“**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

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**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

# Servant: 1 Samuel 18-31

**Chp. 21-28:2 The captain of captivity**

**1 Samuel 22:1-5**

**“You are my portion”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 1-4a Songs for cave dwellers**

**III. Vs. 4b-5 Engraved upon the heart**

**I. Intro.**

David watched his life change on an arrows flight and what seemed to be with in his grasp was suddenly far out of reach. The Lord had promised that he was destined for the throne but the arrow pointed in the opposite direction. Yet in obedience we are told simply that “*He arose and departed*” (20:42). We saw him run into the “*House of the Lord*” looking for **provisions** and **protection** but not in humility and brokeness. David would have settled for far less then what the Lord wanted to give him as he asked for five stale loves of bread and some old warn out weapon. But the Lord wanted to give him the fresh bread of *“His presence*” and the weapon of the “*Sword of the Spirit*”. You will recall that waiting for David in the house of the Lord was Doeg “*Anxiety*”, is that not always the case when we are willing to settle for less then what the Lord has for us? In fear David escapes to find peace amongst the Philistines and looks crazy doing it.

Oh dear saints that is not the end of the story even though it is the end of the narrative. You see David escapes in this chapter to the cave of Adullam a place of rest and refuge and in that cave he would write four psalms. We know this because above each of these songs for ***cave dwellers*** they tells us when they were written:

* Ps. 52 “*A contemplation of David when Doeg the Edomite went and told Saul, and said to him, David has gone to the house of Ahimelech*”.
* Ps. 56 “*A Michtam (instruction) of David when he fled from Saul into the cave*”.
* Ps. 34 “*A psalm of David when he pretended madness before Abimelech, who drove him away, and he departed*”.
* Ps 142 “*A prayer when he was in the cave*”.

Reading these psalms reveals to us what was going on in David’s heart during specific times in the narrative. For instance I personally believe that the first psalm David wrote upon entering the cave of Adullam was the 142nd psalm. In those seven verses David cry’s out and declares his trouble before the Lord as he speaks of his spirit being overwhelmed. In the 4th verse he declares that no one cares for his soul and that “*Refuge has failed*” him. You will recall that Adullam means refuge and in the 5th verse he declares, “*You are my refuge (*my Adullam*), My portion in the land of the living*.” I believe that psalm 142 indicates a change in the heart of David and this led to the other psalms. Is that not glorious that God works through our failures to deepen our relationship with Him?

## II. Vs. 1-4a Songs for cave dwellers

Vs. 1a David was run out of Gath in humility after faking madness and escapes to a cave that is located above the valley of Elah where he had years ago defeated Goliath. I want to leave David in this cave alone for a moment as the next sentence tells us that his family had heard of his holding up in this cave half way between Gath and Bethlehem. I think it is important to remember that we were told concerning David in chapter 16:13 that “*the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward*.” He is all alone above the valley where he had trusted the Lord, stripped of everything, humbled by his own failures. In that place when his spirit is overwhelmed perhaps looking down upon that valley he realizes what he knew years earlier that the Lord is his “***Adullam***” and portion. Folks there will be times in our lives where we will **not sense** the Spirit of the Lord being upon our lives and God will separate us from all we hold dear and lead us to a cave in the wilderness. And there in that cave where we feel alone and forsaken He will come to us and we will realize what we once knew “**God is our refuge and portion**”. Our life is not hanging upon the fanciful flight of an arrow and those things, which we thought was our refuge and portion, have only kept us from that which truly are, the Lord!

Vs. 1b-2 I find it interesting that it is after this time alone with the Lord that God brings two groups of people too David:

1. Vs. 1b **Family**: The fact that David’s brothers as well as his father’s house comes to David here tells us that his brothers must have deserted Saul’s army thus making them a fugitives as well. When we started looking at David we noted that there was contention between David and his father and brothers, now we see that they join him. We often think that it is our success that will reach our family but oft times it is how we handle our set backs that reunites us.
2. Vs. 2 **Misfits**: In a parallel passage in 1 Chron 12:16-18 we know that these three groups of refugees came from two tribes Benjamin and Judah, which represented Saul’s and David’s tribes. No doubt these 400 hundred men which will become 600 by chapter 23:16 had all had enough of Saul’s reign. They would become the nucleus of Israel’s greatest army and would be called his “*mighty men*”. But it is hard to see them as “mighty men” when they first arrive at the cave of Adullam? We are told that these 400 men had three characteristics that we would not associate with greatness:
3. “*Everyone who was in distress*”: These were not mere sympathizers with David they were the “***stressed out***”. They had lived life under a disobedient king and it had left them stressed. God is still looking to bring into His kingdom the **stressed out**, those who have tired of life lived under the god of this world. Listen to Jesus’ promise in Matt. 11:28 when he says, “*Come to me, all you who are* ***weary*** *and* ***burdened****, and I will give you* ***rest***.” Do you see that promise of rest; “*Adullam*” is that not great? God looks to build His kingdom from the stressed out and He calls them out of the world to find rest and refuge in the Rock!
4. “*Everyone who was in debt*”: Then there are those who are bankrupt from living under the king’s regime. They have been sold into slavery to pay their debts and have no hope to ever be freed from their bondage. Can you relate to that, having spent your life pursuing that which you can not pay? Running up more bills then you have funds to cover them? Well to those Jesus says in John 8:36 “*Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed*.” That is the promise, come to Him He has paid your debt that you have made and all you need to do seek His refuge.
5. “*Everyone who was discontented*”: Ah here the word is “*bitter souled*”. I think this occurs when circumstances and life experiences have left us with a soured soul that sees no satisfaction in life and we become cynical and soured on life. This is what happens living in the disobedient kingdom, frustrated by our conditions wanting something better but unable to change! To the bitter parched soul Jesus promises in John 7:37-38 “*If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water*.”

It is interesting looking at this that those who were “distressed, in debt and discontented” when they made a decision for David it was a separation from Saul! They may have came to David **stressed out**, **put out** and **bummed out** but they did not stay that way. No they became mighty men. In fact 1 Chron 12:8 describes them as “*mighty men of valor, men trained for battle, who could handle shield and spear, whose faces were like the faces of lions, and were as swift as gazelles on the mountains*”. What happened to them in that cave? Well God brought them to a man who had spent time in the cave of refuge himself. A man who had been called, anointed and **broken** and there in that cave of refuge the Lord used David to teach them to worship.

Dear saint God is always looking and calling to Himself all the “distressed indebted and discontented” so that He can transform them into mighty men to reign with Him. I’m so thankful of this truth because I qualify don’t you?

Vs. 3-4a Mizpah means “*watch tower*” and was across the Jordan river where it meets the Dead Sea. Sense David’s future was uncertain he did not want to expose his family to his life on the run until he knew what God would do for him. After time spent in the cave of refuge worshipping the Lord God doing good on his behalf was not in question only the timing of when it would take place.

Even though David’s family had shown little care towards him and he had enough problems of his own he did not use this as an excuse to be unloving and uncaring towards others. One of the best antidotes to depression is to spend time serving others instead of ourselves! David’s great grandmother Ruth, (herself a Moabite hence why the King of Moab was agreeable to this), practiced this after her husband had died as she decided to serve her mother in-law Naomi and God blessed her with a “kinsmen-redeemer” in Boaz!

**II. Vs. 1-5 Engraved upon the heart**

Vs. 4b-5 So David drops of his parents off in Moab and heads south to a place we are told in the text that was a “*stronghold*”. The word rendered “*stronghold*” comes from the word Massada and many commentators believe that David sought refuge in none other than Massada. Massada is that 1300 foot hilltop above the Dead Sea that the Roman’s 10th Legion as well as 1000’s of slaves spent three years to building a siege tower to break into its walls. Today a tram can reach Massada or a very narrow path that winds it’s self around this monolith but in David’s day, long before Herod built his place atop it, the only way up to the top would have been to scale it steep slopes. I can just picture David and those 400 men a top this massive rock with a view from all sides willing to wait out Saul and his 3000 men (26:2) that are out to kill him.

David had placed his family in a secure place told the king of the Moabites that he was going to wait till he knew what God will do for him. So David and those 400 men climbed up into safety to wait out the death of Saul in security. But one day Gad (good fortune) a prophet of the Lord comes calling. Gad just kind of appears in scripture we haven’t seen or heard of him before but we will see him again in 2nd Sam. 24 when he comes to deal with David for the sin of numbering the people. Apparently he was close to David as 1 Chron. 29:29 tells us that he wrote a book about David and in 2 Chron. 29:25 tells us that he help arrange the music for worship. At any rate “good fortune” comes calling on David as he is laid up in safety and he has a word from the Lord, “*Do not stay in the stronghold; depart, and go to the land of Judah*.” Hold on a minute, isn’t the “*land of Judah*” near where Saul was? Yep, it’s his backyard! Now I don’t know about you but I think if I was David looking back at the past view months at what had happened to me I’d want to see if my “good fortune” could fly from my “stronghold” if you know what I mean?

Here’s where I’m going with this, David has been striped of everything that was secure and safe in his life. He was driven to the Lord to his cave of refuge and there the Lord broke through the emptiness of his heart and worship returned to his life. God brought to him his family and new friends and **a desperate situation became *tolerable***. He has began to trust again and he places his loved ones in a safe place and goes on top to wait out Saul but not only Saul the Lord as well in safety and security. Is that not like you and I? None of us like being stripped of our security do we? So we climb a top our Massada, our stronghold, to hold on and hold out tell better days. But note this dear saint the Lord does not want you put away on some safe hill top no it is your “good fortune” to leave your last “stronghold” to go to a place of uncertainty. But why? Well I believe the answer is to be found in the destination as David left in obedience to the forest of Hereth. You see the these wooded hills of Judah offered David greater security. Greater security then my Masada? Yes you see the word “Hereth” means engraving, thus God was going to do some engraving upon the heart of David that he would never have received if he stayed in his comfort zone! All to often we like our God far to safe and comfortable don’t we? We like to stay held up in Massada and we fail to realize that our God is an active God and it is in the uncertainties of our life that He use to engraves our hearts with His name as our true stronghold.

I close with this thought; David was willing to leave the last vestige of security he had clung too are you? When “good fortune” comes calling you away from your Massada to the forest of your engrave will you come down from your 1300 foot mountain and allow Him to engrave your heart? Next time we look at this passage we shall see a man who would not come off of his high hill and lived in fear that destroyed not only his life but also all around him. Saul allowed his “anxiety” (Doeg) to take over his life and the result was a massacre of innocent people let this be a warning to us all!

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

# Servant: 1 Samuel 18-31

**Chp. 21-28:2 The captain of captivity**

**1 Samuel 22:6-23**

**“The offspring of anxiety”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 6-19 No satisfaction**

# III. Vs. 20-23 Safe with the Savior

**I. Intro.**

There is not a Christian who has ever been that will not spend some time with Doeg (*Anxiety*) the Edomite. It is not a matter of whether or not you will meet up with “*anxiety*” or even where you will be at when you meet up with him, (*David was in the house of the Lord Saul at his home*). No, the real question is whether or not he will take over and control your life! When fear comes in through the window of our hearts faith always leaves through the front door! David sought rest in his “*refuge*” the cave of Adullam. Accordingly as he wrote a song about this in psalm 142 and verse 4 he declares that “*Refuge has failed me*” and by that he means that “*anxiety*” had dislodged all that he had found comforting. Ah but there alone in that cave which over looked the Valley of Elah where years earlier as a mere boy he ventured out in faith upon the battle field armed with nothing more then his Lord, a giant was killed. Appropriately psalm 142 verse five declares this transformation in David’s heart as we read concerning the Lord that; “*You are my refuge, My portion in the land of the living*.”

Mark this chapter my dear Christian as it reveals to us a contrast of two lives one ruled by faith (David) the other by fear (Saul) and as we shall see a life ruled by anxiety (fear) will always seek to destroy our faith! Ah but the opposite is also true as we are told in 1 John 4:18 “*There is no fear in love; but* ***perfect love casts out fear***”.

## II. Vs. 6-19 No satisfaction

Vs. 6a Apparently some time has elapsed between David being held up in the cave of Adullam and Saul discovering his location. Based upon this verse David has not only returned from Gath but God has already gathered to him all that were “*stressed out, put out and bummed out*” all of which as we saw were no doubt in those conditions from being under Saul’s reign.

Now I mention this because for “*Anxiety*” to begin to control our lives several things must be present:

1. If our lives are characterized by disobedience to the Lord, as Saul’s was then, “*anxiety*” will find fertile soil in which to grow. We are told of the Lord’s words to Saul in 15:22-23 “*Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry*.” Disobedience to the Lord always leaves the door open for anxiety to enter our hearts doesn’t it? Paul wrote to Timothy saying, “*the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from sincere faith*”. If that is the state of our heart, though anxiety may enter he will have no place comfortable to take up his residence.
2. Second, time becomes a tool in the hands of anxiety when a life is not centered upon obedience to the Lord. With every passing moment if our hearts are not being lived in obedience to the Lord we will see each and every minute as our enemy. Paul prayed for the Thessalonians that “*the Lord direct their hearts into the love of God and into the patience of Christ*.” Then in Hebrews 6:12 we are admonished to, “*imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.*”
3. Clearly the revelation that David now had gathered to himself the “*stress out, put out and bummed out*” played into Saul’s anxiety. In other words every circumstance we experience while we live in disobedience becomes a curse instead of a blessing. Clearly based upon verse 8 Saul views this as a “*conspiracy*” as even his own tribe of the Benjamites are against him. Lack of submission to the Lord, plus time always breads the offspring of insecurity!

### Vs. 6b There are **five things mentioned here that indicate that Doeg (*Anxiety*) had already taken up all the space of Saul’s heart**:

### “*Saul was staying in Gibeah*”: Gibeah was the birthplace of Saul and the place of his residence, it is so equated with Saul that it is even referred to as “*Gibeah of Saul*”. The word means, “hill” and in fact today the sight has be excavated in an area called “*Tell el-Fûl*” or “*hill of beans*”. Here is where I’m going with this we can see that Saul has allowed “anxiety” to take residence in his heart because he has made a “*hill of beans*” the house he won’t leave. You’ve heard the expression concerning a person who is in the grasp of anxiety that they make, “*Mountain’s out of molehills*!” Well **Saul was in the grasp of anxiety as he not only made mountains out of a “*hill of beans*” he made it his residence**! How about it dear Christian are you living on a “*hill of beans*”, majoring in minors instead resting in the Lord. There could be no greater contrast then this between David and Saul, “*David fled to Adullam (the cave in the rock) his refuge and Saul stayed fixed upon his comfortable hill of beans*”!

### “*Under a tamarisk tree*”: Saul was not only living on a “*hill of beans*” we are told that he was staying under a Tamarisk tree. This is the tree that Abraham planted when he called upon the name of the Lord in Genesis 21:33. The tree is noted for having long life, hard wood and evergreen leaves, which was associated with God’s enduring grace, faithfulness and promise keeping. The problem with Saul staying under this tree was that this was just for show and not a reality. Here’s my point when “anxiety” has taken control of our heart we are more concerned with outward appearances then inward realities. Gibeah of Saul and the tamarisk tree are two opposite things aren’t they? Saul was trying to mask where his heart was by staying under the tree of God’s grace, faithfulness and promises without ever allowing His true heart to be there.

### “*In Ramah*”: Matthew refers to Ramah in chapter 2:18 as He quotes Jeremiah 31:15 in reference to the slaughter of the innocent children by Herod in his attempt to kill the two year old Jesus. Jeremiah spoke these words about Ramah 500 years later then this date before us as he was in chains watching the week, poor and the young get massacred by the Babylonians as they lead the Israelites captive hence his words: “*A voice was heard in Ramah, Lamentation, weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, Refusing to be comforted, Because they are no more*.” Simply put Ramah is a place of weeping and captivity because of the destruction that a life lived in disobedience brings. It that not so Christian in our lives? When anxiety takes control of our hearts destruction of innocent people and weeping are the offspring of our disobedience and fear.

### “*With his spear in his hand*”: This is a common thing with Saul is it not? What this reveals is **Saul’s paranoia** as he is convinced everyone and everything is out to get him so he always has his spear in his hand. This is a classic indication that anxiety has taken residence in a heart, when we begin to view life as everybody and every thing being against us. Have you ever run into a person who is always carrying around a spear and they aren’t a bit to shy to let you know that they are armed and ready to poke you? I’m afraid that far to often we Christian’s are seen by the world we live in as walking around with our spears in hand instead of people who are at peace! Jesus told His disciple’s to be as “*wise as serpents and harmless as doves*.” (Matt. 10:16) but I’m afraid that far too often we have got our animal’s in the wrong place as we tend to be “*wise as* ***doves*** *and harmless* ***as serpents***”!

### “*And all his servants standing about him*”: The last thing that indicates that “Anxiety” has taken residence in our hearts is when **we begin to view every body as our servants sent to protect us**. Often you will see this within the walls of a Church when little factions gather together that are about serving self-interests. All those servants just standing around him at his beckon call ready to do what ever he wanted. Anxiety in the human heart tends to cause us to want to surround ourselves with “*yes men*” that take up our agenda instead of viewing ourselves as servants of the Lord! How interesting that some of those fellows left Saul as “Stressed out, Put out and Bummed out” to come into the refuge and become worshipers of the Lord.

Does this describe you dear saint? *Are you making your home on a “hill of beans” pretending to stand by God’s grace but in reality your life is causing the innocent to weep while you walk a round paranoid thinking that everybody exists to serve you*? If that describes you then anxiety has taking up his residence in your heart and trusting the God of all grace and love has left through the front door!

Vs. 7-8 This manifests it’s self in Saul’s comments to his fellow countrymen the Benjamites. He engages in a five-fold public relations campaign reminiscent of a political campaign. There is in my mind a direct correlation between anxiety in the heart and having to do a little PR to get people to follow you, wouldn’t you agree?

1. Vs. 7a “*Hear now, you Benjamites*”: “Hey, I’m one of you!” That is Saul’s first appeal as he himself is a Benjamite and as we have discovered some of his fellow tribes men sided with David and made up part of the 400. Saul makes this appeal to that of loyalty and family connections.
2. Vs. 7b “*Will the son of Jesse give every one of you fields and vineyards, and make you all captains of thousands and captains of hundreds*”: “I promise if I’m elected to give you just what you ask for.” Notice how again he plays the family connection care as David was from the tribe of Judah and Saul says would be less likely to show the favoritism that Saul had. That is how politicians get reelected year after year apart from their dismal record.
3. Vs. 8a “*All of you have conspired against me, and there is no one who reveals to me that my son has made a covenant*”: “You better elect me because if you don’t vote for me I’ll get back at you!” Often times when bribes don’t work threats will come out and that is exactly what Saul tries.
4. Vs. 8b “*With the son of Jesse*”: Notice the use of the words “son of Jesse” as it suggests that Saul is saying that David is not qualified for the job. So here we Saul waging a dirty campaign smear the name of the man who he himself appointed!
5. Vs. 8c “*There is not one of you who is sorry for me or reveals to me that my son has stirred up my servant against me, to lie in wait, as it is this day*”: Finally Saul engages in trying to rise some sympathy by claiming that he is a victim. Hard to imagine this working in light of what is about to happen in the killing of 85 priests and their families.

Vs. 9-10 With the condition of Saul’s heart revealed Doeg (Anxiety) ceases the opportunity. Doeg (anxiety) will always be hanging around waiting for an opportunity to control of your heart won’t he? In comparing David with Saul and how they handled anxiety we see that both got to a place that they felt as no one cared for them but David ends up seeking shelter in his “refuge” where he rediscovers that the Lord is his refuge and portion. But Saul doesn’t instead he allows Doeg to hang around him and take over his life.

Hey Christian be aware of this just as Doeg (anxiety) was waiting for the opportunity to advance his own self so too anxiety is always hanging around at the door of your heart. You remember Jesus words to Simon Peter in Luke 22:31-32 when He said, “*Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. "But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren*.”

Doeg makes three accusations against Ahimelech and his aiding of David:

1. “*He inquired of the LORD for him*”: Gave him perspective
2. “*Gave him provisions*”: Provided provisions
3. “*And gave him the sword of Goliath the Philistine*”: Supplied protection

These words of Doeg to Saul who had already accused his son of disloyalty, his subjects of apathy and David of conspiracy was more then enough to get Saul to act upon his fear.

Vs. 11-13 Notice Saul calls Ahimelech the “*son of Ahitub*” who was the Grandson of Eli and the son of Phinehas who with his brother were destroyed because of their sins. Simply put Saul is calling the kettle black with this reference as Samuel’s prophecy was that there would not be an old man in Eli’s house, (1 Sam 2:31). So in other words you have out lived your welcome and I’m going to fulfill the Lord’s will by killing you. By indirectly quoting Samuel prophecy Saul is failing to recognize that Samuel also spoke of his dethronement.

Vs. 14-19 There was of coarse no “conspiracy” in fact Ahimelech was unaware that David was a wanted man, further more David lied about his needs for provisions and protection.

Folks, when we are in the grips of fear and anxiety we are blinded to the innocence of others. In what can only be called a massacre of innocent people 85 men plus women and children all because fear had taken hold of a heart. In chapter 15:9 Saul was disobedient when it came to caring out the Lords word in destroying the wicked but here he has no problem in killing the innocent. Why does Saul do such an atrocious thing? Well because the one that Saul really wanted to kill was God so the next best thing was to slaughter those that served Him. And of coarse Doeg is all to ready to do so and did not stop at just the 85 priests but went right down to their live stock. Which is reminiscent to the word of the Lord by Samuel 20 years earlier in 15:3, which Saul disobeyed. Christian that is what will happen to us if we allow anxiety to take up residence in our hearts through disobedience you will end up as Isaiah said in 5:20 “*calling evil good, and good evil*”.

## III. Vs. 20-23 Safe with the Savior

### Vs. 20-23 We close with David’s response to the massacre told him by the Abiathar. David admits that his giving into fear was the reason for the death of all of Abiathar’s family. Friend once we have picked the fruit of anxiety and fear it can not be placed back upon the tree and all that is left is to eat of it or let it rot upon the ground. No matter what it will always leave you with a bitter taste in your mouth or stink! So David takes in Abiathar as his companion swearing to protect at all costs.

### There is grace to this story even after the failure of David, as he becomes David’s life long friend, High Priest and the one who would bring the Ark into Jerusalem. Here then is the lesson to those who still turn to the Lord even after allowing “anxiety” to take up residence in our hearts; the Lord can make friends even out of our failures if we so allow Him.

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

# Servant: 1 Samuel 18-31

**Chp. 21-28:2 The captain of captivity**

**1 Samuel 23:1-13**

**“Shaping a heart in a clay pot”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 1-5 Faithful men in forsaken places**

# III. Vs. 6-13 A faithful God in a faithless city

**I. Intro.**

### There seems to be at times in my mind a formula to success that says, “***If I seek the Lord and obey His leading in my life then the events of my life will follow my expectations***”. David experienced this very dilemma not just once but over and over as he sought the Lord and each time he did things did not turn out as he expected. I find in my life that these are the most difficult of circumstances to overcome, don’t you? You see we know that we have heard from the Lord and that He is good and only has the best for us yet the circumstances and situations we are dealing with don’t seem to indicate this.

### It is here in David’s life as a fugitive that we can gain insight into our own discouragement caused by this paradox. David was destined for the throne (*God sent Samuel to tell him so*) but if this was true why was he having to live in caves instead of the palace? Follow me on this one dear saint, you see even though David will finally be crowned King in 2nd Samuel his preparation to reign is already under progress during this 10-year stint as a fugitive! That makes this time the time of training and preparation for the throne. How much more so for you and I as our throne is not for the fleeting breath of time on this earth, no it is for eternity! Perhaps we should reevaluate the meaning of success to how freed slave Booker T. Washington so eloquently put it when he said, “*I have learned that success is not to be measured by the position one has reached in life but rather by the obstacles you’ve overcome while trying to succeed!*”

### **II. Vs. 1-5 Faithful men in forsaken places**

Vs. 1 Based upon the text chronologically and geographically 22:5 and 23:1 are in sequential order. You will recall that David dropped off his parents in Moab and then went up to his stronghold (*many believe this to be* ***Massada***) to wait out Saul’s reign when Gad the prophet comes and tells him to leave his comfort zone and head to the forest of engraving (Hereth) in Saul’s backyard. Amazingly the text simply says, “*So David departed and went into the forest of Hereth*.” Now in the 1st verse of chapter 23 David is told the Philistines are attacking the food supply of the city of Keilah (kay-li-la) which was a boarder town in Judah only a few miles from the forest of Hereth. There are three things close by this location:

1. **ROCK**: Saul and Doeg have just destroyed the priests at Nob.
2. **HARD PLACE**: The Philistines, as they are attacking the city of Keilah.
3. **REFUGE**: The cave of Adullam is also close by.

Further more it appears that the arrival of Abiathar the priest happens after David defends the city as there is no mention of David inquiring of the Lord with the ephod that Abiathar brings with him from Nob in verse 6. So through out this section of scripture David inquires of the Lord three times, twice with the prophet of God present and once with both the prophet of God (Gad) as well as the priest Abiathar present. And in each of these situations David follows the Lord in obedience to what His will has revealed going against common wisdom not presuming to know the will of the Lord nor basing his decisions upon personal interests. My point is to show the extent of David’s seeking the will of the Lord which would lead us to believe that in so doing this would guarantee the outcome meeting our expectations but as we shall see **it does not**.

What is even more remarkable is that these conflicts of faith have not hindered David’s desire to seek the Lord nor obey His word! A case in point is right before us as David is hiding out in the “*Forest of Hereth*” when someone comes to him saying, “*Look, the Philistines are fighting against Keilah, and they are robbing the threshing floors*.” Had David been “***out come based***” in his faith he might have been tempted to respond to both man and the Lord by saying, “*So, what does that have to do with me I’ve got my own problems and it doesn’t seem that God or anybody else for that matter cares about me*!” After all David could have justified such a response because it was *King Saul’s responsibility to defend Keilah and if he was more interested in defending his people instead of defeating David everybody would be better off!*” **It is very easy for us to pull away from serving the Lord or to become bitter when we view our seeking God’s will and obedience as a formula to getting what we want**. But God’s interest is in David and him being a man after His heart not a man after his own interests, Saul was already supplying that position.

Vs. 2 “*Therefore David inquired of the LORD, saying, "Shall I go and attack these Philistines*?” The other side of the coin that says, “*Let Saul take care of this*”, is just to ***presume that opportunity equal’s God’s will for our life***. Hey Christian an open door does not necessarily indicate the will of God only His word can do that. David makes no presumption and instead takes the opportunity before the Lord with no bias and simply asks if he should go to war And the Lord speaks to his heart to go and fight and even tells him that the outcome is that the city will be saved.

Robbing the threshing floor was tantamount of hitting a bank when pay role was do. You see the threshing floor had to be out side the protective walls of the city so that the wind could separate the wheat from the chaff. So these Philistines were waiting until the pile of grain grew and then swooped in and took it to feed themselves essentially starving the inhabitants of the city. There are several reasons why the Lord has you and I leave our “***Massada’s***” (*our comfort zones*) to a place of uncertainty:

1. **First** God calls us out of our comfort zones so He can use us to be a blessing to His people! These folks were being ripped off and their King was not interested in protecting them but their God was.
2. **Second** God wanted David to behave as King before he was ever crowned as one. Look through out scripture and you will always see this as part of God’s plan upon the leaders He appoints over His people as God always calls us to act before he ever gives us a title.
3. **Finally** carrying on with the theme of separating the wheat from the chaff is the idea that the Lord was working on David’s heart. You will recall as I’ve already said that Hereth means engraving well Keilah comes from the root word that means “*to carve and toss away*”. Now I spent many years as a goldsmith and I learned how to hand engrave and that is exactly what happens when you engrave something you gouge out the material and toss it away. The word is used to describe a potter as he takes and shapes the clay with tools to cut out and toss away the imperfections to form the vessel of His desire.

Don’t miss this dear Christian as this answers the reason to why the Lord is working the way He is in yours and my life. You see the Lord is wanting to get you to move outside your comfort zones to be a:

* **Blessing to others**
* **So you will pursue His purpose and calling upon your life**
* **Cutting away those imperfections of your life you will be a vessel of His honor**

Vs. 3-4 Apparently David shares what the Lord wanted with his “**Mighty men**”, those 400 fellows who came to him “*stressed out, put out and bummed out*” (22:2), and they are not to keen on the idea and I can see two very solid reasons why:

1. First they were suppose to be hiding from Saul and as it was they were doing so in his backyard, now David was suggesting that the Lord was leading them out into the open by defending a city next door to Saul.
2. Further more these fellows were not trained fighting men and David wanted to go out against an enemy where David had killed their champion, mutilated 200 of their soldiers for a dowry and faked being crazy to escape their grasp.

But notice how David handles their anxiety as he again “*inquires of the Lord*”. It never ceases to amaze me how seeking the Lord changes my heart from fear to security. It also is a mark of a good leader not to impose their will on those who are in fear but to demonstrate the antidote to fear; faith in the Lord and allow the Lord to change their heart. The Lord seems to have used David’s failure to trust the Lord before in Nob with Ahimelech, to give him a heart that can’t stand the thought of a destruction of another city by oppressors who are only serving themselves. It was David’s inability to think of others before himself that led to the destruction of Nob that causes him to place Keilah’s well being above his own!

David receives confirmation from the Lord as well as a promise of victory if he would be obedient. And they trusted the Lord at His word and struck them with a “*mighty blow*” and not only did they save the city they gained spoil taking the livestock of the Philistine’s as bounty, so the city not only gets to eat their cereal again but steaks are on the Lord as well. Clearly all involved could see the leading of the Lord and the benefits of trusting in Him.

## III. Vs. 6-13 A faithful God in a faithless city

Vs. 6 It is here that Abiathar comes with the ephod in his hand. It might be helpful in understanding this passage to understand just what the ephod was. You see the ephod was that religious garment that the priest would ware. Over the top of the ephod the high priest would ware the breastplate with the 12 different stones each baring the engraving of a name of a tribe of Israel. Then lastly tucked in a little pouch was two stones many believe were diamonds by which the high priest used to determine the will of the Lord. The Urim and Thummim or “*Lights and Perfection’s*” would in some way illuminate when the high priest asked specific questions. It was the way in which they would inquire the specific Lord’s will. Now today we have the “Word of God” by which God speaks to our hearts concerning His will in our lives. There was an old southern preacher who was asked by a young pastor how he could better determine God’s will for his life; “*Well son you got-sta do more usin and thummin of the Lord’s Word!*”

Vs. 7-8 Now David is going to have need to know the specific will of the Lord in a moment as news gets back to Saul that David has entrapped himself in Keilah with no way out. So Saul gathers an army to fight against David a Keilah! Saul did not want to defend the city against the Philistines but he did want to attack the city to defeat David!

Look at Saul’s words here, “*God has delivered him into my hand*”! Saul made the assumption that David would not and that was that opportunity equals God’s plan, clearly this was not God’s plan as it went against God’s word. Saul was using his own sentiments to interpret God’s will, which is a very dangerous thing. Just because we don’t like someone or something doesn’t mean God doesn’t. You see God is not on our side we are on His! I can’t help but notice the irony in the words, “*Saul called all the people together for war*”. War, against God’s anointed but not against the oppressors! Be careful dear Christian who you go to battle against and ask yourself whose Kingdom are you defending yours or the Lord’s?

Vs. 9-12 The word gets back to David that Saul has heard of his victory over the Philistines and is planning evil against him. I’m blown away here by what David does as he again does not make any assumptions based upon his following the Lord to save the city. Remember that Keilah was a city of Judah not Benjamin, which tells us that it was David’s people not Saul’s. Further more David was their hero, protector and provider as the city clearly saw that God was with David. The assumption would have been that these people would be loyal to David and his men for several reasons. But David doesn’t make any such assumptions instead he seeks the specific will of the Lord and need’s answers for two questions:

1. Vs. 11 Is Saul coming?
2. Vs. 12 Will the people of the city turn against me?

The answer to both questions was YES, but there is a question that I want answered and that is why? Why would the Lord lead David to deliver a city, risk his own life for those who would in the end betray him to a man who was disobedient and did not even consider their suffering at the hand of the enemy worthy defending? Listen up Christian as the answer is extremely important! God is interested in shaping David’s heart concerning leading people and listening to the Lord. This is important as David will be a God pleaser and not a man pleaser. There is a tendency to have greater expectation on the people we are blessed to serve then on our regular jobs. Take for instance David when he was the shepherd boy with his father’s flock. He risked his life for them against the bear and the lion but none those sheep ever came up to him and thanked him. The truth be told **most of us would be willing to commit ourselves to something or someone as long as we eventually get some return on our investment**! But then our service becomes works in which we expect a paycheck.

Here is my point David was being taught to minister **FROM** the Lord and not **to get something** from the Lord! **The Lord would have you and I give because we have already gotten and not to DO in order to get**!

Vs. 13 This then is the 2nd time David saves the city this time by his departure! Hey is that not interesting? David sought the Lord in order to save the city and the Lord told him to go and save the city. Ah but when the city was in jeopardy because of his presence he sought the Lord and the Lord told him to leave in order to save the city! Notice as well that the Lord has added 200 more men to David during his stay in Keilah most likely they came from that city!

I conclude with David’s words in one of the three psalms that it is believed that he wrote during this time, (psalm 27, 31 and 54) to illustrate the one consistent thing through this passage, “seeking the Lord”. David wrote in Psalm 27:3-5 “*Though an army may encamp against me, My heart shall not fear; Though war should rise against me, In this I will be confident. One thing I have desired of the LORD, That will I seek: That I may dwell in the house of the LORD All the days of my life, To behold the beauty of the LORD, And to inquire in His temple. For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion; In the secret place of His tabernacle He shall hide me; He shall set me high upon a rock*.”

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

# Servant: 1 Samuel 18-31

**Chp. 21-28:2 The captain of captivity**

**1 Samuel 23:14-28**

**“Taking Refuge in Refinement”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 14-18 Strengthening our hand in God**

# III. Vs. 19-23 The blessing of betrayal

# IV. Vs. 24-28 The rock that refines protects

**I. Intro.**

### The 23rd chapter provides a practical guide to some of the processes God uses to shape “*the person after His heart*”. What I so often fail to realize is that life as I know it is not about me “*getting what I want out of God when I want it*”. Rather **it is about God transforming me into who he wants me to be**. (2 Cor. 3:18) Now as I look at my life God uses two primary tools to accomplish this in my life the first of which we looked at this morning **adversity**. Most often this adversity is seen in situations or circumstances that go against us. Such was the case at Keilah when the Lord used a city to “*carve and toss away*” parts of David’s life preparing him for the throne.

### Ah but there is another useful tool God uses to further transform us and the use of this tool is much more difficult for me to appreciate. Here in this section we will look at this tool being used three different ways, one we don’t mind in fact we rather enjoy. Oh but the other two ways we tend to become quite upset when the Lord uses the tool on us. I’ll remove the suspense; the tool I’m speaking of is “**PEOPLE**”. In verses 14-28 we see the Lord using people three different ways to further refine and shape David to be king:

### Vs. 14-18 **Friend** (Jonathan) verse 16

* Vs. 19-23 **Family** (Ziphites) verse 19
* Vs. 24-28 **Foe** (Philistines) verse 27

## II. Vs. 14-18 Strengthening our hand in God

Vs. 14 The 13 verse provides for us David’s departure from the betrayal at the hands of the inhabitant’s of Keilah whom he had just delivered twice, once from his coming into the city taking on the Philistines and once upon leaving the city so that Saul and his army would not destroy it while trying to kill David.

The 13th verse also tells us that David’s men now numbered about six hundred, an increase of 200 hundred from the 400 who originally came to him while he was in the cave of Adullam. It is safe to assume that these 200 were themselves inhabitants of Keilah who observed not only a man who was willing to deliver the city from an enemy but they also saw that he was a man willing to have parts of his life carved and tossed away drawing him ever closer to the Lord. **Hear me out Christian, what God often uses to change others hearts is the very thing He used to change yours**! I have no doubt those 200 men were blessed by David’s heart to be their deliverer but I’m inclined to believe that they were even more amazed at how he handled the betrayal from those he had just delivered. The risking of a life to save a city is a great thing and it made him a hero. Ah but the wounding of a heart from those whom you just saved revealed a man after God’s heart!

Geographically David and his 600 men retreat into the desert hill country of Judah between Jerusalem and the Dead Sea. There are two very important details given us right up front:

1. **Purpose**: The area where David seeks refuge is called the “*Wilderness of Ziph*” and as we shall see that those who make this area their home are called “*Ziphites*”. The word means ***refining***, thus this area would be the “*wilderness of refining*”. I don’t know about you but I always find when the Lord is refining me I seem to be in a wilderness. Further more according to verse 19 that would make those that dwelt there the “refiners”. What fascinates is that these refiners were not strangers but rather family as they were from the tribe of Judah. It has been well observed that we can always determine what kind of servant we are not by what we do for the Lord but rather by how we act when someone treats us like one! People can be abrasive can’t they? Why they tend to “grit” on us rubbing us the wrong way. Oh but don’t miss this saint, have you ever considered the possibility that the Lord has sent them to ***sand off*** some of your ruff spots? Could it be that the Lord may be using the misbehavior of others to further shape you into His image?
2. **Plan**: “*Ok I get the purpose, to further shape me, but knocking off and smoothing out is painful and I don’t much care for it*!” How true but you know what helps? It is when we see that God is doing a great work in our lives and that work may not lesson the pain but does make it worth while. So what is that plan? Well in Jonathan coming to David in verse 16 we are told he was sent to, “*strengthen his hand in God*.” Now I know that in context this speaks specifically of Jonathan’s plan in coming to David but I rather think that it fits God’s over all plan as He allows us to be refined. You see God brings refinement our way to strip away those things that we have held onto that have lessened our hand in God! They don’t necessarily have to be sinful or bad things, why they can be wonderful things that we have held onto but they were never designed to be that which is strong enough to support us. We tend to grab as many of these things as we can and with our hands full of them there is not enough room in our grasp’s for the One thing that can support our lives, God! So periodically the Lord sends us out into the wilderness of refinement to “***strengthen our hand in Him***”!

#### There is a marvelous truth in the commentary of verse 14 as we are told that, “*Saul sought him every day, but God did not deliver him into his hand*.” As it relates to our refinement this is a significant verse as it tells us that God may use the Saul’s to further His refinement in our lives by they are not able to go beyond the purpose that He has intended. As relentless as Saul was God would not allow Saul to move beyond that which the Lord wanted for David and it’s important for our perspective in our refinement that we understand this.

#### Vs. 15-16 Two important points in these verses come to mind:

#### Verse 15 “*So David saw that Saul had come out to seek his life. And David was in the Wilderness of Ziph in a forest*.” The wilderness of refinement is a temporary thing! It is important for us to realize this as David did that the Saul’s of this world coming out against us and our being in the wilderness is not where we will make our permanent home. Oh don’t misunderstand me no time spent in the wilderness with someone seeking your life is fun thing but often we can lose perspective and become very discouraged believing that we will always have Saul coming out against us causing us to sleep in the bushes or caves. The truth is that God in His wisdom is allowing it for a season of refinement and He will not leave you in the wilderness any longer then is necessary to accomplish His purposes in your life.

#### “*Then Jonathan, Saul's son, arose and went to David in the woods and strengthened his hand in God*.” I love the fact that verse 16 starts with the word “**Then**” as it tells us that Jonathan’s seeking David out to strengthen his hand in God directly corresponded with him seeing his father daily come out to kill David. The greatest friendships and encouragement in our lives often go hand in hand with our refinement. **God never allows a Saul that He doesn’t send a Jonathan** dear Christian, to “*strengthen our hand in God*.” Look out through scripture and you will see them Barnabas’ who’s name means “Son of encouragement” seeking a forgotten Paul just at the right time.

### Vs. 17-18 The Jewish paraphrase gives us insight into how Jonathan “*strengthened his hand in God*” as it reads that Jonathan “*strengthened his hand in the Word of the Lord*”! Based upon verse 17 Jonathan observed David’s “fear” and lack of trust in the Lord and what he need was assurance in the Word and he offers him three such assurances:

### “*The hand of Saul my father shall not find you*”: In the midst of this refining from Saul, David needed to hear the truth that God will protect him. Paul wrote in 1 Cor. 10:13 “*God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it*.” What a precious promise to have close to our heart when the Lord uses people to refine us.

### “*You shall be king over Israel*”: Ah this truth is also a great comfort isn’t it as it reminds us that the refinement has a purpose that can not be thwarted. How prone we are to discouragement we fail to see the purpose of our refinement.

### “*I shall be next to you*”: Though specifically Jonathan would not himself be the person who would be next to him during his refinement God promises to “*never leave you nor forsake you*.” (Heb. 13:5). I’m so thankful for this truth as we all need someone to Paul wrote to Philemon “*we have great joy and consolation in your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed by you, brother”.* Most often in my life it is my wife who has been next to me propping my weary tired hands up and this Wednesday will make 26 years she has faithfully done so!

### Jonathan lets David in on the heart of his father be telling him that “*Even my father Saul knows that.*” Listen up Christian as this verse reveals something about our flesh: “*We can know the Word of God and the Will of God but still fight against the rest of our lives*”. We are far too prone to think that our understanding or comprehension of truth ensures our obedience to it. I can think of no more of a worse condition in the human heart then the one that say’s “*I was born this way and I’m going to die this way*!” Don’t you realize that Jesus died so you don’t have to stay the way you are?

Vs. 18 This is the 3rd time that Jonathan and David made such an agreement and it will be the last recorded time that they will see each other. David remained in the wilderness and Jonathan returned to the place but it will be David who removes Jonathan’s lifeless body from the walls of Beth Shean. There is something dear saint that we all ought to practice a little more often and it is to be found in the psalm written by Moses (90:12) “*So teach us to number our days, That we may gain a heart of wisdom*.” Just from the standpoint of the value of friends and family we all ought to treasure every minute.

**III. Vs. 19-23 The blessing of betrayal**

Vs. 19 The refinement of encouragement is as sweet as honey but it is not the only refinement we may taste, here we see the refinement of betrayal. The Ziphites were relatives of David who we are told had a great panoramic view of David’s wanderings from a flattened ridge above where David was hiding. We need to again reflect upon the fact that these folks were not the enemy but they were acting in sin. I suppose one could make the argument that the inhabitants of the city of Keilah were going to betray David ought of fear which still makes it wrong but a little more palatable. But that is not the case of the Ziphites who appear to have betrayed David for political gain.

