

“...He raised up David to be their king, of whom He testified and said,  
**'I HAVE FOUND IN DAVID** the son of Jesse, **A MAN AFTER MY HEART**, who will do all My will.'  
"Of this man's offspring God has brought to Israel a Savior, **JESUS**, as He promised."  
[Acts 13:22-23]

# The Life of King David

*a study workbook for adults*

By Don Hooton

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### **Chronology of King David's Life**

Compiled by William H. Gross (Colorado Springs, 2005)

*This is a suggested chronology of David's life. It is by no means definitive. Few commentators agree on dating, but there is substantial agreement on the sequence.*

- 1040 BC: Saul reigns from roughly 1040—1000 BC
- 1035 BC: David is likely born in Bethlehem between 1040 and 1030 BC.
- 1030 BC: Jonathan is a warrior of whom his own father is jealous (1Sam 13-14) and is fiercely and loyally defended by his men against Saul's intent to kill him.
- 1025 BC: David is anointed by Samuel (1Sam 16) somewhere around the age 10-13—and perhaps hearing of it, Saul keeps David nearby for observation and ready dispatch.
- 1023 BC: David serves Saul in a musical capacity (1Sam 16:17, "provide me a man") but still returns to his father's house to tend sheep – (1Sam 17:15).
- 1020 BC: David defeats Goliath somewhere around 15-17 years of age (1Sam 17)
- 1020 BC: Jonathan, older than David, becomes one in spirit with him (1Sam 18:1).
- 1015 BC: Because of his reputation David was appointed armor-bearer to Saul (1Sam 16:21—it may be mentioned in chap. 16, but the actual event is probably later—i.e., "he [later] became...").
- 1010 BC Saul banishes David from his court, yet he makes him commander of a thousand (1Sam 18:13). David is somewhere around 25 years old.
- 1008 BC: As promised (and to which David asked three times before he fell Goliath), he is rewarded for his success as a warrior and given Saul's daughter Michal, who will become a snare (1Sam 18:21). Michal marries him, and she loves him (1Sam 18:27-28).
- 1007 BC: At Jonathan's warning (and Michal's), David flees from Saul to Samuel at Ramah (1Sam 19). Michal remains behind with Saul. An evil spirit caused Saul to pursue David, but he is stopped by the Spirit of God at Ramah. (Psa 59)
- 1006 BC: David and Jonathan covenant together at Ramah (1Sam 20).
- 1006 BC: David flees to Nob and is helped by Ahimelech the priest (1Sam 21) where David is given the consecrated bread and the sword of Goliath. Doeg the Edomite is present (Psa 56).
- 1006 BC: David flees to Achish, king of the Philistine city of Gath, the first time (1Sam 21:10). He feigns madness to protect himself and his men, and he is expelled (Psa 34).
- 1005 BC: David hides at the Cave at Adullam (1Sam 22:1-5) where he is joined by thirty chiefs. Three enter the camp of the Philistines to get David a drink of water (1Chr 11:15). His father's household joins him there (Psa 142).
- 1005 BC: David takes his parents to Mizpah [Moab]; leaves them with the king (1Sam 22:3-4)
- 1005 BC: Doeg the Edomite, at Saul's command, kills Ahimelech the priest because he helped David and his men. He also kills 85 priests and everyone at Nob for helping David. Abiathar, the son of the priest, flees to David with the ephod (1Sam 22:6-23; Psa 52).
- 1005 BC: David liberates Keilah from the Philistines (1Sam 23:6). Saul hears of it and gathers his forces against David at Keilah. Using the ephod, David learns that the people of

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Keilah will betray him to Saul, and so he flees again. Jonathan visits him at Ziph and covenants with him again (23:16). Ziphites betray David, but God hides him from Saul in the Desert of Ziph (Psa 63).

- 1005 BC: Saul pursues David at en-Gedi (Psa. 54). David cuts off a corner of his robe in the cave near the Crag of the Wild goats. When Saul leaves the cave, David pleads his cause and his intent not to harm Saul (1Sam 24). He returns to his stronghold (Psa 57), just before Samuel dies (1Sam 25:1).
- 1005 BC: David is living nomadically when he encounters Nabal and Abigail at Carmel (1Sam 25). His men protect Nabal's flocks expecting pay but Nabal rebuffs them. David threatens to kill him until Abigail diplomatically intercedes with food and praise. At this point, David is married to Michal and has married Ahinoam of Jezreel (1Sam 25:43). When Nabal dies shortly after this incident, David marries Abigail as well. In David's absence, Saul gives Michal to Paltiel in Gallim, a border town near Jerusalem.
- 1004 BC: David encounters Saul and his 3000 men in his camp at Hakilah, and was betrayed by the Ziphites a second time. He spares Saul's life again (1Sam 26). Saul "repents" of his pursuit of David but David doesn't trust him.
- 1004 BC: David flees to Gath a second time with 600 men and their families. Saul stops his pursuit of David (1Sam 27:4).
- 1003 BC: After living with Achish at Gath (about a month), David asks to move to Ziklag with his men (1Sam 27:6). David "serves" the Philistines for over a year (see 1Sam 29:3). Achish defends David against his officers (1Sam 29:1-11).
- 1000 BC: Samuel dies (1Sam 28:3). Saul solicits the witch of Endor to call up Samuel (1Sam 28:4-7). He prophesies Saul will die the next day. In a battle with the Philistines on Mt. Gilboa, three of Saul's sons die; Saul is wounded and falls on his sword (1Sam 31). David laments (2Sam 1:17-27); and his service is dismissed by the Philistines. The Amalekites raze Ziklag and take the wives of David's men (1Sam 28—2Sam 1). David and 400 men recapture the women, but 200 men cannot go. David shares the plunder equally with them, and with the elders of Judah.
- 1000 BC: With the help of his allies David takes control of Judah and is anointed as king, with Hebron as his capital (2Sam 2:7). He reigns for 7 years and 6 months (2Sam 2:11). While there, he also marries Maacah, daughter of the king of Geshur, Haggith, Abital, and Eglah (2Sam 3:1-5) and has children by all but Michal (2Sam 6:23). David's Sons: Amnon by Ahinoam of Jezreel; Kileab by Abigail (Nabal's widow); Absalom by Maacah the Caananite; Adonijah by Haggith; Shephatiah by Abital; Ithream by Eglah.
- 998 BC: Ishbosheth, with Abner as his general, has liberated the remainder of the Western territory from the Philistines over a two-year period and David is declared king over all Israel, including the northern kingdom (2Sam 2:9-10). Abner slays Asahel at Gibeon which in turn begins a five and a half year war with David (2Sam 2:12-32; 3:1). After Ishbosheth accuses Abner of infidelity with Saul's concubine, Abner threatens his life and covenants with David, who wants Michal back (3:9-13). Michal is returned to David by Ishbosheth (3:14). Joab, David's general, murders Abner at Hebron (3:22, 27).
- 997 BC: David conquers Jerusalem (2Sam 5:6). He rebuilds it and moves to Jerusalem from Hebron.
- 993 BC: Ishbosheth is murdered. David is publicly anointed king over all of Israel, north and

south (2Sam 5:17). Battle of Baal Perazim (2Sam 5:17-25; 1Chr 14:8-17; Psa 18). David's 33-year\* reign at Jerusalem begins (1Chr 3:4). He reigns as king about 40 years (1Kgs 2:11).

- 992 BC: The Ark of God is returned to Jerusalem to a tent (2Sam 6) while the tabernacle remains in Gibeon (1Chr 16). This is when David announced his desire to build a temple to house the ark (2Sam 7; 1Chr 17). God declines and sends Nathan to David with the Davidic Covenant instead, promising a perpetual throne to his offspring (2Sam 7:12-29; c.f. Psa 105, 96).
- 982 BC: After 7-10 years of war, David has united Israel and his kingdom is set (2Sam 8). David's sons become royal advisers (2Sam 8:18, though probably too young at 14-18 years old). Mephibosheth is found and David honors his pledge to Jonathan (2Sam 9).
- 981 BC: After David's ambassadors are humiliated by the young king of Ammon, Ammon and Syria are conquered by Joab and Abishai (2Sam 10; Psa 60).
- 980 BC: David's life begins a spiral. "In the spring at the time when kings go off to war," David seems to be disconnected to his family, disconnected from his role as King with his generals. During this time, David sins. He sleeps with\* (or assaults) Bathsheba (2Sam 11). When Uriah returns, David only correspondence to the commander is to coordinate Uriah's death in April. Later, perhaps December, Nathan confronts David, and he repents. The child dies (2Sam 11-12; Psa 51).
- 979 BC: Solomon is born, youngest of all of David's sons, but chosen to be the future heir to the throne (Compare 1Chr 3:5 with 2Sam 12:24).
- 979 BC: David returns to his duties, conquering Rabbah-Ammon (2Sam 12:26-31; 1Chr 20:1-3).
- 978 BC: Amnon rapes his half-sister Tamar, Absalom's sister (2Sam 13:1-22).
- 976 BC: Absalom murders Amnon (2Sam 13:23-38) and is banished, rather than punished by the law, from the king's presence to Geshur for 3 years.
- 974 BC: Absalom pleads for and is returned to Jerusalem via Joab's intercession and trickery of the woman of Tekoa (2Sam 14); but he is banished from the king's presence for two more years.
- 972 BC: Absalom begs and coerces Joab into interceding yet again that Absalom might see the king's face. He begins his four-year plot against David. (2Sam 14:28-33; 15:1-7).
- 969 BC: Absalom's revolt steals the hearts of the people from David (2Sam 15-19). David weeps on the Mount of Olives (15:30). Shimei, a relative of Saul, curses David on his way out of the city, but Hushai offers to be David's ally in the palace (Psa 3). Absalom lies with his father's concubines as Abner had done with Saul's (16:22). Hushai, against Ahithophel, advises Absalom not to pursue David immediately. As a result, David is able to conquer Absalom's army. Ahithophel hangs himself. While riding a mule, Absalom's hair is caught in a tree where he hangs helplessly (18:14) until slain by Joab, against David's wishes. David mourns his son's death (19:1).
- 969 BC: No sooner has one rebellion been quashed than another arises by Sheba (2Sam 20). Amasa, who was appointed over the army by Absalom in place of Joab, is considered by David to be a threat in this conflict. Amasa is sent on an errand by David, but David also gives orders to Abishai to have Amasa killed. Joab kills Amasa at Gibeon and Sheba flees to Abel Beth-Maacah. A woman of the city has his head delivered to Joab to preserve the city (2Sam 20:4:-22).

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- 968 BC: A three-year famine occurs as a result of Saul's attack on the Gibeonites (2Sam 21:1). The attack violated a covenant made with them by Joshua (Josh. 9:16).
- 966 BC: David makes amends with the Gibeonites by having seven sons of Saul executed except Jonathan's son, Mephibosheth, whom he vowed to protect (2Sam 21:2-14).
- 965 BC: Battles with the Philistines. David is almost killed by a giant, and he is asked to stay home for his own safety. Four giants are killed in these battles (2Sam 21:15-22). They no longer terrorize Israel or mock God as they had in David's youth under Saul. David's Eulogy (2Sam 23:1-7).
- 964 BC: David takes nine months to number the people (2Sam 24:10). Joab asks David not to do it. David repents but God demands a price: pestilence takes 70,000 (24:15). God then instructs David to buy the threshing floor of Araunah (Ornan) for an altar (24:18-25; 1Chr 21:1-17). David offers sacrifices on the threshing floor which God accepts with an angel's fiery sword. David fears approaching God in the tabernacle because it now sits on the high place at Gibeon (1Chr 21:26-30). He begins the preparations to construct the temple around the altar, gathering all the materials according to the pattern God shows him (1Chr 22; 28; Psa 30).
- 963 BC: David charges Solomon and the princes with the task of construction (1Chr 22:6-19).
- 962 BC: David's health begins to fail him (1Kgs. 1:1-4). A young woman is sought to serve him and keep him warm in his old age (Abishag). Adonijah, 4th born son of David, attempts a coup with Joab. At Nathan's insistence, Bathsheba convinces David to declare Solomon king-in-waiting (per the promise in 2Sam 11:24-25; 1Chr 22:9) and have him assume the throne (1Kgs 1:5-53; 1Chr 23:1; 26:31). David agrees.
- 961 BC: David calls the people of Israel and Judah and formally hands over the plans for the temple to be built along with final instructions regarding his enemies (1Chr 29:1-25; 1Kgs 2:1-9).
- David dies. Solomon becomes king of Israel (1Kgs 2:10-12).

**Lesson 1****INTRODUCING KING DAVID AND HIS TIMES**

[1Samuel 10-16]

*Samuel anoints Saul. His weak character fails in the power of his authority.*

King David was a man of vivid contrasts. He was imperfect as a man. Yet, he was single-mindedly committed to God where even inspired New Testament writers would recall his memory and say, "...He raised up David to be their king, of whom He testified and said, 'I HAVE FOUND IN DAVID the son of Jesse, A MAN AFTER MY HEART, who will do all My will'" (Acts 13:22-23). Yet, there are few who would not consider King David just as equally guilty of some of the most serious sins recorded in the Old Testament: adultery, deception and murder.

David lived a frustrating life; first, he lived in the shadow of his brothers, then constantly in the shadows to flee the vengeful King Saul who was told Him through Nathan that the Lord would choose David himself to replace him. Even after he became king of Israel, David was engaged in constant warfare to conquer all of the land that God had promised Abraham; and also to defend it. As King, David was a great military man, but he could not conquer himself and his sons. Passive parental leadership and inaction as well as uncontrolled lust that leads to an assault\*, nearly shattered the nation. Yahweh, however, kept David and the kingdom because of His mercy and His commitment to His promise. David would be king. But there would be another David, a new David that David wanted to be – and a King that would unite the world: Messiah. The life of David shows that while our pride and our sin will indeed bring disastrous consequences, mercy can still be found with God.

Although King David fathered Solomon, one of Israel's greatest kings, he was also the father of Absalom, whose rebellion brought bloodshed and grief. David's life was indeed a roller coaster of emotional highs and lows and in those rides, he left us a songbook of lyrics showing an powerful example of passionate love of God.

**King David's Most Remembered Accomplishments:**

- David killed Goliath, champion of the Philistines, when David was only a youth and Goliath a giant and veteran warrior. David was victorious because he trusted in God for the victory, not himself.
- He killed many of Israel's enemies in battle.
- Despite several opportunities, David refused to kill King Saul, God's first anointed king, who was pursuing David out of mad jealousy.
- He became friends, like brothers, with Saul's son Jonathan, setting a model of friendship that everyone can learn from.
- King David is included in the "Faith Hall of Fame" in Hebrews 11.
- David was an ancestor of Jesus Christ. Jesus was often called "Son of David."
- God called David a man after his own heart.

**King David's Strengths:**

- David was courageous and strong in battle, trusting in God for protection.
- He was loyal to Saul, the Lord's anointed, despite Saul's crazed pursuit of him.
- David loved God deeply throughout his entire life.

**King David's Weaknesses:**

- King David committed adultery with Bathsheba. He then tried to cover up her pregnancy, and when he failed with that, he had her husband Uriah the Hittite killed.
- He took a census of the people, willfully violating God's command not to do that.
- King David was sometimes lax, or absent as a father, as evidenced in the life of [Absalom](#) and Amnon.

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### Hometown:

- Bethlehem, City of David in Jerusalem.

### Referenced in the Bible:

- King David's story runs from **1Samuel 16 through 1 Kings 2**. David wrote much of the book of Psalms and is also mentioned in Matthew 1:1, 6, 22, 43-45; Luke 1:32; Acts 13:22; Romans 1:3; and Hebrews 11:32.
- He is a significant participant in the story of the Bible.

### Occupation:

- Shepherd, warrior, king of Israel.

### Family Tree:

- Father - Jesse
- Brothers - Eliab, Abinadab, Shammah, four unnamed others.
- Wives - Michal, Ahinoam, Abigail, Maacah, Haggith, Abital, Eglah, Bathsheba.
- Sons - Amnon, Daniel, Absalom, Adonijah, Shephatiah, Ithream, Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon, Ibhar, Elishua, Eliphelet, Nogah, Nepheg, Japhia, Elishama, Eliada, Eliphelet.
- Daughter - Tamar

### Key Verses to remember:

- **1Samuel 16:7**: "The LORD sees not as a man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart." (ESV)
- **1Samuel 17:50**: "So David triumphed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone; without a sword in his hand he struck down the Philistine and killed him." (NIV)
- **1Samuel 30:6**: "David was greatly distressed because the people spoke of stoning ~~him~~him, because all the people were bitter in soul each for his sons and daughters. But David strengthened himself in the LORD his God." (ESV)
- **2Samuel 12:13**: "Then David said to Nathan, 'I have sinned against the LORD.' Nathan replied, 'The LORD has taken away your sin. You are not going to die. But because by doing this you have shown utter contempt for the LORD, the son born to you will die.' (NIV)
- **Psalms 51:1,3-4**: "have mercy on me, O God, according to Your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Again You, you only, have I sinned..." (ESV).
- **Psalms 23:6**: "Surely your goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever. (ESV)

**As you begin the study, write one paragraph about what YOU RELATE TO in the life of David you now know. You will revisit this in the last lesson:**



Lesson 2

## The Young David

[1Samuel 10-16]

*Samuel anoints David and he serves Saul as a musician.*

### Overview:

*We cannot study the life of David without looking into the life of his predecessor, the first king of Israel, King Saul. They have things in common. They were outstanding young men. Early experiences reflected humility and sincerity. However, their great beginning did not keep them from terrible failure later in life. The one thing they did not share is that when they made mistakes, one turned away from God and the other turned to God. However sinful his transgression, David sought out God's forgiveness and sought to restore his vital relationship with God.*

*Saul could not have had a better start as a king. But a great start, even with God's blessings, does not guarantee a great ending. Just like Paul wrote, "Therefore, let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall" (1Corinthians 10:12).*

*When Saul sinned and rejected the Lord, God initiated a search for a new King – a king after his own heart. And this brought Samuel to David.*

### Questions:

1. What specific prophecies does Samuel make about Saul (10:1-8)?
2. At the end of verse 7, what command does Samuel give Saul?
3. What specific action does God's Spirit accomplish in verse 10?
4. As Samuel speaks to the people in verses 17-19, what important points does he remind them of?
5. How would you summarize the military developments in chapter 11?
6. From what you recall seeing in chapter 11 try answering the following question without looking in your Bible: How many soldiers of Israel assembled at Bezek to fight against the Ammonites? (See verse 8.)
7. Look at Samuel's words in 11:14. Would you say the "kingship" or "kingdom" he is referring to is the kingship of Saul, or the kingship of God? What evidence can you give for your answer?
8. In his farewell speech to the people in this chapter, what specific reminders does Samuel offer the people, what specific commands does he give, and what specific warnings does he pronounce?
9. In 13:17-18, what action on God's part confirms the words of Samuel?

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10. How would you explain the people's response in 13:19? What final warning closes this chapter?
11. From what you recall seeing in chapter 13, try answering the following question without looking in your Bible: How many chariots and charioteers did the Philistines assemble against Israel at Mishmash? (See verse 5.)
12. Look at God's response to Saul's questions in 14:37. Why do you think God responded this way?
13. What do you learn about Jonathan's character in chapter 14? What comparisons would you make between Saul the king and Jonathan his son? How are they most alike? How are they most different?
14. In rejecting Saul as king, what specific reason does God give Samuel, in 15:11? How does Samuel respond to this news from God?
15. **FOR LIFE TODAY:** What would you say are the most useful and important lessons to learn from the examples of both Saul and Samuel in this chapter?
16. **FOR GOING DEEPER:** Restate in your own words the principle Samuel talked about in 15:22-23. How does it compare with the words Jesus spoke in Matt 9:13 and 12:7?
17. How many specific commands does God give Samuel in chapter 16:1-5?
18. Who was Samuel looking for? Of the sons of Jesse, who did he seem to think would be the Lord's choice?
19. How many descriptions of David do you see in chapter 16?
20. **FOR LIFE TODAY:** Look again at 16:7. How can we see people and situations from God's perspective, instead of from a human perspective? What are the most important ways we can learn to do this?

## Lesson 3

**THE GIANT SLAYER**

[1Samuel 17]

*David's legendary conquest is a snapshot of his heart.***Overview:**

*Sometimes, God uses the most unusual circumstances and people – even unbelievers – to achieve His purpose in the world. This is what happened to a young, relatively unknown shepherd boy named David. Even though he served as Saul's personal musician and carried the king's armor, few in Israel knew about his unusual skills and abilities. More importantly, they knew little about his faith and confidence in the Lord. But in this lesson, we see how all this changed when the little boy slew the Giant. It was more than his moment in the sun. It was the day David's faith became evident to Saul and the nation.*

*David wanted to uphold the reputation of God – even among infidels. How about us? How about you? We must first trust God to reward us in our approved objectives to please Him. But we must balance that with an active faith that works to that end.*

**Questions:**

1. To capture the essence of what happened in chapter 17, retrace your way through the last several chapters. What are the most important things that have happened since Saul was chosen king?
2. How long have you known about the story of David and Goliath? What are some of the earliest impressions this story left with you?
3. How would you summarize the military developments in this chapter?
4. What are the most important decisions and choices that are made in this chapter, and how would you analyze each one?
5. What specific weapons and pieces of armor did Goliath carry? (See verses 5-7.)
6. What was the height of Goliath (v.6)? What in your house is the same height?
7. What did you learn about David's character in this chapter?
8. What more can you learn about Saul's character in this chapter?

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9. How do you see God's power and purpose displayed in this chapter?
10. **FOR LIFE TODAY:** Choose one of these sentences, and complete it as fully and candidly as you would like:
- a. What I see and understand in this chapter is important to my life because...
  - b. What I see and understand in this chapter does NOT seem important to my life at this time, because...
  - c. When and how have I ever faced a foe so daunting as David this day? Explain...

## Lesson 4

**THE KING ON THE RUN**

[1Samuel 18-31; Psalm 59; 34; 142; 63]

*Saul's jealousy leads to rage and to a death plot for David.***Overview:**

*Israel's years of frustration came to an end with the death of Saul. God "sought out a man after His own heart and appointed him leader of his people" (1Sam 13:14). David's appearance marks the dawn of Israel's ancient glory. During the life of David and his son Solomon, the covenant promise that obedience will bring showers of blessing was fulfilled. But David spends these early years in a forever chase where he was being hunted by the King that God had previously anointed.*

*This was, however, a time of intense strain for David. He knew great swings of emotion, as his situation alternated between times of public adulation, and periods when he lived as a fugitive. Psa 59 tells us of David's feelings during this period, as he swings from fear to anger to hope. The Psalm begins:*

*Deliver me from my enemies, O my God; protect me from those who rise up against me.  
Deliver me from those evildoers and save me from bloodthirsty men.*

*The years following David's flight were agonizing ones. Saul, determined to kill David and establish a dynasty, pursued him. Cities which David helped to deliver from Israel's enemies were quick to betray their deliverer to Saul to gain the king's favor! The continual strain began to tell on the young leader; at times David knew deep despair and despondency.*

*The tremendous stress on David and his response to it are illustrated in the events recorded in 1Sam 26-27. Saul received a report of David's latest hiding place and rushed there with 3,000 men. The army camped near David; that night he and Abishai, a follower, eluded the sentries and stood over their sleeping enemy. Able to kill Saul with the king's own spear, David refused. God had chosen Saul. As God's anointed, Saul could not be murdered and the killer remain guiltless. God Himself had to depose Saul, in His own time. David disciplined himself to wait.*

**Questions:**

1. How would you evaluate Saul's spiritual condition in this chapter?
2. From what you recall seeing in chapter 18, try answering the following question without looking in your Bible: How many Philistines did David bring to Saul? (See verse 27.)
3. What more can you learn in this chapter about the character of Saul, the character of Jonathan, and the character of David?
4. For a glimpse of what was going on in David's heart during the events described in chapter 18, what can you discover in Psa 59?
5. What would you say were the strongest features in David's relationship with Jonathan? What foundation was their friendship built upon?
6. For a glimpse of what was going on in David's heart during the time described in 21:10-15, what can you discover in Psa 34 and 56?

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7. From 22:18, how many priests at Nob did Doeg kill at Saul's command? And why did saul command it?
8. What in 23:16-18, what further conclusions can you make about the friendship of Jonathan and David?
9. Why did David save the city of Keilah (23)?
10. Why did David flee from Saul (19:2)? Why did he not kill Saul (24:6; 24:10; 26:9)? Did he ever want to give up (c.f. 27:1)?
11. Who is Abigail (25:2ff)?
12. What do you find odd about the nation with whom David had hoped to gain sanctuary (27:1ff; 29:1ff)?
13. How many men followed David in his attack upon the Amalekites? (30:9-10.)
14. How many of Saul's sons were killed in chapter 31 (31:2)?

Lesson 5

## DAVID, KING OF JUDAH: THE DYNASTY BEGINS

[2Sam 1:1-4:12; 1Chr 10:1-11:9]

*After vindication, David is crowned King and watches and wades through the drama.*

### *Overview:*

*With the death of Saul, the Old Testament record focuses on David.*

*David's fortune changed. He was no longer a fugitive, and was quickly acknowledged as king by the southern tribe of Judah, his own tribe. In the north Ish-Bosheth, a surviving son of Saul, was propped up as king by the military leader, Abner.*

*Over the next years there were minor skirmishes between the two kingdoms. But David's strength showed itself, as did Ish-Bosheth's weakness. Then, Ish-Bosheth was assassinated (and the assassins executed by an outraged David). It was seven and a half years after David had become king of Judah that he was recognized as king by all of Israel.*

*The story of David's triumphs is told in two Old Testament books, as shown in the outline below. From these books we grasp something of the significance of the accomplishments of this great leader, as well as great man of faith.*

### *Questions:*

1. How did David and the camp respond to the death of Saul? Why?
2. In David's lament, what successes did he recall regarding King Saul?
3. When David made decisions, he always sought the Lord's will. How did this forge the character of David? How does this forge yours?
4. How did the move back to Hebron become a turning point for David (2Samuel 2:1-7)? How did it impact the nation?
5. Who was Abner? What was his history with the throne of Israel? And why did he reject the authority of David as the Lord's anointed?
6. What startling truth do you discover about the marriage(s) of David? And of his children?
7. Why did Michal return to David and how did it diffuse the situation?

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8. What might be a suggestion as to why David's family had so many problems? What lessons can you learn from that?
  
9. Who was the commander of Saul's army? (See 2:8)
  
10. In this reading, what in David impresses you regarding his leadership skills (23)?
  
11. Why did David experience so much sin and death in these years of his kingship?
  
12. Proverbs 2:1-5 tells about the sincere person who truly longs for wisdom and understanding, and who searches the Scriptures for it — as if it were buried treasure. That person, Solomon says, will come to understand the fear of the Lord, and discover the knowledge of God. As you begin exploring the book of Second Samuel, what "buried treasure" would you like God to help you find here — to show you what God and His wisdom are really like? If you have this desire, how would you express it in your own words?



## Lesson 6

**DAVID, KING OF ISRAEL: THE DYNASTY BUILDS**

[2Samuel 5-10; 1Chronicles 3:4-8; 13:5-16:3; 17:1-19:19]

*David turns the hearts of the North to his rule.***Overview:**

*David has prophetic as well as historic significance. When the kingdom of Israel had been firmly established, David yearned to build a suitable temple for the Lord. But David was not permitted to build that house. Instead, God spoke to David (2Sam 7:12-16) and promised to build David a house! That promise of a Davidic dynasty is understood in the Old Testament to have the force of a covenant: an unbreakable promise or commitment made by God.*

*David was promised that after his death, a descendant of his would be established as ruler of a kingdom to be set up in God's name. God said, "I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever" (2Sam 7:13). David's line was promised the perpetual right to Israel's throne. Even though David's immediate descendant Solomon sinned in such terrible ways that he deserved to be set aside, the kings of Judah were always from the Davidic line. Because of David's faith, God did not treat his descendants as He had treated Saul's. Sin would be punished, but David's line would never be completely cut off.*

*God's promise to David is recognized in the Old Testament and the New Testament as an amplification of the ancient Abrahamic Covenant. The Davidic Covenant explains the means through which the earlier promises to Abraham will be fulfilled! As Psa 89:3-4 expresses it: You said, "I have made a covenant with My chosen one, I have sworn to David My servant, 'I will establish your line forever and make your throne firm through all generations.'"*

*And again this great prophetic Psalm affirms the certainty of God's promise. "I will not violate My covenant or alter what My liPsa have uttered. Once for all, I have sworn by My holiness - and I will not lie to David - that his line will continue forever and his throne endure before Me like the sun; it will be established forever like the moon, the faithful witness in the sky" [Psalm 89:34-37].*

*From this point on, for the Hebrew people and for the later prophets, David stood as the symbol and the ancestor of a coming King, destined to set up a lasting kingdom through which the whole world would be related to God (see especially Jer 33:22,25-26). God's formal promise was confirmed over and over again in such passages as Isa 9:6-7; Jer 23:5-6; 30:8-9; 33:14-17,20-21; Ezek 37:14-25; Dan 7:13-14; Hos 3:4-5; Amos 9:11; and Zech 14:9. We cannot understand the Old Testament or the hope with which godly Jews looked forward to the coming Messiah if we do not realize that they looked for a literal kingdom on earth, to be established and ruled over for an endless age by David's greater Son.*

**Questions:**

1. Chapter 5 has been called the key to the book of Second Samuel. What does this chapter include that could make it this
2. How would you evaluate David's leadership skills, as you see them on display in this chapter?
3. How old was David when he became king? (See verse 4.)

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4. What does God mean by the word house in 7:11?
  
5. In this chapter, what does God reveal about His character to David? What does He most want David to understand about this?
  
6. In David's prayer in 7:18-29, what does David specifically ask God to do?
  
7. What different names does David use to address God?
  
8. In 7: 27, look at David's expressed reason for finding courage to bring this prayer to God. What most encourages you to go to God in prayer?
  
9. What exactly did the Ammonites do to David's officials? (See verse 4.)
  
10. **FOR LIFE TODAY:** In Rom 15:4, Paul reminds us that the Old Testament Scriptures can give us patience and perseverance on one hand, as well as comfort and encouragement on the other. In your own life, how do you see this book of Second Samuel living up to Paul's description? In what ways, if any, is it meeting your personal needs for both perseverance and encouragement?

## Lesson 7

## THE KING'S TANGLED WEB OF DISOBEDIENCE, DECEPTION AND DECLINE [2Samuel 11-12]

*David's own battle with pride and lust exposes the King's tragic moral weakness.*

### Overview:

*David's greatness cannot hide the fact that he was very human. The two major stories told in these chapters of 2Samuel reveal his weaknesses as well as the reality of his trust in and love for God. When we look in the biblical record at David, certainly one of history's exceptional men and one whose faith is mentioned in both Testaments, we discover that he too had feet of clay. The saint is revealed as a sinner. And we wonder, "Why does God hold up as examples men and women who have such obvious flaws?"*

*For one thing, through David we are reminded that God is a realist. His Book contains no "let's-pretend" whitewash of believers. Noting this, we may be helped to appreciate the fact that we can come to this God in spite of our own weaknesses. God won't overlook them. But He won't be crushed by our failures either. God knows that "we are dust" (Psa 103:14).*

*For another thing, "No temptation has seized you except what is common to man" (1 Cor 10:13). We are all bound up together in the shared ties of humanity. David knew the feelings and temptations that you know - and you know his! When the Bible accurately reports the failures and follies of God's saints, it demonstrates this common bond and encourages us to identify our own inner struggles with theirs.*

*Most importantly, when Old Testament saints are shown to be sinners, Scripture is expressing something basic about the Gospel. The good news of God's love for man is not, "Trust Me, and be freed of your humanity." The good news of God's love is that the Lord will save you in spite of yourself - by faith.*

*How different from Saul! When Saul sinned, he begged Samuel to stay with him, that the people might not discover God's anger. When the Prophet Nathan confronted David concerning his sin with Bathsheba, David not only confessed immediately, but he even wrote a Psalm used later in public worship, openly admitting his fault and sharing the inner anguish that accompanied loss of fellowship with God! We cannot, and God did not, condone David's sins and failings. But we can praise God for moving David to share honestly with us.*

### Questions:

1. In chapter 11,1, where was the King's army? And where was David?
2. What does this chapter reveal most about David's character?
3. If you could go back in time, and God brought you into the events of this chapter to act as a royal adviser to King David, what kind of counsel would you give him, and how would you express it?
4. What was Bathsheba doing? Why?
5. What was David doing? What should he had done differently?

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6. Why is cover-up the natural response to sin? What should we do?
7. Why is Nathan's story of the ewe lamb so effective in convicting David?
8. What were the consequences and judgments because of his sin?
9. For a glimpse of what was going on in David's heart during the events described in this chapter, what do you discover in Psa 51?
10. What would the birth of Solomon have signified to David?
11. In your own words, how would you explain David's response to the child's death in verses 20-23?
12. What are the most important things David does after he stopped mourning for his dead son?
13. After becoming ill by the Lord's hand, how long did David and Bathsheba's baby live? (See verse 12:18.)
14. What's the best evidence you see in this reading of God's grace?
15. Look carefully at the words David spoke in verse 12:13. How much of each of these character traits do you think is reflected in David's words — courage, fear, humility, boldness, pragmatism, wisdom, and faithfulness?
16. What are the most significant times in life in which you have needed to speak the words David spoke in 12:13?

## Lesson 8

**THE KING'S FAMILY**

[2Samuel 13:1-18:33; 1Chronicles 14:1-7]

*David's family begins to crumble and his throne is threatened.***Overview:***David's children shared his weakness, but few demonstrated his redeeming characteristic of contriteness. David's lifestyle was one of responsiveness to God. In his infrequent departures, David remained open to correction.**But, his sons did not. In these chapters, Amnon seduced and assaulted his half-sister and then spurned her. The girl's brother, Absalom, plotted revenge and later killed Amnon. This son, Absalom, was banished. And through the influence of David's general, Joab, the banishment was lifted. But David still refused to see Absalom.**David had two choices: 1) Execute Absalom for murder, or 2) restore him through confession and forgiveness. But David took neither course. Absalom's sin festered within the young man's personality. In time Absalom began a careful campaign to woo the northern tribes of Israel and to alienate them from David. Amazingly, he succeeded! The tribes of Israel (those who had been the last to crown David king some decades before) swung their support to Absalom. Absalom, after having himself crowned, marched on Jerusalem. David was forced to flee for his life from the capital, with only his old companions remaining faithful - plus a band of mercenary soldiers whom David had employed for his personal guard just the day before! How deeply it must have cut him to see these mercenaries remain true to their commitment while his own people spurned him!**2Sam 13-19 traces the origin and the course of the rebellion and reveals something of David's own doubt and discouragement. Without question, David examined himself and found reasons why the Lord might be justified in removing him from the throne.**David fled toward Judah. In the meantime, David's supporters in Zion gave bad advice to Absalom, which allowed David time to gather an army from his homeland. In the battle which followed, Absalom was killed against David's orders.**The story ends with David crying out in agony and weeping over his lost son. This experience was one of wrenching pain for David. And again, David shared his innermost thoughts and feelings with us in the Psalms. Psa 3 emerges from the time of self-examination and self-doubt as David fled Jerusalem. It is short, yet its simple phrases take us deep into David's heart and show us how he handled one of those times which we all experience: a time when everything goes wrong and all seems hopeless.**What were the Implications of the rebellion? David saw clearly that the fact of rebellion indicated that his people believed God was no longer with him. David was forced to examine that question, and recognized a certain justification for the accusation of Shimei that David was a "man of blood."***Questions:**

1. How did David respond when he heard of Amnon's actions?
2. What is complex about the situation Absalom created? Would you have done what David did?
3. Where did Absalom flee to, and how long did he stay there? (See 13:38)
4. How did David's character emerge again during this dark time during Absalom's rebellion?

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5. David won the hearts of the people early in his life. Absalom did as well. How was it different?
6. What unexpected consequences of David's sin with Bathsheba surface later with Ahithophel?
7. Did David make a mistake with Ziba? Why or why not?
8. Why did Absalom take his father's concubines?
9. What different and effective approach did the Lord direct Hushai to use with Absalom?
10. David honored the Lord's anointed and sought His counsel? Why didn't Absalom?
11. How did David show mercy to Absalom – even in battle?
12. Why did Absalom's death signify to Israel?
13. How does David as a Father reflect on you as a father? As God as a Father?
14. What's the best evidence you see in this reading *of God's grace*?

Lesson 9

## THE KING RETURNS TO DOUBT AND RENEWED PROBLEMS

[2Samuel 19-21:22; 1Chronicles 20:1-8]

*Even through a life marred by failure and misery, David comes back to his place as a godly man.*

### Overview:

*It's easy to emphasize one side of David's character at the expense of the other. Some idealize David and explain away his faults. Yet, the Bible record does not hide his many weaknesses. We might well be horrified by the cruelty and selfishness David showed when he took Bathsheba and arranged for her husband's "accident." Can we ever reconcile this behavior with the brave and trusting shepherd boy, or the man who flung aside his dignity with his royal robes to dance for joy before the Lord? How can this David be the same young man whose days of shepherding taught him to view God as man's Shepherd, and who shared this beautiful insight with us in Psa 23? Somehow, we feel uncomfortable in the presence of a man who is both a sinner and a saint because we rarely believe someone else can be – even though it is true of us.*

*David is a man approved by God: one whose heart Scripture says was "fully devoted to the Lord" (1 Kings 15:3). David thus stands before us a unique example of how sin can distort the best of men, and how the best of men deal with sin in contrition and confession. Even more, David stands before us as a testimony to God's love and His goodness. God's grace touched David. He forgave David's sins and enabled him for the task to which he was called.*

*God yearns to deal with us this same way.*

### Questions:

1. What did David temporarily set aside while he was grieving over Absalom? Can you lead while suffering?
  
2. During his trials with Absalom, what did David neglect?
  
3. Why did David choose the tribe of Judah to unify the people?
  
4. What did David do to address Shimei? Why? Do you agree with what he did?
  
5. When David met Mephibosheth, what was the complication David faced ?
  
6. How did David reward Barzillai for his kindness? How do you reward people?

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7. What other conflicts did David still have to address after Absalom's death? Why does that teach us?
  
