



2 SAMUEL

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Welcome to the book of 2 Samuel!

To begin your study of 2 Samuel, meditate upon the contents of the book reflected in the overview chart below. What are the major movements of the book? How are they a contrast? David's success is depicted in two parts. His success over Judah occurs first. His shame is represented in the two names found in the overview. Why do you think they were chosen to reflect his shame? A key verse is 5:2. God's choice was not for the people to have a king. Monarchy (under any king) proved to be inferior to a God-ruled people (theocracy).

2 SAMUEL God's King

David's Success	David's Shame	David's Song
3:1,36; 7:18	12:12-24	
Judah...2:14 Israel...5:2,12	Bathsheba...11:1-4 Absolom...16:20,21	23:1-7
1-9	10-20	21-24

You will shepherd my people Israel! 5:2

Also note the passages listed within the overview chart. Take this opportunity to note each one, relating the section titles to the appropriate passage. What have you learned thus far about 2 Samuel?

Judges opened with conditions of moral decay, continued with cycles of sin and closed the consequences of moral decline. Ruth opens with her resolve to love (in contrast to the spiritual climate of Judges) and closes with a reward for faithfulness. 1 Samuel begins with a call (Samuel) and closes with a casket (Saul's). 2 Samuel opens with David's success, continues with his shame, and closes with his singing over the Lord's faithfulness. Even the best of kings proved to be inferior to a God-ruled environment.

Open your heart as you read!

Why would you consider David a "man after God's own heart?" What were the circumstances of his falling into sin? How could this man of God even consider adultery and murder? David for the most part continually consulted the Lord. Do you pursue God with this kind of dependence? How would you apply any of David's circumstances to your own life? What sin do you believe you are capable?

AUTHOR AND DATE

Consult 1 Samuel.

OTHER BACKGROUND

The book of 1 Samuel records the failure of man's king, Saul. 2 Samuel relates the enthronement of God's king, David. The book is primarily occupied with the story of David as king (2 Samuel 5:3). II Samuel traces the ascension of David to the throne, his awful sin of adultery and murder, and the shattering consequences of that sin upon his family and the nation. The action of the book revolves around chapter 11 which has to do with David's sin against God.

The narrative covers a period of about 40 years. The first seven and a half years see David in Hebron and the last 33 years view him in Jerusalem. There are many important spiritual truths from the life of David in this book.

Why study 2 Samuel?

One of the most important lessons a Christian can learn from a study of II Samuel has to do with sin and its consequences. David furnishes an example of the terrible consequences of sin and how it can affect a life. Note the ever-widening circles of the influence of David's sin.

1. On himself...Psalm 32:3
2. On his family...Absalom's rebellion and death
3. On his nation...Revolt in Judah in chapter 20
4. On his baby born to Bathsheba...Died

As we look at David's sin in 2 Samuel as well as the subject of sin in general, we need to realize that there are basically four attitudes a person can maintain toward sin and only one is the correct one:

- To be ignorant of it
- To be indifferent to it
- To compromise with it
- To deal honestly with it

Another important truth that may be gleaned from 2 Samuel relates to what we sometimes mistakenly call secret sins. Psalm 90:8 says, "Thou hast placed our iniquities before Thee, our secret sins in the light of Thy presence". In other words, our secret sins on earth are open scandals in heaven. After David's act of adultery, he put into action a cover-up plan that would make Watergate pale by comparison.

But nothing is hidden from God's eyes as the last verse of chapter 11 brings out when it states that, "The thing that David had done displeased the Lord". If we as Christians decide to sin against God and plant the seed of iniquity in our life, we cannot hope and pray for a crop failure. "Whatever a man sows, that shall he also reap." When we think to ourselves that we have fooled everyone else about a sin committed, we need to realize that we are only deceiving ourselves because "God is not mocked" (Galatians 6:7).



2 Samuel Chapter Chart

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David's Reign Over Judah

Read Chapters 1-4

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
1		
2		
3		
4		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. What do we learn of David's character from his reaction to the death of Saul and Jonathan?
2. What specifics do we learn about David's attitudes by examining his "death song"?
3. Why was Abner's sin so great?
4. Why does David react the way he does to the messenger that brought news of Saul's death?
To the death of Ish-bosheth?
5. Why do David's actions please the people?

What about today?

David had a deep respect for the authority of the Lord. Before he would assume the already promised throne of Judah, he consulted the Lord so as to be careful to not usurp authority. Do you have this kind of reverence for authority? Recall 1 Samuel 24:

5. In what ways can someone revile authority today?

My thoughts about valid and invalid authority and my response to it:

David's Reign Over Israel

Read Chapters 5-9

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. What was the basis of David's success in chapter 5 (reflected in 3:16)?
2. What is the significance of leaving the ark? The action of Uzziah?
How does it impact David?
3. What does Michal's reaction to David's dancing reveal?
4. What specific principles do you learn about prayer from this section?
5. How does David respond to God's discussion of a "house"?
6. What lesson and insight into David do we learn from his dealings with Mephibosheth?