Vs. 20-23 Notice that Saul sees blessing in betrayal as he is so consumed by his rebellion that he sees this as God’s hand of delivering David to him. In the 54th Psalm there is an inscription as to the timing of when this song was written by David and it reads, “*A contemplation of David when the Ziphites went and said to Saul, Is not David hiding among us?*” Most amazingly David chooses this “refinement” to write a praise song. A praise song, why I would probable chose it to write a song but might be titled after the Carly Simon song “*Your so vain you probably think this song is about you*!” Stick your finger here and turn to psalm 54 and read what David says about his refinement in these seven verses, “*Save me, O God, by Your name, And vindicate me by Your strength. Hear my prayer, O God; Give ear to the words of my mouth. For strangers have risen up against me, And oppressors have sought after my life; They have not set God before them. Selah Behold, God is my helper; The Lord is with those who uphold my life. He will repay my enemies for their evil. Cut them off in Your truth. I will freely sacrifice to You; I will praise Your name, O LORD, for it is good*. *For He has delivered me out of all trouble; And my eye has seen its desire upon my enemies*.” About the only thing David has to say about the *Ziphites* is that acted towards him as if they were strangers and Saul as an oppressor. But concerning his refinement at their hand he declares “*God is my helper; The Lord is with those who uphold my life*” and “*I will praise Your name, O LORD, for it is good*”. Do you see those words, “for it is good”? Why David is praising the Lord for the work He had done through his refinement. Oh yeh, there are words about God repaying them for their evil but it does not over shadow the fact that God used the betrayal of the Ziphites to further solidify God’s faithfulness.

Saul had become so embittered that he has mistaken the Lord’s faithfulness for what he calls David’s craftiness. David’s response is to turn his heart towards the Lord and those who had so acted as well.

**IV. Vs. 24-28 The rock that refines protects**

Vs. 24-26 We have all played this game when we were playing tag have we not. Got the person who is faster then you so you go behind a car and as they pursue one direction you go the opposite keeping the car between you and the one that is chasing you. Well it appears that David was playing that game with Saul and his army. As we bring this study to a close there are yet two more points to make about the people that the Lord allows into our life to refine us.

1. Vs. 27-28a “*But a messenger came to Saul, saying, Hasten and come, for the Philistines have invaded the land! Therefore Saul returned from pursuing David, and went against the Philistines*.” Here the Lord uses the enemy the Philistines as part of His hand of deliverance. David and his men were in danger of being encircled by Saul and his army when the Lord caused the Philistines to invade the nation. Our God is not limited by our understand. Deut. 32:4 declares “*He is the Rock, His work is perfect; For all His ways are justice*” and psalm 10: 5 tells us that “*His ways are always prospering*”. Is that not true? The Lord is able to prepare an enemy to act on our behalf to further “*has deliver us out of all trouble*” (Psalm 54).
2. Finally we are told that David calls the rock “*the Rock of Escape*.” Literally the rock that stands between us and everything else. And who is this “Rock”? well again at psalm 54 and we are told that the Rock is the Lord.

It has well been noted that a life that is to be guided by the Lord is dependent upon a cleansed heart. And it will take refinement to shape our hearts. Yes the Lord will use adversity as well as people to shape us and this will wound us but there will never be a wound that the Lord can not heal.

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

# Servant: 1 Samuel 18-31

**Chp. 21-28:2 The captain of captivity**

**1 Samuel 24:1-22**

**“Winning at Losing”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 1-15 A troubled heart from a cut hem**

**III. Vs. 16-22 Tares not just tears**

**I. Intro.**

In the 23rd chapter David was in the classroom of refinement being taught by the two great instructors **ADVERSITY** and **PEOPLE**. Geographically his migration also indicates this as you will recall that he left his “*stronghold*” in chapter 22:5 and went to the “*forest of engraving*” only to be called by God in 23:2 to save the city of “*carved out and tossed away*” then escaping to the wilderness of “*refinement*”, 23:14. Hey, I know this school don’t you? Sure you do it is called the “***School of Hard Knocks***”. It’s been many years since I was in school but I recall that we were taught things and then every so often we would have a “**Test**” to see how much of what we had been taught we truly had learned. Such is the case for David in this chapter. Jonathan had been used by God to teach David a lesson, which had a threefold truth, and if David had been paying attention ***would “strengthened his hand in God***”, (23:16-17).

* “*The hand of Saul my father shall not find you*”: **God will *protect* you**
* “*You shall be king over Israel*”: **God’s instruction has a *purpose***
* “*I shall be next to you*”: **God’s *presence* will never leave you**

Now how do we know we are having a test upon that which we have been learning in the school of hard knocks? Simple my friend “*opportunity*”! **Opportunity**? Yep, “opportunity” is the test by which **God reveals to us** what He already knows about what He has been teaching us. These 22-verses give us insight into what it looks like to pass and fail the test as we contrast David and Saul. I’m especially excited about this, as I seem to do very poorly on the tests in the “School of Hard Knocks”, as I keep having to keep repeating the lesson.

**II. Vs. 1-15 A troubled heart from a cut hem**

Vs. 1-2 In the Hebrew Bible verse 29 of chapter 23 is the first verse of chapter 24 which make since seeing that David left “*the rock that stands between us and everything else*” in verse 28 making his way to the desert oasis of En Gedi and it is in the area of En Gedi that our story takes place. I again bring you the interesting truth of the geographical location. The “Dead Sea” is the **lowest place on earth** and David and his 600 men have been chased to this place by Saul and his 3000 men. Ah but there is something else that speaks to my heart about En Gedi (*fountain of the wild goat*) that though David is being tested on his refinement **he has come to seek refuge in a fertile place where living water comes down**. My point is that even at the “lowest times” in our life when we are on the run the Lord desires to be our spring of life. **I find personally that the most fertile ground of my heart is always only a few hundred feet above the lowest places in my life**! The waters of refreshment are always sweeter to the soul in the lowest times! Peter wrote to the persecuted church in 1 Peter 1:7 the “*the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ*”.

Saul takes 3000 of the men that were engaged in battle against the invading Philistines to pursue his son in law, showing again that “anxiety” (Doeg) was still ruling his heart.

Vs. 3 Now here we come to David’s “***opportunity***” to see if what he had been taught at school was truly a part of his life. This area of En Gedi is noted for it’s caves in fact not to far from this area is where they unearthed the Dead Sea Scrolls as the hills above the Dead Sea are littered with caves varying in size. With hundreds of caves and many of them large enough to place 600 men it is clear that God was about to put David to the test as Saul chose this one to do his business in. The 1611 King James Bible chose to use a euphemism to interpret this word and said that Saul “*went in to cover his feet*”, cover his feet? Yeh, think about it and you will see what those 1611 scholars were trying to convey. Now, with an army of 3000 men it is safe to assume that when one of those men needed to use the potty they were out of luck as I’m sure the army did not stop when ever each one of them needed to use the rest room. Hey but when the king’s gota go man the whole army has to wait. The Jews had strict standards for personal sanitation according Deut. 23:12-14 and each soldier was required to carry a little shovel with them to dig a hole to do their business and then fill the whole. What Saul didn’t anticipate was that the public restroom was already full and apparently not one of those 3000 soldiers thought to check the bathroom before Saul entered. But it is equally apparent that the Lord was in complete control and their eyes apparently had adjusted to the dark cave and Saul could not see that there in the potty was the very 600 plus men he was out searching for.

I was on a trip a few years back and had to make a pit stop to do my business and didn’t realize that I had a stall mate until I heard him say, “*Are you in the area*?” I was a bit surprised by the conversation and wasn’t going to respond until he repeated the question so I felt obligated, “*No just passing through*”. “*Where are you at*?”, was his next question to which I responded back and asked him the same, It was then that I heard him say, “*Just a minute Fred the Bozo in the toilet next to me thinks I’m talking to him*”! **Darn cell phones**! And you think coming out of the bathroom with toilet paper stuck to the bottom of your shoe is embarrassing.

Vs. 4 Apparently David’s men were Marine’s as Saul was “ceasing his opportunity” to take care of his needs they wanted to “***Cease the Day***”. I’m not sure if what the men had heard were Jonathan’s word’s 20:15 “*you shall not cut off your kindness from my house forever, no, not when the LORD has cut off every one of the enemies of David from the face of the earth.*” Or perhaps Samuel’s words of 15:28 “*The LORD has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today, and has given it to a neighbor of yours, who is better than you*.” Or perhaps something that the prophet Gad had said? But at any rate we need to recall that these men were the same men who had been under Saul’s regime that had left them “*Stressed out, Put out and Bummed out*” and they reminded David that before him was the opportunity obviously given by God to end all of their **hardships, suffering** and **trouble**, placing him that very day on the throne of the nation. There are many times Christian that we view our opportunities as things we need to take up and do. Abraham had been promised an heir and years had elapsed so he and Sarah decided God need to be helped out to fulfill His promise to them. Listen up now believer, God doesn’t need our help to fulfill His promises He has made to us. We see in this passage the difference of two principals:

1. *Waiting* ***on*** *the Lord*: Waiting on the Lord is where we look to know His will in some area of our lives. It is a difficult thing to wait on the Lord for direction and leading.
2. *Waiting* ***for*** *the Lord*: Waiting for the Lord is where we wait upon Him to move in our behalf and this is where we most often fail the test is it not? You see waiting **for** the Lord comes after waiting **on** the Lord and is this reality that makes it so difficult. We have waited on the Lord for direction and He has given it and now we assume that since He has clearly directed us it must mean that we are to move out on our behalf. Ah dear saint we still must wait FOR the Lord to go before us other wise we can get ahead of Him.

Apparently David was some what persuaded by the opportunity as well as the men’s encouragement as he crept forward in the dark with knife in hand. In chapter 23:7 Saul was certain that the Lord had delivered David into his hands, the question as it relates to us is not weather or not their was an opportunity but just what was the opportunity to be used for? Was it to be used for personal vindication or the glory of God? If David was to take this opportunity to advance himself into the promise of God then he would have set a dangerous precedent, and leave the question always open that he had placed himself upon the throne and not the Lord. So Christian you see the test is always about who is on the throne! David realized what we so often fail to is **that his greatness as King was going to be established by him establishing the Lord’s greatness**! Exodus 20:13 clear tells us the “you shall not murder” and this was not killing an enemy on the battlefield it was the assassination of a king.

I can’t help but think of those 600 pairs of eyes as they watched David stealthily creep up behind Saul take his knife and instead of plunging it into Saul simply slice of the hem of the Kings garment. But why the “skirt”? Well according to Numbers 15:38-19 the fringes of the garments spoke of certain positions, sort of the way in which stars on a generals shoulders represents their authority and rank. David’s action said three things, all of which were true:

1. It said that David didn’t respect Saul’s authority and leadership.
2. It should that Samuel’s words in 15: 27-28 were being fulfilled, “*Samuel turned around to go away, Saul seized the edge of his robe, and it tore. So Samuel said to him, "The LORD has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today, and has given it to a neighbor of yours, who is better than you*.”
3. It said to Saul that all who accused David of being out to get him were liars, as clearly God had placed Saul into the hands of David.

Vs. 5 Now this verse tells us that David’s actions clearly troubled his heart. David had showed disrespect to the King whom God clearly still had in power. Saul may have not loved God but God clearly still loved him enough to give him the opportunity to obey and turn from his sin. Hey Christian have you ever said one of those “***cutting remarks***” about someone else? Then you justify it by saying well it is true about them you know they have only heaped this stuff upon themselves by their own actions. **Gossip to be gossip doesn’t have to be untrue it just needs to be spread**! Oh dear saint we need to take a lesson from David and have a repentant heart over our “***cutting remarks and actions***” towards others no matter what kind of person they are!

Vs. 6 David tells his men, “*Hey, guy’s it’s not about the person man it’s about the position*”. God had already spoken to Samuel about Saul’s removal but David had no right to “***cut away a piece of Saul’s character***” only the Lord has that right. Oh sure he could have justified his actions by saying, “Hey, Saul has rejected the Lord”, but again the truth was as long as Saul was still on the throne God had not yet rejected Saul! Jesus told us in Matt. 5:44 to “*love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you*”. Moses in Ex. 14:13 told the nation to “*Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD*”. And Peter in 1 Peter 2:23 reminds us that Jesus “*when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously*”.

Vs. 7 The word “*restrained*” in the Hebrew suggests considerable effort on David’s behalf keeping the men from doing what he was not willing to do. It is one thing to keep yourself from acting in the flesh it is quite another to keep others from doing what we would be in your best interest, yet David does. How easy it would have been for David to say, “*Man, you know I can’t keep these fellows from taking the guy down*!”

Vs. 8 David’s actions here reveal three things about his heart:

1. “*Went out of the cave*”: That is to say that David made himself **vulnerable** by coming out into the open. Hey, Christian how about it are you vulnerable and transparent before those who are out to get you? Man David was as he revealed his location by coming out in the open before the king and 3000 men. We are naturally self-protective aren’t we especially as it relates to where we really are. But if God is our protection, and His trials have a purpose and His presence is with us then we can come out in the open just as we are can we not?
2. “*Called out to Saul, saying, "My lord the king*!”: Second we see by his statements to Saul that David is **submitted to the Lord’s will and timing** in his life. Remember now Saul’s own son Jonathon had told David in 23:17 Saul himself knew that he was to be King over Israel. How about it are you submitted not just to the Lord’s will but timing as well? Again it is the waiting not just **on** the Lord but **for** the Lord as well.
3. “*David stooped with his face to the earth, and bowed down*”: Finally I marvel at not only David’s submission but his **complete surrender of the heart**. I have a tendency to give things to the Lord only to pick them up again but David subjects himself to the hand of the Lord and is at peace with it.

Vs. 9-15 David further past the test of the heart by being very gracious:

1. Vs. 9 David makes it easy for Saul by saying that his actions were caused by bad council instead of a disobedient heart.
2. Vs. 10 Next David reveals to Saul that he had every opportunity to kill him and did not take it thus proving that though Saul saw David as his enemy David did not see Saul as his.

1. “*I will not stretch out my hand against my lord, for he is the Lord's anointed*.” In recent years much has been made of this statement by false teachers and others who interpret this to mean that it is wrong correct or biblically evaluate a persons teaching. Clearly David’s statement in context has to do with harming physically or killing God’s choice. We pastor’s and teachers of God’s word are not to be isolated from evaluation or accountability as clearly seen in James 3:1 and 1 Cor. 11:31.

1. Vs. 11-13 David was content to allow God to be the Judge between them and not to be the judge. It was inevitable that God was going to judge Saul, Samuel had prophesied as much and David cutting the hem of his robe ought to have brought him back those many years to when he tore at Samuel’s robe. What David is saying is that he won’t be the one doing the judging.
2. Vs. 14-15 Finally David suggests that Saul get a new hobby as he is not worth the effort.

### There is a interesting side note to this in 2 Samuel 16:8 as Shimei a descendant of Saul says, “*The LORD has brought upon you all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose place you have reigned; and the LORD has delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom your son. So now you are caught in your own evil, because you are a bloodthirsty man*!” But David had a clear conscience as he had nothing to do with the blood of Saul or his house and as such didn’t have to look over his shoulder. Hey, Christian you won’t always know what is in your heart until opportunity reveals it and in David’s case opportunity revealed that David was not looking to get out of his refinement rather he was trusting God to get everything out of his refinement.

## III. Vs. 16-22 Tares not just tears

Vs. 16-19 There is little doubt that David’s actions as well as his words had an impact upon Saul. Neither is there any doubt in my mind that Saul was sincere in his remorse and even perhaps convicted of his sinful actions towards David. Yet with that said clearly we don’t have biblical repentance. How can you say that pastor, I mean he is weeping and saying all the right things. Yes he does but in chapter 26:2 we *read “Then Saul arose and went down to the Wilderness of Ziph, having three thousand chosen men of Israel with him, to seek David in the Wilderness of Ziph*.”

2 Corinthians 7:10 tells us that “*godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death*.” It is plane to see that what Saul had was sorrow but not godly sorrow that produced repentance that led to salvation. We put for to much importance on emotions and right words as the signs of true repentance but clearly in the case of Saul both of those indicators only showed that he was guilty. The only true indicator of true repentance is consistent actions of a changed life. Anyone can cry and say the right words when their guilt over a situation is made public but the proof is seen in their actions.

Underneath these words of Saul, is still the same problem that he does not deal with and that is **that he is a man that is more concerned with his reputation instead of God’s**. Fourteen times in seven verses Saul uses the words “*I, me, and my*”, in fact if you read all the words of Saul you will see that Saul has reduced all his troubles to “*you and me*” situation (26 times). Saul lived under the delusion that just because David was his enemy that he was his!

To further illustrate this look carefully at Saul’s words in verse 21 “*swear now to me by the LORD that you will not cut off my descendants after me, and that you will not destroy my name from my father's house.*” Did you see that, “**Swear to me that you will not destroy my name**!” Where are the words in Saul’s speech about his tainting the Lord’s reputation? Where do we hear in Saul’s words anything about how his actions have hurt the people he was called to serve? You will not find them instead all you hear is a comparison between himself and David based upon being caught in his own rebellion. Tears with out repentance just leaves a wet face, oh how the Lord would have desired Saul to have a cut heart instead of just at cut robe, not just weeping at his own guilt but a contrite spirit. The Lord spoke through the prophet Joel in 2:13 saying, “*So rend your heart, and not your garments; Return to the LORD your God, For He is gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, and of great kindness; And He relents from doing harm*.” You see Jew’s would rip their robes as a sign of remorse. They did this so other would say, “*Man that guy is really ripped up over his guilt see he is tarring his robe man*.” But God say’s, “*Hey, don’t just do any outward thing, children do the inward thing*!” When the Pharisees came out of Jerusalem at the time John the Baptist was baptizing so many in the Jordan in Matt. 3:4 he spoke them saying “*bear fruits worthy of repentance*”, there needs to be true evidence of change. There is no point in saying, “***I’ve played the fool, if in the end we stay on the stage!***”

Vs. 20-21 This is a most amazing statement made by Saul as it is a prophetic realization that it would be David that would establish Israel as a nation and not him. Through out the Judges and into Saul’s reign never once did Israel establish her kingdom but they will under David’s reign. So Saul is saying I may be king but I don’t have a kingdom!

Vs. 22 One final note, even though David makes a promise with Saul you will note that he does not go back to the palace does he. David attempted reconciliation knowing that he could not trust Saul, yet he still did the right thing. It is clear by David’s action that he didn’t buy Saul’s confession and rightly so! Brothers and sisters let us remember that Jesus laid down His rights to cover our wrongs. Ruth Gram was once asked what she wanted on her tombstone and she said, “***Construction finished, thanks for your patience***!” Ah how true when you come down to it we are all just fixer-uppers!

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

# Servant: 1 Samuel 18-31

**Chp. 21-28:2 The captain of captivity**

**1 Samuel 25:1-22**

**“Tempering our Temper”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 1-13 I’ve had all I can stand**

**III. Vs. 14-22 The work of Joy in dealing with a fool**

**I. Intro.**

The Bible does not write puff pieces concerning those people who grace its pages. There are no perfect people recorded in the Bible and there are no perfect people in this Church. **What the Bible does record is God’s perfection and His greatness, which is made most visible in His ability to transform that, which is so visibly flawed**. Even more amazing to me as I consider this truth is that God’s greatness and confidence in His ability to perfect the imperfect is seen in the fact that He uses that which is still flawed as an instrument to help perfect others. It is like a master painter painting the Mona Lisa with a stick found out in the forest. Paul spoke of such truth in 1 Cor. 10:11 saying “*all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come*.” Simply put God uses our failures and frailties as lessons, to teach others as He did with those who again grace the pages of scripture.

The chapter before us is another such lesson for those of us who scum so often to our tempers and are so prone to try and take things into our own hands. I’m so easily provoked to let my anger rule my life and as I look at this passage I come to some startling truth both about the root of my lashing out at others as well as the keys to tempering my temper.

**II. Vs. 1-13 I’ve had all I can stand**

Vs. 1 Simply records the death of a great man, Samuel who was the last of the Judges and the first of the prophets. He is perhaps one of the least appreciated of God’s servants but a quick look a this life reveals some very interesting points:

* Dedicated to God from birth
* Faithful to God while serving under an apostate Judge “Eli”
* Faithful to God while serving a backsliden nation that didn’t want God to rule them but rather a man.
* Went through the disappointment of his children not walking with God as well as the nation’s choice for king being self-serving.

Yet there are several verses that speak to the heart of Samuel no matter what he faced:

1. 1 Sam. 12: 20-23 “*Then Samuel said to the people, "Do not fear. You have done all this wickedness; yet do not turn aside from following the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart. And do not turn aside; for then you would go after empty things which cannot profit or deliver, for they are nothing. For the LORD will not forsake His people, for His great name's sake, because it has pleased the LORD to make you His people.* ***Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you; but I will teach you the good and the right way***.”
2. Ps. 99:6 “*Moses and Aaron were among His priests,* ***And Samuel was among those who called upon His name****; They called upon the LORD, and He answered them*.”
3. Jer. 15:1 “*Then the LORD said to me, "****Even if Moses and Samuel stood before Me****, My mind would not be favorable toward this people. Cast them out of My sight, and let them go forth*.”

It appears based upon these scriptures that **Samuel was a great man of prayer a real intercessor** on behalf of those people he was called to serve even if they did not call on the Lord he did on there behalf. Another indication of the type of man he was is found upon two statements found in this verse and would it be that they could be said of us upon our graduation into the Lords presence:

1. “*The Israelites gathered together and lamented for him*”: Both here as well as 1 Sam 28:3 state that “*all of Israel*” mourned his loss. It is also worthy of note that Saul who had not seen Samuel for 7 plus years still will seek him out after his death by way of the “medium at En Dor” for his council. What’s my point? Simply this people may have feared Samuel but they respected his heart towards the Lord even if they did not chose themselves to head God’s word through him.
2. “*Buried him at his home in Ramah*”: Though the nation, Saul and others highly honored Samuel the location of his burial suggests that he had not read his own press clippings. In 1 Sam 15: 12 we are told that Saul “***set up a monument for himself***” but not so Samuel.

Putting these two thoughts together indicate what kind of servant Samuel was: “*He was a man who brought people before God and never thought much of himself and all knew him that way*!” We are not sure if David attended his mentors funeral and it is believed that he did not because he understood that Saul would most likely become more aggressive now that the nations conscience had departed. At any rate we are told that David travel far away all the way down to the Sinai.

Vs. 2-3 As we consider the elements that will lead to David’s losing the battle over his temper I believe that it is important to recognize that this was perhaps a build up. I think as we see the context of the passage, namely David being chased by Saul and his 3,000 men and his staying his hand from killing Saul, then the death of his mentor and friend Samuel we can see that David was perhaps at wits end. I say this not to justify David’s actions but rather to identify the times in my life that I need to be aware that I’m ready to blow. In the words of that great prophet “**Popeye**” “*It’s all I can stands and I can’t stands no more*!”

Now we are told three things about this fellow that is going to push David’s buttons:

1. **Position**: He “*was very rich. He had three thousand sheep and a thousand goats. And he was shearing his sheep in Carmel*.” Nabal was not the kind of fellow who didn’t have much money he was very rich and David; well he was a fugitive just trying to get by. You have the classic have and have-nots!
2. **Person**: Nabal’s name means “fool” and I’m from the persuasion that this was not what his mother or father named him but rather over the years that his personality dictated his nickname.
3. **Personality**: “*The man was* ***harsh*** *and evil in his doings. And he was of the house of Caleb*.” The word “*harsh*” in the Hebrew means **cruel** and **hard** and “*evil*” means **bad** and **hurtful**. There you have the personality of Nabal “cruel, hard, bad and hurtful”. Further more we are told that was from the house of Caleb, now Caleb his relative was a great man who along with Joshua was one of the only two spies who gave a good report of the promise land. The land where Nabal was now living was the very area in which Joshua had awarded Caleb from the Lord. Ah but there is an interesting point that is made by the name Caleb as it means “doggish”. Doggish or snappy, you get the picture now of Nabal, he was a fellow who got off on pushing peoples buttons and as such made his home in the “dog house”. He had power and wealthy a good family name and his descendants settled the land.

Why he even had a beautiful wife, whom we are told had the exact opposite characteristics. Abigail’s name is made up of two words “*Aba*” or father “*Gail*” or joy and so her character was the Father’s joy. She was intelligent, beautiful and based upon her action humble, why she had the trifecta of qualities that any fellow would be looking for. Yet we must wonder what she ever saw in old Nabal that made her want to marry the fellow? Clearly she did not think much of him as verse 19 and 25 indicate that she didn’t tell him what she was up too and then in verse 25 she says that he is living up to his name and is a scoundrel or as the KJ puts is “*Belial*”, “son of the devil”. It is believed by most that this was an arranged marriage by her parents who saw his wealth and not his heart. I’m afraid that far to many people have made choices upon who they would marry based upon evaluating the wrong type of wealth. The wrong type of wealth? You bet, you see a person can be wealthy four different ways:

1. Wealthy in what you *have*: **Possession**
2. Wealthy in what you *do*: **Talent**
3. Wealthy in what you *know*: **Knowledge**
4. Wealthy in what you *are*: **Character**

Oh dear Christian don’t settle upon the wealth that will pass away but rather one that will only improve with time. Proverbs 31:30 reminds us that, “*Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing, But a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised*.”

Vs. 4-9 Here we have recorded for us the situation which led to David flying off the handle:

1. Vs. 4 *David had waited until the shearing of sheep*: The shearing of sheep was always a great time of celebration and David having spent his youth being a shepherd knew it well. It was a time with the ranchers would get together thanking God for His protection and provision. There would be great feasting and even giving of gifts to the less fortunate. So David waited until this time to approach Nabal for a gift for the services he provided according to verse 7 as well as Nabal’s servants in verse 15-16 were quite exceptional. David had the right heart in doing what he and his men had been done but he still had 600 men to take care of and they were fugitives.
2. Vs. 5-6 *David sent only 10 young men with verbal blessings to Nabal and his house*: Had David himself came or several hundred it would have been seen as strong army Nabal and David wanted Nabal to give not as an act of compulsion but from a right heart.
3. Vs. 7-8a *David sent his ten men with an itemized list of services rendered and with recommendations from Nabal’s own men*. In other words David was not asking Nabal to take his word for it but rather to asking his own men if they had not been blessed by David and his men’s protection setting up a wall around them (verse 16).
4. Vs. 8b *David was just asking to join the party celebrating the Lord’s blessing*. “Your being blessed by more sheep to shear because of our service can we come in for some refreshment as well?”
5. Vs. 8c-9 *Finally David made no specific demands as to Nabal’s generosity just what ever Nabal thought was worthy*. They also were willing to wait until Nabal made the determination of what he wanted to give.

It is clear by this that David had the right heart in all that he had done in serving Nabal’s men as well as his herds. But something was about to change as clearly what David had thought was normal protocol was about to be slammed in his face.

Vs. 10-11 Here we are given Nabal’s threefold response which was clearly designed to push David’s buttons:

1. Vs. 10a “*Who is David, and who is the son of Jesse*?” It is clear that Nabal knew who David was as he calls him the son of Jesse. So what these words are is a snub, saying you’re a nobody. “*I don’t care if you married into the kings family, killed a giant saved a city or made me money*”.
2. Vs. 10b “*There are many servants nowadays who break away each one from his master*.” Nabal just calls David a runaway slave and he ought to be treated no better than that.
3. Vs. 11 Seven times Nabal refers to what God had blessed him with as mine by using the words “I, my”. As far as Nabal was concerned all he had received was because of his own work, not the Lords or David’s.

Vs. 12-13 David reacts exactly as Nabal wanted him greatly insulted and he snaps angrily. I can only imagine David hearing that the ten young men were returning but noticing that they had received no provisions. Perhaps he thought, “*Well how nice they are inviting all 600 hundred of us to the party*!” Then to hear the report of Nabal’s words, David’s response is quite predictable “Every man strap on your sword!” or as we all would say in Montana, “Lock and load”. Man can I ever relate to David’s reaction can’t you? One minute we are in the spirit man just trusting the Lord doing things in God’s power not our own and some “Old fool” just comes right out and push’s my buttons. He instructs his men 200 staying with the supplies and 400 going out to take out Nabal. I have read this passage all week long and wondered why I’m so easily brought to this place by “Old Fools”.

Think of this a minute Christian David wasn’t going out after the Philistines, he wasn’t delivering a city, and he wasn’t even defending himself against Saul. No he was going to go out and kill a fool and without thinking about how foolish he would look doing so. Can you just see those 400 hundred commandos in full camos, asking what mission are we on? All of David’s restraint was gone and that a the words of a fool, I tell you I can see me in David’s reaction. Last week we saw David pass the test of opportunity but here we see him fail at the test of temptation and it shows a valuable lessons “The men God uses are at best men”. Where does such anger come from? Well it seems to me that David felt he deserved better and his ego was bruised, as it was one thing to take this from a king and a far other to take it from a spoiled little rich boy!

**III. Vs. 14-22 The work of Joy in dealing with a fool**

Vs. 14-17 The words of Nabal’s servants to Abigail confirm what David sent his men to say to Nabal and apparently they were there during Nabal’s tirade as they said he reviled them. In the N.I.V. the word is rendered “hurl insults” and in the Hebrew it is “to swoop down” and is used to describe a bird of prey “swooping down” upon a rodent. These servants a Nabal tell Abigail that David sent his men with gracious words and the “Old Fool” just swooped down insults upon them. Further more his insults were not deserving as the servants say that David and his men acted well towards them never hurting them, as well as taking nothing from them, traveling along with being our protection day and night. These servants are at wits end as to what to do as they could see that David’s men were going to report back Nabal’s words and this was going to mean harm against them and further more then could not even talk with Nabal because he was such a “worthless man”. Prov. 17:12 says, *“Let a man meet a bear robbed of her cubs, Rather than a fool in his folly*.”

Vs. 18-20 Here in Abigail’s actions I see four ways in which she dealt with David’s anger and indeed it is the same way in which we can deal with our own temper.

1. Vs. 18a “*Abigail made haste*”: She wasted no time and dealt with the situation quickly. Most of the time our anger is a build up and the Holy Spirit would us deal with our anger quickly rather than waiting until it overwhelms.
2. Vs. 18b “*took two hundred loaves of bread, two skins of wine, five sheep already dressed, five seahs of roasted grain, one hundred clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs, and loaded them on donkeys*.” Several things come to mind in her actions:
3. She had a ready blessing: Jesus spoke of us blessing those who curse us, and at Abigail’s disposal 200 loaves of bread and five sheep ready for the Barbie. Simply put was prepared to be a blessing and I think that does far to stay off our temper.
4. She was willing to give up what rightly belonged to another: There was no hindrance in giving ground up to what belonged to another. Here is how this works in our hearts admit your own wrongs, own your own stuff, deal with what you have done wrong.
5. Vs. 19-20a Here I see that Abigail didn’t pay heed the flesh demands but instead operated in the Spirits power. I can so often see my temper flair what I stand on my rights and instead of following the Holy Spirit’s lead and not consulting or feeding my foolish flesh.
6. Vs. 20b “*There were David and his men, coming down toward her, and she met them.*” Finally she met anger head on and did not avoid it. Hey Christian we have to deal with our tempers head on not giving our flesh any wiggle room.

Vs. 21-22 In David’s response to meeting Abigail I gain some insight as to why I so often fail in containing my temper as David does the math concerning the equation but leaves out one very important person in every temper tantrum.

1. Vs. 21a “*Surely in vain I have protected all that this fellow has in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that belongs to him***.” David declares that Nabal’s actions and words hurt his feelings**. He is right on the money here Nabal was in the wrong and David is in the right. David has a right to have hurt feelings, but seems as though David was imprisoned by his feelings.
2. Vs. 21b “*And he has repaid me evil for good*.” David declares that he has the right facts concerning the situation. Ah but right facts don’t necessarily guarantee right actions do they?
3. Vs. 22 “*May God do so, and more also, to the enemies of David, if I leave one male of all who belong to him by morning light*.” David makes the assumption that, right feelings plus right fact equal right actions. But listen up dear saint David has left out something in his math equation and that is a right heart!

You see we can have legitimate feelings, true facts and still miss the mark when come to our actions if we don’t have a right heart. Next week we will pick up the story as we see Abigail acting as a type of the Holy Spirit protecting our hearts from ourselves.

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

# Servant: 1 Samuel 18-31

**Chp. 21-28:2 The captain of captivity**

**1 Samuel 25:23-44**

**“Bound in the Bundle with the Lord”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 23-31 Ten things to recall from our Dad’s joy**

**III. Vs. 32-35 Adoration for Abigail**

# IV. Vs. 36-44 Married to joy

**I. Intro.**

In the 22nd verse of the 25th chapter of 1 Samuel we have a good indication of how mad David was at Nabal. You see in the colorful K.J. version records David’s angry oath by saying that all, “*by the morning light any that* ***pisseth against the wall***” would be killed and it is accurate in the Hebrew as the word means to urinate. Now you know where we get our phrase saying that we are **P.O’ed**. David was in that Popeye Syndrome and he had all “*he could stands and he couldn’t stands no more!*” I’ve thought a lot about my anger and the lack of yielding to the Holy Spirit over the last week looking at David. You see David as a young boy took nothing off the hill but an empty sling and even had to stop by the brook to pick up five smooth stones as he went out to face a giant. In the 17th chapter verse 45 David declared to Goliath, “*You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.*” As a young man he needed no **sword, spear or javelin** to face a giant who “*defied*” the Lord, but now he needs 400 men with their swards on. Further more I can’t help but see the irony that he has at his side the sword he took by faith from Goliath. **I see in looking at this a direct correlation in operating by faith while defending the Lord and operating in my own strength while defending my self.** I do not think it is possible for me to defend my self in faith, something Abigail herself concludes in verse 28 where she says, “*my lord fights the battles of the LORD*”. She didn’t say that David fought his own battles but the Lord’s and that can be done both in the energy of the flesh or the energy of the Spirit but we can not fight our battle in the energy of the Spirit or defense of ourselves will always be done in our flesh.

**II. Vs. 23-31 Ten things to recall from our Dad’s joy**

Vs. 23 The first thing I notice is **Abigail does three things concerning her position** the moment she encounters David. Now upon personal reflection I see that these three attitudes would go along way in me not giving into my anger towards the Nabal’s that come against us:

1. “*Dismount from the donkey*”: She came down from her position and in so doing she is respecting David and his position as being at least equal to hers. I think it is important Christian when we are dealing with folks that we are in disagreement with that we do so from the same level and not one that suggests that we our position is above theirs.
2. “*Fell on her face before David*”: She put the interest and hurt of another before herself. I think this act reveals an attitude that says, “*You are more important to me that I am to me*”. **The heart of the problem is always a problem of the heart** and Abigail demonstrates that she values David above herself. So much of our inability to reconcile with others comes from a self-righteous “*I’m better than you*” attitude.
3. “*And bowed down to the ground*”: Finally and most importantly she put her self under the Lord’s authority above her rights. It is not about our rights it’s about God’s honor and rights. Far too often I have insisted on my rights at the price of God’s over me. God is far more interested in our hearts being right then our rights being wronged. **You see we are either people who are trying to be over other people or people trying to always be under God**.

Hey, Christian listen up the only “old fool” that is in season is the one you faced in the mirror and that one must die daily!

Vs. 24-31 In Abigail’s words to David 13 times she calls him lord and 5 times she calls herself maidservant, further more she does all of this publicly in front of not only David but his 400 men. What this suggests to me is that she viewed herself not as superior or even an equal but rather as a servant. Now think a moment when you have been really angry at someone how did you see yourself compared to them? Well if you are like me I didn’t see them as better than me that is why I was upset to begin with. In the words and phrases of Abigail to David I believe there are ten things that the Holy Spirit would try to say to our hearts before we act foolishly chasing an old fool.

1. Vs. 24 “*On me, my lord, on me let this iniquity be*!” **Take responsibility** for your own sins! The Holy Spirit would have you and I start with self-evaluation and taking inventory of our own wrongs. I have found that the Lord does not have near as problem as it relates to my heart with old fools as he does with this fool! And when I start with my heart first at least 50% of the problem is already better. We can be so stubborn and prideful as it relates to this can’t we. Have you ever noticed how much more difficult it is say the three-word phrase “*I was wrong*” compared to the phrase “*You were wrong*”? Abigail is broken that she even asks permission to speak, I’m reminded of James words in James 1:19-20 “*So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God*.”
2. Vs. 25a “*Please, let not my lord regard this scoundrel Nabal. For as his name is, so is he: Nabal is his name, and folly is with him*.” **Consider the source!** Now this may seem like a contradiction to the above point I believe the Holy Spirit would have us consider but it isn’t. You see we start with our own heart and after that is corrected we move to that which offends us. Abigail reminds David, “*Fool is his name and folly is his game*!” Perhaps you remember the prophet “Forest Gump’s” words “*Stupid is as stupid does*!” We don’t need to get all worked up when someone pushes our buttons when we first consider the source, “*Hey no big deal, they have an issue and I don’t have to make their issue my issue*!”
3. Vs. 25b “*But I, your maidservant, did not see the young men of my lord whom you sent.*” **I was not aware**! “*Man if I had known, I would have made it right!*” Abigail say’s. There are many times that our problem is just a miss understanding that needs to be clarified and that what has happened though may have still caused hurt or heart ache was a lack of information not a lack of caring. It is amazing how just communicating that to the person hurt will go along way in causing separation.
4. Vs. 26 “*Since the LORD has held you back from coming to bloodshed and from avenging yourself with your own hand*.” **See the bigger picture**! It wasn’t to late, for David if he halted his flesh now he wouldn’t regret it later. Abigail reminds David that this was far more important then about him being right and Nabal being wrong it was about the Lord being in control of David’s heart. God will take care of those who are out to get us if we just allow the Lord to take care of us. David’s anger shows a lack of trust in the Lord You will recall David had written psalm 59 where he repeatedly proclaimed that “God was his defense”. We so often fail to see the consequences of our actions beyond the immediate and Abigail is causing David to look out beyond the temporary hurt feelings to what his actions would put on his resume. The world is full of people who failed to consider the consequences of their actions and are paying for such over a lifetime! If only we would have heeded the Holy Spirit instead of the flesh.
5. Vs. 27 “*Now this present which your maidservant has brought to my lord, let it be given to the young men who follow my lord*.” **What can I do to make it right**? If there is a wrong that we are responsibility it is not enough to take responsibility if there is a debt owed we need to make restitution. Now not only of these acts of Abigail are pertinent for every situation but they are good to go through, as they will place our hearts in the right place. In all of these we see that the secret of David’s kingdom will be what throne his heart is bowed towards his earthly one or God’s heavenly one.
6. Vs. 28a “*The LORD will certainly make for my lord an enduring house*”. **Don’t lose perspective**. God had promised David the throne and the Lord was going to accomplish that which He promised. David was hurt as Nabal was withholding that which was his and Abigail reminds David that his kingdom if established by the Lord would be firm and not taken away. Oft times we get caught up in the tyranny of the urgent at the cost of our future. It is as if Abigail says to David, “You’re a better than then this!” If we are going to getting in a fight with an fool people aren’t going to be able to distinguish between the two.
7. Vs. 28b “*Because my lord fights the battles of the LORD, and evil is not found in you throughout your days*”. **Is this the Lord’s battle or wounded pride**? If it is a case of wounded pride then our fight will end in our own sin. God has not called His children to defend themselves or to fight their own battles. I have a statement on my wall that says, “*He has not commanded you to be admired or esteemed. He has never bidden you to defend your character. He has not set you to work to contradict falsehoods about yourself. If you do these things you will do nothing else: You will be at work for yourself and not for the Lord*!”
8. Vs. 29 “*The life of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of the living with the LORD your God*”. **Don’t let the enemy rip you off**. Abigail reminds David of three truths as it relates to this:
9. “*Yet a man has risen to pursue you and seek your life*”: **Don’t make a bad situation worse**. Abigail is speaking of Saul and is reminding David that he has enough problems with adding another. Satan often would seek to spread us thin and this would have given Saul a opportunity to justify his actions against David.
10. “*The life of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of the living with the LORD your God*”: **Don’t you know God loves you**? This expression came from the practice of wrapping up, that which was valuable in a bundle to protect from injury. Thus Abigail is reminding David that his life is secure and safe in the Lord’s love. The Lord has placed you and I in the nap sac of His love in his front pocket near His heart and to get us they are going to have to go through Him.
11. “*But the lives of your enemies he will hurl away as from the pocket of a sling*.” **Don’t you know God will protect you?** No doubt as Abigail said this phrase David’s mind rushed back to when he hurled that stone from the pocket of his sling at Goliath. The Lord was perfectly able to protect David and He didn’t need David’s help then nor now.
12. Vs. 30 “*And it shall come to pass, when the LORD has done for my lord according to all the good that He has spoken concerning you, and has appointed you ruler over Israel*”. **This is only temporary**. Abigail reminds David that with the Lord His promises are not “IF” but rather “WHEN” and this refinement was going to lead David to exactly what the Lord had promised.
13. Vs. 31 “*This will be no grief to you, nor offense of heart to my lord, either that you have shed blood without cause, or that my lord has avenged himself. But when the LORD has dealt well with my lord*”. **Will your action no cause you to have regrets later**? Abigail uses two things her to cause David to think along these lines:
14. To himself: “*This will be no grief to you, nor offense of heart to my lord*” Will this cause your conscience to bother you later. Man that is a great question to ask ourselves when our blood is boiling and we are about to say or do something, “Am I about to say or do something that I’m going to eating crow over later?”
15. To others: “*Or that my lord has avenged himself*”. Will my words or actions cause others to think that I’ve fought my own battles instead of trusting in the Lord?

**III. Vs. 32-35 Adoration for Abigail**

Vs. 32 David and the 400 men had heard the words of Abigail and her heart had melted David’s hot temper. He recognizes that the Lord is the one that sent her to stop him from sinning. He has realized that hurt feelings and right facts apart from a right heart doesn’t guarantee right actions and Abigail has just been used to straighten out his heart. Again as a typology of the Holy Spirit it is his guidance that enables us to keep our heads when all are losing theirs. David does not see gender nor is he afraid to admit he was wrong even in front of 400 men.

Further more Abigail didn’t come empty handed and David received what was his. David now decides to leave Nabal alone for the sake of his wife. We do well to head the voice of our Abigail who speaks such words keeping us from our own flesh. Hey Christian being forgiven of our sin is a great thing but being kept from sin is a greater thing still. You see the Lord has not only taken upon Himself the penalty of sin He has broken it’s power as well as we head the voice of the Holy Spirit. Spurgeon once said, “*We will need to seek forgiveness of our sins far less often if we would but heed the Lord’s words more often which will keep us from sins grasp*”. The strength God has given you and I yesterday is not enough for today.

**IV. Vs. 36-44 Married to joy**

Vs. 36 Nabal is truly living up to his name as he throws a party and gets plastered not realizing that David was going to come and plaster him. Note as well as it says that he throw a party fit for a king as he thought of himself as one.

Again Abigail shows her wisdom as she does not try to talk with a drunk but waits until the morning and then Abigail come to him and tells him what was about to happen and he blows a gasket. We are not told whether it was anger or fear that hit his heart but it looks as though his heart of stone turned to stone and he dies ten days later. Now I see the Lord’s mercy on old Nabal as he gets 10 days to ponder his life before he dies and perhaps he gave his heart to the Lord. I’m amazed as well at Abigail as she stayed with this old coot and did not seek to leave him but man she was certainly set free.

It is remarkable how the words of Abigail calmed David’s heart but pierced Nabal’s soul and such is the work of the Holy Spirit our hearts can be broken by the word of God or become hard and it be the same words. Nabal is like so many in the world today that spend their lives trying to get everything and in the end have nothing.

Vs. 39 David hears that Nabal is dead and praises God. Now I’m sure that is because he did not take matters into his own hands and instead trusted in the Lord. Nabal had sowed to the wind and reaped the whirlwind (Hosea 8:7).

Vs. 40-42 Along with David’s praising the Lord for staying his hand against Nabal comes a proposal for Abigail’s hand. And she is very quick to take David up on his proposal of marriage and continued to show her heart to be a servant.

Polygamy was not as yet specifically spoken against as yet it was certainly not God intention. In Gen. 2:24 God spoke at the creation of the first man and woman and said, “*Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh*.” It does not say “Wives” plural nor does it say flesh’s. Further more in Deut. 17:17 Moses spoke to the nation saying that they should not “*multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away*”. Perhaps David thought, “Hey I’m not multiplying I’m just adding”. Looking at David’s life and all the wives that he ends up with and the family problems this creates it is quite obviously not God plan No matter whether or not Saul had given Michal to another. Palti’s name means deliverance of God and looking at Michael perhaps it was a blessing. Ah-in-oam means grace and so David married Grace and Joy. It appears that he first married Ahinoam as her name appears before Abigail’s.

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

# Servant: 1 Samuel 18-31

**Chp. 21-28:2 The captain of captivity**

**1 Samuel 26:1-25**

**“Been There, Done That”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 1-11 A bad habit**

**III. Vs. 12-20 To spear or to spare**

# IV. Vs. 21-25 The value of life

**I. Intro.**

The events 26th chapter give us a sense of déjà vu which Webster’s dictionary describes as “*a feeling that one has seen or heard something before*”. There are even a few commentator’s who feel this is a compilation of chapter 23 and 24 where similar events are recorded. As similar as they are they are not the same events as the location, time of day and other details are not the same. This has caused some to not bother teaching this chapter, as the similarities wouldn’t warrant teaching on something that they had already commented on before. I look at it very differently, as I seems to me that the old adage is true, “*Those that won’t learn from their mistakes are doomed to repeat them!*” Recognizing that the Holy Spirit is the author of scripture and that He did not make a mistake in what chapters to include for our admonition causes me to search for the reason why the repetition of events. I believe the answer lies in the two final statements made by Saul and David to each other, both of which seem to sum up their lives. Saul says in verse 21 “*I have played the fool and erred exceedingly*”. The word “*played*” here does not refer to playing a part but rather the word is used for playing a musical instrument. So **Saul sums up his life as a man whose melody and harmony of life was that of a fool** and indeed even after this confession in the 28th chapter he consults a medium and in the 31st chapter commits suicide. Ah but David’s life is also summed up by his words in verse 24 where he says, “*let my life be valued much in the eyes of the LORD*”. It seems to me that at any point in life we will be able to sum up our lives by one of those two epitaphs. Our lives will either be ***a melody foolishness***, or it will be one that is ***valued much in the eyes of the Lord***. And how will we be able to tell if we have moved from one epitaph to the other? Well it will be seen in how you respond to similar events in your life, if you repeat the same mistakes them you are clearly not learning from them. My mother use to always tell me, “*Your not a fool for making mistakes only for not learning from them*”!

**II. Vs. 1-11 A bad habit**

Vs. 1-2 The scene before us is all too familiar for our two men and it posses a question, “Why do both of these men go back and do the same things they did before?”

1. **David**: We are told here that David went back to Ziph, which you will recall means “*refinemen*t”. Why would David go back to a region inhabited by “*refiners*” who only a short time before ratted him out to Saul for political gain? The Ziphites were from the same tribe as David, Judah but more specifically they were even more closely related to Nabal “***fool***” as they also shared Caleb as an ancestor. Perhaps the answer lies in the psalm 54, which David wrote after his first encounter with the Ziphites; (The title of psalm tells us that it was written as contemplation when the Ziphites went to Saul). There in that seven-line hymn David says, “*Behold, God is my helper; The Lord is with those who uphold my life… I will praise Your name, O LORD, for it is good… For He has delivered me out of all trouble*”. I suggest to you that David went to Ziph because he had learned in refinement that the Lord was his helper the One that upheld his life and delivered him out of trouble. David did not dodge refinement, why he headed right towards it even if it meant being betrayed by family. Is it any wonder then that his life was “*valued much in the eyes of the LORD*”?
2. **Saul**: Now consider if you will Saul who declared in 24:17 “*You are more righteous than I; for you have rewarded me with good, whereas I have rewarded you with evil*.” Finding Saul doing the same thing as he did for after having said those words leaves only two possibilities:
3. He didn’t really mean what he said prior
4. He had forgotten what he had learned: Either way it is clear that like David’s epitaph, Saul’s fits him as well as his life’s song is sung in the key of “Fool” major.

The Ziphites perhaps were worried that David was going to refine them a bit after their betrayal of David. Look at these two men a moment David going from one tough experience to another and Saul continuing to fight against the Lord thinking that it is David he is battling instead of the man in the mirror. Again the epitaphs of these two men are evident in the way they few education. Education? Yeh, David saw life as a classroom in which God was instructing him, equipping him for his future reign as King. Saul well he just hated the teacher and wanted to go out and play, and so to with us!

Vs. 3-4 In chapter 24:17 Saul had declared “*You are more righteous than I*” and based upon David’s response here he wanted to believe Saul’s words. He knows that the army is there but he sends out spies to see if indeed Saul had come with them. I can not speak for you but I must confess that I have a strong tendency to believe the “*worst*” in someone who has done me wrong instead of believe the “*best*”. Now with that said the fact that David sent spies and did not take his army indicates that it is one thing to believe the best and another to bank on it, as doing so would have risked his men’s life.

Further more it is interesting to note that Saul has a 3000 to 600 hundred-man advantage but still David knows where Saul is and Saul does not know where David is even after the Ziphites were acting as his scouts. Why is that? Well, Saul went to the hill of “*darkness*” (Hachilah) while David was content to stay in the wilderness of “*refinement*”. Here is my point those who wish to have their *life’s to be valued much in the eyes of the LORD* will need to learn that dwelling in the wilderness of refinement always gives us a better view on life then making your “***encampment***” on the “*hill of darkness*”. Let me spell this out for you, we are far to prone to seeking a better vantage point on life and others through the world’s ways. You see as we learn to make our home in the “low lands” of refinement you will find that **the Lord only teaches through broken hearts not enlarged heads**!

Vs. 5 After hearing from the spies that Saul was indeed among the 3000 David decides to go closer and the pursued becomes the pursuer. What David observes is very interesting he notes that Saul has placed his sleeping bag in the center of 3000 crack commando’s “the Green Bares” right next to Saul. Abner was Saul’s uncle and his name means, “my father is Ner” which I suppose would have helped Abner out if he ever got lost at the mall.

Vs. 6-7 David comes up with this plan to into the midst of these commando’s that are protecting the king slip right next Abner the bodyguard. Now notice he does not command others to go for him, nor does he command those to even go with him, instead he asks, “*Who will go down with me to Saul in the camp*?” A dictator says, “Go” a boss may say, “You will go!” Ah but a servant of the Lord says as David did, “Who will go?” Hey, Christian in authority we must be people who allow the Lord to lead not demand others to follow.

A-bi-shy (Abishai) is an interesting fellow as his name means “*father of a gift*”. We are further told here that he is the son of Zeruiah, brother of Joab. Zeruiah is David’s ½ sister, which makes Abishai as well as his brother Joab and Asahel David’s cousins. They will all become leaders in David’s mighty men until Abner kills Asahel and Joab will avenge his death. So what we have here is a precursor to trouble between these families in the future.

By way of application I can’t help but notice how Saul and David’s actions represent their epitaphs.

Vs. 7 Saul: Who in verse 21 says, “*I have played the fool and erred exceedingly*”. It seems to me that Saul’s problems are illustrated by how he has arranged his camp. He has placed 3000 men, a bodyguard, a spear by his head and a jug a water and all of this is to protect himself from his own fears. Saul’s melody of life was so foolish because he protected himself from himself. Could it be that we too far to often become those who surround ourselves with people to protect us from the one thing we need to rid ourselves from our own rebellion? Do you see what I mean? Saul’s self protection kept him in his position it was ensured his slavery to self. Note the three things that Saul made sure were next to him so he could rest:

1. **A spear by his head**: A spear to protect him and notice that it was near his head. Saul wanted to protect himself so he slept with his weapon under his pillow. What does that say? Well it says that he was a man tormented by fear, a man who thought, “*I’d better be ready at all times*.” Saul can’t find peace; he has no rest yet he is the one pursuing David. Oh, to us Saul’s the Lord says leave your spear child and “*Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light*.” (Matt. 11:28-30)
2. **Abner and the people lay all around**: Saul has surrounded himself with those who will ensure that he remains the way he has been. And I can’t help but notice that they to were all asleep. Those who were there by design to surround Saul and keep anyone or anything else away from him were just as he was, ***asleep and ineffective at their calling***. Oh, *if you want to spend your life stuck in the “warn out song of foolishness” just keep those around you who will continue to let you get away with sin and rebellion. Those who will pull up next to you to lay there head upon the pillow of compromise and rap themselves with the temporary covers of complacency*. Oh but if you want to sing a new song then heed the words of Hebrews and surround your self with those who, “*stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching*.” (Heb. 10:24-25)
3. Vs. 11 **A jug of water**: At first thought it seems to be a good idea to keep near Saul something to quench his thirst but was their no “*living water*” near by? And if not why set up camp where there is no place to refresh ones self? A jug of water suggests to me that ***Saul was trying to maintain his condition while not seeking change his location***. What? A canteen is only a temporary solution, it is that which is filled with stagnant water. Saul had his jug of confined lukewarm water just enough to take off the edge so he could continue going the direction he had been on. Oh did he not realize that he could have asked of “*the gift of God, and said 'Give Me a drink,' and He would have given him living water*.” (John 4:10)

Vs. 7-11 In contrast to Saul we see David who in verse 24 says that his life , “*valued much in the eyes of the LORD*”. Here in these verses I see four things that indicate David was living by a different standard than Saul.

1. Vs. 7 “So David and Abishai came to the people by night”: **Boldness and Courage**! How fascinating that David took with him “*father of a gift*”. As in Abigail’s name which meant Daddy’s joy here we see that Abishai name means Daddy’s Gift. Ah who is our heavenly Fathers gift to you and I, is it not Jesus? No wonder we see David with such great boldness to walk right in the midst of all that darkness where all the people were asleep. Dear saint we will be people of boldness as we walk into the camp of darkness why? Well Daddy’s gift He is right be side us. Our lives will all value much in the eyes of the Lord when we walk with Him even if our destination is into a camp full of those who sole purpose is to kill us. If Saul sought to hide and protect himself from himself David faced his problems head on!
2. Vs. 8-9 “*Please, let me strike him at once with the spear….. Do not destroy him*”: Those that live a life that is valued in the eyes of the Lord will people who (and note this) **will seek to spare their enemies and not spear their enemies**! Abishai sees the opportunity to kill Saul with his own spear and doubt a little poetical justice as Saul was a spear chucker and you know the old saying “*Live by the spear and you die by the spear*”. To further the temptation Abishai begs permission to do and promises that he can do it one shot. I can’t help but wonder what might have happened if David had not gone through the experience with Nabal and seeing that the Lord took care of Nabal. My point is had David gone from Saul promising to learn form his errors to him again coming out to take his life he may have been tempted to say, “*Fool me once shame on you, fool me twice shame on me*.” David was a man who learned the lessons at hand and this case he not only didn’t do wrong he kept Abishai from doing wrong. It is a person who seeks the Lord who knows that we can be tempted equally from friend as well of foe!
3. Vs. 10 “*As the LORD lives, the LORD shall strike him, or his day shall come to die, or he shall go out to battle and perish*.” Two wrongs do make a right, the saying goes but David has come to the conclusion that since the Lord placed Saul as King only He has the right to remove him.
4. *the LORD shall strike him*: Saul will just drop dead like Nabal
5. *his day shall come to die*: Saul could just die in his old age
6. *he shall go out to battle and perish*: Or Saul could die as he goes out to battle, and that is what shall happen a little while later.
7. Vs. 11 “*Please, take now the spear and the jug of water that are by his head, and let us go*.” David took away that which enabled Saul to stay the way he had been and again I find there a truth that sparing people from what they deserve is always better that spearing them. Oh how easy it would have been to allow Abishai to shish-kabob Saul but instead David takes away the things that allow Saul to not deal with himself as well as showing how inadequate his self protection was. David will see that the Lord had provided a deep sleep to come upon Saul and his men not to spear them but to rather spare Saul.

**III. Vs. 12-20 To spear or to spare**

Vs. 12-13 David got away with anyone knowing and then he goes to a hill in the dark and calls out to Saul who was still very much in the Dark. Yet with David he could not read the next chapter in his life as we can for him he did not know what tomorrow held but he had something far better as he knew intimately Who held tomorrow. Hey Christian we are being trained in our ignorance of what lies beyond today but mark this well “*today’s lessons are part of what we will need for what tomorrow holds*”! God has already been to our next week, month and year. So much of my Christian life has been bound up doing the right thing the wrong way but David is living a life valued in the eyes of the Lord so he is doing the right thing the right way!

Vs. 14-16 Now I pray you allow me to put this into some of today’s language as David attempts to wake up Saul and his army to the danger they are truly in.

Vs. 14a “*Do you not answer, Abner*?”: Hey, Mr. Big shot wake up!

Vs. 14b “*Then Abner answered and said, "Who are you, calling out to the king?*”: Who ever is talking better be quiet or you’ll wake the King!

Vs. 15-16 “Hey, Ner’s my Dad aren’t you suppose to be guarding the king some one could have taken his life and that would mean your life.” With all of Saul’s protection nothing could keep the Lord from taking him and David wanted to let Saul know this as to give him time to get his heart right. David truly cared more for the king than those whom the king had surrounded himself with.

Vs. 17 Saul wakes up a little sleepy and recognizes David’s voice in the dark but he still calls him his son which based upon 24:44 he was no longer as Saul had taken his wife and given her to another man.

Vs. 18-19 Though David does not call Saul his father he still refers to him as king and lord even though he is not acting as one.

Again David desires correction if he is wrong rather than insisting on his rights. “*If the Lord has called you to chase me as a discipline than let me know and I’ll go and make it right with the Lord*.”, David says. “*But if this is being motivated by the flesh, then your going to be the one disciplined.*” Further more David’s greatest regret was that his trial was keeping from worshipping at the tabernacle. “*Your, keeping me from Church and there aren’t any fellowship out where you are chasing me*”, says David.

Vs. 20 “*Don’t kill me without a cause, I’m not worth the effort*.” The reference to the partridge is interesting as the birds are quite fast and they were killed by flushing them continually from bush to bush until they were unable to fly quickly then you would smack them with a club. So David likens his experience to that of a partridge in the mountains.

**IV. Vs. 21-25 The value of life**

Vs. 21-25 Saul again repeats his act of forgiveness by saying “*he had sinned*”, “*played the fool*” and “*erred exceedingly*”. Yet with a ever so slight hint Saul says, “*Return, my son David*.” To which in verse 22 David responds “*I have the kings sward come and get it*!” David saw that his business was not with Saul and he but rather between himself and the Lord and what ever a man sows that also shall he reap. David does not need Saul to value his life he already has the acceptance in the Beloved and nothing Saul did or didn’t do would take that away. These are the final words between the two and Saul ends his words with a affirmation of David yet an unchanged heart. He played the fool and though he put doing the instrument was still singing the tune.

May we hear what the Spirit has to say to us today and heed His word and surrender our lives more fully to Him!

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

# Servant: 1 Samuel 18-31

**Chp. 21-28:2 The captain of captivity**

**1 Samuel 27:1 – 28:2**

**“Sleeping with the enemy”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 1-9 Nothing better for me?**

**III. Vs. 10-8:2 From courage to discourage**

**I. Intro.**

The 26th chapter left off with the final words of Saul to David, “*May you be blessed, my son David! You shall both do great things and also still prevail.*” Two things become quite apparent as we read the 27th chapter:

1. David didn’t believe Saul.

2. David did not believe the Lord’s ability to “*both do great things and also still prevail.*” The first point in light of Saul’s character was the right assumption; the second however was way off base.

Oswald Chambers in his devotional wrote, “*Living a life of faith means never knowing where you are being led. But it does mean loving and knowing the One who is leading*.” Our life is indeed a life to be lived in knowing Him who calls us to go! Ah but what if you don’t much care for the road He has us traveling on? Well then we are faced with a difficult choice travel on the wide road of discouragement or chose the more difficult road of faith. I suppose that of all of satan’s weapons in his arsenal discouragement would be the corridor by which all of his other weapons against enter. For by discouragement sin first entered the human race and it is still the pathway we exit the throne of grace for the dumps of this world (drugs, alcohol, adultery etc). It is here in this section that we see our hero David “*the man after God’s own heart*” leaving the presence of God for the world all because he succumbed to discouragement. Think of that dear saint the “*man of courage*” who had just crept into Saul’s camp of 3000 commando’s that encircled Saul with spear by his head has been reduced in only a few days or hours into complete discouragement. What has happened and how could it have been prevented? That is what we shall find out now!

**II. Vs. 1-9 Nothing better for me?**

Vs. 1 This verse reveals to us six things that led David down the road of discouragement and I believe that in examining them they may keep us off this deadly road. I promise that as we look at this passage we will find great reasons to be encouraged even if we have spent a good while of our time walking the road of discouragement and perhaps it might be good if I start with one of those before we look at the six things in David’s life.

1. Based upon chapter 25:1 and 28:3 we know that Samuel had already died. Yeh so? Well that means that Samuel is not the one recording this chapter and it is safe to assume that it was David himself who wrote this section about his own journey living in the land of discouragement. My point is that David survived and even lived to write about it. I find that as I am in that place of discouragement I am prone to believe two lies:
   1. **I’ll always be in this place**.
   2. **There is nothing of value for myself or others while I’m here**.

Neither of these sentiments is true, as clearly David lived to write about it thus he was not always going to be there and further more the fact that he is retelling his time here means that there was something of value here. That to me is very valuable insight to keep me from becoming even more discouraged about me being discouraged in the first place. Hey Christian you and I can pull out of the dive of discouragement any time we hand the control of our lives back over to the Lord and it starts with reminding ourselves that we don’t have to make it our home and there is something we can learn about the time we have spent here.

1. “*David said in his heart*”: David may have never said these words aloud, uttered them to anyone else and it is obvious that he didn’t say them to the Lord but he said them “*in his heart*”. Further more a close examination of the scripture reveals something very interesting to me. Go back to the 26th chapter and look at David’s words to Saul in verse 19 “*they have driven me out this day from sharing in the inheritance of the LORD, saying, 'Go, serve other gods*.” In light of this chapter it appears that David had been contemplating his exodus to the enemy’s camp for some time. This points out two important details as it relates to our discouragement:
   1. First it shows us that David’s discouragement was not a “*big event*” but rather a gradual descent. You can search this passage high and low and not find one single “*big event*” that pushed David into discouragement. Rather it was an accumulation over seven years of being on the run now with growing responsibilities of an army and their families along with his two wives. My point is this, some times we look for some major reason for our discouragement and we find none and this causes us to become even more discouraged. Satan knows that the best way to slip in his poison pill of discouragement is to do so gradually over a long period of time so the effects of it won’t be noticed all at once.
   2. Secondly it reveals that David didn’t take his discouragement to the Lord. Some versions render the phrase “*in his heart*” as “*within himself and to himself*”. In other words while David was pondering things in his own mind, and considering the circumstances in which he was in he became discouraged. It is an interesting truth with regards to our discouragement though building circumstances may be what settles upon our heart it is our lack of giving them to the Lord that sends us into a tail spin. David was overcome by his own feelings and it is for this reason that we ought not to “*listen to our own hearts*”. Hey Christian **there is a reason why the Lord placed your head above your heart**! The tragic truth is that David was only 1 ½ to 3 years away from ascending to the throne which God had promised and all (Samuel, Saul, Jonathan and Abigail) had told him would be his. Ah but what he could David had done with these piling thoughts of impending doom? Well he could have taken them to the scripture, as Paul suggest to the Corinthians in 1 Cor. 10:5 that we are to take “*every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ*”. Consider the words of psalm 42:5 as he wrote not of listening to the mounting discouragement of his heart but rather said, “*Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him For the help of His countenance*.”
2. “*Now I shall perish someday by the hand of Saul*”: Secondly we see David suffering from a very bad case of “*nearsightedness*” as he seems to have fallen into that terrible trap of thinking that says, “*God can’t fulfill what He has promised, so I’m going to have to help Him out*”. There are a great many of us who know that the no where in the Bible does it say that “*The Lord helps those who help themselves*” but nonetheless we still act as if that verse is in the Bible. Had David forgotten multiple times the Lord had been able to keep him form Saul as well as himself? I suggest to you that David had grown weary in trusting the Lord and wanted to trust in the situation instead. I make this indictment against my own heart as at times ***I would rather find rest in the circumstances than to find rest from the circumstances in the Lord***. Ah, the best words for our discouraged heart come from our own lips. Consider David’s words the Goliath in 17:45-46 “*You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied*…*that* *all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel*.” Do not dear saint under estimate the mighty power of discouragement as it was able to accomplish what 3000 commandos could not and that is make a coward out of a hero!
3. “*There is nothing better for me*”: Time and again David is seen as a man who talks with God yet here he has been reduced to a man who merely talks to himself. Jeremiah spoke of the self delusions of the heart when he said, “*The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it? I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give every man according to his ways, According to the fruit of his doings.*” (17:9-10) “**Nothing better**?” What of the cave of Adullam, “*refuge*” (22:1) where you wrote those words of psalm 142:5 “*You are my refuge, My portion in the land of the living*?” Don’t miss understand me, I’m not faulting David I’m speak yours and my hearts as we are so prone to not remember God’s faithfulness in times past in our own lives. David has been reduced to a man whom he wrote about in psalm 32:9 that is “*like the horse or like the mule, Which have no understanding, Which must be harnessed with bit and bridle, Else they will not come near you.*” When the Lord would prefer to “*guide you with His eye*.” God does not long to deal with as man does with his animals but rather with a face to face relationship. Take a look at our Lord Jesus who faced an hour far worse than that of David’s in John 12:27-28 when looking His death for the sins of the world when He said, “*My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour. Father, glorify Your name.*” Jesus had the Father’s glory uppermost in His mind David had his comfort and ease.
4. “*Than that I should speedily escape*”: We can never improve on God’s plan for our lives and David’s words reveal a tactic of the enemy and the flesh, “hurry, hurry”, don’t think just react! I find in my own life that I’m either responding to God or reacting to the situation. When I was just starting out as a goldsmith the man I apprenticed under noticed that I was always in a hurry as it related to my work habits and finally he took me aside and said, “***You know Dale I’ve noticed that you never have time to do it right but you always have time to do it over***!” Again my I encourage you to not “*give in*” but rather learn to “*give it up*!” Impulsive decisions will often lead us into the wrong land away from God’s will. Is it not interesting that sales people often try this ploy you to cause you to buy something with out considering the costs?
5. “*To the land of the Philistines*”: There is always “something better” then going away from God to a land where they worship idols. David is leaving the land of God’s promises and protection and seeking comfort amongst the enemy. Again how many times have we done the same? “*I give up, I quit, I can’t take it any more, I’m just going to go back and seek comfort doing the things I use to do*!” Don’t get me wrong I’m making fun of you, nor am I offering excuses, what I am saying is that we have all gone thru times like this where we think that the Christian life, the walk with God is too hard and that a little comfort of the world with its “leeks and onions” are pretty tasty. Consider this Christian the Bible tells us in Hebrews 11:25 speaking of Moses that he forsook “*enjoying the passing pleasures of sin*”. The things of the world always offer their delicacies up front and make you pay for it after you are hooked. I have yet ever had to speak to a Christian and tell them to stop “praying, reading their Bibles or go to Church” but I have had to warn them against going after the quick pleasures of sin. In Jesus miracle at Canaan where He turned the water to wine there is an interesting statement made by the steward who sampled the wine “*Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the guests have well drunk, then the inferior. You have kept the good wine until now!*” You see what he is saying? The world offers the best first then when you are drunk and what it has to offer gives you the stuff that roots your guts. Ah but **Jesus always saves the best for last**!
6. “*And Saul will despair of me, to seek me anymore in any part of Israel. So I shall escape out of his hand*”: Two things are wrong with David’s thinking in his own heart:
   1. Saul will not despair when we turn to the world, no he will rejoice. It was not Saul’s despair that caused the compromise it was David’s.
   2. Vs. 4 Does inform us that “*it was told Saul that David had fled to Gath; so he sought him no more.*” Ah but since when does the “end justify the means?” **David obtains his peace of mind but at the price of a troubled heart** and that will cause a further problem that we shall see as lies and deception become a part of his life, which will escalate into murder and mayhem.

Vs. 2-6 David went over with his 600 men and their families and Achish of Gath was receptive of him coming. No doubt he had heard of Saul’s repeated attempts to kill David and with his army saw David as a good ally in his battle against Saul. Note that it says that David took his too wives with him, Ahinoam and Abigail. You will recall that their names mean “Daddy’s grace” and “Daddy’s joy” but though you may attempt to take “Grace and Joy” with you into the world they will never be in your heart!

David seeks his own city from Achish no doubt so that he would be able to keep his tabs upon David and his men. There are several interesting facts concerning “Ziklag”.

1. First is its name: As it means “measured or pressed down” which so fits David’s heart condition. It was a walled city with all of the comforts of the world but none of the comforts of the Lord.
2. Second is its location: It was originally given to Judah and Simeon (Joshua 5:31) but neither of them had ever been able to root out the enemies that dwelt their. Simply put this was “God’s land given to God’s people” but they had never kicked out the things of the world. There are always areas of our lives where we are content to live in God’s country but don’t want to uproot the inhabitants of the land.
3. Third is its history: These were supposed to be where the people of God lived but instead it was where the world was squatting. And David made it his home for 16 months and we are told in verse 8 that he continually raided “*Geshurites, the Girzites, and the Amalekites. For those nations were the inhabitants of the land from of old*.” Now these folks all were allies of the Philistines and even though this land was in the allotment of Israel David went after those who should have been removed to begin with. So perhaps David thought to justify his actions by saying, “*I may not be where I’m suppose to be but It’s ok because I’m still carrying God’s plans*.”

So far everything is working out fine until you read verse 9 where we read that committed genocide upon the people of the land to keep any of them from coming back to Achish to tell him that David and his men were wiping out all his allies.

**III. Vs. 10-8:2 From courage to discourage**

Vs. 10 Perhaps it would be a good time to offer some encouragement? There is an interesting fact that during these 16 months David writes no psalms of praise. But three psalms (8, 81, 84) record for us that they were to played on the instrument of a “gittih” (we get our word guitar from this word) which was an instrument invent by the people of Gath. My point is that even though David wrote no psalms of worship he learned to play an instrument of worship during this season of discouragement and compromise. It is impossible to praise the Lord when we are in the world but God can and often does use that season as an instrument of praise for His faithfulness in the future!

When Achish finally came to inquire of David’s raids David lies and says that he had been out against the “*southern area of Judah, or against the southern area of the Jerahmeelites, or against the southern area of the Kenites*.” The “*Jerahmeelites*” were one of the major families of the tribe of Judah and “*Kenites*” were the descendants of Moses father in law. So David lies and says that he is taking spoil from his own family and friends when in truth he is taking spoils from Achish’s allies. It is this lie of David that prompts him to consider David and his men to a frontal assault upon Israel and God’s people, to which David must respond that he would go since he has already claimed that he had been raiding them all along. This by the way is the very battle by which Saul as well as Jonathan is killed and had it not been for the Lord causing suspension from the tribal heads of the Philistines David might have been involved in the killing of his own country men. But here David is not only made a commander he is given the position of chief body guard to the enemy of God’s people. (29:3,7). Just because things are recorded in scripture doesn’t mean God is for it instead this section teaches us the necessity of what we are told in Jude 1:21 “*keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life*.”

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

# Servant: 1 Samuel 18-31

**Chp. 21-28:2 The captain of captivity**

**1 Samuel 28:3-25**

**“Can you hear me now?”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 3-14 The silence of God, more fearful than His Word**

**III. Vs. 15-25**  **God has departed from me…. what should I do?**

**I. Intro.**

1 Samuel is a book of **the tale of two kings** and the last of the Judges and the first of the Prophets (Samuel) that knew them both well:

A. Saul, whom the nation wanted, was a man that **elevated human potential**, a man who looked the part, a man of like passions, ultimately a worshipper of himself.

B. David was a man who **elevated God’s potential** and was His choice. In David God defied human logic choosing a young cast off shepherd boy whom would epitomize God’s great ability to transform a man through his weakness and frailty into a person whom He could use in spite of himself. Ultimately a worshipper of God.

These next few chapters marks the transition from man’s king to God’s king and I must confess after looking at David last week it is hard at times to distinguish between the two. God’s choices of the instruments he uses befuddles me most of the time but when we consider God’s words to Samuel (16:7) we have the answer, “*the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart*”. Looking out at this chapter I’m sadden by the continual choices those that profess to know Him make. David may have walked into the world of disobedience in the last chapter but Saul made it his home. It is in this chapter that amongst all the strange events we see the debts to which the Lord will go in trying to reach those who have hard hearts. We will also see the depths of depravity of the human heart that refuses to listen to the Lord yet still wants God to do things his way. In Matt. 5:8 Jesus gives us great insight into spiritual communication as He says, “*Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.*” Spiritual vision is dependant upon our character being pure and if we want to maintain intimacy with the Lord we will be often called upon to allow the Lord to work in ways in our heart that will cause us to stop thinking and doing certain things that others may find acceptable.

**II. Vs. 3-14 The silence of God, more fearful than His Word**

Vs. 3-4 There are three dynamics that led to Saul’s dilemma:

1. “*Samuel had died*”: This is the 2nd time Samuel’s death has been reported (25:1). The fact that it is mentioned again emphasizes the **spiritual vacuum** left by Samuel’s departure, this was further complicated but the fact that Saul had Doeg kill 85 priests in chapter 22 with only Abiathar escaping and he was now with David. Not only had Saul turned a deaf ear to the Lord’s voice and word so too had the nation and they were without council. As often is the case the leaders of nations represent the overall heart of a nation. I find it interesting that the nation mourned Samuel’s death but didn’t want to follow his word.
2. “*Saul had put the mediums and the spiritists out of the land*.” Apparently under Samuel Saul had put out all mediums and spiritists (those who do séances and bringing up the dead), some think that this might have been done as we are told on 1 Sam 16:15 when a (distressing spirit) had come upon Saul. Now doubt under the spiritual influence of Samuel he obeyed the commands in the Mosaic Law to cast out those who practiced occultic arts. Yet with that said Saul is going to seek out that which he has vanquished, in other words Saul was **doubled minded and therefore unstable in all his ways**. Hey Christian, things such as tarot cards, palm readers, horoscopes and Ouija Boards are modern attempts to practice forms of spiritism. The Bible says nothing concerning other superstitions but is not silent on these things. What this reveals is that such things as these are dangerous links to the demonic, even if undertaken in a spirit of fun and as such we should have nothing to do with occultic arts or practices.
3. Vs. 4 “*Then the Philistines gathered together, and came and encamped at Shunem*.” **Mounting pressure from an enemy whom Saul had neglected while chasing after David**. There are several things that no doubt influenced the Philistines advance into Israel against Saul:
   1. The Philistines were terrified of Samuel but **Samuel is dead** now.
   2. **Saul is preoccupied with David who appears to be on their side** now so they are now empowered to go against Israel.
   3. **The geography of *Shunem*** (their sleep) aided in this as we are told that the Philistines made an aggressive attack against Saul and Israel coming through *Shunem* is in the Jezreel Valley which tells us that the Philistines had penetrated far into Israel’s land and in effect cut off Saul from the northern half of his armies giving them further dominance over Saul and his armies. The war between the Philistines and Saul was to take place in the northern city of Gilboa (*revolution of inquiry*) which meant that Saul was now boxed in. Saul lost control of Israel because of what he said in 1 Sam 19:17 *David became his enemy* instead of those who were against the things of God. The same thing can happen to us when we allow ourselves to get side tract chasing after our enemies instead of fighting against the enemies of the Lord. (1 Cor. 10:4-5) *“the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God*”. It is very easy to find ourselves fighting the wrong battles and as we do the enemy has advanced well into the boarders of our heart and when we finally realize it we are powerless to reverse his advance.

Vs. 4-5 As Saul and his army move up the slopes of Gilboa he could see the enemy’s advancing army in the valley below and he became terrified. When Saul still walked in the Spirit, he was a man of great courage (11:6-11). But his courage left him when he left obeying the Lord and now that Samuel is gone who was the only man to have much spiritual influence on Saul his courage seems almost completely gone. Living a life in the energy of the flesh makes cowards out of us all, ah but the opposite is true as well as a life that has yielded to God and His word makes hero’s out of cowards.

Vs. 6 Saul had not been interested in the word of the Lord as Samuel had already told him that he was not going to be the king, yet he had spent years defying the word of the lord. Now he is facing the battle for his very life and he has distanced himself through disobedience from the very One that could have saved him (the Lord). There are a great many people out in the world like old Saul who have spent a life time avoiding listening to God and as their lives face impending doom they try to avoid what they spent their life pursing (their own destruction).

Saul’s hard heart has left him without communication, through dreams, priests (he killed them in Nob) nor prophets as Samuel was dead. I find this interesting in light of modern warfare as the first aim of any army is to attack the opposing army’s communication; if the commander can not talk with the foot solider then it will not take long until defeat. In Prov. 1:28-31 we read of the hardness of the heart of man and the Lord’s response when we are told “*they will call on me, but I will not answer; They will seek me diligently, but they will not find me. Because they hated knowledge And did not choose the fear of the LORD, They would have none of my counsel And despised my every rebuke.*” Three forms of communication with God are mentioned:

* **Dreams**: Nobody had any dreams so clearly Saul wanted to know what was going to happen but we don’t have to be concerned or look into our dreams as God in His word will make it known to us if they have any significance. It is interesting that almost every dream in scripture that needed an interpretation does so with someone that is not a follower of God. Yet when God thru a dream wants someone to do something He has no problem let them know.
* **Urim**: Was a way of determining the will of God, but Saul had killed 85 priests and only Abiathar remained and he was with David. There are a lot of folks to day who want to know God’s will or direction and they seek to do so apart from the word of God. To them the Bible is a “dead book” instead of the living word (Heb. 4:12 “*the word of God is living and powerful*”).
* **Prophets**: The Israelites were to seek God through the prophets before they went out to battle but Saul isn’t hearing anything. “*Saul is finding out that* ***God’s silence is much more fearful than His word****!*” David had cried out in Ps. 28:1 “*To You I will cry, O LORD my Rock: Do not be silent to me, Lest, if You are silent to me, I become like those who go down to the pit.*”

It is hard for you and I to hear the truth about ourselves, that we need to go and say were sorry for some uncaring action or that some attitude in our heart is not right. Its hard to hear that some area of our life is not right with God. But it is far more difficult to not hear from the Lord at all. Jesus spoke of the religious in Matt 13:15 saying, “*Their ears are hard of hearing, And their eyes they have closed, Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them*.” If we continue to rebel and sin then we are hardening our ears to hear and are closing our eyes to see and in so doing we are ripping ourselves off from turning to the Lord who alone can make us whole. All to often people can become like Saul who had not wanted the Lord to speak to him, and so God honors Saul’s wishes. Saul refused to obey the command of God. He had been rejected by God, because he had rejected God.

Vs. 7-8 The contradiction of Saul’s life is brought as we compare verse 3 “*Saul had put the mediums and the spiritists out of the land*”, with that of verse 7 “*Find me a woman who is a medium that I may go to her and inquire of her.*” In Ex. 22:18 we are told that “*You shall not permit a sorceress to live.*” Saul was acting the part as he had early on expelled all spiritism, but it is interesting that Saul’s men knew where one existed so apparently it was just a show to appease men. This duplicity of Saul who had ordered the deportation of all wizards, fortune tellers and 1 900 psychic folks yet under cover and in darkness (verse 9) seeks counsel from one. I can’t help but notice that his approach represents the problem of his heart. Outwardly he wants to appear to be right but he *cloaks himself* and goes out in *darkness*. You will recall that Samuel had said in 15:23 that Saul’s “*rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry*. *Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He also has rejected you from being king.*” Now Saul turns to that which his rebellious stubborn heart already represented witchcraft and idolatry.

The night before the battle Saul disguised himself went out at night and traveled ten miles from Gilboa to Endor in the process he must go all the way around the Philistine army at night to get to Endor. Saul began his reign as king at the dawn of the day being anointed by a prophet Samuel and he ends his reign at night visiting a spirit medium breaking the very law he attempted to enforce. Perhaps his justification was since he could not inquire of the Lord he must seek out a woman who at best was a phony and at worst was possessed.

Vs. 9 Now if I was Saul I would have to wonder what kind of powers this woman had who was unable to till who he was when he stood “*head and shoulders*” above every one else. I might of turned away and said, “*never mind*”. Clearly she is concerned as Saul had killed most of the witches and mediums in the land and she thought this perhaps was some sort of sting operation, yet how did Saul’s advisers know where to find her and why was she still around? There is an interesting side note in all of this, you remember when Saul came back from the destruction of the Amalikites, where God had said, “*Utterly destroy them, don’t leave any of them alive*”. Well David is making raids against the Amalikites, and we’re gonna find where the Amalikites made a raid against David and well Saul is going to be killed by an Amalekite. Here’s my point. When we fail to utterly destroy the flesh it is that very area you let live in your life that can destroy your spiritual walk.

Vs. 10 Apparently Saul didn’t realize that in seeking a medium, he was bring upon himself a curse. Leviticus 20:6 we are told that “*The person who turns after mediums and familiar spirits, to prostitute himself with them, I will set My face against that person and cut him off from his people*.” Saul will ask the medium to channel the deceased prophet Samuel. He does this because he wants to know what God might say to him! Saul is like a man going to a palm reader to hear the will of God. He obviously isn’t thinking clearly here. Once people reject the truth, they are far more likely to fall for even the most foolish deception.

Saul is making a promise that he can’t keep concerning her harm as he again disregards God’s word for his wishes. He seeks to reassures her by swearing in the name of the Lord, no less - that she won’t be punished. This is the last time Saul uses the name of the Lord (Jehovah) and he does so in reference swearing to a medium that she will not be punished!

The irony of this should not pass by our observation as Saul swears an oath to in the name of the Lord whose command he was breaking by seeking a medium. And to further muddy the waters Saul seeks to contact the prophet of God whom he didn’t want to listen too while he was alive.

Vs. 11-12 Why did Saul want to see Samuel? You may recall that it was Samuel who rebuked Saul in chapter 15:22-29. Saul has become so desperate for God’s prophet who was his guide and mentor that even in the midst of his sin, depression and demonic influence that he has forgotten that Samuel was his adversary when he had refused to obey the word.

What was this encounter? There are four possibilities:

1. Some believe that *this was a hallucination of the medium*. But this doesn’t make sense, because it doesn’t explain why the medium was so frightened. It doesn’t explain why Saul saw Samuel also, and why Samuel spoke to Saul, not to the medium.
2. Some believe that *this was a deception by the medium*. But this also isn’t an adequate explanation, for the same reasons given to the previous suggestion.
3. Some believe that *this was a demonic impersonation of Samuel*. It is possible that the medium, with her occultic powers, summoned a demonic spirit that deceived both her and Saul. But this suggestion is also inadequate, because it does not speak to the issue of *motive*. After all, what advantage does Satan gain by “Samuel’s” words to Saul?
4. Some believe that *this was a genuine (but strange) appearance of Samuel*. This is the best explanation, because it is supported by the reaction of the medium, which got more than she bargained for. It is also supported by the *truth* of what Samuel said (and the text says that *Samuel* said it). The woman of En-dor had no power over *Samuel*; and that *no incantation* can avail over any *departed saint of God*, nor indeed over any *human* disembodied spirit. Samuel really came, but not because the medium called for him. Samuel appeared because God had a special purpose for it.

This is supported by five reasons in the text:

1. Vs. 12 The medium is surprised
2. Vs. 14 Saul perceived that it was Samuel
3. Vs. 15 The text says that it was Samuel that spoke to Saul
4. Vs. 16-18 The words from Samuel are biblically correct

Yet with that said I’m still not sure and can see it both ways. Clearly the woman had a vision and Samuel spoke but not through her and this was not her normal encounter as she was terrified. Some see this as a demon who impersonated Samuel and that Samuel would not have been coming up, would Samuel still look old?

Let us not lose the truth of the text for the uncertainty that is here.1 Chron. 10:13-14 informs us that “*Saul died for his unfaithfulness which he had committed against the LORD, because he did not keep the word of the LORD,* ***and also because he consulted a medium for guidance. But he did not inquire* *of the LORD****; therefore He killed him, and turned the kingdom over to David the son of Jesse.*” Saul is only concerned over losing battle and the kingdom but still does not recognize that he has lost the battle for his heart and given it over the enemy.

Vs. 13-14 This appearance of Samuel accomplished two things:

* + 1. It re-confirmed the coming judgment upon King Saul’s in a dramatic way
    2. It taught the medium a powerful lesson about the dangers of her occultic craft.

Perhaps God sent Saul to warn of his approaching death, that he might have an opportunity to make his peace with his Maker. The truth is when we close our ears to God; He will find unusual - and perhaps uncomfortable - ways to speak to us. If Samuel did appear to Saul he did not come in response to her call instead he was sent of God, for the express purpose of rebuking Saul for his seeking a medium to pronounce his doom.

**III. Vs. 15-25 God has departed from me…. what should I do?**

Vs. 15 Saul wanted to know one thing, “*I have called you, that you may reveal to me what I should do*.” The philistines were attacking and Saul had been unprepared because he was to busy going back on his word to David chasing him all over. Seven times Samuel uses the word to remind Saul that the Lord was not answering him because he had refused to listen over 20 years.

Oh to God that Saul would have only shortened his question to, “***God has departed from me…. what I should do.***” There are a great many people in the world today that don’t want to hear what God has to say about sin and rebellion and they depart and go their merry way in disobedience. Ah but we are told in Gal. 6:7-8 “*Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life*.” It is then that they will want to know as the end of the life they so wanted apart from God is closing in on them, “***How can I not reap what I have sown?***” “*What should I do*”, Saul asked Samuel but Samuel doesn’t tell what he should only what is going to happen. ***That which we fail to slay in our life will be that which dominates our lives and if allowed to stay will shorten our lives***. “*God never departs from a man until the man has departed from Him. Then, in the interests of righteousness, God is against that man*.”

Vs. 16-19 Here we have Samuel’s words to but Saul will never get his question answered because his out come was already set. Though the medium saw Samuel and Saul did not Saul didn’t talk to her to speak to Samuel but directly to Samuel. This is nothing new here as this was old news but the words “*the LORD will also deliver Israel with you into the hand of the Philistines. And tomorrow you and your sons will be with me. The LORD will also deliver the army of Israel into the hand of the Philistines*”, does have a prophetic edge to them.

Samuel as a prophet of God didn’t need the help of a medium. In Acts 16:17-18 Paul rebuked a demonic spirit that was in a woman who was saying, “*These men are the servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to us the way of salvation*.” God does not need any help from the enemy as far as attracting the world to Christ. Whenever the world is joined with the Church all that can happen is compromise in which the truth that the Church wishes to proclaim becomes confused. Samuel’s answer is that as far as reaping what you have sown there is no way out. You refused to obey the Lord in 15:28 and now what the Lord had promised, Samuel had been sent as “*accounts payable*”. This is the first time that publicly Samuel had said that David was the neighbor who would inherit the kingdom.

Samuel told Saul “*The Lord has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today, and has given it to a neighbor of yours, who is better than you . . . For He is not a man, that He should relent*” (1 Samuel 15:28-29). Apparently, in the fifteen or so years since the events of 1 Samuel 15, Saul thought that perhaps the Lord had changed His mind! Saul thought that *time* would change God’s mind; but *time* never changes God’s mind only our *genuine repentance* and *brokenness* changes out eternal outcome, never time.

The next words of Samuel would at first seem to be the worst news of all, “*tomorrow you and your sons will be with me.*” But I see this is an act of mercy and grace towards Saul, “*You have time, in fact you have eternity.*” Oh make no mistake about it you and your sons will die tomorrow and you will reap what you have sown but “***you can be with me***” or you can make another act of rebellion and chose to die apart from returning to the Lord. Hey, what a great word to all, you may have lived your life apart from God and he has honored your wishes even though He has loved you enough to send His only son to take your sins upon Himself. But it is not to late God may have departed from you but He longs to be near you if only you will turn from your sins and live. Hear now the words of the Lord in Ezek 33:11 “*I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn, turn from your evil ways! For why should you die*”? In Rev 20:6 we are told “*Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years*.” Saul may have lost the right to reign in this land of the dieing but he could have a part of reigning with the Lord in the land of the living.

Vs. 20-25 Saul is told he is one day away from eternity and he passes out and this woman who is a medium uses her great powers seeing that Saul has passed out and “saw that he was severely troubled”. Gee, what was her first clue? And then she becomes his maidservant so if Saul didn’t already have enough problems he has now got witch from Endor as his servant girl.

Saul wanted to hear from the Lord but what he heard caused him to pass out. The news of death was more than he could take but why? Paul would write in 1 Cor. 15:55 “*O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory*?” Saul had thought that he could con God into giving him what he wanted victory over the enemy by fasting, he sought to change God’s mind but the Lord wanted Saul to change his heart! Hey, Christian we can’t earn a blessing from the Lord by works that we do. When we fast and pray it is not to change God’s mind it is to seek His face and have Him change our hearts and redirect our steps to where he would have us go! We can be some what successful at manipulating people to do what we want them to do but you will never be able to manipulate God into doing what you want Him to do. No, he will always do what is best for you in accordance to His character and nature.

The woman must have been pretty much in demand as she had a fatted calf at her disposal and she tries to comfort the defeated Saul giving a meal fit for a king but also his last supper. So she has this black kettle with a little “*eye of knute*” brewing and says got something cooking little me turn you into a frog or something while I’m at it. So she had a fatted calf in the house! What on earth! This little old witch just has this fatted calf walking around the house during the whole time and she just butchers it right in front of him baked some unleavened bread making sure everything was nice and kosher as all good witches do and then serves it to Saul. Apart from all the blessings God gave Saul, all the opportunities to repent and get his heart right Saul remained unrepentive and in the end Saul like so many was unprepared to lead a nation, unprepared to fight a battle and unprepared to meet the Lord at his death!

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

# Servant: 1 Samuel 18-31

**Chp. 28:3-31 From exile to exaltation**

**1 Samuel 29:1-11**

**“No where man, living in a no where land”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 1-5 What are these doing here?**

**III. Vs. 6-11 Return now and go in peace**

**I. Intro.**

In Psalm 18:35-36 David would write “*You have also given me the shield of Your salvation; Your right hand has held me up,* ***Your gentleness has made me great****.* ***You enlarged my path under me, So my feet did not slip*.**” If there was ever a time that these words of David fit it would have been in this season of discouragement while he wondered away from the land of promise and sought friendship with the world. David had let discouragement drive him away from the presence and promise of God. But how was he to get back to the land? **Merely walking back is the right direction but doing so with the enemy beside you will not suffice**. No we must heed the word of the Lord to Nehemiah in 1:9 “*but if you return to Me, and keep My commandments and do them,* ***though some of you were cast out to the farthest part of the heavens, yet I will gather them from there, and bring them to the place which I have chosen as a dwelling*** *for My name.*”

This is the battle in which according to 31:3-5 Saul and his sons will be killed and this chapter reveals to us how it was **not** David’s righteousness that sustained him from the battle but rather the hand of God. David in a real dilemma but even here the Lord is about to work in spite of him. Psalm 34:18 says, “*The LORD is near to those who have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit*.” Such helplessness brings about God graciousness to work in our deliverance from self.

**II. Vs. 1-5 What are these doing here?**

Vs. 1 Based upon David’s deception recorded in the 27th chapter Achish now expected David to go out and fight against his own countrymen and David even confirmed that he would be saying, “*Now you will see for yourself what we can do*.” (28:2) The Philistines camped at Aphex “*strength or fortress*” a place where we are told chapter 4:10 that 90 years earlier the Philistines defeat Israel at this very spot. No doubt the Philistines were keenly aware of Saul’s declining kingdom, and David was living with them on their side of the world. The increasing numbers of men that were coming to David (1 Chron. chapter 12) indicated that there was a growing dissatisfaction with Saul as king. So they took advantage and struck deep into the land of Israel and encamped at the fountain of Jezreel (*God will sow*). So geographically the Philistines came in their “*strength*” while Saul and the Israelites were about to reap what “*God will sow*”!

With the Philistines intent on delivering a death-blow to Israel, and the two armies squaring off in anticipation of a battle where was Saul? The night before, Saul sought the help of a spirit medium, wanting to hear from God. Through a strange appearance of the prophet Samuel, God told Saul he would die the next day in battle. Instead of humbling himself in repentance before the Lord, Saul simply resigned himself to this fate. Seeing now way in which he will get what he wanted to remain king, he gives up on what the Lord wanted his heart right with Him.

Ah but David to finds himself in a place he thought he would never be; among the ungodly, ready to *fight against* God’s people! Hey Christian when we sin, when we backslide, when we turn away from the things of God, we may soon find ourselves in a place we *never* thought we would be.

Vs. 2-3a The troops paraded their readiness before five commanders and all was fine until David came up with the king as his personal body guard. David’s deception was so good that Achish actually defends David and his men before his own commanders.

In 1 Chron 12:1 we are told of David’s mighty men that “*they were among the mighty men, helpers in the war, armed with bows, using both the right hand and the left in hurling stones and shooting arrows with the bow.*” They were men we are told in verse 8 that were “*trained for battle, who could handle shield and spear, whose faces were like the faces of lions, and were as swift as gazelles on the mountains*:” Some of which in verse 15 we are told were “*the ones who crossed the Jordan in the first month, when it had overflowed all its banks*”. They were the kind of men we are told in verse 18 that said to David, “*We are yours, O David; We are on your side, O son of Jesse! Peace, peace to you, And peace to your helpers! For your God helps you.*” Why do I mention them in this story, is not about David and his wonderings? Yes but these men gave up all, they were loyal, strong and courageous. They were David’s men without question, they had left Saul and sided with David and it had cost them and made them as wanted a man as he was. His wandering was their wandering these were not fare weather friends. I say that not in defense of David or of these men but rather to understand these gallant men who though **misguided** thought that **in supporting God’s man they were supporting God**. Apparently they never realizing that ***God’s man needed only be support by God*** and that their unwavering support kept him 16 months longer in the world then needed be. Loyalty is a great quality in friends but if it supplants our loyalty to God and His word then we do neither ourselves nor our friend any good. Oh yes do not abandon your friend but do not keep him in the world either and some times the best way to be loyal to him or her is not to go support them in a decision where they have wondered into the world!

The Philistine leaders *could see what David was blinded to*. David had started to think and act like a Philistine, and was ready to fight with them against the people of God. But the Philistine leaders could see that this wasn’t right, even when David couldn’t! David would have never slipped into this sinful place if he had remembered who he really was, and what His destiny was. This is a sad example of a time when we wish David had the wisdom of the Philistines! It is very terrible when the children of the world have a higher sense of Christian integrity and holiness than Christians themselves, and say to one another, ‘*What do these Hebrews doing here*?”

Vs. 3b “*David*”, Achish said, “*Was as good in my sight as an angel of God*” (verse 9) he so trusted him that he had made him and his bodyguard his royal escorts. It is a sad thing that a Philistine ruler will defend David so confidently! David has identified himself so much with the ungodly, that Achish *knows* he has David in his pocket. “*Don’t you know this fellow David has converted from the people of God to the people of the world*?” To hear an ungodly ruler say, “*David has been with me*” and “*I have found no fault in him*” and *“he defected to me*”. These words should have been a great wake-up call to David. It would be as if an ungodly coworker insisted to others that you really weren’t a Christian after all, because they had seen how you live! David had said as much in 1 Samuel 28:1-2 and Achish had every reason to believe that David would fight on his side. And with every step of their march from the world back into the Promised Land the steps must have grown heavier and heavier.

Hey friend, there is always a lightness in our steps as we come back into the presence of God having left Him for the things of this world. Yet if we wonder in from the world but allow it to come with us in our hearts then our steps back into the things of God will be awkward and heavy. Why? Well because we have not truly left the world we have taken the enemy with us.

Vs. 4-5 The other Philistine leaders were not in agreement with Achish at all. They didn’t trust David, and they feared he would turn against the Philistines in battle, to bring himself back into Saul’s favor. The Leaders were thinking what better way could he make up with Saul, then in the midst of the battle, turn and cut our heads off! “*No way will we allow him to go into battle with us!*”

The song of David’s victory has come back to haunt him again, the song was growing old like “*Henry the 8th I am, I am*”. This is not the first time this song has got David in trouble! When the song first hit the charts in chapter 18: 7-8 it made Saul angry, when it reached the Philistines in 21: 11 it angered them and drove David to droll. But now in verse 5 the song has gotten a little old and the leaders don’t want to listen to it or see David in who it was sung about. But you know what is cool this song was an expression of God’s greatness in spite of David’s failure and the Lord uses this little ditty to rescue David from his wondering in the world. If there was a theme song for David it would have to be this one but each time it was played it meant something else:

1. It was sung as a **rock song** upbeat in tempo, to show what God can do through a man who Love’s the Lord and shows it be being strong and courageous.
2. It was sung as a **blues song** mournful to show what happens when we face discouragement and forget what the Lord has done.
3. Here it is sung as a **love song ballad** to show that God never gives up a man even though the man has given up on everything and everyone else.

David was about ready to do the right thing “*go to war*” but on the wrong side! He found himself in the wrong camp amongst the wrong people having lowered his standard and excused himself by saying he was still engaged in the things of God but yet in so doing *he had to mimic the world to accomplish the things of God*. But the world always knows when we are a fake and asks, “*I thought you were a child of God*?” Yeh I am! “*Will why are you here and why are you doing the things the way that we do them?*” What led David to take the armies of the enemy to attack the people of God? **Discouragement which lead to compromise**! To make matters worse his compromise had only **fooled himself, his men and Achish** it had not fooled the ***princes of this world***. Those that were his friends believed the best about him but the world saw him only through his compromise. Their word is correct, “*Make this fellow return*,” (verse 4). There are far too many of God’s people who like David were leaving the things of God for the things of the world and there is not much difference between them and those of the world. We are to be in the world we have no chose in this matter we are in the world but we are not to be of the world.

**III. Vs. 6-11 Return now and go in peace**

Vs. 6-7 “*As the Lord lives”*  is the unexpected oath from Achish who no doubt was being courteous to David in not swearing by Philistine gods. Though Achish plead on behalf of David and his men it was to no avail as “*the princes of the Philistines*” were not his friends as he had thought and they knew he didn’t belong amongst them.

David thought he couldn’t be happy or at peace in the land of Israel (*Now I shall perish someday by the hand of Saul. There is nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape to the land of the Philistines*, 1 Samuel 27:1). Now he finds that his “Philistine friends” won’t accept him either. **David has no home; he is trying to live in both worlds, so he has a home in neither world**. David didn’t *like* being rejected by the Philistine rulers. Not many people like rejection, but God would *use* the rejection of ungodly people in David’s life. Many people are hesitant to live out-and-out for Jesus Christ because they are afraid of the rejection of the ungodly. How much better it is to be all out for Jesus, and to trust that if the ungodly reject us, God will use it for good. **David is in the worst place for any child of God. He has too much of the world in him to be at peace in the Lord, and he has too much of the Lord in him to be at peace in the world**.

David used to “***displease the lords of the Philistines*”** all right; he used to be a mighty warrior for the cause of God, and he used to strike fear in the heart of every enemy of God. David has made friends with Achish who is only concerned about displeasing **the lords of the Philistines**! Could you imagine someone coming to David before a battle, and saying, “*Excuse me David, I don’t think you should do that? You might* ***displease the lords of the Philistines****.*” In James 4:4 we are asked, “*Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God*.”

Vs. 8-10 David seems genuinely disappointed that he will not be able to fight for the Philistines against Israel. “*But what have I done*?” cried David in protest but **he should have wept unto the Lord “*What have I done*?” in reference to his 16 months away from the Lord and the land of promise.** Thank God for the princes of the Philistines who rise up in protest at his compromised life by saying “*What are God’s people doing here amongst us*?” David has sunk so low, that he now calls God’s people his enemies. David says, “ He is ready to go and fight against the enemies of my Lord the king”, and announces that Achish is his Lord, his king. He’s ready to fight against the enemies of Achish instead of the enemies of the Lord.

The sad, tragic thing is that many times, when a person turns away from the path of God, he never intended to go as far as he does. He didn’t intend that it get him this involved. He didn’t intend to get so far immersed in that sin, that one day he would turn his back upon God, and become an enemy to God, or to the people of God. Finding himself now in that position of fighting against the people of God, he has come to rock bottom.

Vs. 11 **David was outside of the will of God for 16 months but not outside the working of God**. Instead God sent David and his men back to slay the enemy who had raided a city that was suppose to be where God’s people dwelt. **We fail to inherit the land because we compromise and allow the enemy to stay in areas purchased by our Lord**! God brought David back 30:1 to attack those who had taken the innocent captive and it is always compromise that leaves are lives burned (30:1). In 1 Chron. 12:20-21 we are told when David turned back God added to his men “*those of Manasseh who defected to him…. captains of the thousands.*” Don’t miss this as it is the Lord’s way that when we turn to him in the areas of our own lives He grants us victory and increases our blessings.

If we only had the Psalms, and didn’t have all of these other things about David’s life, we’d think, “*Wow! Wouldn’t it be great to be like David, so God could use me*!” But I know God can’t use me, because man, you know I’ve told lies, and I’ve failed. God points out that David had his flaws, in fact some of them, at least as bad as ours, yet God used David. May God guard us against despair and discouragement, as it is the lack of trust in the promises of God that drives us to try to do things in our own strength. The Bible tells us in 2 Tim. 2:13 that “*God is faithful even when we are faithless*”. And that is what we see as God stepped in to save David from himself and from making a tragic mistake that would have changed history and how the nation would have seen David. Hey, Christian you can’t trust in the circumstance, you can’t trust in your ability but you can always and all times trust in God who only does good! “*God takes the worst things, the things that leave us broken and feeling discarded and He in His greatness use those very things as the doors for the best things he has for our lives*!”

In Luke chapter 4 as Jesus came into His home town of Nazareth and went into the temple he grew up in the they handed him the book of Isaiah and He looked for the passage found in chapter 61 where He read, “*The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD*”. But the passage that Jesus read from goes on to say something wonderful about His life as it says that He will “***comfort all who mourn, give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness***” As I think of such things I an amazed at His ability to take and make beauty from my ashes, Oh dear sweet Lord for give me for doubting You as you are the only One who continually gives me beauty for my burned out ash heap of a life, in spite of me Lord I have been anointed with the oil of joy from your Spirit and I am wearing Your garment of praise instead of heaviness! God is not look at us taking a record of who’s been naughty or nice and rewarding us based upon our performance. No, He according to the words of David in psalm 103:14 “*He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust*.” There is none of us that are what we should be, do what ought to do or be where we could be. But in Heb. 11:6 we are told “*without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.*”

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

# Servant: 1 Samuel 18-31

**Chp. 28:3-31 From exile to exaltation**

**1 Samuel 30:1-15**

**“My Heart His Throne”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 1-6a All alone with God**

**III. Vs. 6b-15 Stones of remembrance**

**I. Intro.**

In Rom. 8:28 we read that familiar verse, “*we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose*.” Hey Christian this is true even when we are outside the will of God resisting the work of God.

* **Even if we are seeking to escape the loving discipline of the Lord**
* **Even when we have painted ourselves into the corner of compromise**
* **Even if we are forsaken of our worldly friends that we sought at the expense of the promises of God**
* **Even when our families have been the casualty of our flesh**
* **Even if the closest of our friends now seek our destruction because they have tired of reaping the wages of our self centered pity**

Even if there is no one left on earth to stand by us there is One we are told in Prov. 18:24 “*a friend who sticks closer than a brother*.” Though all the earth seeks to repay me and **rightly so** “*we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.*” (1 John 2:1) Who can resist a God like Him? Hey Christian in our lives we know that we can neither save ourselves nor sanctify our lives. But as true as that is God will not give us good habits or a good character. He will not force us to walk rightly with Him; no we must do that by reckoning the old man dead and the new man alive in Christ.

**II. Vs. 1-6a All alone with God**

Vs. 1-2 “*On the third day*” indicates that David and his men covered about twenty-five miles a day on the march south from Aphek to Ziklag, where they would have arrived tired, hungry and expecting all the comforts of home. But there was to be no home coming celebration for David and his men who had been trying to join the Philistine army to fight against God’s people. The Amalekites knew that David was preoccupied with the battle between the Philistines and Israel in which he was on the wrong side. It was at this time that they picked for their raid, taking advantage of a defenseless city and burned it to the ground.

In a touch of irony David was reaping exactly what he had done on other cities (27:8-11).During his 16 months living among the Philistines, David made his living as a bandit, robbing cities and *whenever David attacked the land, he left neither man nor woman alive*. The truth is the Amalekites were being more merciful than David had been to them! God, who is rich in mercy, does not discipline us as much as we deserve. Like a compassionate father, He tempers the stroke of His hand with kindness and love. How so pastor? Well consider this:

* Had the Philistines princes waited any longer or caved into their kings wishes and allowed David to stay and fight it may have been weeks or months until he got back to Ziklag.
* Had there not been one of David’s soldiers left to defend the women and children offering resistance then the Amalekites might have killed all instead they were celebrating their easily won victory (verse 16).

Sometimes we wonder why the Lord allows certain things in our lives, the Lord has allowed this to happen to get David out of the world that he sought friendship with. God was sending up “***smoke signals***” to let him know that it was time to get his heart right. David had finally come to the end of the road and **what he found was the burned ruins of the city of compromise where he sought refuge from the situations of life lived in faith**. He can not blame Saul, the Philistines or anyone else; this is made up of his own doing. So often we seek to avoid trusting the Lord during a season of discouragement and we run to the world desiring a rest from the things of God in the shelter of the world’s walls. And in our compromise **the situation leads us back to faith as the comforts of the world are for more disastrous then the trials of faith that we sought to avoid**.

Vs. 3 The are an interesting study of the Amalekites as we are told in Exodus 17 that these people came out and attacked the children of Israel, right after they came out of Egypt (a typology of the world). Israel had came through the Red Sea, and was journeying through the area of Rephidim towards Sinai, when Amalek and his forces attacked them from the rear, killing the stragglers and old feeble people who couldn’t keep up with the rest of the people on their march. In Deut. 25:17-19 God said to Moses, “*Look Mo, you’ve got a score to settle with Amalek, and when you come into the land, and you’ve subdued the nation, and you’re strong, then I want you to go down and utterly wipe them out, because there’s gonna be war with Amalek with every generation*”. The Amalekites were cave dwellers those who **dwell in the recesses of the earth** and in scripture they are seen as a typology of the old flesh which seeks to pull us down in our weakest areas.

In a further twist in 1 Sam. 15 the Lord told Saul through Samuel to settle this ancient score with Amalek to go down and utterly wipe them out. So Saul went down, and God delivered Amalek into his hands but Saul kept the finest of the cattle and the sheep, and brought them back with him. But that’s not all Saul left alive as we see here the Amalekites have attacked David thus Saul did not destroy them all otherwise they wouldn’t be there to fight. In a twist of fate it will be an Amalekite that ultimately kills Saul. In the 31st chapter Saul is hit by one of the Philistine archers and he turns to his armor bearer, and he said, “*Kill me; I don’t want those uncircumcised Philistines to catch me in this wounded condition and to kill me*.” His amour bearer wouldn’t do so, and so Saul set out his spear, and he fell on his own spear, but he didn’t die. Then came this Amalekite and Saul said, “*Hey guy, come over here and kill me*!”, and the guy went over and killed him. So what’s the moral of the story? Well **Moses, Joshua, Saul** none of them had taken out the Amalekites and here they are ripping of God’s people. Hey saint you can always count on a battle with the flesh (*Amalekites*) the moment you are about to leave wondering in the world behind. So what can we do about it? Well we need to heed the words of Paul in Rom. 13:14 “*put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.*” God’s remedy for the flesh is daily destruction, crucify it, mortify it, by the Spirit, and put to death the deeds of the flesh.

Vs. 4-5 David and his men had never lost a battle they were undefeated they had been on the other side of raids during their 16 months in Ziklag, never seeing what it was like to come into a town after a raid seeing everything you owned and every body you loved gone. David has become what he had hated so in Saul a double minded man, a man of no integrity. Mark this servant of the Lord, if **we run to the world from tyrants we will in turn become the tyrants we ran from**! *Any time we run to the flesh and the world from the things we hate we will in time become to others that which we hated*. Their first reaction was to wear themselves out in grief, to weep until they couldn’t weep any longer! David had not been immunized from his rebellion, he too had his family taken and his house burned, and he knew why his men were upset as he was acquainted with the same grief. Further more David’s weeping was not only because this but because he knew that he was responsible for it. He, like the prodigal son, now sat in the pigpen of his own backslidden state. Hey saint at times we too must stand among the ruins of our self willed lives amongst the smoldering ashes of our compromise before we can see that He alone can make beauty from our ashes, **remember if God can create life and order from dust then He can create beauty from the ashes we have made of our lives**.

This is not a bad place to be as Spurgeon wrote, “*May you see your self-righteousness burned like Ziklag, and all your carnal hopes carried away captive, and may you then encourage yourselves in Christ, for he will recover all for you, and give you spoil besides, and there shall be joy and rejoicing*.”

Vs. 6a The same men who had in 1 Chron 12:18 “*We are yours, O David; We are on your side, O son of Jesse! Peace, peace to you, And peace to your helpers! For your God helps you*”, are now ready to stone him for his wonderings into the world. You can take people through the same set of circumstances and people will react differently. All that life’s circumstances will reveal is what is truly in us. David’s men were so angry that they wanted to kill him, now that’s a response that shows that they were looking for ***someone to attach blame*** more then they were wanting to get their families back. “*Well it was David’s fault after all, I mean if he hadn’t wondered into the word with out seeking the Lord and if he hadn’t raided the Amalekites while in Ziklag they wouldn’t be in the situation right?*” Wrong, **who made them follow David**? **Who caused them to leave the Lord for the world and raid cities**? Hey, Christian when you and I chose to do what we do we can’t all the sudden play the victim and say it’s not our fault. **Killing anyone but ourselves for our sin is a big waste of time,** yes they should have been grieved but not only at David’s sin but at their own **for following a man who chose to go to the world instead of the word**.

Here we yet another thing that drove David to the Lord. You see David had rejected his own people and sided with the world, then the worldly friends rejected him but at least he still had his family but now his family is gone, “*Ah I still have my “****home boys****” they won’t turn on me.*” Now he has nobody left but **the One who promises to never leave us or forsake us** and the tragedy is that David could have been here 16 months earlier! It’s interesting how that so many times God has to take me to the bottom, before I’ll turn back to Him. God doesn’t delight in that, He would rather that I listen and deal with me without a painful processes. I believe strongly that **God will always use the least means possible in His leading us** but if we fail to listen to Him He loves us so much that He will use even a painful processes.

**III. Vs. 6b-15 Stones of remembrance**

Vs. 6b David had *said in his heart* in 1 Samuel 27:1 “*There is nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape to the land of the Philistines*”, now He again has a talk with his heart and this time he takes his heart to the Lord which strengthens himself in the Lord. “*The best talks we can have are the ones that we have about ourselves to the Lord. It is a foolish thing to talk to others to ourselves and not talk to the Lord and allow Him to speak to our hearts*.” Now “*David strengthened himself in the Lord his God*”, but why would God strengthen him? Because God is rich in mercy and grace (Eph 2:4)! and he is now completely broken and ready to be filled. Sometimes we think we have to achieve or earn God’s blessing or strength, but **all we can do is receive them in spite of ourselves**. Oh blessed circumstances as prior to this, David didn’t see himself as weak, but after coming home to a burned-out ghost town because of his wonderings, he now knew he was weak and needed God’s strength. God’s strength was there for David all the time, but now he appropriates it for himself and strengthens himself in the Lord his God. In 2 Cor. 12:10 Paul wrote “*I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong*.” This wasn’t some kind of rah-rah cheerleader kind of positive thinking. No this was strength for brokenness, strength for repentance, strength to win back what the enemy had ripped off in his life, it was resurrection strength!

God doesn’t say, “*Hey David I’ve been calling your number for 16 months and you didn’t pick up your phone so now you think you can call me and get an answer*?” Hey Christian there is no working our way back into grace for if we did then it would not be grace, it is works. **The question is not weather or not grace is available for it surely is, the question for us is have we truly repented**? In 1 John 1:9 we are told, “*If we* ***confess*** *our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*.” The word “*confess*” means to “*say the same thing*”, or if you will “*agreeing with the conviction of the Holy Spirit*”. This is not some **outward sobbing for show it is surrender with out any self justification**. True confession is **only after restoration of the relationship with God** that sin cost and isn’t concerned with the restoration of things lost beside the relationship with the Lord. **If in our heart we seek to restore the things lost along with the relationship with God, then we are placing the things lost on the same level as the relationship with the Lord**! If that is the case then we have no true repentance as ***we are not turning from sin just merely hoping to divert its effects***.

**How did David strengthen himself in the Lord?** I suggest to you **three things** **stones of remembrance**:

1. By **remembering *God’s love***: If the Philistine leaders had not rejected him and sent him away, the Amalekites fires of would not have still been burning and the situation would have been far worse. God had sent David home through rejection and that which was bitter had now became a sweet expression of the Lord’s love.
2. **By remembering *God’s promise and calling***: He had been living a defeated and discouraged life but the enemies destruction caused David in desperation to realize that he was a man anointed by God, called by God, and promised by God to be the next king of Israel. “*Hey wait a minute I’m a king called by God I have promises from God, and He hasn’t taken it away. I need to start living according to that destiny.*” David could thank God and see the glory of His power in this high calling, Rom. 11:19 tells us that “*the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable*.”
3. **By remembering *God’s past deliverances***: David could recall all the past troubles and God’s faithfulness to deliver him in spite of his doubt and failures. Since God has done this before then He will do it again as the Lord didn’t deliver me then to watch me perish now.

Vs. 7-8 Hey Christian did you note something here in the life of David that was missing during those 16 months while David and his men made their home in the world? Well brother, sister this is the first time we read of him seeking God in any way. Oh saint **we could avoid the road of discouragement and our stay in the world altogether if we would simply inquire of the Lord in this way.** James would write in 4:8 “*Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.*” When David should have called on the Lord he didn’t and instead spoke “*within himself*”, but what David didn’t do in discouragement “*seek the Lord*” he won’t do without seeking the Lord. What are you saying pastor? Simply this, “*We are at our best when we are facing our worst*.”

David sought the Lord through Abiathar the priest who “*brought the ephod to David.*” The **ephod** was a special apron that the High Priest would wear, to cover over their clothing, so the sacrificial blood and gore would splash on the ephod, not on their clothing. And in a pouch was the *Urim and Thummim* which today we have the Word of God. Hey do you see a picture of how we are to seek the Lord? **Well we go through our “*High Priest Jesus*” whose robe of righteousness has His blood stained sacrifice upon it seeking His word as our guidance.** The Lord’s answer contained two things:

1. Something to do: “*Pursue*”
2. A *promise* in the doing: “*you shall surely overtake them and without fail recover all*.”

Hey that’s cool as **God never gives us something to do that He does not also promise that in so doing He will accomplish His purpose**. As David comes back in true brokenness the Lord did not give him a lecture, probation or punishment. No he said I’ll give you victory. Saul may have eaten the fatted calf from the witch at Endor but it was David that returned from the pigpen to his loving Fathers arms.

Vs. 9 David’s men were in the place of mutiny even speaking of “*stoning him*” (verse 6). But then David “*strengthened himself in the Lord his God*” and “*inquired of the Lord*” (verse 8) now they are ready to follow him because he is back following the Lord. Hey Christian never under estimate the importance of obeying the Lord and personal integrity as it relates to leading others. You can not lead others any farther then you yourself are willing to go and if you try all you will have on your hand is a mutiny! Hear now the words of Paul in Rom 2: 21-22 “*You who preach that a man should not steal, do you steal? You who say, "Do not commit adultery," do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?*”

Note the words, “*So David went, he and the six hundred men who were with him*”, which implies that David said, “*Men, I’m going. I have a promise from God for victory, and I’m going to believe it. It doesn’t matter if you come with me or not*”. What a great sight this was especially in light of the fact that only a few days earlier David and his army were about to fight against God’s people now they are off on a mission from God. **Hey believer there isn’t an army on earth that could defeat us when we walk in obedience to God’s will even if this comes right on the heels of our failure**.

Vs. 10 After a three day ride David and his men travel another 16 miles to the brook of Besor where 200 soldiers couldn’t go any further as in the Hebrew it says that they were “*dead tired*”. **Hey saint just because we start obeying the Lord does not mean that we will not again face our enemy “*discouragement***”. He sets the one-third to work guarding the supplies, lightening the load of the 400 who continue, and he sets out again, and full of faith. “*Many a believer would have given up when one out of three of his troop can’t continue, but David continued on. Oft times when God wants to bless us, he takes away a part of the little strength we thought we had. We didn’t think our strength equal to the task when we had all, then the Lord in His wisdom takes even more of the little power we thought we had.* ***Listen up Christian God does not fill till he has emptied****. Two hundred men must be taken away before God could give him victory .****God blesses by subtraction more then by addition****. So then saint, you can expect that your discouragement may deepen but that will only increase your joy in the end*.

Vs. 11-13 They didn’t even know where the Amalekites were and David was trusting the Lord to guide him and it was then that they ran into a sick Egyptian who had been a part of the raiding party in a field. The fellow should have died in the wilderness but God had kept him alive and David and his men could have taken out their frustration on him but instead they reached out to this fellow who knew the plans of the Amalekites.

The Egyptian was near death; **he had eaten no bread nor drunk any water for three days and three nights**. It would have been easy to ignore him, and pass him by. They could have said, “*Hey look, this is a very sad but this man is near death anyway and we can’t do much to save him, so let’s be on our way*.” “*We are on a mission from God and our delay is risking our family’s life*”. What this shows is that David was really walking in the heart of God as he puts others concerns above his own.

“*To whom do you belong, and where are you from*?” What a great question to ask someone who has been discarded and left to die by the enemy in the world. “*Has the person who has control over your life been doing a good job with you?*” “*Is all well with you? Do you want to stay in the state you are in?*” That is always the best place to start when you are speaking with someone. Yet with that said it is not enough to ask these things without offering them **Bread** to eat and **Water** to drink. And who is this bread and water? Well it is Jesus the **bread of life** of whom will give you **living water** which will quench every thirst. And notice as well that there was “*cake of figs and two clusters of raisins.*” There was that which was sweet to eat and pleasant to the pallet as the Lord always is to those that partake of Him.

Vs. 14-15 The ‘***we***’ at the beginning of verse 14 suggests that the slave participated personally in the Amalekites’ raids and in saying this he risked his own life as this was a confession of his wrong doing. Ah, truly it is the goodness of God that leads to repentance. In 2 Samuel 15:18 we find that the *Cherethites* formed a part of David’s guards.”

Dear saint we will only recover what we have lost when we come to the Lord as our friend that we have forsaken! There are **four things that allowed David to recover what he had lost:**

1. Vs. 6b “*David strengthened himself in the LORD his God*”: He came to the only One who could wipe away his tears.
2. Vs. 7-8 “*David was willing to hear and obey the Lord*”: That’s the 2nd thing that we need to do be willing to hear and obey.
3. Vs. 9-10a “*David took a step of faith*”: He didn’t just sit back and say, “*If you want my family back you just bring them to my burned down door step*”. Instead David pursued and even when 1/3 of his army couldn’t keep going he still did. In fact verse 9 tells us that “***David went*** *he and the six hundred men who were with him*”. In other words David was going with the Lord and it didn’t matter who or who wasn’t going.
4. Vs. 10b-15 “*David put others needs and wants before his own*”: And in so doing God used this guy who had been part of the raid as the very instrument in finding where the enemy had taken his family. So often we will find that as we are self sacrificing that the Lord bless through our surrender of our needs and wants.

If we desire victory over self to step into the purposes to which the Lord has for you then you must be willing to walk into brokenness through the burned rubble of the flesh life. Stop fighting against God and return to Him. Then you will see God put to flight the enemy of our faith. Paul wrote of his self in Rom. 7:18 “*I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells*”, do you believe this about yourself yet? The moment we humble ourselves and stop our fighting against the Lord and instead inquire of Him we will find He is there.

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

# Servant: 1 Samuel 18-31

**Chp. 28:3-31 From exile to exaltation**

**1 Samuel 30:16-31**

**“To the victor go the spoils”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 16-20 Recovering all**

**III. Vs. 21-31 Finders’ keeper’s?**

**I. Intro.**

This chapter serves as wonderful picture of what Jesus has done for us by His death and resurrection, “*He has* ***recovered all*** *that was lost by the rebellion of the human race*”. David was manifesting **three visible signs** of his spiritual decline and we only need to retrace his words to see this:

1. **Trust** 27:1a “*Now I shall perish someday by the hand of Saul*.” Discouragement had dislodged David from a man who took God at His word to a person who used the circumstances and situations he faced to interpret who God is. “***An upward look***”
2. **Truth** 27:1b “*There is nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape to the land of the Philistines*”: The 2nd thing to go for David was that truth went out the window. It is a fact of our fallen nature, Christian, that when we fail to trust God’s word then it is certain that the truth of the Word will depart from us as well. The Word of God must be believed and applied *not just acknowledged*. “***An inward hunger***”
3. **Target** Vs. 27:2 “*Then David arose and went over*”: Clearly David leaving the land of promise for the temporary comforts of the world demonstrated that he was way off target but let us not forget this began with a lack of trust which escalated into a deviation from truth and those two things caused David and his men to miss the target. “***An outward action***”

Alan Redpath rightly said, “*Many a Christian stands at a crossroads facing a revival or a funeral*” and the steps of David can serve as an indicator of which road we are heading down. So just what does revival entail? ***An upward look, An inward hunger, An outward action***. Hey saint, there **is a difference between being people who know the Word of God and people who know the God of the Word**! If we are people who know the Word of God we will be ***knowledgeable,*** ah but if we are people who know the God of the Word will be more then knowledgeable we will be ***constantly transformed***. Remember this, a man who sins stops applying God’s word and praying but the man who applies God’s Word and prays will stop sinning as well! How did David recover what became casualties on the road of discouragement, while in the walled city of compromise? Ah, verse 6 holds the key, “***strengthened himself in the LORD his God.***” And in his return to God he was transformed by an “***upward look***”, “***inward hunger***” and by “***an outward action***” David recovered for more in a day then it took him 16 months to lose and such is the case when we like David turn to the Lord in trust applying the truth, He will make sure we stay on His target.

**II. Vs. 16-20 Recovering all**

Vs. 16-17 David and his men caught the Amalekites off guard in the midst of their celebration as the Amalekites had figured that all the Philistine and Israelite armies were far to the north, preparing to fight each other.

The word “*twilight*” in verse 17 is better rendered “***Dawn***” as it appears that David and his men took some rest and attacked at first light, when the Amalekites would have been suffering from a hangover. All went well for David and his men except that 400 Amalekites escaped on camels. In as much as the Amalekites are a typology of the flesh it causes us to realize the desperation that our old nature will go through to make an escape and ride off.

Vs. 18 Twice in two verses we are told that “*David recovered all*” but how did he do so? Well in verse 6 we were told that David *strengthened himself in the Lord his God* then inverse 8 we were told that David *inquired of the Lord.*  Thus God gave David a complete victory and he recovered all the enemy had ripped off because David in obedience did what God had told him to do but let’s not forget how God got David to this place of recovering all:

1. The Lord first encouraged David to trust by taking away every one and everything he had trusted in prior.
2. The Lord gave David wisdom to what to do and His power to accomplish what he promised.
3. Finally the Lord directed David and his men through discouragement to find out where the enemy had taken captive their loved ones.

Simply put **God used negatives to accomplish positives**! Ah well did David say in Ps. 37:5 “*Commit your way to the LORD, Trust also in Him, And He shall bring it to pass.*”

Then we see David didn’t just sit back and say, “*Great God, I’ll just kick back and wait here until you return what my flesh lost.*” Yes the Lord fulfilled His promise, but He used David’s obedience to do so. Hey, Christian most often God’s promises to us don’t exclude our cooperation; rather they are an invitation to participation with Him as He empowers us and equips us to fulfill what He has promised. How does this work? Well we are trust God to secure His promises and then march off and serve as if it all depended upon us.

David didn’t just recover “*some, most or 99%*” but ***all*** that was carried away. In this we see that the Lord’s heart is that He wants to have back all that our sin and flesh has taken from us but that won’t be for our use no it will be to bless others (verse 23-31). God desires to bless us but can only do so when we desire to be a blessing! Remember that the Lord did this during a season of doubt and discouragement; this ought to serve as well as the Lord desires to do the same for you and me.

Vs. 19-20 Imagine what joy at recovering “*all*” that was lost was for these men. Your wife, sons and daughters all you owned and anything else that was lost to you. Hey Christian such is the promise of God to you and me as we turn to Him that He will according to Joel 2:25 “*restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten*”. Did you notice that? God will restore not only the produce but the years, which the locusts ate. You see locusts not only destroy the produce of one year, but they so completely eat all buds that the crop will not recover for some years. So God’s promises are that He will not only return the damaged year but give you even more fruitful years in the future as well.

So God gave David much more than what He promised as David received the spoil from the battle but also spoil beyond that which had been taken from Ziklag. Ah the grace of God which goes beyond “*not getting what we deserve*” (**MERCY**) beyond “*recovering what we have lost do to our own rebellion*” (**GRACE**). No Jesus has according to Eph. 1:3 “***has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ***”. Every thing from “*not getting what we deserve*” to “*every spiritual blessing*” has come to us by our Lord Jesus as He is “***able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think***” (Eph 3:20). Hey Christian the Son of God is never content with just reconciliation and restoration, No He wants to turn our losses into gains.

Why was David allowed to keep the spoil of the Amalekites when Saul was commanded not to? (1 Samuel 15:1-3)

1. David had no specific command from God to destroy all the spoil from the Amalekites, as Saul did.
2. David was recovering what the Amalekites had taken from others, though he recovered far beyond what was taken from his city.
3. David was not acting as the king of Israel, representing God’s people, as Saul was. So in this case, simply put, the rules were different for David.

The words “*This is David's spoil*”, was not claming personal wealth for himself but rather that David would see to its distribution. In other words this phrase suggested the response should we have to God as we come to Jesus without any compulsion and give Him everything we have, everything we are you see we are all His spoil. Again notice that David is bringing back not only what he lost but what others had lost as well thus we see him in verses 26-31 returning to those things ripped off by the flesh (Amalekites) as well. Hey Christian such is our joy and privilege to be doing according to 2 Cor. 5:19-20 “*the ministry of reconciliation*” by being “*committed to the word of reconciliation*”.

**III. Vs. 21-31 Finders’ keeper’s?**

Vs. 21-22 Based upon verses 9-10 when David was in swift pursuit of the Amalekites, 200 men, 1/3 of his army, could not continue on. So at the brook Besor they made camp and lightened the supply load from the 400 soldiers who would continue with David. So as David and the 400 soldiers returned to the 200 men who stayed by the supply camp there arose a dispute over the division of spoil. These 200 men apparently saw some of their own possessions among the spoils of battle, and they requested it back. But some of those 400 men who went to battle hadn’t a problem returning the 200 men’s families but their property was “***finder’s keeper’s loser’s weepers***” kind of a deal.

The text calls those fellows “*wicked and worthless men*” (*sons of the devil*) and the fact that they were some among David’s men raises some questions.

* 1. Was it David’s own self centered actions 16 months earlier that caused them to repeat what they have learned?
  2. Those fellows who protested this had lost all as did those 200 who had crashed by the brook Besor, so where is the empathy and compassion. Where is the love of the brethren?

It is an awful thing to watch how we who profess to have experienced God’s love for us demonstrate it to others. It has appeared to me that oft times the Lord allows me to go through some difficult circumstance so that I might be tender hearted towards the Lord as well as those poor souls who have suffered.

Vs. 23-24 The generosity of David bothered some of the fighting men who wanted to keep what rightfully belonged to others. Some of the 400 men mistakenly saw the victory as theirs but David rightfully concluded that it was the Lord’s victory, verse 23. In Matt. 10:8 Jesus said, “*Freely you have received, freely give*.”

There is an important spiritual principle here: The **supply lines** are just as vital as **the soldiers** and God will reward both “*soldiers*” and “*supporters*” equally. God insists that all who serve no matter in what capacity share equally in His abundant blessings. God’s heart for us is as Jesus shared in Luke 6:38 “*Give and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom.*”

Is that not cool to realize that God will reward the *hidden servant* with the same reward as *visible servant*? Hey Christian there are far more folks in the Church that serve invisibly, behind-the-scenes, choosing to support the more visible aspect of the God’s work. So what’s the difference between the “*wicked and worthless men*” and David?

1. The wicked and worthless men: Look at the spoil and say, “*We fought for this spoil and it is ours*.”
2. David (a man after God’s heart): Looks at the spoil and says, “*Look at what the Lord has given us*” verse 23. You see when we look at our time talent and treasure as belonging to the Lord will have no problem in wanting to share it. **This wasn’t David’s victory it was the Lord’s victory**.

It’s just as important that we have men staying back and guarding the stuff, as it is to have men out on the front line fighting. Those that are out on the front line fighting need the logistical support from those that are back keeping the stuff. There are those in missions today that **serve as senders** that stay by the stuff at home, and support those that go to the mission field. And in God’s economy, when we get to heaven, we will discover that we will be rewarded for our support of those missionaries that are out in the front lines. How cool is that when we get to heaven and people will come up to you and say, “*Hey, I’m one of your kids*!” “*I’m here because you stayed by the stuff, and supported those who went out!*”

Vs. 25 David realized that God had done to them what they had not deserved and to take it as such would be a grievous. Paul said in 1 Cor. 4:7 “*what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?*” David say’s who is going to listen to you in this matter? So the principle became a “*statute and an ordinance for Israel to this day*” (verse 25) thus it becomes something that you and I ought to practice today. What an encouragement this is for us who at times think that what they have and give to the Lord is of little value.

Vs. 26-31 David also sent presents from the spoil to every leader in the places that he and his men had hid during his wonderings. David went back to his burned out city to await the outcome of the battle between the Philistines and Israel and based upon 2 Sam 1: 1-2 he had only stayed three days until he got word that Saul was dead. He no doubt realized that his time among the Philistines had caused some bad feelings towards him among God’s people so he knows he must do whatever he can to put things right again, so he shares the spoils with Judah and sent spoil from the battle to more than 13 cities. Based upon 20 David took all of the cattle that were driven in front of them, not those that had belonged to them, but all the extra spoil called it “*David’s spoil*” making this spoil restitution. David’s diplomacy will pay off in the future as at first his reign is only over the tribe of Judah and he makes his home in Hebron but in the 5th chapter of 2nd Samuel the rest of the tribes of Israel will come to him and we are told that he was 30 when he started as king over Judah and 37 ½ when all of Israel accepted him as “*shepherd over God’s people Israel*”. (2 Sam. 5:1-5)

Ah but this is great picture of the Son of David as Jesus said of himself in Matt. 20:28 “*the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many*.” The Son of David, Jesus Christ, when He triumphed on the cross shared His spoil with us as we are told in Eph 4:7-8: *But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ’s gift. Therefore He says: “When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men.”* We are to be like Jesus has been to us; we are not greater than our Master. He has blessed us to be a blessing so lets get in the habit of doing what Rev 4:10-11 says we will be doing “*casting our crowns before His throne, saying You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power*”.

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

# Servant: 1 Samuel 18-31

**Chp. 28:3-31 From exile to exaltation**

**1 Samuel 31:1-13**

**“You’ll never take me alive, God”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 1-7 I did things my way**

**III. Vs. 8-13 What might have been**

**I. Intro.**

This chapter serves as the visible summation of what Saul had said verbally concerning his own life in 26:21 “*I have played the fool and erred exceedingly*.” You will recall Saul had been a national hero, people had sung that he had slain his 1000’s but you can see his decline after he had refused to obey the Lord and wipe out the Amalekites. Then David comes on the scene and the Lord blesses him as seeks to obey the Lord which causes envy and hatred towards David from Saul. The more Saul tried to achieve in the flesh the more he lost. And now we come to the sad and tragic end of a man who hardened his heart against the Lord and refused to return even unto death. Saul saw at the end of his life what the price of his rebellion was as three of his four sons and his army dies around him. Oswald Chambers makes an interesting observation when he says, “*The great enemy of the life of faith is not only sin, but right choice based upon our rights. When ever our rights become the deciding factor of our lives it dulls our hearts to God’s will,* ***good is always the enemy of the best!***” Saul had lived life not wanting to trust the Lord and instead sought away around the plan of God. He sought to live according to what seemed right in his own eyes and did so even at his own death. Proverb 14:12 would fit well over Saul’s tomb stone, “*There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.*”

**II. Vs. 1-7 I did things my way**

Vs. 1 If we were to look at a map we could see just how far the Philistines had advanced as they went all the way up into the Jezreel Valley almost up to the Sea of Galilee. This gave the Philistines a great man advantage as they have already successfully cut Saul and his army in half, they also had a superiority in weapons as in 2 Sam. 1:6 we are told that they had chariots which were highly effective on flat land.

Saul had been more interested in attacking David than he was defending the nation from the enemy and as such he was not prepared for the battle as we are told in 28:5 “*he was afraid, and his heart trembled greatly*”. In verse 28:19 Saul made things worse by seeking to hear God by going through a medium and this was the night before the battle. But in spite of Saul and the medium God spoke to Saul words of judgment through Samuel giving Saul yet another opportunity to get his heart right saying that “*tomorrow he would be with him*”, well “***tomorrow***” has come TODAY. There are a great many people like Saul that fail to realize that “***tomorrow***” is **now today** and the life of rebellion has come calling.

Apparently Saul and his army left their camp on Mount Gilboa and began to experience such a defeat that they retreated back to camp only to be caught and slaughtered along the way, remember that this was the battle that David and his men were going to be in. The first things that goes is his army, many had already defected to David, and others died on the hill Gilboa, still others deserted (verse 7). So Saul’s army was no match without Samuel’s guidance and David’s leadership and they were easily defeated.

Vs. 2 Having seen the battle turn in their favor the Philistines now turned their attention to the man who stood head and shoulders above the rest, Saul. Tragically we are told that Saul’s sons are caught in the cross fire as three of the four sons died in front of him . Jonathan the oldest and most loyal to David dies as we would expect him to fighting for his God, his country, and his father the king unto the very end. Based upon Jonathan’s words in 18:1-4 we know that if Jonathan had survived, he would have gladly yielded the throne to David, but this more than likely would not have been the case with other three sons. Jonathan, whose heart was knit together with David’s, will have to wait for the day when he will reign alongside David as well as the Son of David. Yes he would miss the glory of David’s Kingdom but we need not be sadden by this as he will not miss the greater glory of the Son of David’s kingdom. Hey dear saint, to fall in battle in this life for the honor and glory of our King fighting alongside our Father against the enemies of His kingdom is no big loss it is a big gain for us!

There is an interesting point as we look at what Saul named his four boys as it reveals his spiritual digression over time:

Jonathon: “***The gift of Jehovah***”

Abinadab: “***King of nobleness***”

Mechishua: “***King of help***”

Ishbosheth or Eshbaal: “***The shame of Baal***” to “***Baal’s man***”

God is merciful to the nation as well as to David in taking Saul’s sons in battle as he will be left only with Ishbosheth who will be propped up by his uncle Abner until he accuses him of sleeping with his father’s concubine and switches to David side. Eshbaal will be murdered both those who attempt to gain favor with David but David will exact the death penalty upon those who kill him, this will leave only the 5 year old crippled son of Jonathon whom he will take in as his own son.

Vs. 3 The fact that it says that the **archer*s*** (plural) hit Saul suggests to us that he had been struck by many arrows and mortally wounded. He must have realized at this moment that not only was the battle lost so too was his life. The Philistines were well known for abusing their enemy’s kings and nobles and so in front of him he probably watches them hack off the heads of his three boys. So fearing the same fate as his boys he seeks to take matters into his own hands.

Vs. 4-6 In yet another selfish act on his part he asks his armor bearer to kill him but he will not, so Saul falls on his own sword. Apparently Saul is still alive when an Amalekite is asked to cut of his head which sums up the life of Saul one that his flesh ruled and took his life (2 Sam 1:8-10).

Far too many people have passed into eternity with the words of that old movie “*Angels with dirty faces*” (replayed on “*Home Alone*”) on their breath, “*You’ll never take me alive, copper*”, only instead of “Copper” it’s God. Oh to God that people would let the Lord “***God take them alive***”! Saul had tried always to live life on his own terms and now at his death he was seeking to die on his own terms. In the words of the prophet “*Frank Sinatra*” Saul was singing to the very end that, “***I did things my way***!” Do you see a pattern here? Man when you and I seek to do life on our terms, “*Captain our own ship*” all that is going to happen is we will just run it a ground. Oh you have free will you can “*Do things your way*”, you can die with the words “*You’ll never take me alive, God*”. *God will let you have what you want and you can die apart from ever knowing His love, you and a myriads of others will spend eternity proclaiming how you defied God’s love, reject His repeated attempts to reach you and have thumbed your nose at truth but why*? **Saul has been in the process of killing himself for 20 years, and he has finally come to doing so himself**. There is no mention of prayer or repentance after watching his son’s die instead all he wants is to make sure that he won’t be tortured or humiliated so he seeks to take his own life.

Saul actions here show what lies at the root of suicide, selfishness, as this was the last act of a man who would not stand up to life. Suicide is the 9th leading cause of death in the U.S. and number 1 amongst youth as three people per hour take their own lives more then any other country in the world. Which goes to show you something very interesting it has **nothing to do with circumstances** as there are far more countries in the world that have far worse situations then we face in this country. What these statistics show us that the number one reason people commit suicide is the very reason Saul does here “*self centeredness*”.

I pray no one here is contemplating suicide as you don’t want to kill your body, your body got dressed and came here. You see people who are suicidal are killing the wrong part of themselves what we all need to do is kill the self centeredness in our lives. The lie of satan is that if you kill your body you end it all; you don’t end it all you just kill the clock and enter into eternity in a life that will keep a person in a never ending existence apart from God who alone can satisfy the longing of their hearts. Just ***kill the self seeking, self worshiping life*** and if you really want to end that part of you the bible says that we only need to “*reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord*.” (Rom. 6:11) Paul spoke of it this way in Gal 2:20 when he said, “*I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me*.” You see Paul killed his old self centered life when he trusted in Jesus and he recalled that daily.

Saul’s reign had begun with such promise and victory but ends with utter ruin. In the last breath of defiance and rebellion there is absence of any sign repentance or crying out to God. Saul had been told the day before that he would die (1 Samuel 28:19), yet he seems to be unprepared to meet God. Twenty years earlier God had pronounced judgment upon Saul and had given him those years to get his heart right perhaps Saul was like a good many people today who think that they have plenty of time to get their hearts right but we are told by Jesus in Matt 24:44 that “*you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him*.” And for all of those 20 years all that Saul did with his heart is harden it towards the things of God.

Vs. 7 The victory of the Philistines was so complete that even those on the other side of the Jordan fled in terror. Geographically with the Philistine occupying this territory they cut Israel in half, from east to west which would leave the entire nation vulnerable total complete occupation by the Philistines. In Israel’s terror to flee Jonathan’s five-year-old son named Mephibosheth (*idol breaker*) will be left permanently injured (2 Samuel 4:4), but David when he becomes King will continue to grant him favor for the rest of his life.   The fear of the nation at the destruction of their leader shows the danger in trusting in a man instead of God. Hey, Christian we need to be people would look to the Lord instead of stumbling ourselves when a leader fall’s. This also reinforces the truth of why the people God places in leadership over His people are under a higher standard. We see here how Saul’s habitual sin and hardened heart not only brought about his ruin it reached beyond affecting his immediate family to literally endangering the entire nation. This is why the New Testament proclaims a higher standard for leadership in God’s Church. In 1 Tim 3:2 Paul speaks to his protégé that they should be “*blameless*” which does not mean before God but before man. Simply put there ought not to be anything for people to grab a hold of specifically in the 13 areas he mentions. James warns like wise in 3:1 saying “*let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.*”

**III. Vs. 8-13 What might have been**

Vs. 8-10 Apparently when the Philistines came to loot the dead bodies was the day after Saul attempted to take his own life and had the Amalekite do so for him, which means that Saul still had time to have gotten his heart right before the Lord and in stead of doing so shortened his opportunity to do so. Beth Shan is at the north end of mount Gilboa just above the Jordan river, and across from Jabesh-Gilead. And it is here they pinned to the wall of their city the body of Saul after beheading him and taking his head back to the areas of Gath to put it in the temple of Dagon their god.

According to 1 Chron. 10:9 they took Saul’s body “*stripped him and took his head and his armor, and sent word throughout the land of the Philistines to proclaim the news in the temple of their idols and among the people*.” Saul’s death gave opportunity for the Philistines to disgrace Saul’s professed God. First, by cutting off Saul’s head was the way that they proclaimed in that culture that their god was superior to Saul’s. Second, the Philistines were letting their people know that their gods had given them a great victory over their chief enemy and that the worship of Dagon was greater then the worship of Jehovah. **If only Saul had stripped himself of the rags of his pride, placed God as his head and trusted in the Lord’s protection instead of his own none of this need to happen**.

Vs. 11-13 In a time of loss and tragedy like this God still has His valiant men to do His work, the men of Jabesh Gilead took down the bodies of Saul and his sons from their place of humiliation and gave them a proper burial. Saul is gone but God is going to rise up a man after His own heart, David. The army of Israel is has died and those who survived turn and ran but God still has His valiant men. You see saint God’s work is always bigger than any one man or any one Church He will always have His people ready to step up when others fall.

In an interesting twist we recall Saul’s first victory came as Jabesh Gilead had been held captive by the Ammonites (11:1-11). These fellows hadn’t forgotten this even though it had been 40 years so they risk their lives to take down Saul and his son’s bodies from the walls of Beth Shan to repay the kindness God showed them from the hand of Saul. They marched all night risked their lives to recover the bodies, to do so these valiant men had to cross the Jordan river and go through many miles of enemy territory to honor a man who had risked his life for theirs. They further honored Saul as they took his body back to their city to dispose of it properly and burry his bones under an evergreen tree where he use to hold court.

Even though Saul had forgotten what kind of man he could have been, they had not. Do you have any regrets? I wish to have none, I don’t want to look back over my stay here and say, “*Man, I wish I would have trusted the Lord in this area and just allowed Him to have His way in my life*.” Saul’s life is just a big waste, he could have been so used of God he had more talent and abilities then did David but he wanted to rule over his own heart instead being like David and allowing God to rule his heart. How about it saint do you want to live life with out any regrets, then let the Lord take you alive!

Many people wonder about cremation as a part of burial and here we see that it was a practice amongst the Jews. As far as I’m concerned, cremation will do in thirty minutes, what nature will do in thirty years. It’s only speeding up the process of nature reducing our body back to dust. The same 17 elements that are in dirt are the same 17 elements that are you and I and the bible says in Gen. 3:19 from, “*dust you are, And to dust you shall return*” so in my opinion it is a matter of choice and not scripture. Jesus said in Matt 10:28 “*do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell*.” Cremation of the body is a matter of choice, hey but if you stop and realize it so too is cremation of the soul? Solomon would say in Eccl. 12:7 “*the dust will return to the earth as it was, And the spirit will return to God who gave it.*”

So they took what remained of Saul’s ashes and buried them Jabesh which means “dry”. And such was the case with Saul’s life as he departed from the presence of the Lord from living water he drank for a time from stagnant water and in the end his life parched spiritually, oh how tragic a life lived in rebellion is. A person’s life is a vapor of missed opportunities of what could have been instead of awaiting a glorious graduation into His presence.

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

**V. Sovereign: 2 Samuel 1-24**

**1. Chp. 1-10 The King’s triumphs**

**2 Samuel 1:1-27**

**“How the mighty have fallen”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 1-16 Broken by the failure of others**

**III. Vs. 17-27 The song of the bow**

**I. Intro.**

1 and 2 Samuel is one book in the Hebrew Bible and 2nd Samuel begins with the death of Saul and ends 40 years later with the death of David. David’s dealing with the death of Saul most clearly illustrates the difference between the two. 2nd Samuel will go on to describe how God will use David to unite a nation, defeat the enemy, expand their boarders and prepare the nation for the temple of God. Hum, I can not find a better illustration of what you and I ought to be about, can you? We should be servants of God:

* ***Uniting people to God***
* ***Tarring down satan’s strongholds***
* ***Reclaiming ground that he has inhabited***
* ***Preparing people for God’s reign***

Saul tore things apart and God will use David to put them back together and so should we. Again we see that God uses imperfect people to accomplish His purposes and our sole responsibility is to be men and women who remember David’s words in psalm 51:1 “*A broken and a contrite heart; These, O God, You will not despise.*”

**II. Vs. 1-16 Broken by the failure of others**

Vs. 1-2 At the end of 1st Samuel we saw Saul’s army losing the battle against the Philistines on Mount Gilboa as his son’s and army were dying around him he remained defiant to the end. As we noted last week we are given some additional info as to how Saul came to die and this information came as David and his men were hanging out in Ziklag around what was left their homes realizing that God in spite of them had returned all to them and more besides.

Note the timing of the news from Amalekite of Saul’s death coincides with David enjoying his “*recovering all*” that had been taken and more beside. My point is what my reaction might have been. I could see myself very easily slipping into the attitude of self justification and seeing these two circumstances as vindication and that I was finally getting what I deserved. Amazingly David realizes at 30 years of age having been hounded by Saul for half his life that he is no better man than Saul. How is that possible? Well I suggest that the smoldering of Ziklag was just the location he needed to ensure a right heart. David was standing next to his own failure and had he gotten what he deserved he would have ended up as Saul. Latter on in 2 Sam. 22:1, 36 “*David spoke to the LORD the words of this song*” saying “*Your gentleness has made me great.*” Proverbs 24:17-18 says, “*Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, And do not let your heart be glad when he stumbles; Lest the LORD see it, and it displease Him, And He turn away His wrath from him.*” Except by the grace of God there goes us all! Thus we do not see rejoicing over another’s failures only sorrow at what might have been theirs had they only responded to God’s graciousness.

This fellow, an Amalekite, does what all would do in that culture to demonstrate grief; they would tear their clothes, put dirt on their heads. Further more he comes and in a show of humility falls to the ground before David which signifies that David is his master.

Vs. 3-4 The Bible records three separate and differing accounts of the event that surround Saul’s death:

1. 1 Sam. 31:1-13 Which we saw last week told us that Saul committed suicide.
2. 2 Sam. 1:1-10 Tells us that he was not dead and that an Amalekite came by to save him further agony.
3. 1 Chron. 10:14 Tells us that God killed him for his rebellion and for seeking the witch at Endor.

So which is it? Well it appears all can be correct as Saul was mortally wounded by the Philistine archers, sought to do himself and would have died of his self inflected wound when the Amalekite killed him at his request all of which was a judgment for his rebellion for not killing the Amalekites and for seeking the witch at Endor.

David was eager to hear what had happened in the battle and so the Amalekite tells him how he was the fellow who brought down Saul perhaps trying to get something ought of the deal. Man is that ever like the flesh isn’t it always trying to get something, claim something for its self boasting of its righteousness but all that we brag about as coming from ourselves is just a big waste and in the end is death. But David is not interested in a side show his interest is in knowing what happened in the battle. I believe that there are several reasons for David’s interest:

1. First was his **love of Jonathan** who he knew was in the battle.
2. Next, (*and I believe this is bore out by David’s reactions*), was his love for Saul. Saul? Wasn’t Saul the fellow who made David miserable for over 20 years? Yep, but in an amazing work of God in David’s heart we see that David never saw Saul as his enemy even though Saul saw David as his. What pray tell allowed David to have such a heart? Well I can only suggest from personal experience that at least one of the deciding factors was the self realization of his own frailty and depravity. Paul the apostle would write to Timothy in 1 Tim 1:15 “*Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners--of whom I am the worst*”, **that verse always causes me to realize the truth that as far as personal knowledge of any other individual I’m the worst sinner I’ve ever known**.
3. Finally there was perhaps a realization that he should have been there with his people and country. Instead David almost found himself fighting against those that he loved. It is not a good practice to draw insight from silence but I can’t help but wonder in light of David and Achish the king of the Philistines statements concerning David’s prowess as a soldier (28:2, 29:5-6) what the outcome might have been had he fought with Israel against the Philistines, so perhaps there was a sense of responsibility at the outcome.

Five times in this chapter the word “***fallen***” appears and it adequately describes the life of Saul as a fallen leader. It was Saul’s pride and refusal to repent that brought him down from a man that was “*head and shoulders*” above the people to a man who was **fallen**.

Vs. 5-8 This Amalekite (*a typology of the flesh*) is rewarded but not the way he was expecting. The flesh is always out to secure rewards from its behavior, always trying to achieve accolades for its deeds but there is only one way to reward our flesh and that is seeing to it that it dies. In 1 Chron 16:22 David wrote a song about this saying “*Do not touch My anointed ones, And do My prophets no harm*”, so this fellow is rewarded with what was coming his way.

It is interesting position that we are in with regards to those that God has called to serve as we are to see to it that they stick to the truth concerning what they teach and how they behave but we are not to be involved in bringing them down and especially not involved in rejoicing over their demise. No, our attitude is best summed up here in David’s and that is to be ***grieving over their fall.*** Even with the crown in his hand and the royal jewelry in the other the Amalekite was thinking that he could trade up on the deal and get something better for taking matters in his own hand and returning the kingdom to David. But David said, “*Who do you think you are, taking a life of one of God’s servants for your own betterment*”. **This Amalekites action is far too familiar to me of my own flesh who verbally slays another to look good before others**. There is far too much of that going on in the body of Christ. You know, taking others down so we can strip them of their crown and importance to make ourselves look better. It’s not impressive and we ought to remember this story as ***he who slays another will eventually come to the same fate***. I think it wise for us to consider the words of Paul who wrote to the Corinthians in 1 Cor. 10:12-13 “*Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful*”.

Vs. 9-16 This Amalekite fellow must have been pretty surprised at the response of David and his men and he was about to get his reward. You see he would have thought that after all Saul had put David and his men through they would not have been morning Saul’s loss instead he’d be gloating over his demise. The Amalekite makes a wrong assumption that because David was Saul’s enemy continually that Saul would occupy the same position in David’s heart.

There are a great many people who scum to making enemies of those who call us their enemies but David keeps his heart pure in this regard and his action caused others to be broken over the waste of Saul’s life rather then say, “*Serves him right*”. David and his men were not against Saul and his men, no they were on God’s side and any life that fails to come to the fullness of what God has is cause for brokenness and weeping not rejoicing. In mind there is nothing that shows the strength of the Lord in a person’s heart more than when we do not act towards others as they have towards us. Jesus said in Matt. 5:44-45 that we are to “*love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven*”. The only vindication that day was upon the Amalekite and not upon Saul or the nation and in doing so while in Philistine land this would have been viewed as an act of treason.

David shows us the way to handle our flesh that wants to boast and brag at the expense of others; man you got to kill it mortify that part of our lives. May this serve as a warning for you and me. How so? Well Saul lost his calling because he refused to deal with those pesky Amalekites in his life instead he offered Samuel excuses for his keeping them around in his life. He saint there is no excuse for our old flesh, it’s never going to get any better its corrupted, it just flat out stinks. Hey, pastor if I can’t excuse my sin or explain my sin what can I do with it? Well you can’t do any thing as there is **no excuse only a cure** and that is to agree with God about it, call it what it is and let Him take care of it and live free in Christ!

**III. Vs. 17-27 The song of the bow**

Vs. 17-18 The book of Jasher (*Book of Just Ones*) was probably a kind of national sacred song-book, a collection of songs and praise of the heroes of Israel. We have only two samples from this sacred song-book this one here and back in Joshua 10:12-13 where the words of Joshua at the crisis of the battle of Beth-horon are recorded. Why all this talk about the “*Song of the Bow*”? Well back in 1 Sam. 13:19 we are told that the Philistines made sure that “*there was no blacksmith to be found throughout all the land of Israel, for the Philistines said, Lest the Hebrews make swords or spears.*” So Saul and Jonathan taught the Israelites to be archers and the irony is that Saul is shot by that which he had some 30 years earlier had trained Israel to fight with. During this song David addresses:

* The people of Israel in verses 19-20,
* The mountains of Gilboa in verse 21,
* He praises Saul and Jonathan inverses 22-27.

Handel’s “*Saul*” came from David’s “*Song of the Bow*” and is still used today in the “*Dead March*” at many a funeral. But David writes this song for the nation to sing at the memorial for Saul and Jonathan, a sort of tribute song. It was a song that they were to teach their children and as such had a twofold purpose:

1. It was part of the memorial for Saul and Jonathan as this was a time of grief.
2. It was also a time of instruction for the nation.

You see Saul was shot by archers and Jonathan was himself a noted archer so that is why this song’s title was the “*Song of the Bow*”. Hey Christian, if we aren’t careful and start to think of ourselves standing “***head and shoulders***” above the rest then we to will be an easy target for the enemy’s arrows. Ah but if we humble serve the Lord, then though we may be slain in battle we will be mighty for His glory.

This song has a four part harmony:

1. It shows **what our hearts ought to be towards those who miss treat us**. Jesus told His disciples in Matt. 5:44-45 that we should “*love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven*”. So this song is a practical demonstration of doing so, training the children to see the best in others.
2. Second, it would **remind the children of remaining a friend even if the other person wishes not to remain yours**. So much of our friendships are based upon what others response is towards us. In other words we are their friend because they are ours but Jesus reminded His followers in verse 46 “*if you love those who love you, what reward have you?*”
3. I suggest to you that those children would also be reminded of **the value of a life lived for God and the price of one wasted on self.** Yes, they would sing of Saul’s pleasant life (verse 23) but they would also be reminded of how he squandered that life in pursuit of the very person who wrote the song.
4. Finally, this song speaks of the important truth of the set backs of our lives. What? You see **David composes a song speaking to the nation to get back to the battle and remember the lessons of your defeat so as not to repeat them**. The tendency of our flesh is to wallow in despair and to stay depressed in the “*would of’s, should of’s and could of’s*” but that’s just a pride thing move on and serve the Lord in renewed strength and determination to live and operate in the “*power of His might*” not our own.

Vs. 19-27 David refers to Saul and Jonathan as:

1. *The beauty of Israel* (Vs. 19)
2. He wants no one to rejoice in the death of Saul (Vs. 20)
3. He wants everyone to mourn, even the mountains and fields (Vs. 21)
4. He praises Saul as a mighty warrior (Vs. 21-22)
5. He compliments the personality and loyalty of Saul (Vs. 23)
6. He calls Israel to mourning, and praises what Saul has done good for Israel (Vs. 24)
7. He mourns for Jonathan, and remembers their deep and committed friendship (Vs. 26) Solomon described such love referring to marriage in Song of Solomon as “*love is as strong as death*” and his friendship with Jonathan was that strong.

**The stanzas of the song are quite revealing**:

Vs. 19-20 David reminds them not to rejoice in the destruction of those who are God’s people even though you maybe at odds with them rather choose to remind yourself of the good things about their lives. Why? Well because you will only cause the world to rejoice at the destruction of God’s people.

Vs. 21 David says, that the mountain where Saul died was to “*no dew nor rain upon you, Nor fields of offerings. For the shield of the mighty is cast away there! The shield of Saul, not anointed with oil*.” Today you will find Mount Gilboa barren because of this very curse. You see when Israel came back into the land they took this quite literally as they were reforesting the land with tress but they didn’t plant any on Mount Gilboa and the area gets very little rain so you won’t see any trees there today.

What David wrote in his song was that ***the Hill of Gilboa was to remind them of the fruitless life, the wasted life when it is lived after the flesh***. Further more David wrote of the “*The shield of Saul, not anointed with oil*”, he was speaking of the practice of anointing the shield with oil so that the arrows would glance of instead of sticking. Now that is interesting as David is reminding all that ***Saul fell slain by the enemies arrows because he had forsaken God’s power of protection, God’s anointing in his life***.

Vs. 22-27 David recalls how God had used those two men as the hammer against the enemy and how those who had lived in Israel were blessed, thus they will be missed. Amazingly David wrote this song of brokenness not only for Jonathan a great friend but also for a man who chased him over the country side making causing him to live in caves.

Think of this as it is the best way to handle those who are verbal ***spear chucker’s***. You see David choose to remember the positives about their lives, their pleasantness, strength in battle, and the blessings of their leadership economically. David took a long look into what was good about Saul and chose not remember what was bad. Philippians 1:10 reminds us “*approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ*”. Then in chapter 2:3 Paul says that we should do “*nothing be through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.*”

Finally David considered his friendship with Jonathan as being of greater value then his wives, now perhaps that’s because David had wives instead of a wife? I can tell you that after almost 27 years that Donna has been “*very pleasant to me; her love to me is wonderful, Surpassing the love of any other*.” Now, that ought to make up for the comment last week about her cremation!

You know what’s missing in this song? Well there is no mention of bitterness from his experience while Saul was alive, indeed David could well have uttered the words of Joseph in Gen. 50:20 “*you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive.*”

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

**V. Sovereign: 2 Samuel 1-24**

**1. Chp. 1-10 The King’s triumphs**

**2 Samuel 2:1-32**

**“Spirit Led verses Flesh Driven”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 1-7 Led by God**

**III. Vs. 8-17 My army is better than yours**

**IV. Vs. 18-32 The foolishness of the flesh**

**I. Intro.**

Over 15 years have passed since David first heard the word of the Lord through Samuel in chapter 16:12 saying, “*Arise, anoint him; for this is the one*!” If you recall I told you that there was **three things God must do to a person whom he will use**, two of which David received that very day, “***Calling and Anointing***”, those my friend come as gifts they require nothing from us they are simply given. The third? Well it is what causes the other two be useful, “***Brokenness***”. A.W. Towzer put it so will when he wrote, “*Those whom God will use greatly He must wound deeply!*” Hey saint, faint not if you find your self in a season like David did being wounded deeply, as in do season our great God will turn your weeping into a season of fruitfulness. The key to David’s success is being led by God, inquiring of Him and not assuming that he knew what way God was leading. Corrie Ten Boom once asked, “*Is prayer your steering wheel, or just your spare tire?*” That’s a great question to ask ourselves don’t you think? Most people don’t use prayer to guide them, to steer them to where God wants them to be. No they use prayer when they feel flat or have had a blow out. I’m convinced I’d have a lot less flats and blow outs in my life if I’d just come and let the Lord drive me away from those things that puncture my life in the first place, how about you?

**II. Vs. 1-7 Led by God**

Vs. 1-2 David is now poised to enter into the promise God made to him some 15 to 20 years ago; but he does not rush in blindly; instead he carefully seeks the Lord. You will recall that David had spent 16 months backslidden in the land of the Philistines. The tragedy is that it took him going through this to bring him back to the goodness of God.

There is something I’m looking forward to **understanding about myself and that is why** even as a believer do **I resist the proven Love of our Lord**? Here is how the scenario usually unfolds in my life, I resist the word of God and He lets me go then I fail and make a mess of things then I blame God for it.

David asks two very important questions in verse 1:

a. ***Should I go***?

b. ***And where should I go***?

I look back now as eight months have passed when I was launched out on this amazing journey leaving my Ur and my family to a land known only by my God with a promise He would show me. And *those two questions were ones that I* ***had not*** *asked prior but rather told God my answers*. Ah but on that day in the first of October I asked those two questions next to my smoldering ruins, my Ziklag. Oh blessed God who not only restores all of my wonderings and more besides but leads me out of Ziklag back to His side.

Hey, saint there is a lot of talk today about you and I being “*purpose driven*” hear me out, personally over the last 25 years I have had very little problem with being “*purpose driven*” but I have always struggled with being “*Spirit led*”! David didn’t struggle with being “*purpose driven*” it was being “*Spirit led*” that he battled with. Listen to James in chapter 4:13-15 when he admonishes us saying, “*Come now, you who say, Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit"; whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that*.”

And what of that city Hebron? Hebron was the capital city of the time for the tribe of Judah it was a priestly city but even in this David does not assume to know where the Lord would place him. Take it from me Christian it is a good thing to seek the Lord for “***deployment***” and not for *appointments* our *employment.* Further more Hebron was the city given to the patriarchs “*Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*” thus Hebron was a city that comes to symbolize God’s promises being fulfilled. Ah but God never led those fellows to that city until they stopped trying to get their own their on their own! Hey saint, **could it be that we fail to move into God’s glorious promises in our lives because we continue to do so in our own power** rather than saying, “*Shall I go up... Where shall I go up*?” Here’s where I’m going with this; ***God wants to lead us into His promises for our lives and we continue trying to obtain them***. We want them ***our way***, on ***our terms***, in ***our time frame*** but then they would not be a gift rather they would be something wrought of the flesh and God wants just to bless us not be a debtor to us.

Vs. 3-4 David did not seize the throne the elders of Judah approach him. Because he didn’t take matters in his own hands he can forever know that it was not by his own effort that he has become king but rather by the Lord who in His timing has brought about what He promised. David didn’t say to God, “*Hey God, tell you what you make me king and I’ll go where you want me to go.*” You see he sought the Lord if he should go and where he should go with **no deals, no expectations he simply left those up to God**. So it is in verse 4 that we read that “*the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah*.”

My point is that there are a great many of us that have the cart before the horse as we place our order with God and tell Him that we will follow Him after He does what we ask of Him. Hey, saint we are suppose to be the servants and He is the master and David has the right order as he asks the Lord if he should go and where he should go and makes no demands. When you and I do it this way seeking His will for our lives then God is free to bless us as it’s no longer a formula to success.

Did you realize here that it has taken the people of Judah a better part of 15 years to recognize what God was doing and that He had called and anointed David as their king? There is a real important lesson in this saint and that is not to waste those years in bitterness against people who aren’t noticing what God is doing in your life. Don’t get ahead of the Lord! **Hey saint the joy in the journey isn’t just in the destination, (*listen up now*) no the joy in the journey is who you get to travel with**! Hebron was located 25 miles from Ziklag and for the first time in over 10 years David and his men were no longer fugitives. This is the second time of David’s three times that he will be anointed as king (Samuel, here and 71/2 years later by Israel).

Now you may be tempted to think what does that matter, David could have achieved by self effort much earlier then what it took the Lord to accomplish in 15 – 20 years. **We may be able to outwardly obtain what the Lord has promised us but the question is can we maintain our enjoyment of it**? **You see Abraham and Sarah are great examples of giving birth to what the Lord promised earlier than the Lord had planed**. **Only that which is gained by the Lord in His timing is what He will honor.** Again notice that David sought the Lord and not a title, as it isn’t until after he obeys the Lord and takes all to Hebron that “*the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king*” (verse 4). There are far more that make the outcome a condition on our obedience and that my friend makes as the Lord and God the servant!

Vs. 5-7 Well David does just what the Lord tells his to do and brings his army with him. It has taken 15 years of refinement for David to come to the place to realize that he wants to be only **where** the Lord wants him to be **when** the Lord wants Him to be there. ***Imagine being in the place where you have the winning lottery pick and asking the Lord should I cash it in?***

The first act of David as King is to thank those “*valiant men*” of “*Jabesh Gilead*”. And you will recall that they were the ones who risked all too properly dispose of Saul and son’s bodies, is that not amazing? Why would David care? Well I suggest to you that David cared more for the honor and glory of God and His reputation in the world and not what folks thought of him. David invites the men of Jabesh Gilead to join him but they would not and instead would follow Abner. These men as valiant as they were allowed their loyalty to Saul to blind their hearts to God’s will for the nation and instead sided with “Baal’s man”, they had a good heart right idea but didn’t allow the Lord to do the leading. Many folks today do the same thing, “*Hey, saint* ***Jesus will be Lord of all or He won’t be Lord at all***”.

Now even though David’s own tribe hadn’t recognized the anointing and calling on his life David does not want to do the same and when he hears of the valiant men of Jabesh Gilead his first act as king is to send and official proclamation honoring their efforts in recovering the body of Saul and disposing of his body properly. I suggest to you that this illustrates the work that God had accomplished in David’s life, how so? Well, God had taken David down a road where he had been unappreciated and he has come out the other side sensitive towards others who are going through like circumstances. Typically Saul’ tribe Benjamin and David’s tribe Judah linked together so David offers his hand out to these fellows who happened to be from the same tribe as Saul and says, “*Oh by the way I’ve been made king by my tribe Judah and if you want to I’d be honored to serve folks like you as well*.” In showing compassion for those valiant men who took Sauls body off the wall David is demonstrating that others are more important then himself. You can observe how people respond to others and it will usually be a good indicator to see if they are being led by the spirit or driven by the flesh.

**III. Vs. 8-17 My army is better than yours**

Vs. 8-17 Abner and Joab get together both are generals Abner is the cousin of Saul and Joab is the nephew of David and they get tighter and want to have a contest a “winner take all” kind of deal and all came out dead. Instead of Abner doing the right thing he decides to make a contest out of it.

Abner was Saul’s cousin and personal body guard which raises the question why is he still alive? This isn’t the first time we see Abner **not** doing his job as in chapter 26:14 David Abishai crept into camp of 3000 commandos and took Saul’s spear and jug of water with Abner sleeping right next to Saul causing David to question his talents as body guard. I mean we are told that Abner is the commander of Saul's army, but wonder what kind of general he was as we never see the fellow winning a battle. There are far to many servants of our King who like the title but forget the responsibility, sometimes God’s children forget who’s the king and what kingdom their in, if you know what I mean. It was Abner who brought David to Saul after he killed Goliath but it was also Abner who with Saul pursued David and his men some 15 years. So when Saul died Abner found himself out of a job as David’s Nephew Joab already had the position of general so he decides to try to stay in power by supporting Saul’s remaining son but even that took 5 years as the nation of Israel wasn’t into Saul’s son and he made “Mahanaim” Israel’s capital. Abner seems to be quite political as he sees David has been made king of Judah perhaps he heard about the offer David made to folks of Jabesh Gilead and thinks, “*Man I better act quick because if I don’t I’ll be out of a job.*” But Abner has got a bit of a problem as he is down to just one son Ishbosheth who isn’t much of a fighter or leader even though he is about 10 years older then David. How do we know that he is not a fighter? Well why was he not beside his father or brothers? So really what you have is a puppet king and Israel is really being led by the general Abner who is pulling all the strings.

Looking at these two generals shows me that God wants the leaders He chooses to serve and not to be lord’s over people but rather to lead them by example to shepherd the flock and it is something the two opposing generals don’t understand. The scene shows us three types of leaders:

1. **Abner**: Who knows how to manipulate others a bully who controls others for their own benefit.
2. **Ishbosheth**: Who is in power simply because they have connections.
3. **David**: Who is called anointed and tried under fire.

The sad truth is even in the body of Christ we see at times that the **wrong person** is placed in the **right position**.

Joab and Abner are cut from the same cloth they are both ruthless men the kind of guys you don’t want as neighbors. In fact David upon his death bed would leave instructions to have Joab executed by Solomon after he died for all of his brutality. To illustrate the kind of men these two fellows were told of the two men and their armies meeting by “*the pool of Gibeon”* for a gladiator fight to the death. So we have these two generals sacrificing 12 each of their men in a fight to the death just in some morbid contest for their entertainment.

I’m not a big fan of this stuff, you got all sorts of barbaric things going on today as fellows get into rings and folks pay big bucks to see blood spilled, afraid we are not much removed form Abner and Joab. At the end of the first quarter all 24 are dead and apparently neither side much carried for the way the contest was had ended up as they didn’t want a draw. They even name the place the “*field of sharp swords*”, you talk about stupid. It kind of seems as though the stands cleared and we end up in a full out bench brawl according to verse 30-31 the final score was Joab 360 to Abner 20 as David’s men killed 15 to 1 Abner’s as his rebellion caused the death 360 men. But who really won? I can tell you that those 20 didn’t win as they were just entertainment for two generals with mucho problems.

**IV. Vs. 18-32 The foolishness of the flesh**

Vs. 18-32 When Abner declared Esh-Baal king he was making a declaration of war against David, he obviously felt that he had the superior army and set out to prove it in a contest 23 miles north of Gibeon in a large cistern. The end result of this stupidity is that these two families are going to be at odds with each other and we see what is behind all this gang warfare. Some awhile back two idiots got together to see who was the bigger idiot and killed the other idiot who now gets some other fellows to go get even for being stupid in the first place and this just goes on and on. The Hatfield’s and the McCoy’s had their feud over the price of a pig and in the end hundreds died. *Zeruiah* was David’s sister (2 Chronicles 2:16), It is clear that Abner kills Asahel in self defense; but his question (*How then could I face your brother Joab*) will indeed haunt him and in an revenge killing cost him his life.

Asahel is a track star and he is hot on the heels of Joab who tells him, “*Hey buddy you don’t want to catch me so you better just turn aside*.” So to save his own life Abner sticks the spear into the ground and lets Asahel impale himself. Now, they come to where Asahel is dead and they have a moment of silence but the two remaining brothers take up the chase but Abner’s buddies take his side and now we have a stand off until Abner, “*Hey, man were all brothers here what say we all just cool it before any more get hurt*.” So the contest is called and Abner and his gang of Benjamites had back home while Joab and his gang burry Asahel. Abner requests the cease-fire, and both parties agree in hopes of avoiding a long, bloody civil war. The great difference in casualties (360 to 20) shows that God’s hand is definitely upon David in this entire struggle. The increasing strength of David and increasing weakness of Saul’s house did not begin when Saul died; it began when God first chose David and withdrew His Spirit from Saul (1 Samuel 16:13-14).

So in a brief amount of time as king has used diplomacy and restraint while his army has plunged the nation close to civil war. Yet we David will wait 71/2 years and still does not push his agenda he would have to wait this time. What this chapter illustrates is the importance of being Spirit led verses being flesh driven and it is an important lesson for us to receive.

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

**V. Sovereign: 2 Samuel 1-24**

**1. Chp. 1-10 The King’s triumphs**

**2 Samuel 3:1-21**

**“Search for Significance”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 1-5 Padding our stats**

**III. Vs. 6-11 What’s yours is mine**

**IV. Vs. 12-21 I’m on your side**

**I. Intro.**

The first verse sets the tone for the section we will be examining this day as we are told that, “*there was a long war between the house of Saul and the house of David. But David grew stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul grew weaker and weaker*.” This truth was God’s plan, it was what He had ordained but the insecurity of this truth was not part of what the Lord desired. So much of our identities are in what we do and how others perceive us instead of how the Lord sees us. Consider this:

1. David took this season of growing stronger and stronger to demonstrate as much by adding wives and children to his family. (Insecurity)
2. Abner and Ishbosheth demonstrated the house of Saul growing weaker and weaker by infighting and making deals in an attempt to divert God’s plan. (Insecurity)

On either end “David’s or the house of Saul” ***both were trying to bolster their images in a search for significance***. It matters not if you are on the *strong side* or the *weak side* as **apart from seeing ourselves in the Lord we will be on an unending quest to be seen as important.** Hey, who cares if others see you as important when God has already through out eternity declared you so important and precious to Him that He sent His son to die for you!

Further more this section shows the continual battle that rages on in our life the battle that Paul spoke of in Gal. 5:17 when he said, “*the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.*” When we think of this battle we think in terms of sin but the battle begins way before we become entrapped by the things our flesh lusts after. It begins when we begin to search for our significance outside of our relationship with Christ. Yes there is battle that is going on but rest assured He who has begun a good work in you will see it thru the day of completion.

**II. Vs. 1-5 Padding our stats**

Vs. 1The phrase “*there was a long war*” reveal a continual civil war between David and Israel rather than an occasional clash. Irregardless of the war David was growing stronger while Saul’s house was growing weaker. Based upon the concluding verses two things transpired during this time:

1. David as well was busy increasing his kingdom by adding to his harem and they intern gave birth to six sons.
2. Abner was strengthening his hold upon his hand upon Ishbosheth’s throne.

What I find interesting is that irregardless of what both sides were trying to accomplish God was nonetheless causing what He promised to come to pass, “*David grew stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul grew weaker and weaker.*” David’s additions to his family and Abner’s attempt to “*strengthening his hold on the house of Saul*” were merely cosmetic God was at work. My point? Why do we continue in the foolish pursuit of trying to achieve our significance apart from the Lord, when He is going to have His way anyway? You and I ought not to waste another moment in pursuing our significance apart from seeing ourselves in the beloved.

Vs. 2-5 Consider what God is accomplishing in David: He is now ruler over the Keilah (1 Sam. 23:1) and over Ziphites (1 Sam. 23:19) both of whom betrayed him into the hands of Saul and now the Lord has placed him as their king. My point? There is an obvious blessing upon David and his reign as he continues to increase while Saul decreases even in areas where year’s earlier people had rejected him. So why does David seek to add to his wives? In one word I can answer that question, **insecurity**! Is that not amazing? Man we humans are the most insecure of all of God’s creations, blessings, positions, popularity all leave wanting more because we are never rich enough, thin enough, etc.

The outcome of David’s insecurity is he wants more wives two, (Ahinoam and Abigail), are just not enough and four more Maacah, Haggith, Abital**,** and Eglah (heifer). If you are going to show your self as being a powerful king you have to have a big harem. Never mind that that David is being disobedient to God’s word in Deut. 17:17 where they were told not to add wives like the pagan nations do. God did not say, “*And 17 of you will be one flesh*”. Polygamy started back in Gen. 4:19 with a descendant of Cain, Lamech and slipped into Israel’s practice. This was a common practice among the pagan nations to take many wives as treaties were put in place between nations by a king sending a daughter to become a part of the wives of another king. It would insure peace because a king of one nation would be married to the daughter of another which would establish a treaty with the nation because you wouldn’t want to break the treaty as it may cause the death of your daughter.

Hey did you notice that is says here that David married “*Maacah, the daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur*”. Her name means “*oppression*” she is the daughter of Talmai and was part of the Canaanites by way of the Geshurites. So? Well in 1 Sam. chapter 27: 8 we were told that David and his men made a raid upon the Geshurites and that he did not leave any alive in fear that they would tell Achish. So apparently he left her alive and now seeks her as his wife. From this relationship came Absalom and his sister Tamar (in fact it was this region that Absalom fled after killing his half brother who raped his sister). Is it any wonder that the Bible tells us not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers? (2 Cor. 6:14)

By these six wives he had six sons, three of whom were to be a grief to him, (Amnon, Absalom, and Adonijah.)

* Amnon will rape his half-sister and was murdered by his half-brother Absalom.
* Chileab is also called Daniel (1 Chronicles 3:1) most likely died young or was ungodly as he is not mentioned again.
* Absalom after killing his half-brother leads a civil war against his father David.
* Adonijah tries to seize the throne from David and then again from Solomon. He tries to take one of David’s concubines and ends up being executed for his arrogance.
* Shephatiah and Ithream either died young or were ungodly as they are only mentioned once again in the ancestry of David.

The results of David’s committing “*mass marriage*” in having all these wives all at once is that it just doesn’t work for the family. Yet there are those up the hill who look at the Bible and justify their own “*mass marriages*” saying that it’s in the Bible. Hey just because the Bible records something doesn’t mean that God is for it and we are to do it. Now, it is common since that “Mass marriage” is not a positive thing, I mean think about the sibling rivalry having 6 sons each from different wives!

With that said God’s not into “*serial marriage*” either! “*Serial marriage*”? Yeh, that’s where you marry one and get rid of that one for a newer model and every so many years trade one in for another. Paul told Timothy to look for those fellows that were “*one woman men*” and that is what God’s word would have us follow. Henry Ford was once asked what the key to his automotive success was and he quipped, “*Simple, stick to one model*” personally I can’t risk trading in as I’ve already found the best and I’m certain I wouldn’t find another that would put up with me.

Even more astonishing to me is that according to 2 Sam 5:13-16 David will take even more wives and concubines and will have **11 more sons born to him**. Solomon is going to pick up this same habit and carry it to an extreme. You see we are told in 1 Kings 11:3 that Solomon had “*seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines; and his wives turned away his heart*.” We may tempted to say that we aren’t near as bad as David was but **God does not grade on the curve He grades on the cross** and truth be told we may have not done all the rotten stuff David did but neither have we slain giants or worshipped God with such passion. You see the amazing truth is God uses imperfect people and it is His greatness that works thru us. I suppose one of the most difficult moments we will face is when we see our Lord face to face and we shall see all of what we could have experienced of Him if we would only have surrendered fully to Him. So much of our lives are spent on holding back parts of our lives and I’m convinced that all that is going to be seen as ripping myself off when I’m in His presence.

**III. Vs. 6-11 What’s yours is mine**

Vs. 6-7 Judah had come to anoint David in Hebron but the rest of the nation was in a wait and see pattern with the majority siding with Abner’s Ishbosheth but even with all of Abner’s help Saul’s dynasty is losing strength as David’s is increasing which only served to caused Abner to come out even more from the puppet king he backed. Simply put “Baal’s man” just couldn’t do the job he was not gifted, or strong enough to stand up as king. Abner is the kind of guy that always wanted to be on the winning side and clearly he had thought he was because he had a larger more seasoned army, however his defeat at the hands of David’s men under Joab proved other wise. So now he hopes David’s kindness will save his own skin and secure a position in David’s staff. The deceased king’s harem belonged to his successor and to even ask for one of those gals was considered an act of high treason. Now I rather think this principal applies for us pastors as well as the church belongs to no one but Jesus, and it is treason to “take” the bride of Christ as if it were our own possession.

As I said when a man took another man’s concubine it was like saying that you were filling their shoes and Ishbosheth accuses Abner of literally doing so. Hey saint we don’t have to worry about filling another man’s shoes, no we are to just put our feet one step at a time in the steps of our Lord? Paul wrote to the Colossians in 2:10-12 we should “*walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.*” Further more he urged the Corinthian’s in 11:1 to “*Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ*.” **We don’t have big shoes to fill just big shoe prints to follow**!

Vs. 8-11 Abner’s response leads us to believe that the accusation was false. Though it is possible that as he was going after Saul’s concubine to strengthening his hold on the house of Saul it is far more likely that because of Abner’s increasing power Ishbosheth felt insecure and invented this accusation as grounds for getting rid of Abner. So though he was being wrongly accused in reality he was guilty of filling Saul’s shoes as Ishbosheth couldn’t fit into them. Rizpah means “*Hot Coal*” so either she was **hot** looking or she was **hard as coal** depending upon your perspective. Abner is so upset that he says, “*Who do you think you’re talking to here?* *Man I put you into your position and you’re after me over this hot coal?*” “*You’re just a Man of shame, and the only reason you’re king is because I placed you there and have kept you in this position*”. And it was true as the military was on Abner’s side and Ishbosheth was just a puppet king. So Abner promises Ishbosheth that he is going to back David and stop fighting against David and join him and poor Ishbosheth can’t even say a word back as he is afraid of him. This is the first of ten times that we read of the phrase “*throne of David*” and in Isa. 9:6-7 it will take on Messianic importance as it relates to Jesus. Again you see two men in search of their significance trying to find where they fit in and knocking each other around to establish dominance and self importance.

Now if Abner knew that David was God’s choice for king (verse 9), why did he fight against him before this? Abner is a good example of those of us who know things to be true but we don’t live as if they were true. **Abner did the right thing in joining David’s side but he did it for the wrong reason**. Instead of joining David because Ishbosheth offended him personally, he should have joined David because he knew that David was God’s choice to be king. **It is not enough for us to do the right thing we must do so for the right reason Christian**.

**IV. Vs. 12-21 I’m on your side**

Vs. 12-16 Abner comes in to strike a deal with David and David accepts with only one revision and that is he wants Michal the daughter of Saul that he purchased at the price of a 100 Philistine foreskins. You will recall that he received Michal in marriage (1 Samuel 17:26-28), but Saul took her away to spite David (1 Samuel 25:44). Now the one thing David doesn’t need is another wife as he already has 6 of them; this is an ego thing as well as a political thing as having here back would be uniting the house of Saul with himself. If I was David I might have said, “*Hey look I’ll make a deal with you but only if you don’t bring Michal back!*”, as she was a pain. Perhaps Paltiel is weeping for joy and not sorrow?

So why did David request Michal back?

1. She was still his wife, even though she had been given to Paltiel 10 years earlier.
2. It was good diplomacy to unite the two warring factions.
3. By claiming Michal David was claiming Saul’s kingdom.
4. By having Abner bring Michal to David it proved that Abner could deliver on his promise of bringing with him the rest of the nation.

Abner acts as if David and God needed his help in accomplishing God’s promises and in so receiving Abner David acts as if he was the bridge to the two kingdoms. So there is poor Paltiel following after Abner and Michal crying at losing her and Abner is a real tough guy as he turns around and says, “*Go home*” and Paltiel does. David may have cared for Michal at one time but had been apart from her for some 15 years but it was his reputation was in jeopardy if he let her stay with the man that loved her, people might say that he wasn’t tough enough to stand up as king. I’m not saying he had no right to her as his wife as Saul had taken her from him but it wasn’t about his rights it was all about appearance and that is a fool hardy reason to do things.

Vs. 17-21 Abner’s own words should have provided a conviction in his heart for his lack of action to the prophetic word he quotes to Israel. Abner, after striking a deal with David, goes back to Israel and tells them, “*In times past you wanted David now is your opportunity, now then go and do it*”. Abner and twenty of them, no doubt, the leaders of the other tribes to come to David to see what he thinks of the idea and he throws them a feast and a deal must have been struck as Abner leaves to go tell the rest of Israel. Now it is an interest fact that this word came from Abner to Israel instead of from David to Israel even though he was the king. Further more we know that even though this word came from Abner to Israel and a deal was struck David would not reign over Israel until several years later. Simply put what man orchestrated God did not honor until they were not coursed but rather submitted freely. So based upon the delay in making David their king it illustrates **the weakness in proclaiming truth to others is always found in not living by it ourselves**!

Yet with that said saint, this is a good word for you and me to reunite with the “***Son of David***” not by coercion but rather out of His love for us. I think that we Christians’ need to regularly revive our relationship with the Lord; you know quit making excuses and procrastinating and “*go return*”. **We want to see the Lord move in the hearts of the unsaved but we fail to realize that He must first move in the hearts of the saved**, in fact you won’t see a move in the hearts of the unsaved until we follow the council of 1 Chron. 7:14 as we are told that if we who are, “*called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land*.” Ah now we come down to the reason why we search out side of our Lord for our significance as the truth is known but sadly not obeyed! How about it Christian are we like Israel towards their king? Do we know the truth about Him yet remain lukewarm and reluctant to embrace Him as our King over every area of our lives?

David never moved an inch until Abner’s invitation came. In light of the fact that the house of David and the house of Saul had been at war for many years yet we see David making a feast for the man that rejected him even after Saul was gone reveals to us that David had no agenda, weather it is Abner, Keilah or Ziphites. Simply put David was a peace maker and we as are called to be peace makers as well. Though this was wise and generous of David towards a former adversary and A lesser man might not have forgiven Abner for leading an army against him it was none the less something that God would not honor until the people of Israel responded on their own.

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

**V. Sovereign: 2 Samuel 1-24**

**1. Chp. 1-10 The King’s triumphs**

**2 Samuel 3:22-39**

**“Beyond the Gates of His Grace”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 22-30 Grace for me, judgment for you**

**III. Vs. 31-39 The Lord shall repay**

**I. Intro.**

So far in 2nd Samuel looking at David’s reign as king we have taken note for our own application of ***the difference of being Spirit Led and flesh driven.*** From there we moved to the application from the text ***of our struggle for significance*** apart from seeing our self’s in the Lord. Now we come to the tragic murder of Abner at the hand of Joab and his brother Abishai which speaks to our hearts about grace. Grace? Yes, as ***Abner is lured away from it and Joab thinks that he ought to be the only one that deserves it***. And it is in this tale that we again marvel at the similarities in our own lives.

1. How easy it is to be lured from the protection that only God’s grace affords. Christian there is no protection for us outside of our Refuge, one step from His banner of love and we like Abner will fall just outside its gates.
2. And in the case of Joab he reminds us of the duplicity of our hearts which has made its home inside His grace but does not afford others of like passions equal residence.

I’m afraid that we like these two have much to learn about God’s grace!

**II. Vs. 22-30 Grace for me, judgment for you**

Vs. 22-23 The beginning phrase “*at that moment*” reminds us of the timing of the events which were about to transpire. You see David’s popularity was growing but he was still in Judah and just on the verge of reigning in Israel as the deal brokered by Abner would lead to not only a smooth transition but a peaceful one as well but such was not to be the case for Abner or the uniting of the nation. Joab was lurking in the back ground waiting for the opportune time to avenge the death of his brother Asahel at the hands of Joab and he didn’t care at what price.

David had sent Joab and his army on a raid to secure wealth for his new kingdom and upon his return he had heard that David and provided a feast for Abner and sent him away in peace. The reaction of Joab to David is reminiscent to the elder brother of the prodigal son to his father at the acceptance and grace given to the rebellious son. How about it do we feel slighted by the grace expounded upon others forgetting what God has so richly lavished upon us? Joab had become imprisoned by bitterness, hatred and the quest for revenge and **gone from his view was the king’s grace extended towards him who was equally responsible for starting a civil war which cost him his brother**.

Hey Christian listen up, the death of Abner by the hand of Joab caused the end to the movement to make David the king over all the land as it would be several more years until David would be inaugurated king over all of Israel. Further more David demotes Joab from being a general and stripped him from his rank. It will be five years later when David came to Jerusalem to establish the city as the center for the kingdom, David said, “*Whatever man will go into the city and deliver the city shall be the general over my armies*” and Joab was the guy who went in by way of the spring of Gihon which was the water source for the city of Jerusalem. So Joab was reappointed as general over David’s army. (1 Chron. 11) What is my point? ***Only this, “Service which is not being birthed and bathed in His grace is not only “deadly” but slows the blessing God so wants to give us***.***”***

Vs. 24-25 Joab was major bummed at David as he had no use for Abner and as he had been out on a raid which brought much spoil felt that David did him a disservice by not keeping Abner around as a reward for his work. Hey, we too are out raiding enemy lands for our King, is our service “grace” motivated or do we expect our King to give us what we want for our deeds like Joab? Now remember Joab is the nephew of David but David is still the king and does not show him respect. And even though his comments about Abner have truth too them but his actions are not justified by Abner’s sinful behavior, as two wrongs don’t make a right.

To further bolster his position Joab accuses Abner of being a spy for Ishbosheth with his ultimate aim of taking down David and the newly formed kingdom. Clearly Joab hadn’t received the comforting words he hoped to hear from David as he engineers a deceptive plan to kill Abner one in which David was not aware of. Joab was accusing Abner of being a double-agent for Ishbosheth and he was particularly angry that David let Abner go without arresting or killing him. But there are two other reasons for Joab’s frustration at David’s acceptance of Abner.

1. According to Num. 35 Joab saw himself as the “*The avenger of blood*” for the death of Asahel his brother and wanted to avenges his death and David could have arrested and held Abner so that he could of killed him.
2. Joab was chief general for David’s army thus Abner was a rival who had a lot of top-level military experience and might be able to replace Joab as David’s chief military assistant.

Vs. 26-27 In verse 25 Joab had maligned Abner’s motivate by saying it was nothing more than deception and then turns around and deceives the very one he just accused of deception. Have you ever noticed that our sins always look for worse on someone else? The word privately is also rendered “peaceably” which suggests that Joab was using deception to order to lure Abner out of Hebron and based upon verse 30 Joab and *Abishai* were waiting to ambush Abner when they lured him from the city of Hebron. This made Joab’s execution of Abner premeditated murder. How so? Well according to Joshua 20:7 Hebron was a city of refuge where the matter could have gotten a fair hearing but Joab did not want to risk peace when revenge was what his heart was after. You see God through Joshua had set up ***cities of refuge*** a sort of self imposed trial and then prison by which after seven years a person who unintentionally or in self defense killed another could go free. The idea was if the person would not live under these guide lines then perhaps they weren’t as innocent as they insisted. God had Joshua set up six cities by which (one of which was Hebron) and it was understood that a “*blood avenger*” (usually the closest able body relative) had every legal right to avenge the death of a loved one if they went outside the city. But as long as they remained in that city those 7 years they were off limits and afterwards they were set free in the year of Jubilee, and were free to go back to their homes and families without any fear of retaliation.

So Joab made sure that Abner was killed outside the gate of Hebron and acting as Asahel’s blood avenger Joab knew that Abner had a rightful claim of self-defense and was protected inside the city of Hebron, but he wanted him dead anyway so he lured him outside the city. Joab may have justified his actions by saying, “*I’m doing this to defend and honor David my king*.” But the truth is sin and treachery is never honoring anyone but our own self centered interests. The flesh is always seeking justification for its actions and by far the worst type of deception is self deception where we believe that our actions are God approved and honoring to Jesus when in truth they only bring disgrace upon his name.

Hey saint we too have our “*city of refuge*” (**our rock of salvation our Adullam**) where we have run too from the crimes that we have committed and it is Jesus. Ah but out side the gates awaits the “*blood avenger*” the enemy of our souls, who is waiting for you and I. The tragic truth is that there are far too many professing believers living outside the gate and as such they have left the protection of His loving arms. Some a lured outside by the enemy of our souls like Abner by Joab. And like Abner they think they are strong warriors, wise leaders and nothing will happen if they wonder out into the world beyond the gates of His grace, but Abner died as a “*a fool dies*” (verse 33). Hey Christian listen up **don’t see how far you can step outside of the gates of His grace, instead dwell deep inside the expanse of His protection, stop walking the fence to see how close you can live to the world and still be a Christian.** All you are doing is ripping yourself off and endangering your well being. Jesus said of His beloved people in Luke 13:34 “O *Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you were not willing*!”

Further more these two brothers knew the wishes of their king but put their own sinful desires above the interests of the king as well as the peaceable transition for the kingdom. The truth of the matter was that Asahel was in pursuit of Abner on the ill advised aftermath of a brutal contest in which ***Joab*** fully agreed too. So he was not murdered but was the victim of Joab’s and Abner’s stupidity. Oh how difficult it is for you and I to accept our own responsibility for our actions we want someone else to punish instead of being brokenhearted and repenting. Further more Abner pleaded with Asahel to stop and in fact defended himself. Joab was nothing if not precise as according to 2:23 his brother Asahel was killed by the blunt end of the spear that went through his stomach and so Abner was stab in his stomach or as the KJ version records both were stabbed “*under the fifth rib*” so Joab made sure it was *“under the fifth rib for a under the fifth rib*”. So the fifth rib is an “*an eye for an eye*” mentality.

Vs. 28-30 David, upon hearing the news of Abner’s death disclaims any knowledge of what his two nephews had done and names the plagues that Moses had warned of would befall all who disobeyed God’s word (Deut. 28: 25-29). Although David had nothing to do with this murder he is concerned with the precedent Joab’s action would set has he did not want his administration to have a reputation for brutality especially as it related towards Saul’s former kingdom as it would make it difficult for David to win the rest of Israel over to his side.

This curse upon Joab and his family went like this, “*May Joab’s family not fail to have someone that has their skin fall off, crippled die of a horrible disease. May they die by their own hand be killed tragically or starve to death*.” With this David removes Joab for a few years until he needs some brave person to go into Jerusalem to unlock the city gates and Joab volunteers.

Joab’s life is a great illustration of what often causes people to ponder and question the Lord. You see people wonder how a person whom God has clearly used in the lives of others can be actively engaged in living a compromised life, contrary to the truths they proclaimed. It seems people error on two extremes:

1. They tend to ***invalidate*** all that God accomplished through a person when they find out that the person whom God has used was not living by the very truth they proclaimed.
2. Second they tend to ***defend*** all that the instrument God chooses to use does by saying, “*Hey, look at all the good that they did for God clearly He is ok with the way they lived their life*.”

Hey saint the truth is ***God is so great that He does not need perfect people in order to use them for His purpose.*** You see **God uses us in spite of us not because of us** but that in no way gives us a free pass to live our lives apart from submitting ourselves to His Word. **Think of it like this**: “A doctor could well proclaim the benefits of diet and exercise and its positives influences upon our physical well being and all the while himself not practicing what he preaches. His truth concerning what he shared is ***no less true*** even if it is **compromised** by his failure to apply it in his life.” Paul spoke of such in 1 Cor. 9:26-27 saying of himself; “*I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified*.” Disqualified from what? Well not from his salvation but rather from two things:

1. **Disqualified**, *most importantly*, from reaping personally the benefits of the truth to which he taught others.
2. **Disqualified**, from being able to further teach the truths of obedience as many would no longer believe what you said because of your failure to live it in your own life.

Based upon verse 39 *(the sons of Zeruiah, are too harsh for me*) David’s nephews had never been easy to deal with, so he said nothing, not because he agreed but because he desired to heal a nation more then defend his rights. David saw through Joab’s excuses and realized that they were nothing more then self justification for a personal vendetta.

**III. Vs. 31-39 The Lord shall repay**

Vs. 31-34 David commanded that the men under Joab’s control tear their garments weep and show the sign s of repentance worthy of a great man. Joab and Abishai were part of the precession so most people probably didn’t realize that they were the murders. Yet with all of this David never put those two on trial for murder, yet he writes a eulogy saying that Abner was never a prisoner of war and died by a foolish act, by men whom he trusted. Notice that David does not protest Abner’s death but rather the means by which it was accomplished as there was no trial no concern for the facts. No, Joab who was just as wicked as he lured him out side the city of refuge, outside of the protection in which dwelling in the city of Hebron afforded him and killed him vengefully.

Vs. 35-39 David further honored Abner by burring him in the royal city of Hebron and by calling him a prince of a man, then he appoints Abner’s son Jaasiel as an officer over Benjamin. David would leave the judgment of his two nephews up to God.

The people saw David’s grief over Abner’s death even though Abner got what was coming to him. David realized (as could we all) that if he “*got what was coming to him*” then we all would die outside of our Hebron lured away and enticed because we thought ourselves impervious to the things of the enemy. Peter (the rock) said to Jesus, “*Even if all are made to stumble because of You, I will never be made to stumble*.” Yet it was that very night that a little girl put him to flight. Paul said in Gal. 6:1 that “*if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.*”

Abner had spent most of his life thinking he was on the right side but in reality was fighting against God’s clear choice. Finally in the end he realizes that he is on the wrong side and joins the right side but for all the wrong reasons.

Listen up now; even though Abner does the right thing for all the wrong reason God nonetheless used it to save the followers Ishbosheth of further harm as they join David in serving God. Hey, saint just because God uses you doesn’t mean that our heart is in the right place. I have spoken to far too many Christian’s over the years that wave the success of their ministry as that which proves that they are alright with God. ***The success of our service never qualifies those that He justifies. His work on our character is the only visible demonstration of His justification, not our anything***.

David did not want his kingdom established by violence, he believed that vengeance belongs to the Lord and wanted God to establish his kingdom not his own actions. This whole affair was a mess, but it would not be the first or the last mess of David’s kingdom. In some regard, “*messes*” are inevitable as proverbs 14:4 says “*Where no oxen are, the trough is clean; but much increase comes by the strength of an ox*”. Thus David’s words point out a truth that there are situations too tough for us to handle and we just need to turn them over the Lord. Our power is limited and we need to rest in the fact that the Lord will take care of it. It is the “*Let the Lord do His best and you commit to rest in His best!*”

When David was dying he told Solomon*,* “*do not let his gray hair go down to the grave in peace.*” (2 Kings 2:5-6) So Joab was actually put to death by Solomon when Solomon took over the kingdom. This is a good lesson when someone is wound up in our lives and we can’t seem to separate ourselves from their wickedness as we can say as David did, “*the Lord shall repay the evildoer according to their wickedness*”

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

**V. Sovereign: 2 Samuel 1-24**

**1. Chp. 1-10 The King’s triumphs**

**2 Samuel 4:1-12**

“**How to Keep Your Head On**”

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 1-7 Losing your heart**

**III. Vs. 8-12 Losing your head**

**I. Intro.**

The fourth chapter again is a chapter that involves political intrigue and assassinations. It seems that what David did not want as king has taken on a life of its own as Abner was murdered outside the gates of Hebron by David’s Nephews and not Ishbosheth is murdered by his own country men while asleep. The world is a sinful place full of people who are (**pardon the pun**) out to “*get even*” or “*get a-head*” but how are we to maintain ours while those around us are losing theirs? I suggest to you that this chapter offers us some practical insights into not only not losing our heads but making sure that we don’t take off others. Oswald Chambers wrote, “*Wherever God sends us, He will guard our lives. Our personal property and possessions are to be a matter of indifference to us, and our hold on those things should be very loose. In essence, Jesus says, I will guard your life, but if you try to guard it yourself, you will remove yourself from My deliverance*.” Jesus said as much in Luke 17:33 “***Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it***.” As we now venture through these 12 verses you will notice the relevance of Jesus’ words.

**II. Vs. 1-7 Losing your heart**

Vs. 1 Of primary importance is the timing of the events. Notice that before Ishbosheth never lost his head before he lost his heart (verse 1, 7). Since the object for you and I is not to lose our heart this sequence of events gives us a great key in not losing our heads. Here is what I mean, **the battle of the head is always won or lost at the battle of the heart**. Consider the words of Jesus in Matt. 12:35, “*For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things*.”

Ok now the events to the lose of heart:

1. We have David who no doubt had been bummed out by the practices of his nephews as they took out their vengeances upon Abner. So what does Abner’s murder have to do with Ishbosheth losing heart? Well it caused a ripple effect as it had been Abner that was the driving force in keeping him in power and all of Israel knew it. More importantly these two brothers knew it and most likely expected a quick invasion by David and took action thinking that this was going to help save lives especially their own.
2. It is a safe bet to assume that Ishbosheth knew of Abner’s resolve to broker a deal with David by which he was to lose the kingdom, so why did he lose heart after Abner is dead? Well the death of Saul meant that there would be a new king and the way the world handled this was that everyone in the previous kings family would have to go as well and the way they did that was by killing all of them so that there would be no future cue attempts. Seeing that Abner was dead caused Ishbosheth to lose heart because it appears that Abner’s death meant that the deal was not accepted and that David was going to take the kingdom by force. Poor Ishbosheth can you imagine what must have been going trough his mind when he hears that the guy that propped him up and placed him in the position has been killed while brokering a deal that would cause you to lose your kingdom. This couldn’t have been interpreted as a good thing.
3. Finally, we have verse four The story of Jonathon’s now 12 year old son who was the son of David’s best friend that was also a choice to be king, even though he was crippled he would have been favored by David over Ishbosheth.

In all of this I see two great truths for us:

* 1. **Allow the Lord to raise you up**: If God had placed Ishbosheth as king why lose heart and be troubled? When we take the reigns of our own lives and things don’t work out then there is always that sinking feeling in our lives that we are losing control. Hey saint look out at the mountains, which of those did you or I create? Here the words of God’s reproof of Job in 41:10-11 “***Who then is able to stand against Me? Who has preceded Me, that I should pay him? Everything under heaven is Mine***.” And in light of this Job’s response in 42:2-3 “*I know that You can do everything, And that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You. You asked, 'Who is this who hides counsel without knowledge?' Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand, Things too wonderful for me, which I did not know.*” You and I having nothing to lose heart over now matter what the circumstance if where we find ourselves is right where God has placed us and not of our own doing.
  2. **Don’t trust in man**: Ishbosheth had trusted in a man to gain his position, so when the man was gone he knew his position would be soon gone. Hey saint it is always a foolish thing to trust in man to prop us up, whether that is in mans schemes or support. If we are in the place we are based upon whom we have surrounded ourselves with, or by any other means of human ingenuity then we have good reason to “lose heart”. Ah again I remind you of David whom had inquired of the Lord while still in Ziklag and asked, “*Shall I go and where shall I go*”? ***We can have the greatest confidence only when we have no confidence in ourselves or any one else and every confidence in the Lord!***

Vs. 2-3 The text is very explicit concerning these two brothers Bay-anna and Ray-cob. I have a habit of looking into these things when they are in the text as I believe that at very least they may offer color on the passage we are studying. Here is what we know of these two men that were captains of Israel’s army and were the sons of Rimmon a Beerothite, children of Benjamin. These brothers were from a town that was not originally part of the allocation to the tribe of Benjamin and in fact was not part of any tribe “*a sort of renegade town*” that later on became part of the tribe of Benjamin. So these Beerothites came from one of the cities of the Canaanites and according to Jos. 9:3 were descendants of those who succeeded in ***deceiving*** Israel, and a making a covenant with them. Further more they seem never to be content with where they are as verse 3 informs us that they “*fled to Gittaim and have been sojourners there until this day*.” The name Gittaim means “double wine press” and again kind of gives me a picture of these fellows. They are renegade, deceiving party boys. The kind of guy’s who are “*always trying to get a head*” at the expense of someone else’s, if you know what I mean?

**How does this fit into the application of not losing our head**?

* Well first we saw the truth of **the best way to not lose your head is to not lose your heart**.
* Second, we see the truth that **the best way not to lose your head is to not to trust in man but God as far as getting a head**.
* Thirdly (*and that is where we are now*) **the best way to not lose your head is to make sure your not seeking someone else’s**.

Vs. 4 Hey saint consider the story surrounding Mephibosheth (Me-fib-o-sheth) also called *Meribbaal* (Baal's fighter) in 1 Chron 8:34. The facts concerning him and his handicap are recorded for us in verse 4 where we are told that at five years of age his nurse dropped the boy permanently leaving him a cripple while fleeing after hearing the news of Saul and Jonathon’s death. What does this story have to do with Ishbosheth losing heart and then his head? As mentioned Mephibosheth was the last male descendant of Saul and with that he was the only other person who had a legal claim to his grandfather’s throne event though at this time he was only 12 years old and crippled. My point? Consider these two men and their handicaps:

* 1. Ishbosheth was handicapped because of a heart issue and having confidence in man.
  2. Ah but Mephibosheth was weak because of circumstances beyond his control, (*his age and because of injury that came from the misfortunes of a good intention*.) My point? There are a lot of folks who may be whole of body but crippled in heart which is a far worse condition to overcome. We won’t meet up with him again until the 9th chapter then again in the 16th, 19th and 21st , where we see that he is granted a special dispensation of grace by David as David becomes a surrogate father and he eats at David’s table the rest of his life.

Ishbosheth loses his heart and then his head but Mephibosheth discovers the glorious truth that we are week God’s is strong on our behalf.

Vs. 5-7 Ishbosheth had no real loyalty among his troops as they were only loyal to him when they thought he was strong. The two brothers “*son of oppression*” and “*horseman*” came all the way into the house and escaped without any opposition which reveals the state of Israel under the leadership of Ishbosheth. These two brothers were of the same tribe as Ishbosheth was again reveals the popularity if the puppet king as well as a character flaw. To take a noon nap was not uncommon but to do so with out a guard reveals a lazy heart. It was necessary in the minds of Baanah and Rechab as his head would prove their deed.

As bad as the murder of Abner was the murder of Ishbosheth was even worse as his only crime was being Saul’s son. He had not broken any law, injured no person and wasn’t even given the opportunity to defend himself as he was killed while taking a nap by his own country men.

There are several things which aggravated the guilt of those wicked men?

1. Ish-bosheth was an innocent man therefore neither of them had any grounds to kill him.
2. Second, he was in his own house, which was his sanctuary, and none but the worst of men would disturb him there.
3. Finally he was on his bed, resting in the heat of the day, and so free from suspicion that he was not even attended by his guards, nor had he his doors secured. To take the life of such a man, whom also they professed to hold as their king was the worst type of treachery.

It never ceases to amaze me how twist the thinking of men can become when we seek to govern our own lives apart from submitting to the Lord we all would be sneaking around, pretending to be someone we aren’t to “get ahead”.

**III. Vs. 8-12 Losing your head**

Vs. 8 These two brothers didn’t even show respect to his corpse as they took of his head and then claimed that they had done this act in obedience to God’s word. It is a bad thing to do what these men have done but a far worse thing to then claim God as the One who is authored their actions. “**Yeh, I stole, lied, manipulated and murdered because God told me to**”. They are following their father but it is not our Father as Jesus said in John 8:44 “*You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.*”

So many want to use God to justify ones actions when his clear teaching in the word makes no such claims.

So these two brothers pretend to be delivering wheat while Ishbosheth was taking a nap and kill him as they thought that this might get them some where in David’s reign and to prove that they had done what they claimed that took with them Ishbosheth head.

Vs. 9-12 These two brothers made two false assumptions:

1. They made the mistake thinking that because David was Saul’s enemy that Saul’s son would be his.
2. They claimed that the Lord was behind their actions and that He approved of their deed and all they had acted on were Lord’s express orders. Perhaps they were not aware of the song that David composed for Jonathon and Saul in 2 Sam 1:17-27.

So David answered Rechab and Baanah his brother, the sons of Rimmon, and said to them, “*As the LORD lives, who has redeemed my soul out of all adversity*.” You see David had learned an important lesson and that is not to take things in his own hands. “*I don’t need man. I’ve got the Lord working and I’m on His side*.”

Rechab and Baanah thought David would be pleased to see the severed head of Ishbosheth. Back in 1 Sam 24:20-22 David had pledged his David's loyalty to God and the house of Saul by promising to preserve Saul's family and descendants by saying he would not “*destroy Saul’s name from his father's house*.” David had carried the head of Goliath as a trophy of God’s work through him to slay an enemy but David knew that Saul and his descendants were not his enemies.

This is a difficult thing for us Christians to understand is it not? Sometimes those in the body of Christ become at odds with each other and a battle ensues. Hey saint be careful that you don’t take the head off of a brother or a sister in Christ because it makes a poor display on your trophy case! “*Ewe what’s that in your cabinet? Oh that’s my brother and fellow servant in Christ, you see we were in disagreement over an area and I won so I took his head off to display to everybody how right I was and how wrong he was!*” Ishbosheth was not the Lord’s anointed, he was not on the same level as God had placed David but David didn’t see Ishbosheth as his problem and if God had allowed him to reign then God could remove with out anybody taking off his head.

David had never one time broken God’s commandment not to kill to advance his own position and the Lord had still advanced him to be king when it was time. He did not want to be involved in trying to accomplish God’s will in his strength. Look at this carefully as **David did not accept these two fellows evil deed, even though it seemed to serve a good purpose**, (unifying Israel under David's reign as king.) **No servant of God can ever consent to do evil that some good may come of it**. *Jesus while on earth never accepted the testimony of demons even though the truth they said about Him was true*. These men were not soldiers fighting together with him; they were murderers who deserved just punishment. David’s enemy was injustice and he was not a respecter of persons even if the act that was done personally benefited him and his reign as king.

Perhaps these brothers justified their action by saying, “*There no avenger for Mephibosheth so will do the poor fellow a favor and take out his uncle since he can’t do it himself.*” An you know what they probably took his head and stuffed it into a wheat sack to carry it out and would have gotten away with the crime had they not came to David.

So he has the two brothers executed cutting off their hands and feet. According to Deut. 21:22-23 we are told that “*If a man has committed a sin deserving of death, and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, his body shall not remain overnight on the tree, but you shall surely bury him that day, so that you do not defile the land which the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance; for he who is hanged is accursed of God*.” So to do what David was the ultimate humiliation, yet David took Ishbosheth’s body and buries it with Abner’s in Hebron.

These guys thought that they were going to be rewarded by David and they were according to their deeds and David told them that their reward was going to be the same as what the Amalekite’s was who claimed he had killed Saul, death. You see these two fellows were trying to well “get ahead” at the expense of another’s. There are far too many folks doing this sort of thing coming in stealthy pretending to be something they are to take off someone’s head in order that they might get ahead. ***The moral of the story is that if you take a head to get ahead you will end up losing yours*** .

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

**V. Sovereign: 2 Samuel 1-24**

**1. Chp. 1-10 The King’s triumphs**

**2 Samuel 5:1-12**

“**Keep Going and Growing**”

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 1-3a Three marks of God’s anointing**

**III. Vs. 3b- 6 Three anointings of God’s servants**

**IV. Vs. 7-12 Three things God’s anointed need to remember**

**I. Intro.**

For the moment we leave behind the assassinations and political intrigue that we have seen the last two weeks to examine David’s final coronation as king over a united nation. In Deut. 17:14-20 prior to Israel having a king God knew that one day they would follow after the nations of the world so He gave Moses specific qualifications for Israel’s kings and the most important one is given us in verse 15 where He says that the king over them should be one“***whom the LORD your God chooses***”. Now you think that ought to be an obvious thing but it wasn’t. You see Saul had been the people’s choice and even after his obvious failure Samuel was still evaluating Jesse’s sons on outward appearance where the Lord was looking at the heart. It seems to me that most people tend to look for those who stand head and shoulders above other men but God wanted a shepherd boy who he would equip to lead the people, not rule over them.

**II. Vs. 1-3a Three marks of God’s anointing**

Vs. 1-3 The placing of the word “*Then*” tells us that after 20 years of refinement (David is now 37 years of age) “***then***” all Israel came to do what God said would happen while at his fathers house. You will recall that God had anointed him when Samuel came down to the house of Jesse and anointed David, the king. We often think that God is lagging behind us and is slack concerning His promises but the truth is it takes us a long time to catch up with Him. God is so far ahead of us and it takes us time to catch up with His plan and purposes for our lives. So we have recorded for us that years later the nation finally catches up with God even though He had already anointed David the king, and now they anoint him as king over all Israel. Oh, dear saint are you waiting for the “***then***” in your life? Know this **you will one day hear that word but not before He has broken you so that all you want is more of Him**.

This the first time since the book of Joshua that all of the tribes of Israel have been united together. In first Chron. 12:23-40 we are given, “*the numbers of the divisions that were equipped for war, and came to David at Hebron to turn over the kingdom of Saul to him, according to the word of the LORD*”, over **three hundred forty thousand men of war came untied to see David become their king**. All of this happens as representatives from the varying tribes come to David some five years after the death of Ishbosheth. It took five years for the nation to realize that they needed to heed God’s clear choice. Hey, Christian God’s timing means that we will not need to strive over what He has promised as all will see what God wants to do. There was a great celebration as we are told in 1 Chronicles 12:38-40 that they were with David three days, eating and drinking. . . “*for there was joy in Israel*”. Man is that not a great picture for you and I as our hearts are no longer divided and we come to let the Son of David have complete reign over us there is great joy as we feast with Him.

There are a great many folks like Israel that only turned to the Son of David when their previous choice was taken away. How about it dear saint do we only give Him the right to rule the throne of our hearts when other choices have crumbled? I find this an indictment against my own heart at times that I often won’t surrender to Him until He has allowed me to get to the place that He is my only choice! How much better for our hearts to not wait until whom or what we had first chosen to rule our hearts have been killed off. Though most of us would fit that category the Lord takes us into His kingdom as if He was not our only choice but rather our first choice.

Based upon the words in these three verses **the nation of Israel recognized David as king for three reasons**. These three characteristics still ought to be visible marks of God’s appointment to lead:

1. Vs. 1 “*Indeed we are your bone and your flesh*”: **Belong to God's people**. United to God’s people in ***heritage and heart***, a person who is ruled by God themselves and has a deep seated love for God’s people, or if you will them must be those that first love God and second love His people.
2. Vs. 2a “*In time past, when Saul was king over us, you were the one who led Israel out and brought them in*”: **Demonstrate capability to lead.** Even though Saul was the king, David continued to demonstrate his willingness to lay down his life for the people; he did not sit upon a throne in some far off land he was out in front of the people leading them always putting their needs before his own.
3. Vs. 2b “*The LORD said to you, 'You shall shepherd My people Israel, and be ruler over Israel*”: **A clear and evident call from God.** There was an obvious calling and anointing upon David to be king to which time and circumstances bore witness of that truth.

Hey, saint there are those today placed over God’s people who are nothing more then hirelings out to fleece the flock of God for their own egos, who say “*I’m called to pastor*”, yet when the best interest of the sheep comes into play they continue to demonstrate that the flock is their to meet their needs instead of them being there to meet the needs of God’s people. Perhaps God’s people would be better served if they looked not to seminaries as the qualifying marks but rather these things listed before us.

**III. Vs. 3b- 6 Three anointings of God’s servants**

Vs. 3b David was anointed three times and each of them speak to the way in which God raises His servants up:

1. 1 Sam. 16:13: This was the time where Samuel went before Jesse and he paraded seven of his boy’s, big strong strapping boy’s, before him but God had not called any of those. Then Samuel asked you got any others? “*Oh yeh there is little what’s his name out there taking care of the sheep*!” And God said this is the one I have chosen. So what is it we learn about this anointing? Well namely this **that before God ever anoints a servant over any other area He first calls you to serve over your family**. Paul wrote to Timothy concerning the selection of leadership in 1 Tim 3:5 saying, “*if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God*)” Can you imagine how hard this was for David, I mean he was the youngest brother who was saddled with the lowest job “*shepherd*” while they were all in the army. So David had to prove himself in his own home before his own family, so to should the people God chooses to day. Hey saint, if the person who is standing before you isn’t proving they are anointed before their own family, faithfully serving them then they are clearly not anointed and are disqualified from serving on a larger scale.
2. 2 Sam. 2:4: Here is where we saw **David anointed before his own tribe,** **Judah**. So what does this anointing reveal to us? Well, this speaks of the anointing before the community in which a person lives and works. Now remember that this anointing took some 15 years after the first one which tells us that in God’s time there is a greater responsibility. In Acts 6:3 when they selected the first deacons they had to be men of “*good reputation*” amongst the brethren. So **the second area in which God anoints His people to serve is seen in and around the community in which we live and work**. So with out a “*good reputation*” on their job in their neighborhood or around the Church, well then a person is not demonstrating that they have been anointed by God and therefore are not qualified to serve.
3. 2 Sam. 5:3 Finally we have before us David’s anointing king over the entire nation which took place 5 years after the death of Ishbosheth, which again suggests that some time took place of God’s continual work on David’s heart which was visible to all even those who for what ever reason hadn’t seen his anointing prior. What was it that made this anointing more visible? Well I believe it was how David handled his detractors “*Saul, Abner and Ishbosheth*” as he was broken hearted over their demise. **I suggest to you that David had grown to the place where God could raise him up because he didn’t seek being raised up instead he only wanted to sit at the Lords feet**. When we care more for the promiser then the promises and desire to serve more then to be served then the Lord has done a work and can place you in a position over others.

Hey, saint listen up; God wants to take you as far as you are willing to die to self! What? In 1 Tim 3:1 Paul says, “*If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work.*” Why? Because he is **going to have to continually die to his family, his community and the Church!**

Vs. 4-5 David was around 18 or 19 when he killed Goliath, so it was around eleven years from his victory over Goliath to this moment being proclaimed king over all of Israel. Further more he reined for forty years which tells us that David lived to be about seventy years old.

Again Samuel anointed David when he was about 15, and here we are told that he did not take the throne of Judah until he was 30 and did not become king over all the tribes until 37. So? *Well that means David spent at least 15 years in preparation for the throne of Israel*. Can you see this in your own life? Perhaps you’re single and you have been waiting for God to bring you that person of His choosing, have you been more concerned with finding the right person instead of becoming the right person? Maybe you have been waiting for clear direction from God as to what calling and purpose he has for your life. Hey have you been wondering around trying to find his plan for your life checking out this church or that church seeing what they have to offer you instead of submitting to His plan for your life? A great amount of time in my life has been wasted because I have not been willing to allow the Lord to make me into the right person instead I’ve tried to fast track my life into where I thought I was suppose to be. Listen up you know where we are suppose to be? Right at His feet allowing Him to make us into the right person for His glorious use. Consider Moses who spent the first 40 years of his ministry thinking he was something when he was nothing. Well then he spent the next 40 years thinking he was nothing when he was something. Finally he spent the last 40 years realizing that God can only use nothings for something’s. Paul too spent over 13 years in obscurity as God was preparing him for use. Don’t miss this saint those years of preparation are not wasted years they are the most necessary years as the Lord has you in school of brokenness.

Look at this saint as we are told that David reigned in Hebron and he reigned in Jerusalem he reined all told 40 years. So? Well those 15 years seem a long time for preparation but when compared to his reign. I’ve said it before I’ll say it again “*Whom God uses greatly He must wound deeply*”, as there is a direct correlation between preparation and the task to which He is preparing us for.

Vs. 6 As David was now a king of a united nation he wanted a capital that would also unite the nation thus it could not be Hebron or Mahanaim, the city which Ishbosheth made his capital. Jerusalem was a great place for the capital:

1. Geographically it was surround on three sides by valleys, which meant that only one side had to be fortified.
2. Politically it also straddled the two tribes Judah and Benjamin so that neither tribe would feel slighted.

The Jebusites had Jerusalem for 400 years in the land given to Israel and the nation had been unable to capture the city. This city was so difficult to take that the Jebusites mock David saying, “*Hey, we are going to put the blind and the lame as guards, you know, you have no chance against us, man.*” So the natural defenses of the Jebusites made them feel very secure thus they and the children of Israel up to this point had never been able to break through for 400 years.

Did you hear the phrase “*The King and his men*” went to Jerusalem against the Jebusites? Oh to God we would follow our King to take the cities that He in His blood has purchased. The problem with the nation was **not** that they weren’t *strong enough*, *bright enough* or any thing else to take the city. So what was the problem how come they couldn’t take the city and root out the enemy for over 400 years, at best they co-existed? Well it is rather simply dear saint, listen up, ***they had the wrong King on the throne***! Did you hear me? I suggest to you that this is the very same reason we aren’t “*more than conquerors through Him who loved us*”, (Rom 8:37) we have the wrong king on the thrones of our hearts!

**IV. Vs. 7-12 Three things God’s anointed need to remember**

Vs. 7 “*Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion (that is, the City of David)*.” In spite of past failures, in spite of the enemy held up in his strong hold, in spite of their constant persistent taunting, “*Nevertheless*” the Son of David will take the strongholds in our lives and make that which defeated us His capital! Oh don’t miss it saint, don’t walk away from here and not apply the truth contained here and put the right King on the throne of your heart!!!! Hear now the words of 2 Chron. 16:9 “*the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him.*”

This is the first time the word Zion is mentioned and the word can mean “***Sunny height***” or “***Dry Hill***” and Zion would latter come to be specifically used for the temple mount area. Is that not interesting as some folks view Church as a “*Sonny Height*” and others as a “*Dry Hill*”, it all depends on your heart. Some come to Church out of restraint and they would rather be any where else when they “climb up” out of bed. You see they are heading to the old “*Dry Hill*” with nothing there to refresh their parched soul. Ah, but others climb out of bed and head off to the “*Sunny Height*”, kind of like the “Road to the Sun” if you will, and man the views are incredible and worth the trip, in fact it’s the (pardon the pun) “***high light***” of the week. So if church is a “*Dry Hill*” instead of a “*High Light*” then maybe **the problem isn’t where you are going but your heart in going**!

Vs. 8 It is believed that David sent Joab up the water shaft called “Warren's Shaft” later called Hezekiah’s tunnel that brought the water up from Gihon spring. The story of this is given us in I Chron. 11 as well where we are told that Joab volunteered and it is believed that he did so by traveling up the water shaft 75 feet from the Kidron Valley floor.

Joab was not the most upstanding fellow you will recall but he was willing to do what others were not and that is climb up and take a city that had been held for 400 years. Hey saint Ezekiel records God’s heart when he writes, “*I sought for a man among them who would make a wall, and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land*”. God is still looking for those who crawl up the water shaft and stand in the gaps to take cites and restore rightfully He has paid for and you know He does not ask that we have perfect past’s only willing hearts.

Vs. 9 Millo was the northern part of Jerusalem and was the most vulnerable part of the city to attack, so David not only took the city for God he fortified the city for God. Did you get that? The first thing you and I must be willing is to climb up and take the city then we must be about fortifying the weaknesses against future attack, so we are “***reaching up***” and “***reaching out***” with regards to the cities He has placed us in.

Hey Christian this not unlike our lives as our King, Jesus, over comes areas of old strongholds, territory that we should have given to Him long ago. “*There is no habit that has gone so deep but that the power of the blood of Jesus can go deeper, and there is no entrenchment of sin that has gone so far but the power of the risen Lord, by His Holy Spirit, can go further.”* (Allen Redpath) The psalmist would write in Ps 48:1-2 “*Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised In the city of our God, In His holy mountain. Beautiful in elevation, The joy of the whole earth, Is Mount Zion on the sides of the north, The city of the great King*.” So the city of Jerusalem was thought of by God’s people as more than a capital but a place where God’s people would gather to worship Him.

Vs. 10 David “***became***” great, and the fact that it is worded this way reveals to us that such success was by no means “*overnight*.” David was prepared for the greatness he later enjoyed. Further more David would write in Psalm 18:35 “*Your gentleness has made me great.*” ***David’s greatness came from God’s work in Him and His grace towards him and not anything of himself***. In God’s plan there is almost always a hidden price to the Lord making His greatness visible in us. As he takes those He uses through much pain and difficulty so that they would value only Him and not see themselves in what He accomplishes through them.

You’ve heard the phrase “*let go and let God*” well here is a new one, “***Let’s go and let’s grow***”. It says of David that two characteristics were visible: “***He kept going and growing***”! How do we keep “***growing***” will I suggest to you that you must be willing to keep “***going***”? There are far too many Christians that have stopped growing in the grace of God because they became continent where they were at and stopped going forward in their relationship with Him. In 1 Cor. 6:12 Paul wrote, “*All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.*” That’s the key to keep going and keep growing!

Vs. 11-12 Building David a house by way of a neighboring king shows David's influence and importance. Hiram king of Tyre honored David by sending the finest craftsmen and wood to build him a palace, wanting to make an alliance with him. Earlier we saw three characteristics marks of God’s appointment to lead. Here we see **three things that those are called to lead need to be reminded of**:

1. Vs. 12a “*That the LORD had established him as king over Israel*”: As a servant of God (as noted in Ishbosheth losing his heart) you must know that it is God who has placed you where you are and not you yourself. You and I can “establish” (root word means to set up) ourselves in a position or we can allow the Lord to raise us up, but peace and confidence comes only from the realization that the Lord is the one that does the establishing.
2. Vs. 12b “*That He had exalted His kingdom*”: Second, and note this, David knew that the kingdom belonged to God, it was His kingdom. Though God chooses His instruments to serve in areas of usefulness it is imperative that the servant never think of himself as the master. Every servant be that pastor or other wise that falls always falls here first, they touch and handle what does not belong to them it is His kingdom not mine. The moment I think of this fellowship as mine then it is only a short distance to where I’ll begin to act that way.
3. Vs. 12c “*For the sake of His people Israel*”: Finally David knew that the purpose of his being placed in the position of king over God’s people was to use him as a channel to bless His people, he was being blessed to be a blessing. It was not for David's sake that he was lifted up, but for the sake of His people Israel, make no mistake about it Christian God loves us and our calling to serve others is not to be some sort of power trip over people it is to be a blessing.

Every person ought to recall these three things in their lives each and every time they head off to fellowship with God’s people:

* Am I here because God has placed me here or because I’ve place myself?
* Am I here promoting myself and my kingdom or am I here promoting God’s kingdom?
* Am I here to be blessed by others or am I here to be a blessing?

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

**V. Sovereign: 2 Samuel 1-24**

**1. Chp. 1-10 The King’s triumphs**

**2 Samuel 5:13-25**

“**The battle within and without**”

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 13-16 The battle within**

**III. Vs. 17-21 The Lord of Breakthroughs**

**IV. Vs. 22-25 Waiting for the move of the Spirit**

**I. Intro.**

The 17th verse opens up with an interesting observation as to when the enemy chose to attack as it says, “*when the Philistines heard that they had anointed David king over Israel, all the Philistines went up to search for David*.” There appears to me a direct correlation to God’s hand of blessing upon a life and satan’s deliberate attacks. Ah but there is more then this in the section under our observation because there are three specific attacks of the enemy two of which David is successful to defend and the other in which he is defeated. Now pay attention Christian, David is not defeated because he is out numbered or inexperienced, no he is defeated because he deliberately invites the enemy into an area to which they will take up residence and even destroy his family. To make matters worse all David needed to do was apply the same defenses that he did in the other two attacks and he would have won this battle as well.

There is a chorus to a song we sing that goes, “*Ruined lives and broken people are why He died on Calvary*”. Our defeat at the hands of our enemy is always a failure to appropriate what Jesus did on our behalf at Calvary and what ought to sadden us is His victory is complete so that we needn’t experience defeat.

**II. Vs. 13-16 The battle within**

Vs. 13-16 After David left Hebron he took more concubines and wives when he made Jerusalem his capital. There are four lists of David’s children divided into two groups, those that were born to him while he reigned in Hebron, those who were born to him while in Jerusalem. But not all of these were added right away as we see Solomon’s name listed and this won’t happen for some time yet. There are **three points of interest in these four verses**:

1. **Disobedience**: As mentioned before this was is in direct disobedience to Deuteronomy 17:17-18 where the king was told to “*Neither shall he multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away; nor shall he greatly multiply silver and gold for himself. Also it shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book*”. These marriages would have been seen as being political and socially acceptable and a sign from God of blessings upon David. Yet it matters not how the world views something when the clear teaching of the word prohibits it. Often you hear people say “*Everybody is doing it; it’s the latest thing after all we are to be all things to all people!”* Ah but that verse in 1 Cor. 9:22 goes on to say, “*I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.*” How does behaving like the world save some? The truth of the matter is the trouble that would come into David’s life from here on out would be because he was either adding to his harem or reaping the fruit of having done so. Perhaps David was not aware of this scripture? Well it is interesting in light of his actions in verse 21 where we are told that they burned the idols. What does that have to do with not multiplying wives? In Deut. 7:5 God told the nation to destroy the pagan nations “*altars and break down their sacred pillars, and cut down their wooden images, and burn their carved images with fire*”, so if David knew not to take idols and to burn them based upon Deut. 7:5 don’t you think he read Deut. 17:17-18 about not multiplying wives?
2. **Duration**: My second point is to notice when this temptation came upon David, right after he was made king of Israel. My point? Simply this, **the seeds of our future trouble is sown in times of success and prosperity and not during times of stress and trials**. We like David have far more to be on our knees about when we are in a time of plenty then when we are in a time of lack. Paul wrote in Philippians 4:11-13 “*I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me*.” Now the truth is we battle the flesh far more in contentment when we are *abounding and full* then when we are *abased, hungry and suffering need*.
3. **Difficulty**:Finally these four verses point to a reality that few of us ever truly recognize, namely that **the battle with our old flesh is much more difficult to over come then the battle we face through adverse circumstances and situations we face**. How so? Well notice David inquired of the Lord twice (verse 19, 23) when facing the enemy with out and never one time did he inquire of the Lord as to whether or not he should add to his harem with wives and concubines. Can you imagine what would have happened in David’s life *if only he had applied the same principal* to the battle with the flesh that he did with the battle against the Philistines? “*Lord, should I go up and take more wives and concubines*?” “*Lord should I disobey Your clear teaching in Deut. 17 not to add wives and concubines*?” What do you suppose the Lord would have said, “*Yeh, sure thing David I didn’t really mean what I said in the scriptures I’ve changed my mind just for you*!” No, the Lord would have told David, “*What part of* ***NOT*** *multiplying wives don’t you comprehend*?” Now hear me out, why don’t you think David did not “*inquire of the Lord*” concerning the battle with the flesh as he did with the battle with the Philistines? I can only assume here but perhaps **David didn’t want to hear what the Lord thought concerning his battles with his own flesh as it would mean that he could not pursue the things of the flesh**! Hey, pastor you seem to know an awful lot about this kind of stuff, yep way too much! Hey Christian, three things will take you and me down according to 1 st John 2:16 “*the lust of the flesh* **(GOLD)***, the lust of the eyes* **(GIRLS)***, and the pride of life* **(GLORY)**” and these things are nothing new under the sun.

**III. Vs. 17-21 The Lord of Breakthroughs**

Vs. 17-18 Five Philistine city’s joined together right after hearing David had become king over a united nation. Again notice the timing of the Philistines attack as it was when they heard that David was anointed king over Israel then “***all*** *of the Philistines came up to seek David*”. Not some or most but **ALL** as they sent everything they had at David. Whenever God grants us favor we can expect the enemy to mass his troops at our boarder.

Also of interest is the meaning and location of Rephaim (verse 18). You see it means valley of the Giants and it was only one valley away from Jerusalem. Even though David was a “Giant Killer” he didn’t respond in pride saying, “*Hey, I’ve already killed the biggest and meanest giant of them all, I don’t need God on this one*”. Just because we have come to realize God’s promises in our life does not mean that the enemy won’t come up to seek us and in fact they go to the valley of the Giant’s (Rephaim). Have you ever experienced this in your life you come into a new place, a new a refreshing time with the Lord and then the enemy starts’ railing the Giant’s in the valley? So what does David do when he hears of this? He makes no assumption, no quick decisions instead it says **two things** about what he did:

1. It says here that “*he went down to the stronghold*”. Do you see the truth for us in this? Why when the enemy comes into the Valley to get the Giant’s against us then we need seek refuge in our stronghold our strong place the Rock Jesus!
2. Second it says in verse 19 that, “*David inquired of the Lord*”. Hey saint we have before us great truths of how to handle the enemy’s recruitment of giant’s the valley where we live “*Come to your Rock and inquire of Him*”.

Here’s where I’m going with this, the first thing we need when the enemy is in the Valley gathering giant’s is **the security of God’s presence**. So when you come to the Lord start by recalling His love and promises before you begin to inquire of what to do about the giant’s. David did not go **UP** and fight, he did not go **OUT** to the battle, no David “**WENT DOWN**” on his knees in prayer. You see that? So lets remember when the Philistines “***go up***” then we need to “***go down***” to our knees, as you and I can count on more spiritual warfare as God establishes us and His goodness makes us great. Satan is always lurking attacking from within and from without bringing opposition by appealing to our flesh and sending old adversaries and we are to not react “*up and out*” but rather “***down***” upon our knees as the quickest way “*up and out*” is always down on our knees. God honors our dependence on Him as we seek Him for direction and strength to secure the promised victory.

Vs. 19 Now the Lord said unto David, “*Go up: for I will doubtless deliver the Philistines into your hand.*” When David was a “little king” in a “little kingdom” the Philistines didn’t view him as a threat, ah but he moved to Jerusalem added a few more wives and they are after you. I can’t help but wonder if David adding a few more wives made him a bigger target? I personally have gotten used to being a bull’s-eye and I do expect some people will want to take shots at the pastor but I don’t think I should by my actions be supplying the ammunition and loading their guns for them and I think it wisdom for you and I not to live a compromised life so as to make it easier to shoot us down.

Vs. 20-21 Now remember that this valley is only one valley away from Jerusalem. But is David worried about it? No he just goes to his knees as he realizes that it was the Lord was the One whom gave the kingdom. David sees the supernatural in the natural as he recognizes that it was the Lord gave him victory. During his reign God will establish the nation from only 6000 square miles to over 60,000 square miles, where He guides He provides.

The name of the battle area was called “*Baal Perazim*” which meant “*lord of breakthroughs*” so David has a play on words and says, “*Yeh, it’s a place of breakthroughs alright as it will be here that the Lord will breakthrough as easy as passing through water*.” What a fitting name as God came out like a flood against the enemy. Hey saint the Lord wants to give you a “***breakthrough***” in the area where the enemy has encamped rallying giants against you, He wants to breakthrough into areas held up by the enemy. Ah but notice David’s words as he declared that “***The Lord gave me a breakthrough***.” Man, we so often want to be able to claim, “*I planed it all out, I prayed it through, I’m so smart and talented that I gained the “breakthrough” just as I knew I would*”. But David says, “***Shoot, the Lord just came through as He always does when I trust Him and not my own resources***!” God wants the glory and doesn’t want us to be able to claim this for ourselves. To further reveal David’s heart this was the very battle according to (2 Sam 23:13-17) where three of David’s men broke through the battle lines to get water from a well in Bethlehem to show great devotion to their king David but David took that which was poured out for him and poured it out before the Lord.

A further sign of God’s rout of the Philistines was seen in the fact that they had brought their good luck idols to battle a were in such a hurry to run away that they dropped their idols and David and his men picked them up to smelt them down. The Philistines felt certain that the presence of their god’s would ensure the victory but David and his men lifted the idols up showing how God had defeated the things the world places their hopes and trust in. Notice David did not save or sell the idols of the world no he lifted them up as conquered by God and burned them. Hey saint, you may not think of yourself as having idols you carry around putting your trust and hope in but we can most certainly find our when they go up in smoke if we were worshipping them. If what we put our hope and trust in can be burned, ripped off or destroy than we are worshipping the wrong thing!

**IV. Vs. 22-25 Waiting for the move of the Spirit**

Vs. 22-23 What were these Philistines thinking “*double or nothing*?” Note this dear saint our enemy is nothing if not persistent, as we are told that “*the Philistines went* ***up once again***”, and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim. Satan does not stop his attacks because he has been defeated he will come and deploy once again in the Valley of the giants.

David does not make the assumption that sense God gave the victory once that he didn’t need to pray? One of the enemy’s greatest weapons is over confidence, “*God did it this way once so He will do it that way again!*” All too often the Church does not inquire of the Lord instead it just seeks to duplicate what worked in the past. We Christian’s like programs and often prefer to seek and implement programs instead of inquiring of Him. You see what the Lord desires is fellowship not with programs but with Him personally.

Just about every week some well meaning person calls or sends a packet full of some program or seminar declaring they have a formula for success that will ensure our Church will grow but ultimately our trust will be on the program and not on God. We need to walk in the Spirit and we do so by inquiring of the Lord as the victory is about the living God not a formula and we need to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit’s moving in our lives. What would have happened if David didn’t ask and just fell into a routine and just assumed that this was “*kill a Philistine*” 101? God wants to have fellowship with Him and **He does not want our service to Him to become the enemy of our fellowship with Him**, and you know that is so easy to fall into isn’t it we get so busy that we become just too busy to spend time with Him.

Ah but look at David Christian **he did not turn to *formulae* nor did he** **try to *formulate* a plan no he just sought the Lord as too His plan**. And then he waited for the Lord to direct his move and simply walked into what God was doing. So much better then doing what every body else is doing and asking God to bless our mess. Listen up we don’t have to try to get God on our side, convince Him our way is the way to reach the world for Him. No all we have to do is inquire of Him and wait on Him to move and walk in His power.

Vs. 24-25 The first time David went up and confronted the enemy face to face and even though he is in the same valley facing the same enemy he seeks the Lord as to how He might want to work this time. Again what a great lesson for us as: “***Yesterday’s plan is not always a lock on today’s problem***”, God wants to work a fresh work and if we are open He may move a different way. How come we don’t see more of this type of guidance and answered prayer today? Well James tells us in 4:2-3 “*you do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures*.” Two mistakes are made:

1. **The attitude of assumption**: We assume that we know best or that what was once tried will work again.
2. **The attitude of atheism**: That does not ask because it does not believe that it well receive?

Now we read that David was told to wait for the Lord to strike the enemy and the sign was “*the sound of marching in the tops of the mulberry trees*”. But just what was this sign of “*the sound of marching*” in the tops of the mulberry trees?

* 1. Well the ancient Rabbis said that it was the “*footsteps of angels walking*” in the tops of the mulberry trees.
  2. Other see this as a natural sign as the leaves of mulberry trees are very light and it takes very little breeze to cause them to move. So with the massive Philistine army under the trees the direction of their movement would be seen in the tops of the trees before it would have been visible on the ground.

It is obvious by the text that it as a signal to show David and his men that the Lord was at work so they could rush in for the victory. Now in John 3:8 Jesus says concerning the Holy Spirit that “*The* ***wind blows*** *where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.*” I think that is what we have here as the Lord says, “*When you see the moving of the Spirit, then you go out and strike the camp of the enemy*”.

Hey saint this is true in our lives today as we sense that the Lord is at work, we need to be on the move. There is a need to be **sensitive,** to be still and wait for the “*moving of the Spirit*” before we move out in obedience to obtain the victory He has provided. Don’t forget that being sensitive to the Spirit’s move is of little worth if we don’t obey the Spirit as well. As one old saint put it “*We need to listen to the sound of Spirit’s going and follow the footsteps of his anointed*.” When David inquired of the Lord, the Lord didn’t say “Go up”, He said “*Circle around behind them, and come up over near the mulberry trees*”. Yeh so? Well Obedience was three times:

1. First seen in inquiring of the Lord
2. Second, on waiting on the Lord
3. Finally on moving out once the Lord moved

This is further brought out in the King James Version as verse 24 reads, “*when thou hearest the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees, that then thou* ***shalt bestir thyself***.” To bestir means “*to be sharp, active and quick*” far to often we think more in terms of being “*spiritual cheerleaders*” instead of taking action ourselves. The moving of the Spirit is **not mere hype and emotionalism**, no it is action that ensures the Lord’s victory. I believe the “the stirring of the Spirit” will do several things in our lives:

* + First awaken us to prayer and worship
  + This will move us to confession and repentance
  + Then we will be motivate us to serve others
  + This then will be the Lord will use to add to His Church as David pursued the enemy some 20 miles regaining the territory lost by Saul when he lost his life on Gilboa, in the following battles David would regain the cities lost as well (verse 25).

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

**V. Sovereign: 2 Samuel 1-24**

**1. Chp. 1-10 The King’s triumphs**

**2 Samuel 6:1-12**

**“Getting the Cart Before the Servant”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 1-5 A new cart**

**III. Vs. 6-8 A bump in the road**

**IV. Vs. 9-12 A simple servant blessed**

**I. Intro.**

In Psalm 132:6-9 we have what motivated David to bring the ark of the covenant into Jerusalem. It seems as though David was sitting in the house that Hiram was building him, this place and he said, “*Surely I will not go into the chamber of my house, Or go up to the comfort of my bed; I will not give sleep to my eyes Or slumber to my eyelids, Until I find a place for the LORD, A dwelling place for the Mighty One of Jacob. Behold, we heard of it in Ephrathah; we found it in the fields of the woods. Let us go into His tabernacle; Let us worship at His footstool. Arise, O LORD, to Your resting place, You and the ark of Your strength*.” What could be wrong with this?

Well notice that David does not inquire of the Lord and ask the question “*How can the ark of the Lord come to me*” until the 9th verse of the chapter. When we consider a dead Church service we often do so imagining one that is devoid of **enthusiasm** and **emotion** though that may be the case some of the times here we see that dead worship was such not because it lacked those two things neither was it dead because it sought the wrong thing, the presence of God. No, it was dead because even though it had the right motive and excitement it lacked what God wanted. Dead worship is to be found when ever we make the pursuit of it more important than the personal presence of the Lord.

**II. Vs. 1-5 A new cart**

Vs. 1-2 To set this in context in the fifth chapter you will remember that David becomes king over all of Israel and he decides to make Jerusalem the capital of the nation, so Hiram builds David’s palace there. Then the Lord works through David in defeating the Philistines on all sides.

But something wonderful happened in David’s heart based upon psalm 132 as David says, “*I will not give sleep to my eyes Or slumber to my eyelids, Until I find a place for the LORD, A dwelling place for the Mighty One of Jacob.*” Apparently David recalled the story of the ark of God, (constructed 400 years before his time; that 3 feet 9 inches long, 2 feet 3 inches wide and 2 feet 3 inches box with its lid called the mercy seat completely covered with gold), the Ark that had been kept in the Holy of Holies in Shiloh but hadn’t been there for 70 plus years. Again we have David’s heart recorded for us in psalm 132 as he says, “*we heard of it in Ephrathah; we found it in the fields of the woods.*” You see the ark of God lay some 13 miles away in “*City of forests*” (Kirjath-jearim) in the house of Abinadab where it had been since coming back from being in the hands of the Philistines (1 Samuel 7:1). Once again psalm 132 records the heart of David as it says, “*Let us go into His tabernacle; Let us worship at His footstool. Arise, O LORD, to Your resting place, You and the ark of Your strength*.”

Why was it so important for David to bring the ark of God into Jerusalem? Well two scriptures shed light upon this: In Lev. 16:2 we are told that God’s presence would “*appear in the cloud above the mercy seat*”. Then in Ex. 25:22 the Lord spoke to the people saying, “*I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are on the ark of the Testimony*”. What David desired for the nation was for them to experience personally the glory of God in the presence of God among them. He wanted to bring the Ark into Jerusalem to honor the Lord as the true King making Jerusalem the city where the sanctuary would be, causing them to be truly “*one nation under God*”. According to 1 Chron 13:5 David gathered the nation from its furthest boarders to unite around the presence of God (the gathering of his best 30,000 soldiers was a part of this). What was that all about? ***Well it was a desire for the people to put down their petty differences and come together to glorify the Lord***.

Hey saint, there is ***nothing of greater importance for the people of God then the presence of God.*** Without the presence of God our hearts grow weak, our hands become feeble our steps unsure so above all else we need the continual conscience presence of the Lord in our lives. That was what was on the heart of David and what he wanted for the people of God, (the continual presence of the Lord) So he thought “*I’ll bring the ark from obscurity to prominence then the city will be alive with the presence and glory of God*”. So what could be wrong with this?

Vs. 3-4 Well based upon Exodus 25:12-15 and Numbers 4:15 the ark was to be carried only by the family of Koath from the tribe of Levi and not transported on a cart. What’s the “big deal” as to the specifics of the moving of the ark? It seems as though the Lord wanted nothing about the worship of Him to be mechanical nor based upon His children approaching Him based upon their own terms. The Lord wanted the Levites His servants to carry the burden of moving the presence of the Lord and they were to do so prayerfully, thoughtfully with great care, effort and labor. **All of which has to do with the right heart does it not?**

What we have here is a clear example doing the right thing the wrong way. Where did David get the idea of placing the ark of a new cart? Well when the Philistines took the ark of the Lord they hadn’t counted on everywhere the ark went their people would break out in boils. So they finally brought that ark to Ekron, the people said, “*We don’t want the thing it’s a curse*.” So the Philistines decided to set the ark on a cart, and they had a couple of oxen pulling the cart.

Hear me out Christian, that’s not the way God in His Word spoke of concerning transporting the ark of the covenant. According to scripture the ark of God was to be covered so that no man could look upon it then transported by the priest by two gold covered polls slipped through the rings on the ark resting upon their shoulders so that no man would touch it. God spoke to Moses in Numbers 4 giving him and the nation specific instructions on how put up tear down and transport the tabernacle. So the problem was not to be found in their **motivation** but rather in their **methodology** as they did not seek the word instead they sought to copy the world by following the worldly example of the Philistines. Two things needed to be considered:

1. The Philistines were trying to get rid of the presence of God not trying to approach God on their own terms.
2. God didn’t want His people to get their example from the world but rather from the Word.

So many people think that “*If it blesses me then it will bless God*”, but God’s work must be done God’s way in order to have God’s blessing. Hey, saint it is not by experience or emotion that we ascertain the will of God but rather by the Word of God! Hey saint, no amount of ***ecumenical unity***, ***professionalism*** or ***enthusiasm*** will ever compensate for disobedience. Oh don’t get me wrong crowds may approve and applaud but the end will be death without the true worship of God. It was for this reason that Aaron was told “*not to come at just any time into the Holy Place inside the veil, before the mercy seat which is on the ark, lest he die*”.

I’m not speaking with any one church in mind but rather just an observation of the Lord’s church here in America in general as so much of our service for the Lord is being done with a “*New Cart*”. A new cart? Yeh you know a couple of “**Big Wheels**” which provides motion for a bunch of “**Boards**”, if you catch my meaning (*big wheel and boards*). And what do **Big Wheels** and **Boards** produce why, “***Big Productions***”. Further more we are told that two son’s (grandsons) of Abinadab are recruited to drive the “New Cart”. You see Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, whom David appointed to drive the cart, have interesting names. Uzzah means “*strength*” and Ahio means “*friendly*.” Did you get that? “*Friendly*” went in front of the arc while “*strength*” walked beside it to support it. Do you get the picture “***Strength***” is propping everything up and “***Friendly***” out front (many a church today even call themselves “*seeker friendly*”). Man does that not sound like many a church? With all the technology being used to attract the world in the quest to be relative to this “*new generation*” they are doing so with “*in our own strength*” along side.

So what’s wrong with this? I kind of like Big Productions by Big Wheels and Boards! Well, the primary problem has to do with human effort instead of the move of the Spirit as we saw last week. I mean where is the inquiring of Lord? You see in this ministry style God isn’t needed any more instead all that is needed is a consultation with our media consultant. Let me again say I think the Church is on the mark concerning wanting to bring the “***presence of the Lord***” into the city in which they dwell what is wrong is the methodology that is being employed. Yeh but didn’t David pray for God's blessing on this big production? Yes but he never inquired of God regarding the production itself.

Hey listen up Christian; there are a lot of people who approach God using “a new cart”. “*Man this will bless the Lord we will impress Him with “new technology and lots of money” that will make up for our disobedient heart*.” Now on one side of this equation the attempt to want God’s presence near to where we live is a great thing and the attempts to approach him with our fancy carts demonstrates this. Yet when we do so apart from a right heart then it is an abomination to Him. Far too often in our desperation to want more of God we put forth our hands but not our hearts (verse 6). **We needn’t seek God with “new things” in order to have more of Him in our lives the key is too approaching Him is to do so with a “*new heart*” not a “*new cart***”. Consider the book of Acts as we are told in Acts 2:42, 47“*continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers….And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved*.” There were no slick sales presentations, no light shows or movie clips and skits. If His Church still seeks to makes Him the center of their lives then He will be able to do what He wants to do in and through us. It’s God’s job to cause His body to grow and it our job to gather together and be open to His transformation in our lives. In Matt. 16:18 Jesus said, “*I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.*” Why is the Church trying to do Jesus’ job instead of allowing Him to do His work in our hearts and lives?

Vs. 5 Judging by the differing musical instruments this was quite a worship team assembled. Don’t miss understand me now I’m certain that the place was rocking with anticipation and folks were excited about bringing the Ark of God’s presence into their home town. Far to often we judge our worship experience by how it makes us feel instead of whether or not it pleases God. We can be certain if what we are doing in worship of the Lord is not in accordance to His Word then it isn’t pleasing to His ears. I realize that in consumer-oriented culture were accustomed to think things are about us but Worship is not about what please us but rather what pleases Him.

“*Hey, I know we will throw God a parade sell tickets for a stadium and He will come down just because we have gone to all the trouble and effort.*” Ah but how do we get God to come? Well I know we can use our technology and advertise just like the world does and then God will show up. Well to do so we will need to structure! Structure? Yeh, a new cart made up of some “Big Wheels” and “Boards” and they can appointed someone “*Friendly*” to go ahead of the cart and someone “*Strong*” who is a “*hands on*” kind of guy to keep the whole thing running the way we want it to. And then we can higher a real great band to play some great music, why it will be great, powerful and impressive, man ***God couldn’t refuse such a display of our greatness***!

**III. Vs. 6-8 A bump in the road**

Vs. 6 Nachon’s threshing floor was probably very close to Jerusalem so they were all most home when Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God to stabilize it as the oxen went over some thing causing it to rattle a bit. In the midst of this joyous celebration surround by religious fervor and excitement Uzzah is stricken by God for his error. I mean you talk about putting a damper on your religious service.

Now I find that very interesting in light of two things given us in the text:

1. Nachon’s name means “*prepared, ready or sure*”. So? Well here they are jumpen, shouten and spinnen abouten they are “***certain***” that what they are doing is pleasing to the Lord.
2. Ah but all of this changes when they come into the threshing floor. You see at a threshing floor you take the whole stalks of wheat that are gathered and you beat the wheat until you separate the chaff from the wheat. And in spite of having a few “*Big Wheels*” and some “*Boards*” with “*Friendly*” and “*Strength*” leading the way there was a lot of chaff in this **Big Production** and God blew it apart with the chaff hitting the floor.

Think of this now dear saint worship:

* + No matter how big a production
  + How many on the worship team
  + How seeker friendly
  + How many big wheel and boards we have behind it

In the end if it is done in our own “*Strength*” it will be deadly! Oh don’t get me wrong it may be impressive to man but it won’t be pleasing to the Lord.

Vs. 7 Uzzah had a reflex action but he was in that position because he thought that he could approach the Lord on His terms. There are two things that need to be brought out:

* Uzzah knew all about the ark because the ark had been in his father's Abinadab’s house for 70 years
* Uzzah He also made the mistake in thinking that God couldn't take care of the ark of Himself and that the ground of Nachon's threshing floor was less holy than his own hand.

You see in Numbers 4:15 those that transported the ark were warned that “*they shall not touch any holy thing, lest they die*.” That means that Uzzah made a decision in a moment to disregard God's command and do what seemed right to him. Now what would have happened if Uzzah hadn’t reached out and touched that ark? Well it may have fallen to the ground. Follow me on this:

* I’m not saying that they didn’t have the right idea in wanting the presence of God near the city in which they lived
* I’m not saying that Uzzah in reaching out to keep the ark from falling did the wrong thing.
* What I am saying is that he should not have been in that situation to begin with. Even our decisions made in a moment matter before God and they can cost us our lives.

Vs. 8 David was angered because the Lord broke through man “Strength” so he names the place Perez-Uzzah. “*It’s not fair, all I wanted was you, so what if I want Your presence on my terms why did a man have to die*?” Had David simply inquired of the Lord as he had in battle with the Philistines he would have been directed to the word of God. Why judge a man for doing that which was natural in the first place? What is wrong with stretching out your hand to keep that which Holy steady? First of all that which is Holy is what keeps us steady and not the other way around and in this you have the fundamental problem that being the ark should not have been in the cart in the first place. The presence of the Lord is only to be carried on the hearts of those who are separate to Him, do you hear me? We can not hitch His presence to some fancy cart, add Him to our club’s and drive Him around parading Him around as our trophy when we are the trophy of His grace! What a tragedy to die right along side the mercy of God, slain by the hand of God because we engaged our hands to work before our hearts.

**IV. Vs. 9-12 A simple servant blessed**

Vs. 9-10 The word for fear here is “reverenced” so David stopped showing reverence towards doing things in his own strength and started respecting doing things God’s way.

I find it interesting that David scraps the Idea of wanting the presence of the Lord near the people of God because it couldn’t be done in His own strength. Far too often we stop desiring the right things because they can’t be accomplished through our own strength. So the parade stops as Mr. Strength literally “*fell apart*”. Bummer, how will the presence of God ever come nearer my heart if it isn’t done my way?

Now David did a good thing here as we are told that he “took it aside” (Vs. 10) into the house of Obed-Edom. Ah hear me out as this fellows name means “*servant*” and according to 1 Chronicles 26:4 he was of the tribe Levi and more importantly of the family of Koath who according to Num. 4:15 was the family within the tribe of Levi that God had commanded to transport and take care of the ark. When David’s heart switched from “***in my strength***” to “***in His service***” blessings were poured out.

Vs. 11-12 Edom means “ruddy” and it was what was said of David thus he was a “Ruddy Servant” so David was brought back to the time when he was nothing, not a worship leader, not a giant killed, nor a conquering general, not a king of a nation just a worshipper and all that he wanted was the Lord more in his life and it was not a production.

Notice as well upon the first attempt 3 months pass and David goes back to the word and when he did bring up the ark there was just as much if no more joy. In 1 Chronicles 15:13 David explains why the first attempt led to death as he tells the priest, “*because you did not do it the first time, the Lord our God broke out against us, because we did not consult Him about the proper order.*” Hey saint when we worship the Lord the way that He has prescribed in His word it will still be filled with gladness and joy. Oft times we think that if we do it God’s way it will be boring and dull not so! There was a big production the first time they tried this but did you notice that ***it never says that there was any joy***? Why is that? Well it is because they were doing so with a couple of “*Big Wheels*” and some “*Boards*” in their own “*Strength*” and even though “*Friendly*” was up front it was nothing more then a production. Ah but when their focus became “*in His service*” well then it became joyous for all. In Exodus 25:14 that the ark was to be carried by Levites who inserted gold covered polls and bore it upon their shoulders, simply humbly no big wheels, boards or bands just servants who want to do it God’s way. Do you hear me saints? **David’s production was impressive but it took away from God’s glory the production became the object of worship rather then God whom the production was suppose to be for**!