8. How did the women of Abel save the city?
  
9. What retribution did the Gibeonites ask for the sins of Saul?
  
10. Why did Joab kill Amasa?
  
11. How did Rizpah, in spite of her grief and sorrow, show love and courage?
  
12. What does David's life teach us about our own lives?



## Lesson 10

**KING DAVID FINDS VICTORY**

[2Samuel 22; Psalm 18]

*No matter the darkness or the painful memories, we can always praise the Lord!***Overview:**

*One way to celebrate victories and commemorate them for years to come is to compose and sing songs. Songs of all sorts are known throughout the ancient Near East from the first half of the third millennium. One Assyrian list of songs about a century before David includes titles of about 360 songs in dozens of different categories. The singing of a song in response to divine help resulting in victory is a common theme in the Bible. Though they may not be the same genre as the Hebrew Psalms, kings from both Mesopotamia and Egypt composed dedicatory hymns to gods, thanking them for victory over their enemies. For example, Tukulti-Ninurta I of Assyria (c. 1244 B.C. - 1208 B.C.) composed a long epic hymn to Ashur thanking him for victory over Babylon, while justifying his conquest of Babylon because of the unworthiness of their ruler.*

*For at least ten years, David had been in "tight" places, but now the Lord had brought him out "into a spacious place" (v. 20 NIV). God could give him a larger place because David had been enlarged in his own life through his experiences of trial and testing. "Thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress" (Psa 4:1 KJV). David had often cried out, "The troubles of my heart are enlarged," but at the same time, God was enlarging His servant and preparing him for a bigger place (18:19,36). "I called on the Lord in distress; the Lord answered me and set me in a broad place" (Psa 118:5 NKJV). In the school of life, God promotes those who, in times of difficulty, learn the lessons of faith and patience (Heb 6:12), and David had learned his lessons well.*

*What do you do when you're drowning in a flood of opposition? You call on the Lord and trust Him for the help you need (v. 7). David was a man of prayer who depended on the Lord for wisdom, strength, and deliverance, and the Lord never failed him. Why did God wait all those years before delivering David and putting him on the throne? For one thing, the Lord was building himself a leader, and this could be done only by means of trial, suffering, and battle. But the Lord also had his own timetable, for "when the fullness of the time had come" (Gal 4:4 NKJV), out of David's family the Messiah would come to the world.*

**Questions:**

1. In this song of victory, what was David giving thanks for?
  
2. How did David describe the Lord in his song of praise?
  
3. What does this image of the Lord as a rock mean?
  
4. Can you follow David's example when facing opposition? Can you sing about it? Have you?
  
5. How did these hard times in David's life mold him to this moment of praise? How has hardship molded

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you?

6. How did David live a 'blameless' life while Saul pursued him? How can a sinner be blameless?
7. What does it mean that the Lord could work through sinners? Through David? Through you?
8. In what way did David's body belong to the Lord? And how does yours?
9. Why is David's life so much like ours?
10. Why did David praise God anyway?

## Lesson 11

**THE THRONE IS TRANSFERRED**

[2Samuel 23:1-24:25; 1Kings 1:1-2:12; 1 Chron 29:21-30]

*Legendary faith, praise, and love in a heart who sought after his God.***Overview:**

*2Samuel reports the last words of David. Those words speak powerfully of David's awareness that he had been God's instrument. Even more, they speak of David's complete confidence that God had made an "everlasting covenant" with David's family, and that God would be loyal to that commitment. Because God truly is sovereign, David looked ahead with certainty, knowing that God had "arranged and secured ... every part" (v. 5).*

*For 33 years David aggressively guided God's united people to greatness, forging a powerful empire. As David grew older, his sons disputed over the succession. But God had revealed to David that He had chosen Solomon to succeed him (see 1 Chron 22:9-10).*

*David had shared this revelation with Bathsheba, Solomon's mother (1 Kings 1:13,17). He had even announced it to the nation (1 Chron 22:5; 29:1). Still, Solomon was not the oldest of David's living sons. There were older brothers who understandably disputed his right to the throne.*

*Finally, one of David's older surviving sons, Adonijah, took steps to gain the succession. Nathan the prophet and Bathsheba insisted that David act. David did. He made Solomon coregent. When Adonijah heard, his supporters deserted him and the young man rushed to the altar of sacrifice to claim sanctuary. His life was spared, and Solomon was secure on the throne.*

*1 Chronicles tells us that David then made final preparations for his departure. He saw to it that Solomon was acknowledged by all as the next king. Then, at the end of a 40-year reign, David died "at a good old age, having enjoyed long life, wealth, and honor" (1 Chron 29:28). And his son Solomon succeeded him as king.*

**Questions:**

1. If you learned you were going to die tonight, what would you want your last words to be?
  
2. In 23:1-7, how would you summarize what was on David's mind and heart as his life came to a close?
  
3. What was the name of David's mighty man who killed a lion on a snowy day? (See verse 20.)
  
4. **FOR LIFE TODAY:** If you died tonight, would you be able to express the same confidence that David does in verse 5?

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5. How would you compare David's life in the first part of this book with his life in the second part (beginning with his relationship with Bathsheba in chapter 11)?
  
6. How many people died in the plague in this chapter? (See 24:15.)
  
7. **CAPTURE THE ESSENCE:** What does this last chapter in 2Samuel reveal most about David's character?

Lesson 12

## **THE KING'S LEGACY: A LIFE IN PERSPECTIVE**

[re-read (or listen to in the Bible app) 1Samuel 16:1-2Samuel 24:25]

*His ebb and flow of failure and conquest yields heart principles that can guide us today.*

*When we look over his life, there are these 10 principles of building a better life. Consider them. Relate them to the life you know David lived and the life you now live. Write in the space what you remember in David's life where this principle would have guided him away from sin and back to God. And last, add more principles you see.*

1. *Never rely on past success as security from future failure.*
2. *Avoid idleness and boredom.*
3. *Remember that success often makes us rationalize our weaknesses/sin away.*
4. *Be on guard against welcoming and developing a sensuous lifestyle.*
5. *Turn from temptation. Look away.*
6. *Confess your sin to God immediately.*
7. *Don't cover up your sin.*
8. *Appreciate the grace of God but don't take advantage.*
9. *The greater the responsibility, the greater the accountability.*
10. *When you confess your sin, face your consequences and the do right.*

***As you began the study in lesson one, you wrote one paragraph about what YOU RELATED TO in the life of David you knew before we began. What more do you relate to in David at the end of this study?***