What about today?

David was a minister of God's justice and His mercy. How do you see yourself ministering in your sphere of influence? How do you view yourself as a man or woman after God's heart? Note how Christ is a minister of God's justice (Revelation 2:7; 12:5; 19:15) and mercy (Romans 5:1-11).

David received criticism, much from his own family. What kinds of criticism have you experienced as you have followed God? How has it affected you?

My thoughts about my current spiritual successes:

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
10		
11		
12		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. Why did the sin of murder follow David's initial sin?
2. Why did it take Nathan's confrontation for David to admit responsibility and repent?
3. Why was it necessary for David to suffer the consequences of his sin despite the fact that he had repented?
4. How could God provide Solomon for a son in the midst of such a sinful and adulterous marriage?
5. Why does the account of war with Ammon appear where it does and why is Israel so harsh?

What about today?

Idleness in spiritual pursuit will lead to idolatry and fleshly pursuit. Do you feel the purposes of God are consuming you (note Hebrews 10:32-39)? Our nature is to cover sin and not bring it to the light. Spiritual failure is a part of life, although not always a necessary part of life.

My thoughts about my current spiritual failures:

David's Family Problems

Read Chapters 13-14

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
13		
14		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. Here we see the fruit of David's sin manifested in his family. We observe the uncontrolled lust of Amnon that leads to death just as David's uncontrollable lust led to his dethronement. Why did Amnon hate Tamar?
2. Where have you heard the words of 13:28 before and what do they reveal about Absalom?
3. In Absalom we observe the twisted beauty and wisdom of one who is beautiful in appearance but loathsome in character. According to the law, how should David have dealt with Absalom? David's moral standards have apparently drastically declined or his judgement is impaired.
4. Why do you think David had such severe family problems?
5. Compare the words and actions of Absalom with Isaiah 14:12-14.

What about today?

The previous sin of spiritual hypocrisy had been sown years earlier and was now full-grown in his household. Our children respond not necessarily to what we say but to what we are and do! Note Psalm 127 and recall Deuteronomy 6. Are you walking in spiritual works which will result in a spiritual family?

My thoughts on my spiritual leadership of my household:

Absolom's Revolt

Read Chapters 15-17

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
15		
16		
17		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. What was the conspiracy of Absolom?
2. What are some contrasts in the character of Absolom and David?
3. What do we learn about David's heart as he flees from Absolom?
4. What lesson do we observe from Ahithopel's position, counsel, and demise?
5. Take instruction from the actions of 16:9-14.

What about today?

David knew God. He saw life through spiritual eyes. In what ways do you revolt against authority after the pattern of Absolom? Life's circumstances come for our testing that we might be broken and humbled before God. Even though David was suffering sin's consequences, he still submitted to God. Note James 4:3-10 for insight into this principle.

My thoughts on how God has humbled and broken me:

Conflict, Death, and Revolt

Read Chapters 18-20

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
18		
19		
20		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. How clear did David make his desire known to not harm Absalom?
2. What does 18:8 teach and preview?
3. What is the significance of the two runners?
4. What does 18:33 reveal? Why is Joab so harsh with David? Is this harshness justified?
5. Why were the two groups (Judah and Israel) bickering?
6. What instruction does the revolt of Sheba give? The encounter with the wise woman?

What about today?

"The wages of sin is death." When the people of God align with the rebellious, only calamity will result. Are feelings of revenge a part of your life? In many ways, David's resolve had turned to mush because he had compromised his morality years earlier. Do you feel you have maintained your spiritual resolve? In what ways have you compromised it?

My thoughts about spiritual compromise in my life:

Famine and Destruction

Read Chapters 21-24

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
21		
22		
23		
24		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. Of what significance are the events of chapter 21 in the overall teaching of the book?
2. What elements does David's Psalm of chapter 22 include (his final Psalm)?
3. What is the tone of the song in chapter 23?
4. Why did the anger of the Lord burn against David?
5. Why did dealing with the actions of David have to cause the suffering of others?
Why was this necessary or fair?

What about today?

David was trusting in fleshly strength to evaluate his success. Note Psalm 147:10 for insight on confidence in the flesh. In what ways are you presently choosing to not trust in your own abilities? In what ways are you trusting in your own abilities?

My thoughts on the long-range consequences of self-centered confidence: