimei but David said no, thinking the Lord may have told Shimei to curse him.


In verses 15-23 Absalom arrived in Jerusalem.

- Hushai met up with Absalom and when questioned said his loyalty would be with the one the Lord and the people of Israel had chosen.
- Absalom asked Ahithophel what he should do. Ahithophel told Absalom to sleep with his father David's concubines to demonstrate his superiority in hopes of getting others to join his cause.

Note: Sleeping with the king's concubines was an indication of succession of leadership.

Some thoughts for additional consideration:

- *Because David never dealt with Absalom killing Amnon, he now has to deal with him as an insurrectionist. Absalom used his charm, his good looks, and his charisma to flatter and lie to build a following of loyal supporters. Rather than dealing with Absalom early in his quest for power, David allowed him to grow stronger and stronger until he had to flee his own capital city.*

- 
- *In this passage, we see very clearly how a situation within a family can grow out of control when it isn't dealt with immediately. Not controlling his own family impacted not just their lives but also the lives of the people of Israel.*
 - *The same is true for us today. Whether it is the family or our businesses, the failure of a leader to deal decisively with issues always makes the situation worse.*

What I Noticed Today (2 Samuel 17-18)

2 Samuel 17

In verses 1-4 Ahithophel laid out his plan to Absalom to take 12,000 men to attack and kill David immediately. The proposal seemed good to Absalom and the elders of Israel.

In verses 5-14 Absalom sought out Hushai for his advice.

- Hushai, suggested they assemble all the troops throughout the land and attack David and his entire army.
- Hushai's plan appealed to Absalom's pride and desire to completely destroy his father.

Note: Hushai knew this plan would take some time to implement, giving David time to rest and organize his own forces.

- The Lord decreed Ahithophel's advice be ignored in order to bring about the ruin of Absalom. So Absalom followed the advice of Hushai.

In verses 15-23 Hushai sent messengers to tell David what to expect.

- When Ahithophel realized his advice had not been followed he went home, put his affairs in order, and committed suicide.

Note: Ahithophel realized since his advice had not been followed David would regain the throne. He would be considered a traitor so he killed himself.

In verses 24-29 David went to Mahanaim.

- Absalom appointed Amasa over the army in place of Joab.
- Absalom and the army marched to Gilead and camped there.
- While in Mahanaim, Shobi, Machir, and Barzillai brought supplies and food for David and his men.


Note: Shobi, Machir, and Barzillai were chieftains who remained loyal to David. Machir was the man who cared for Jonathan's son, Mephibosheth before David had him brought to the palace in Jerusalem.

2 Samuel 18

Absalom is defeated and killed.

In verses 1-5 David organized the army and prepared for battle:

- David wisely gathered his army together and divided it into three parts with three commanding generals; Joab, Abishai, and Ittai.

- 
- David planned to march out with the army but the men implored him not to go so he stayed behind.
 - He told the generals and all his troops to treat Absalom “gently for my sake.”

In verses 6-8 David’s army engaged the army of Israel in the forest of Ephraim and defeated them inflicting 20,000 casualties.

In verses 9-18 In the heat of the battle Absalom got hung up in a tree.

- David’s men found him and reported it to Joab.
- Joab descended on Absalom and struck him with three javelins into his heart.
- If that wasn’t enough he had ten men get Absalom down and strike him until he was dead.
- They then buried Absalom under a pile of rocks.

In verses 19-33 runners were sent back to Jerusalem to let David know that they had won the battle, but David seemed most interested in the welfare of Absalom.

- When David was told that Absalom had been killed he went into his chamber weeping, saying he wished he had died instead of his son.

Some thoughts for additional consideration:

- *It is hard for me to understand David’s continued support for his son Absalom. Absalom had turned the country against his own father. He built an army and attempted to kill his father in order to become king. A vast number of men died as a result of Absalom’s treason. Yet, when David hears the news of their victory he is more concerned with the loss of his son than in the loss of 20,000 men of Israel.*
- *Sometimes as parents we can become blinded to the faults of our children. The same thing happens in business. This blindness leads to chaos and destruction that reaches far beyond the family or the business in which it occurs.*

What I Noticed Today (2 Samuel 19-20)

2 Samuel 19

David is restored as King.

In verses 1-8a David grieved the death of his son Absalom to the point that his army returned to Jerusalem as losers rather than as victors.

- Joab confronted David about his grieving for his traitorous son Absalom.
- Joab urged David to go appear before the people and encourage the soldiers who had risked their lives to retain David as king.

In verses 8b-13 the Israelite army that had followed Absalom returned to their homes.

- But the elders made no move to restore David as king even though he had delivered them from the Philistines and was victorious over Absalom.
- David sent word to the priests Zadok and Abiathar to go the elders of Israel and ask why they were reluctant to restore David as king.
- David attempted to reunite the people by forgiving those who had rebelled against him.
- David even promised to make Amasa commander over the army over Joab (Amasa had been Absalom's general, 2 Samuel 17:25).

Note: David may have learned that it was Joab who had killed Absalom so he replaced him as commander of the army.

In verses 14-23 As David was returning to Jerusalem Shimei, who had cursed David when he left Jerusalem (2 Samuel 16:5-8), was first to welcome David back. Shimei begged David to forgive him for the things he said before. Abishai wanted to execute Shimei for speaking against David but David said there was to be no more bloodshed this day.

Note: Shimei was killed some time later because he violated Solomon's edict in 1 Kings 2:36-46.

In verses 24-30 when David came back to Jerusalem, Mephibosheth came out to meet him.

- Mephibosheth had the appearance of someone who had been in mourning while David was gone.
- Mephibosheth explained that Ziba, his servant, had left him behind, and had lied to David.
- Knowing that Ziba had lied, David rewarded Mephibosheth by restoring

half of his property but allowed Ziba to retain the other half.

In verses 31-38 Barzillai, the rich man who had helped David by providing for him, was invited to come to Jerusalem and be with David.

- But, because of his age, Barzillai declined, preferring instead to remain in his homeland.
- Instead, Barzillai asked that Chinham (also spelled Kimham) be given the honor.
- David agreed, blessed Barzillai, and returned across the Jordan.

In verses 39-43 as David and his men arrived at Gilgal a group of men from Judah and Israel met them. The men of Israel argued with the men of Judah wondering why the Judeans had taken David away secretly. The men of Israel said they had ten shares in the king (10 tribes) and were first to speak of restoring David as king.

Note: There is nothing in the record that suggests the claim of the Israelites about restoring David was true.

2 Samuel 20

In verses 1-3 the argument between the Judeans and Israelites continued until Sheba, a Benjamite, attempted another coup by rallying the men of Israel.


In verses 4-10, this time, David wisely decided to put the insurrection down.

- He commanded Amasa to gather the army within three days and pursue Sheba.
- When Amasa didn't take action, David ordered Abishai to take command of the army.
- Abishai took his soldiers including Joab and his men, the Cherithites, and the Pelethites to pursue Sheba.
- When Joab caught up to Amasa he pretended to greet him killed him with his dagger.

Note: Joab and Amasa were cousins. Both were sons of David's half-sisters (1 Chronicles 2:16-17).

In verses 11-22 Joab took command of the army pursuing Sheba who fled to the city of Abel of Beth-maacah.

- Joab surrounded the city and laid siege to it.
- An unnamed woman implored Joab not to destroy a city of Israel. Joab said he only wanted Sheba to be turned over to him and he would leave.
- The people of Abel, in order to save their city from destruction, killed Sheba, cut off his head, and gave it to Joab.



In verses 23-26 Joab assumed command over the entire Israelite army once again. Benaiah was over the Cherithites and Pelethites. Adoram was over the forced labor. Jehoshaphat was the court historian. Sheva was the court secretary. Zadok and Abiathar were priests. Ira was David's personal priest.

Note: David may have tolerated Joab's killing of Amasa at the time, but he instructed Solomon to deal with Joab (1 Kings 2:5-6).

Some thoughts for additional consideration:

- *David hurt the morale of the people who had been loyal to him, by caring more for his slain son than them. In his attempt to reunite the people he showed favoritism to some, which angered others. That resulted in inter-tribal jealousy and yet another rebellion. Perhaps some of the poor decisions David made through this crisis came about as a result of not seeking the Lord. Often in previous difficulties we read of David seeking the will of God, but through most of these recent chapters, he acts seemingly on his own.*
- *Leaders in the midst of a crisis have many difficult situations that need to be addressed, and often there is no single answer that will make everyone happy. I think the learning for us is that while we need to be in a position to restore and forgive those who come against us, we must not neglect the people who remained loyal to us all along! We should also be on our knees before the Lord seeking His wisdom!*

What I Noticed Today (2 Samuel 21-22)

2 Samuel 21-24

The last four chapters of 2 Samuel are like an addendum. They are additional information about David's reign, though not tied chronologically to the rest of the book.

2 Samuel 21

In verses 1-10 a three-year famine in the land caused David to inquire of the Lord, and God told him the famine was a result of Saul having killed some Gibeonites (who were descendants of the Amorites).

- The Gibeonites had remained in the land since the days of Joshua, and the Israelites had promised not to kill them (Joshua 9:3-17).
- Yet Saul had not honored the oath.
- The Gibeonites demanded that seven of Saul's sons be turned over to them to be hanged.
- David complied, saving Mephibosheth as he had promised Jonathan (1 Samuel 20:15-16).
- The Gibeonites hanged Saul's sons in Gibeah (Saul's home town) during the barley harvest (early spring).

In verses 10-14 David gathered together the bodies of the seven sons, and the bones of Saul and Jonathan and buried them in Saul's father's tomb. After this, God lifted the curse on the land in answer to David's prayer.


Note: I wonder why David endured three years of famine in the land before he inquired of the Lord.

In verses 15-22 the Philistines continued to wage war against the Israelites.

- One of the Philistines, a giant, was about to kill David but David's nephew Abishai killed the Philistine.
- Because David was no longer a young man his men asked him to stay out of the battle so he would not be killed.
- Another battle with the Philistines occurred at Gob, and another battle occurred at Gath.

2 Samuel 22

2 Samuel 22 is a psalm of thanksgiving to the Lord that David offered sometime after the initial battles to claim the land and after Saul had died.



Note: This passage bears striking similarities to Psalm 18. The psalm seems to be a look back over his life as David gives God the credit for many military victories, and for sustaining and protecting him through many years of trials and suffering.

Note: Deliverance is a key aspect of this psalm. The word “deliver” is used six times (vv. 1, 2, 18, 20, 40, 49). The image of David’s many years spent in the wilderness is seen in his references to God being his rock, his fortress, and his deliverer. David speaks to the Lord’s faithfulness (vv. 26-28), how the Lord guided and empowered him to fulfill his calling (vv. 29-43), and finally how the Lord had established David in the land (vv. 44-51).

Some thoughts for additional consideration:

- *At times, David was very close to God, and at times he seemed to lead on his own power. But in the end, David recognized that without the Lord guiding and leading him he would never have been able to achieve what he had for the people.*
- *We would do well to be that kind of leader in our family and in our businesses. We would do well to insist on that kind of leadership in our governing agencies. If we had men and women of God faithfully following Him, we wouldn’t be experiencing some of the difficulties we are facing today!*

What I Noticed Today (2 Samuel 23-24)

2 Samuel 23

2 Samuel 23 begins with David's song about leadership.

In verse 1 he refers to being called by God.

In verse 2 he refers to being led by the Holy Spirit.

Verses 3-6 describe a Godly leader as one who rules justly in fear of God, not for selfish gain.

Note: David uses two metaphors to describe the results of a good leader: they are like the sun shining in the morning, and like the rain that makes the grass grow.

Verses 6-7 describe worthless men (presumably leaders) as being like thorns that are thrown away and consumed in a fire.

The balance of 2 Samuel 23 lists the accomplishments of the mighty men that had served David over the years.

- It is interesting that David included Uriah the Hittite in the list since it was David's own treachery that got Uriah killed.
- Of note, is the diversity of David's mighty men who came from a variety of backgrounds, and tribes, and some were foreigners.

2 Samuel 24

2 Samuel 24 relates David's sin in conducting a census among the people.

Note: 1 Chronicles 21:28-22:19 contains a similar account which places the date of this event late in David's reign at the time when David was giving instructions to Solomon for the building of the temple.

In verses 1-17 David orders a census of the Israelites to be conducted:

Verse 1 says that the Lord was angry at Israel and incited David to conduct the census.

Note: We do not know from the text what caused the Lord to be angry at the Israelites.

Note: 1 Chronicles 21:1 says Satan is the one who incited David to conduct the census, which is a seeming conflict with 24:1. Certainly God could use Satan to accomplish his will. God may have allowed David to be tempted, but God did not force David to take the census.

- David ordered Joab to conduct the census. Joab protested but David's

order prevailed.

- It took almost 10 months to complete the census.
- When Joab gave the census numbers to David, David realized he had sinned in ordering the census.
- David confessed his sin to the Lord, but there was still a consequence to be born.
- God gave David his choice of three punishments for Israel to endure.
- David wisely picked three days of pestilence over three years of famine or military losses to their enemies.
- David took responsibility for the sin and asked God to punish him not the people.

In verses 18-25 David built an altar to the Lord:

- Gad came to David and told him he should build an altar to the Lord on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.

Note: Gad was a prophet of the Lord whom we first met in 1 Samuel 22:5.

- David went to Araunah and bought the threshing floor and oxen for the sacrifice for 20 ounces of silver
- David built an altar and sacrificed the oxen as burnt and peace offerings.
- The Lord ended the plague on Israel.

Note: There were situations in which taking a census was allowed (Exodus 30:11-16). But when a census was completed it was to make atonement for the people, and a ransom had to be paid for each person over 20 years old.

Note: I wonder if David thought God really was ordering the census and if David had taken the census in accordance with the Laws God had set forth if God would have forgiven him and not punished Israel.

Some thoughts for additional consideration:

- *I am impressed by David's recognition that leadership is a special calling, that the Holy Spirit should lead leaders, and that leaders should faithfully and justly administer the responsibilities God has given them. We could certainly use a few more leaders like that in our world today!*