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

**V. Sovereign: 2 Samuel 1-24**

**1. Chp. 1-10 The King’s triumphs**

**2 Samuel 6:13-23**

**“The king’s new clothes”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 13-19 A broken heart instead of a new cart**

**III. Vs. 20-23 Michal or a Maidservant**

**I. Intro.**

In 1 Chronicles 15:14-15 we are told that David specifically commanded “*the priests and the Levites sanctified themselves to bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel. And the children of the Levites bore the ark of God on their shoulders, by its poles, as Moses had commanded according to the word of the LORD.*” Far too often we think that a “*new cart*” with a P.R. man named “*friendly*” and a hand’s on guy named “*strength*” is the way to bring the presence of God to the people of God. But based upon the above passage, God wanted His presence to rest upon the shoulders of those who were broken hearted, obedient, praising, set apart men. And he has not changed His standards.

Hey did you notice that this was still a big production? In fact quite honestly in many ways it was a bigger production then the first attempt. So what was the problem of the first attempt? Well two things:

1. The first one came from the world’s example and man’s strength and the second came from the Word’s example and men with broken hearts operating in God’s strength and not their own.
2. And most importantly what made the second one a greater production was the sacrifice after the sixth step.

**So many people have traded in the presence of the Lord for a parade that emphasizes what we have to offer Him instead of Who He offered for us and many can’t figure out why they are not getting much out of their time at Church**.

**II. Vs. 13-19 A broken heart instead of a new cart**

Vs. 13 The 2nd attempt to bring the ark of the Lord into Jerusalem is given a greater amount of space in 1 Chron. 15:1-16:3 as Chronicles is written from a priestly point of view. What is plain is that David is determined to do God’s work God’s way so he now sends the Levites a few miles to bring the ark of the Lord to the people of God.

Though positional it was the presence of God that moved to where the people of God lived, in reality based upon the sacrificing after the sixth step (*1 Chron. 15:26 informs us that they waited to see if God was pleased with their heart before continuing on*) it was the people of God that moved to where the presence of God was.

Hey did you notice that when David first sought the presence of the Lord amongst the people of God there was no sacrifice no he won’t move a seventh step without one? What this tells us is very important:

* That God is altogether Holy and we are altogether sinful
* That the only way to the presence of God is upon a path sprinkle in blood of One whom was innocent who has be sacrificed on our behalf

In psalm 24:3-4 David asked and answered a question, “*Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD? Or who may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, and has no lifted his heart to an idol*.” We live in a time in which many well meaning Christians fail to realize that no one can know the presence of God in their life until they first except that innocent blood has been applied to their heart. We shall not know of the joy of the Lord until we have come to know of His holiness and been washed by the blood of the Lamb.

To sacrifice animals was no easy task, it required effort as well as being quite messy (*something you hunters know well*). My point? Well, David did this every sixth step! Moving the ark of the Lord in a “*new cart*” made practical sense as it was the most efficient way of transportation. But listen up saint, God never prizes “Efficiency” above **obedience**. Yes it was true that placing the ark of the Lord was the “*right thing*” but sacrificing an animal every sixth step was the “***right way***”! Far too much of our Christian experience boils down to us sacrificing the “***right way***” for the “*right thing*” and the results may impress man but it will never impress God. Just consider our Lord what if He just came to earth in one day said he was the Savior of the world did a few miracles to show that He was who He claimed to be went out to a hill on Bethany and ascended? Well it would have been more “efficient”, it would have been the “right thing” ah but it would not have been the “right way”!

Of further interest to me is that **the number six** in scripture is the number of man, the number of our flesh that says, “*Look at me how impressive I am, how important I am*”, that’s our flesh! So what a great picture this is as at the end of the sixth step flesh was dying, blood was being shed and man was being “*altered*”.

Hey, Christian that is what we need to do in our lives every time we are being drawn towards walking in our own strength and self dependence it’s time to die to self by remembering His sacrifice. How much more joyful and fulfilling would our lives be if regularly we stopped and built an alter? Then laid our dreams and ambitions on that altar and remembered His sacrifice on our behalf? “*Lord, I’ve forgotten, I’ve been walking on my own strength and I have failed to realize that I’ve been bought with a price and my life doesn’t belong to me it belongs to You, so what do you want me to do today*?” Oh to lay down our fleshly tendencies every sixth step every day in sweet confession that is how to make sure you are going the “***right way***” and not just doing the “***right thing***”.

Vs. 14 In Chron. 15:27 we are told that David “*was clothed with a robe of fine linen,* but also *wore a linen ephod.*” What this reveals is that his royalty was clothed in his servant hood. Hey who does that sound like? Well in Philip. 2:6-7 we are told of Jesus who “*being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men*.” Jesus the “Son of David” clothed His royalty in the form of a bondservant.

In so dancing before the Lord with all of his might he had covered his royal kingly garments by putting on the garment of a servant. Yeh so? Well this demonstrated two things about David’s heart:

A. It showed as far as God is concerned we are equal before God from a king to a slave we are all the same before the Lord. The Lord does not say, “*Man that rich believer that famous servant of mine I’m so impressed.*” No David wrote in psalm 51:17 “*The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart; These, O God, You will not despise.*” No matter who you are when we come before the Lord with a “*broken and a contrite heart*” we are stripping ourselves from any earthly importance. God is not into our robes of righteousness, but He desires to clothes us with His righteousness which is only in Christ.

B. Secondly when we consider that David regularly wore kingly clothes, an outfit that told everyone that saw him that he was a powerful man he was royalty. But David set those clothes aside and wore the clothes of a servant of the Lord. Why? Well hear me out, because he cared more about Whom he worshiped then who worshipped him! “*Oh look at him, look at her aren’t they impressive man if I could just be like them*”. **How sad is it that a lot of times church becomes a place where God’s people come to impress others of their importance instead of a place where we all come together and are impressed with God’s importance**! Do you hear me? Let’s take off our “*filthy rags*” of our self importance and gird our heart with that of a servant and allow Him to clothe us in the royal garments of His righteousness!

Now David didn't dance out of obligation or for a show neither did he do so half heartedly? No way David gave all he had as his own expression of worship. What are we to make of this dance of David? Now fellows, you don’t think it’s weird watching a ball player dance when they hit a game winning home run or when some player scores a go ahead touchdown. Sports not your thing? How about when you would attend a concert or what about when you went to the store ladies and the item you wanted to purchase had gone on sale at 50% off what do you do when you get home? Why is it that David’s expression of joy at the presence of God among the people of God be seen as weird? It seems that there are two errors that we make in regards to our emotions as it relates to worship of God:

1. Making the emotions the center of our experience and the qualifying mark of our worship.
2. Or the other extreme thinking that any display of emotion is not befitting the Christian life.

Hey saint, our worship must not be manipulated or repressed, no it ought to be genuine!

In 1 Chronicles 15:27 we are told that “*David was clothed with a robe of fine linen, as were all the Levites who bore the ark*”. Some have wrongly taught that David was dancing in his under-roo’s when in fact he was simply dressed just like all the other priests and Levites in this procession. So what this is telling us that David’s dance was not a solo and that he took off his royal robes and rejoiced as a simple man not a king. It was a celebration like being in a parade and nothing was done that would have been out of “step” (pardon the pun) with what was going on. He wasn’t naked trying to draw attention to himself and his action was not a disruption to what the Lord was doing! So much of what is passed off as worship dancing is not what David did and is out of context to what is going on. In 1 Cor 14:32 Paul wrote that “*the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.*” The principal Paul is expounding is that the true work of the Holy Spirit will not disrupt what the Hoy Spirit is already doing it won’t be out of control nor out of our control but will draw attention to the Lord Jesus and not the gift nor the instrument of His choosing.

Vs. 15 So there was this great celebration as if an enemy had been defeat. Hey, come to think of it the Lord had just defeated a great enemy the enemy of the flesh as His presence was now dwelling in the midst’s of His people. Notice that the 2nd attempt of bringing the presence of the Lord amongst the people of God David is not the king out in front, he is just one the servants as the Levites are carrying the true KING to amongst His people. Simply put David was no longer fitting God into his program instead wants to fit into Gods program.

Hey look with we a moment to verse 5 and look at the instruments that David used to bring in the ark the first time while in the “*new cart*” as compared with the instruments used to bring in the ark with sacrifice.

1. The first lists of instruments are all played with the hand: Thus the first attempt was impressed with what they were doing to be near the Lord.
2. The second list is all played with breath: The 2nd attempt was a “*sacrifice of praise*” and was a move of the Spirit as breath is always a symbol of the Holy Spirit.

Does that ever illustrate the difference between the two attempts to bring the presence of the God amongst the people of God. So often people are seeking to “*move*” God near to where we are by the work of our hands. Ah but when the Holy Spirit moves us it will always be to where He is which will enviably be a “*sacrifice of praise*” where He inhabits the praise of His people instead of just being brought along for the ride!

Vs. 16 Now Michal Saul’s daughter David’s first wife looked through a window, and she saw her husband dancing before the Lord; and she despised him in her heart. So she apparently felt it wasn't dignified for the King of Israel to express his emotions before God as a common man. But it is apparent based upon verses 20 and 22 that her complaint was to found in not dancing but rather that king stripped himself of his royalty to worship him who alone is royal. Hey saint remember that you will always have those who mock your worship of the Lord as does Michal especially after you have gotten your heart right.

Vs. 17-18 After so many years the ark of the Lord, the visible manifestation of the presence of God among the people of God, had finally come to be where it was designed to be. And according to 1 Chron. 16:6-7 we are told that, as “*the priests regularly blew the trumpets before the ark of the covenant of God. On that day David first delivered this psalm into the hand of Asaph and his brethren, to thank the LORD*:” And then it mentions one psalm that later on was divided into two psalms:

1. Psalm 105:1-15 Part of which says, “*Oh, give thanks to the LORD! Call upon His name; Make known His deeds among the peoples! Sing to Him, sing psalms to Him; Talk of all His wondrous works! Glory in His holy name; Let the hearts of those rejoice who seek the LORD! Seek the LORD and His strength; Seek His face evermore! Remember His marvelous works which He has done, His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth*”.
2. Psalm 96: Part of which says, “*Oh, sing to the LORD a new song! Sing to the LORD, all the earth. Sing to the LORD, bless His name; Proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day. Declare His glory among the nations, His wonders among all peoples. For the LORD is great and greatly to be praised; He is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the peoples are idols, But the LORD made the heavens. Honor and majesty are before Him; Strength and beauty are in His sanctuary*.”

David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the Lord. Now burnt offerings were offerings that symbolized being set apart while peace offerings were fellowship offerings. Hey saint Paul tells us that we are the “*the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's*.”

Vs. 19 Further more they had a great barbeque after that would put to shame “Famous Dave’s”. All of this reminds me of what we are told in Rev. 19:9 that “*Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!*'”

What a great picture of “communion” as David distributed before all the people three items:

1. ***A loaf of bread***: Ah that’s easy Jesus is the bread of life and He took up the unleavened bread and broke it saying this is my body given for you.
2. ***A cake of raisins***: A cake of raisins, well that would be the fruit of the vine to which Jesus said this the cup of the new covenant in my blood, which is shed for you.
3. ***A piece of meat***: But what is this piece of meat? Well in Hebrews 5 refers to the Bible as the “meat of the Word” and Jesus is the word.

So as these folks went back to their homes they partook of the Lord and were “altered” by the sacrifice of praise. Further more based upon 1 Chron. 16:1 when the presence of the Lord reached its final destination the priests offered even more sacrifices.

**III. Vs. 20-23 Michal or a Maidservant**

Vs. 20-23 What a great and glorious day for the nation David must have been thinking “*Nothing can stop me now, nothing can bring me low*”! But there is the enemy right there as David goes to bless his own house and Michal comes and with biting sarcasm, “*What a dumb thing for a king to do to go out and make himself nothing!*” Michal says, “*You call yourself a king why you looked just like a servant!*” But David fires right back, “*Man I didn’t do this to spite you or bless you and did it to glorify the Lord*”. “*Woman what ever you may think of me is far too great for such a low man.*” “*Those little servant girls who I worshipped the Lord with me will be more fruitful in their lives then you who will not humble yourself before the Lord.*” Isn’t that like the world to tempt us, “*Man you’ve worked so hard, waited so long to get to the top you deserve to live a little, after all you are just a little better than every buddy else*!”

Your see David saw himself not as over the people but rather ruler over the people of the Lord. David’s stripping himself of his royal robes was an act of humbling himself before His royal KING and not an act to show how spiritual he was, it was not about him. David told Michal that however humiliated she was of ought not to be more then he saw himself before the Lord. She was bummed as the lack of his greatness reflected upon her but David wasn’t concerned in the slightest of his greatness but he was concerned with the Lord’s greatness. Spurgeon said, “*Brother, if any man thinks ill of you, do not be angry with him; for you are worse than he thinks you to be*.” In 1 Chron. 13:3 David commented upon her fathers barrenness of the presence of the Lord in Saul’s life saying that the nation had “*not inquired at it since the days of Saul*” and apparently the apple hadn’t fallen far from the tree as Michal’s physical bareness matched her spiritual barrenness.

Hey saint, there is difference between the types of instruments used to praise and there are differing types of people who praise.

1. **Michal**: Who will despise her husband for being a broken hearted servant
2. Vs. 20,22 **Maidservant**: Who will honor the Lord instead of worship a king

We will either be a Michal or a Maidservant when it comes to whom we worship, the works of our hands or the works of His hands, fruitless and barren or fruitful and worshipful! God doesn’t want our parades, the works of our hands no He wants our hearts as servants who sacrifice our importance for His. Hey folks let’s today every sixth step lay down our lives and allow Him to move us to where He is instead of trying to get Him to where we are!

Ah but did you notice that David offered a sacrifice of praise before the Lord (verse 17) before he ever blessed the people (verse 18) and that is always the way of the Lord. We must always be people who offer a sacrifice of praise before the Lord before we can ever be a blessing before His people. Far too often we Christians think that our blessing the people is the a sacrifice of praise before the Lord, “*Oh I’m right with God you see I’m serving in Sunday school*”! **God wants our hearts before He ever desires our service, only after we have spent time praising Him can be a true blessing to others**!

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

**V. Sovereign: 2 Samuel 1-24**

**1. Chp. 1-10 The King’s triumphs**

**2 Samuel 7:1-17**

**“Not offering leftovers”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 1-3 A desire to Give our best**

**III. Vs. 4-9 A shepherd not a contractor**

**IV. Vs. 10-17 A building not made with hands**

**I. Intro.**

What we have in this section is what has been called the Davidic Covenant a declaration that reaches far beyond David to Israel and even you and me. While David was wondering some 20 years he wrote in psalm 132 that he would not rest until he built God a dwelling place. But it all starts with a king’s heart to give his best for God and is told NO! It is difficult for us to hear no especially when what we ask for is clearly the right heart and motive; in fact it is a desire to be a blessing to God and His people. I know of no servant that handles this well but David reveals to us a heart that says, “*If I can’t have it my way then I’ll be involved in ant way you want me to be!*”

**II. Vs. 1-3 A desire to Give our best**

Vs. 1 Now chapter 8 tells us “*that David attacked the Philistines and subdued them*”, which would suggest that the events of chapter 7 happened after the events of chapter 8. So why would it be complied the way it is? Well it seems as thought that God wanted you and me to see the importance of this chapter above the 8th chapter. Why? Well it is a prophetic chapter as it speaks to David’s reign through a yet future Son, Jesus and speaks to you and I about the God’s ways being far greater than our own.

Vs. 2 Cedar wood was very hard to come by and was not a native tree of Israel, in fact in the fifth chapter we are told that it came from Tyre. What this tells us is that David was blessed and lived in an expensive, beautiful home. Ah, but when he was in that house he looked out and saw that the presence of God was resting inside a tent of curtains. This is a good heart to want the Church of God to be a nice place and not give God our hand-me-downs and David was bothered by the thought that he had it nicer then where the Lord’s presence dwelt amongst the people. When we consider that David had fled to the cave of Adullam where the Lord blessed him with His presence and now he lived in a cedar palace he had come along way.

As this relates to you and me it is seldom that our heart of grace grows with His heart blessings upon our lives. David is at rest and at peace because of what the Lord had done and we see him not kicking back but rather pressing on. Man does that speak volumes to me as when things are going well I have a tendency to kick back instead of pressing on. Paul spoke of this same heart in Philip. 3:13-14 when he said, “*one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*” David is spending his down time in an upward manor as he is hanging around a brother in the Lord milling over the things of God, speaking out loud about what he could do as king for God who had done so much for him. His heart was troubled because God had given him so much and David felt as he hadn’t done much for the Lord. Since the Lord had defeated all of the enemies of Israel they were sending him tribute to the toon of over a billion dollars according to some and he was palace was huge and glorious David was living in the realm of the “*life styles of the very rich and famous*”. Statistically the more a person has been blessed the less they spend upon the work of the Lord but David was looking for new ways he could bless God and the people of God and he thought, “*Man what better way then to build God a house, a glorious center in which His people could come together and extol His virtues and praise His character*”. It’s a wonderful heart to see that David wants to give back to the Lord!

Vs. 3 In Exodus 25:8-9 more than 400 years before this God instructed Moses to build the tabernacle according a specific pattern. So Nathan anticipates David’s heart by telling him “*Go do all that is in your heart, for the Lord is with you*”. Now in Deut. 12:5 God said that there would come a time where His people should “*seek the place where the LORD your God chooses, out of all your tribes, to put His name for His dwelling place; and there you shall go*.” The tabernacle was perfectly suited to Israel wilderness wonderings as they were constantly on the move. But now Israel has security on all her borders and there is a sense of permanency for God’s people so David thinks now the time was right to build a temple to replace the tabernacle. Nathan’s thought was that David’s heart was right therefore what could be wrong with the idea? So perhaps Nathan just thought of that verse and said to David “*Go for it!*”

It is never the wrong heart to want to do something special for God to want to give Him your best but doing something special and giving Him our best always starts with seeking Him! Hey saint we can sit down and dream big plans and ideas for the Lord to make His name great and fail to seek Him to see if it is what He desires. Now don’t get me wrong the heart is in the right place but the knees aren’t!

**III. Vs. 4-9 A shepherd not a contractor**

Vs. 4-7 So the word of the Lord came to Nathan saying, “*When did I ever say build me a house for me to dwell in? I never asked anyone to do so from when you left Egypt to this day I have tabernacled among you*.” “*I’m the God of peace, you go back and tell David he can’t build a house for me but I’m the chief builder and by Me building Him a house I’ll be building Me a house.*”

You see Nathan’s answer was based upon presumption which according to Webster’s dictionary is the “*reason or evidence lending probability to a belief*” but he did so before he inquired of the Lord. Hey saint, we must test even the best that our hearts have by His word. Even though the work is good and for God’s glory it still must be proved before we start. Proved? Yes surrendered to His word and to waiting patiently for His time.

In God’s response through Nathan He seems to be both honored and blessed by David’s offer to build Him a house. Like a child who bakes mud cookies for their mother “*That’s so sweet that you have that heart*” **but the taste is in the heart not the cookie**! Again it is worthy of comment as far to many of God’s children want to know how little of themselves they can give to God and still please Him instead of David’s heart that wants to do more then God asks. Further more David does so:

* Not from a heart that wants to obligate God to do something for him
* Nor from a heart that wishes to earn what He has given us

No David’s heart was, “*You’ve blessed me so Lord I want to bless you, I want to give to you the best of my time, talent and treasure.*” Far too often we give with a heart that says, “*Go ahead and take it!*” instead “*Oh God let me give it!*” Hear me out saint, based upon the Lord’s response in verses 11-16 He blesses David and the nation even more while not allowing David to build the temple. I can’t help but wonder how much of our spiritual poverty has come upon us because we have had a heart that grasps the blessings of God instead of passes them on back to Him!

Of further interest to me is that even though David now knew that the Lord didn’t want him to build a temple that didn’t stop David from gathering the materials according to 1 Chron. 29:2-9. There are a great many that would not give or serve if they can not do so on their terms but not so with David, “*Can’t build you a temple Lord, well then I’ll gather the material for someone else!*”  How about it child of God would you be willing to gather for someone else’s building? There are not many who are given the opportunity to build but the true test of the heart is whether or not they will still be just as motivated to gather for so that someone else might build!

Vs. 8-9 Now isn’t it interesting that God takes this moment to remind David that He had taken him from the pasture to the palace? And more then that He had protected him through out the whole journey making his name great in all the earth. So why remind David of these truths? Well it suggests to me that God want David to take a journey through the blessings He had bestowed upon his life. It is not often that you and I take stock of God’s work in our lives, we have such a tendency to forget His blessings adopting a “*What have you done for me lately attitude*”.

I find that God often takes me to a place where He can remind me of the way I was, a nothing a nobody. Yet because of His greatness He chooses us to reign as kings and priests with him forever. “*I took you Dale from being fatherless and on the street and I set you in My family and in My house*”. “*I never sent you any where I didn’t go with you and I’m with you now.*” “*I’m with you now and will be with you in the future and when it’s time for you to come home I’ll use what I did in you to be a blessing for others*.” Why does God do this? Well to remind us that our blessings do not come upon us based upon our deserving them but rather upon His love.

“*David you’re not a builder you’re a shepherd that’s why I called you to herd people to green pastures not to construct buildings*.” I’ve got to tell you that far too often I’ve tied to be a builder of people instead of just having a heart for them I think that is often a problem with us pastors, you see God wants Shepherds not contractors. In taking David down “*memory lane*” God is showing David that His love for him was when he was a nothing a nobody, His protection over him has been while he was held in caves out on the open land to the palace, further more God declares, that He had made David a man in whom others looked up too. So how does this relate to David’s desire to build a tabernacle? Well **God is letting David know that He was close to him through out his entire life and that intimacy with the Lord has nothing to do with a building and everything to do with where our heart is at**.

Now there is something else here to consider at no time in Israel’s history did He ever ask anyone to build Him a house. Instead He had commanded Moses to make a tabernacle that would travel with His people so that where ever they camped He would be right there with them. It is interesting to me that in John 1:14 we are told literally that “*And the Word became flesh, and did* ***tabernacle*** *among us, and we beheld his glory, glory as of an only begotten of a father, full of grace and truth*.” But now that Israel was safe in the land of promise David wanted a sense of permanence to the presence of God. But God wanted a shepherd not a contractor, someone who would continue to lead the people to Him and not to a building! If we fast forward to Solomon when he dedicated the temple in 1 kings 8:18 he said, “*the LORD said to my father David, 'Whereas it was in your heart to build a temple for My name, you did well that it was in your heart*.” Did you hear that, “You did well that it was in your heart the Lord told David”? So instead of build God a house the Lord chooses rather to build a house upon a heart not bricks!

**IV. Vs. 10-17 A building not made with hands**

Vs. 10-11 The first promise God makes David has to do with those that he serves Israel. He promises that under David’s reign that they will be secure and that they won’t be vagabonds. Secondly God promises David a legacy that will endure long after his death.

Get it? David wanted to build God a house to dwell amongst His people and God says, “*Nice jester my son but I dwell in a house not made with hands so by me granting you a legacy then I will continue to dwell amongst My people*.” What’s cool here is that God honored David based upon his intention and at the same time honored his intention by send the Son of David who would die for the sins of all man kind and then dwell in human hearts that received Him. In 1 Chronicles 22:8-10 we are given a explanation of this, “*You have shed much blood and have made great wars; you shall not build a house for My name, because you have shed much blood on the earth in My sight. Behold, a son shall be born to you, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies all around. His name shall be Solomon, for I will give peace and quietness to Israel in his days. He shall build a house for My name, and he shall be My son, and I will be his Father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel forever*.” What is interesting is that this explanation came years later and David was just told NO and would have to wait to understand the reason.

Further more God declares through Nathan that He has a plan to establish a center of worship but it will not be a work of man it will be a work of God. Go with me to Hebrews 9:11 as we are told “*Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation.*” How interesting is this that David sought a glorious temple in which the nation would gather to praise and worship God but God didn’t want people to come to a place to worship Him. No ***His plan was to always be amongst the people to travel to where ever they are to meet you and me in every situation, every circumstance so He would build a temple within every heart that wants Him***. But you know what we like to do? Well we like still to decorate the outside of our temples don’t we? Jesus said of the “*scribes and Pharisees that they were like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness*.”

So the Lord says, “*No way I can let David do what he wants to do I’ve got a better plan and I’m going to need him for it*!” “*From you David the true King will dwell amongst His people*” Again Hebrews 1:5 tells us about the Son of David saying, “*You are My Son, Today I have begotten You"? And again: "I will be to Him a Father, And He shall be to Me a Son?*” Some interpret the phrase “*If he commits iniquity*,” “**If he carries iniquity**” he shall be beaten and of coarse then this phrase would fit Jesus but most likely it is referring to Solomon who was disciplined by God but did not lose his kingdom. So what we have here before us is a prophetic word concerning a future house that God would build in which would last forever and because of this King His presence would indwell His people and they would be with him forever. In John 14:17 Jesus said, “*the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.*”

Vs. 12-17 David was only the 2nd king and the family of Saul will became totally extinct while David’s line will remain till the incarnation. What’s amazing to me is that this promise has only a future fulfillment and the only way David could receive it was like Abraham by faith. Upon hearing this promises David must have realized that the Messiah was to be born from his ancestry and that some how the redeemer was to come.

So God slips in a great promise “*You won’t be building me a temple I will through your offspring*”. The linage of David did reign for more than 400 years but they like all flesh succumbed to sin and were removed yet according to Isaiah 11:1-2 “*There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots. The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and might, The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD*.” This was partially fulfilled through Solomon as God was “*his Father, and he shall was His son and even after Solomon committed sin God did not reject him but instead chastened him*”. But then the promise reaches past Solomon to the Son of David Jesus as we are told that “*the throne of His kingdom will be forever*”. These three promises were only partially fulfilled in Solomon:

* Solomon ruled on David’s throne
* God’s mercies never departed from Solomon, though he sinned
* Solomon built God a magnificent house

But according to Jeremiah 23:5-6 we are told of yet another who would completely fulfill these words, “*Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, that I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; a King shall reign and prosper, and execute righteousness in the earth. . . . Now this is His name by which He will be called: THE Lord OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS*” Also in Isaiah 9:6-7 “*For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. . . Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it . . . from that time forward, even forever*.”

So consider God’s promises to David completely fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

* Jesus does reign, and will reign on David’s throne forever
* The Father’s mercies never departed from Jesus, even when He was made sin for us
* Jesus is building the Father a magnificent house (1 Corinthians 6:19) in the sense that we are God’s temples (1 Peter 2:5) and the church is God’s new house

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

**V. Sovereign: 2 Samuel 1-24**

**1. Chp. 1-10 The King’s triumphs**

**2 Samuel 7:18-29**

**“Beyond Mercy and Grace”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 18-21 His goodness in the present**

**III. Vs. 22-24 His goodness in the past**

**IV. Vs. 25-29 His goodness in the future**

**I. Intro.**

Here in the 18th verse through the end of the chapter we have David’s response to God’s answer of refusal to allow David to do something special for Him. What follows is David’s prayer and praise for God’s goodness as he examines it looking at the present, past as well as into the future.

You see David wanted to do something special for the Lord but there is always a danger in allowing us to do something special for the Lord and that is that we begin to think that we are special to the Lord based upon what we do for Him instead of seeing ourselves special based upon what He has done for us! So God sat David down and said, “*I can’t let you do that special thing for me but you are non-the-less precious to Me*”. I wonder how many times God’s no’s are really His goodness being distributed? David saw that God’s denial was for a greater purpose a better plan than what he had in mind for God. Hey saint, I don’t know about you but this is confession time for me man when the Lord tells me No I tend to pout not praise, how about you? **Don’t you know that you will learn to praise instead of pout when you will want what you get instead of get what you want**! How seldom does God ever find any of us humbled and left speechless by His goodness towards us? Far too often our ambitions can become far greater than His promises and when they are not achieved in our manor we pout instead of praise.

**II. Vs. 18-21 His goodness in the present**

Vs. 18 As God spoke of His plans for David he is left went only two responses Praise and Prayer.

1. He praises God for the promises

2. He prays *in* the promises

Hey saint both are necessary if we want to experience dwelling in the house that God is building us by His Son. David did not dwell on what he wanted to do for God; no he dwelled in what God was doing for him, had done and would do for him in the future. Oh to God that we would so marvel at His work towards us that we would be left speechless by His goodness towards us.

Rom. 2:4 tells us that it is “*the goodness of God leads you to repentance*?” And here we see that it leads to a thankful heart as well. David says, “*Lord, you’ve made me king, placed me in this palace, put my enemies under me and honored me with a great reputation. But look at me I’m a nothing, a nobody.*” David is thanking the Lord for the present for taking him from the pasture to the palace. Notice that David calls Him Lord God referring to God as both sovereign and the powerful promise keeper.

There are far to many time we Christians tend to think that God’s blessings and gifts make us great instead see that the greatness lies in the one who gives not in the one who receives. Jesus said in Acts 20:35 “*It is more blessed to give than to receive.*” David looked out at all the Lord had done and said, “*Who am I*” he didn’t say, “*Man I’m so great that even God's gives me gifts.*” No he said, “*God is so great that He gives even me gifts*.” I tend to think that of all of God’s creation we humans tend to be the most ungrateful as we tend to always be comparing His blessings to that which He has granted to others and say “*Why not me*” instead of looking at what He has given us and saying “*Why me*”? What this reveals to me is that I’ve become so spoiled that I think God owes me His blessings instead of seeing my self as not being deserving.

Vs. 19 The NLT renders David’s question this way, “*Do you deal with everyone this way, O Sovereign LORD?*” The answer to that question is both no and yes.

* No, because God has chosen the house of David to bring in His Son
* Yes, in that all who trust in this Son will be saved and be called a child of God.

**It is seldom that we are humbled by God’s goodness; it is more often that we are humbled by our failure**. But the truth of the matter is that we would only take the time to consider His goodness we would have more occasions to be humbled by His goodness then even our failure.

Ten times in 12 verses David calls himself the servant of God and as a servants it would be proper for David to merely wait for his master to give us orders and then simply carry out His commands but God did not bark out orders to David instead He said, “*You are My plan, all you need to do is accept it and trust Me to do the work*!” Imagine going to work for a extremely wealthy man whom you serve daily carrying out His interests and one day he calls you into His office and says, “*Son, I’ve called you into my office to let you in on a new direction for the company, it’s you*!” “*You’re the plan, and all you have to do is let me bless you, let me work in you and through you, that’s my plan*!”

Hey could it be that an attitude of gratitude comes from a perspective of our status as David was more then blessed at what God had given him because he saw himself as servant and not a king? I can’t number the times I’ve thought to my self, “*Man I deserve better than this*”! Ah but David said of himself “***I don’t deserve any of this I’m a servant of the King not the king of the servants!***” Again all of this took place right after God had told David no at building Him a temple, He didn’t sulk at not getting his way as David wasn’t about getting things his way instead he wanted God to get it His way.

Vs. 20 “*Lord, I can’t, I can’t say anything more*.” There comes a place in our hearts as we reflect upon His goodness towards us that words can’t convey our gratitude, **God’s goodness has left us speechless**. Our heart is so full that our emotions are so deep that you cannot really express them with words. As I reflect upon my own heart I’ve got to say that over my Christian life I have spent far to little time reflecting on His goodness towards me and far to much time complaining to Him about my situation. As blessed as David was at what God HAD done in his life he was already praising the Lord for what He had promised He was going to do (verse 19). It is good for us to count His blessings in our lives as these often hold the keys for us trusting His promises for the future. David seemed to always see him self as undeserving rather then deserving better.

God not only showers His mercy (*not getting what we deserve*) He also pours out His abundant grace, (*getting what we don’t deserve*). Ah but according to David the Lord goes **beyond mercy and grace to lavished His undeserved goodness upon us**. Hey, saint we are always on the look out for the qualified deserving people to reward, we give our goodness on the qualified “good people”. But God doesn’t call the qualified He qualifies the called and as they trust upon His glory, His honor, His power, His riches, He grants them His grace and strength just to confound the wise of the world.

Vs. 21 David refers to God’s work as “*You have done all these great things*”. What made these promises great was that they were dependant not upon David’s goodness and faithfulness, no they were dependant upon God’s goodness and faithfulness. David prays, “*Lord, you didn’t do all of this because I was so cool and just a great guy. I wasn’t worthy or deserving of one of your blessings in my life. No, You did it all for Your word’s sake, so that it would speak of Your goodness and glory not mine!*” Now this isn’t going to be very flattering to you and me but that’s why God chooses the most unlikely people to do His work in and through so that the glory may be to God, and not of us.

In Paul said, in 2 Cor. 4:7 *“we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us*.” I was given the task of going through Donna’s parent’s house in search of jewelry and was amazed how we found the valuable amongst the costume and that in ordinary boxes. You wouldn’t think that you would put a diamond or a sapphire ring amongst junk in a beat up old wood box, but there they were. As I was going through it finding the few nice items I reflected upon this verse as God puts His glorious treasure in our clay pots, earthen vessels. Why? So that the glory may be to God and none of us, people see the work, and they say; “*Only God could do that because it sure can’t be them*.”

**III. Vs. 22-24 His goodness in the past**

Vs. 22-24 David broadens his view of God’s goodness to both what He has done in the past as well to whom He has distributed His goodness towards, His people Israel. In Deut. 7:7-8 Moses spoke to the nation saying, “*The LORD did not set his affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples. But it was because the LORD loved you*”. So we see David looking at God’s mercy in the past towards His people as He had not given them what they deserved. God had chosen Israel to make Him known and to be a demonstration of His love towards all mankind and they as recipients of God’s goodness were not to be like other peoples who worshipped the work of their own hands as they were to remember that they were the work of His hands.

Now notice that David says that God has confirmed to Himself the people of Israel to be a people unto Him forever. There are those today who are declaring that God is through with Israel that they have been set aside and that God’s whole purposes now are to be accomplished through the church and that the church is now Israel. So they claim that all the promises that relate to Israel now apply to the church. What is interesting is that they don’t take all the things of judgment that are to come upon Israel instead they say, “*No the blessings are the Churches but the judgments are Israel’s*”.

Based upon the above truths of reflecting upon God goodness towards him David says, “*You are great, O Lord GOD. For there is none like You, nor is there any God besides You, according to all that we have heard with our ears*.” You hear what David is saying? He is extolling the goodness of God based upon personal reflection looking back over his life and says, “*I’ve experienced personally your goodness upon my life and I’m testifying that You’re the only God there is and even those people who speak of the worship of other Gods can’t come up with fiction that comes close to what I’ve experienced personally*”.

In Hab.1:5 the Lord tells the nation “*I will work a work in your days Which you would not believe, though it were told you*.” Then in Eph. 3:20 Paul say’s, “*Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us*”. Both of these verses speak of a problem with God’s goodness as it relates to our receiving it. Namely that He bless us so much that it just blows our minds we just can’t handle His goodness, so we tend to doubt and worry rather than reflect upon what He has done that blew our minds in the past and say, “*Well Lord you blew my mind last week with your goodness towards me so I’m going to just sit back and receive you blowing my mind again!*”

**IV. Vs. 25-29 His goodness in the future**

Vs. 25 David reflected upon the words God had just promised to him by simply believing Him at His Word. David just prayed through the promise and said, “*Do just as You said*.” In verse 27 David says, “*Your kingdom come*” then in verse 28 he says, “*Your will be done*”. Hey saint, David not only heard the promises of God and believes He prayed to the Lord to fulfill them just as He promised He would do.

David’s prayer is not:

* **Passive**: “*Well God, do whatever You want to do - I don't really care one way or another*.”
* **Arrogant:** “*Well God, let me tell You what to do*.”
* It is **bold**: “*God, here is Your promise - now I trust You to fulfill it grandly and to be faithful to Your word*.”

It is good for you and I to pray His word back to Him, oh not to remind Him to keep His word but rather to remind us that He keeps His word!

Vs. 26 David is applying these promises of God through prayer. Hey saint just because God promises doesn't mean that we possess what He promises. No we must trust Him through prayer like this and the God who promised will appropriate in His time. Much of God’s promises go unclaimed simply because we don’t trust Him.

Vs. 27 Hey notice that David prayed from the heart not from a book, not from a script, my point? He came before the Lord to “*pray this prayer*” to express his heart before the Lord. When we pray it is to our Heavenly father we are doing so not to be heard by others but to be heard by Him and we don’t need to impress Him nor convince Him just talk with Him.

It is clear based upon David’s words in his prayer that, “*in his heart to pray this prayer to You*”, that David’s prayer was based only upon God’s promises and not trying to strike a deal with the Lord. God writes David a check and He expects him to take it to the bank and cash it, not return and say “*It’s not what I expected, or I think I’ll take it back and get something a little different*”. How about saint, how do you receive His gifts to you?

Vs. 28-29 David say’s “*You are God, and Your words are true*,” to not do so in prayer is to say that He is a liar by saying that He can not be trusted to keep that which He has promised. Ah how many times have we been guilty of this? The foundation of any relationship must be trust and who is more trust worthy then God? Every Word of God’s is true and it is impossible for Him to lie.   
 Hey saint, God does not withhold the less that He does not bestow the greater, He does not refuse our offer that He has not a promise waiting for those that trust Him at His word. Here words of the Lord in Isa. 60:17, 22 “*Instead of bronze I will bring gold, Instead of iron I will bring silver, Instead of wood, bronze, And instead of stones, iron. They shall inherit the land forever, The branch of My planting, The work of My hands, That I may be glorified. A little one shall become a thousand, And a small one a strong nation. I, the LORD, will hasten it in its time.*” That’s His promise of goodness Christian, as Jer. 29:11 says, “*For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope*.”

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

**V. Sovereign: 2 Samuel 1-24**

**1. Chp. 1-10 The King’s triumphs**

**2 Samuel 8:1-18**

**“Walking in Victory”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 1-14 The preservation of David**

**III. Vs. 15-18 Administering judgment and justice**

**I. Intro.**

In the 7th chapter you will recall that David sat on his porch looking out and noticed that as he was in a palace while the Lord’s presence dwelt in a leather tent. On his heart was the desire to bless God and His people. 1 kings 8:18 records God’s heart towards David’s jester as written by David’s son Solomon, “*the LORD said to my father David, 'Whereas it was in your heart to build a temple for My name, you did well that it was in your heart*.” Then in the final 12 verses of chapter 7 we have David’s prayer at hearing of God’s goodness being poured out upon him and his family forever. How will David respond to such a blessing? Well based upon the 8th chapter he **walked in the victory pronounced in the promises of God**. Hey saint, I suggest to you that we will know that we have believed what God has promised not just by what we say in prayer but whether or not we will be bold enough to walk in the promises after we have got up off our knees!

The story is told of a famous tight rope walker who was about to walk across the Niagara Falls around the turn of the century. The daring deed was to be preformed on the weekend so to promote it he invited the media to attend a preview. After having walked across and performing various stunts he jump down next to the reporters and asked them a question, “*Do you fellows believe I can walk across this rope tomorrow*?” There was a loud chuckle from the reporters and the one nearest him said, “*Well sir that’s rather a silly question seeing that we just watched you do it for the last 15 minutes*”. Seeing that he got the reply he was looking for the man said, “*Well then hop on my back and let’s go for a walk!*” Of coarse the reporter declined and the next day the place was packed to watch him do so for money. My point? There is a big difference in agreeing with something and that of hopping of the bank and going for a walk, **David takes off from the bank and demonstrates that his trust was far more then mere words**!

**II. Vs. 1-14 The preservation of David**

Vs. 1-2 As we shall see David fresh off of praying in the promises of God moves out in every direction subduing those enemies that once oppressed and held large portions of the land promised Abraham by the Lord in Genesis 15. Equally interesting to me is that each of the four areas mentioned are equated to areas of our life that inhabit far too much area of our hearts that are promised by God.

Vs. 1 ***The west*** was inhabited by the Philistines and they were aggressors and oppressors. They had real anger issues and were always striving to dominate other nations around them. They had been battling with Israel for 100’s of years and had often ruled over Israel but not so under David’s reign as we see that he became the aggressor subduing the enemy. Metheg Ammah is the Hebrew name, for the city of Gath (1 Chron 18:1). Of further interest is that it was a walled city and as such could not be taken in battle but rather by a prolonged siege as they would form blockades until the people surrendered. Now remember this was the city that David twice had sought refuge in. The name literally means the “*Bridle of Bondage*” so David takes back the area that had so often been the “*Bridle of Bondage*” for the nation as well as twice in his own life. So by taking Metheg Ammah David and Israel were in control over the Philistines.

Hey saint there are areas of our lives like our anger that dominate us and oppress us, areas that we always seem to be battling. Like David we have a history of failure as he had twice over the years gone to Gath to seek refuge. So how do we handle our “*Bridle of Bondage*”? You’ve failed so often in controlling your temper only to fly off the handle again and again. Hey why not do as David did and attack the capital with a prolonged siege, starve it out. What’s the center of where your anger lies? Well that would be pride so don’t give it any ground and let the King take hold of your life and advance where you once lost? Hey saint that is what David’s Son desires to do in our lives, Jesus wants to put to flight those areas that have held you in bondage. I suppose if David had been like some of us he might have looked at the past and declared, “*Man I can’t fight against this area of my life, why I’ve spent most of my life held down by my temper*!” Ah but Christian don’t you know that we “*are more than conquerors through Him who loved us*.” (Rom 8:37) Why not try a blockade of the Word around your heart so that the anger that once held you captive will be an area where you can live a victorious Christian life.

Vs. 2 ***The East,*** was inhabited by the Moabites who were the direct decedents of an incestuous relationship with one of Lot’s daughter (Gen. 19:37). Balaam was hired by these guys and they always seem to be seducing the nation as it was Balaam who told them to send in their young ladies to seduce the nation away from God. You may also recall that David's great-grandmother Ruth was a Moabite and in 1 Sam 22:3 he entrusted his mother and father into their care. It is clear to me that the Moabites represent the lust of the eyes which we are so prone towards. The Moabites had been friendly when they thought that Saul was David’s enemy and yet he did not secure them as an ally. That’s the way of the temptation with lust just a little flirtation an long gaze people think no big deal. Now it is interesting to note that the Jewish commentators suggest based upon the absence of any further mention of David’s parents that the Moabites killed his parents. The seduction of lust will always take and ruin families and far too many have given themselves over to its lure.

Hebrew text suggests that David measured off the land and cites of the Moabites destroying 2/3 and keeping 1/3 and. The sudden change in heart was most likely from the Moabites end and not David’s as they welcomed him like the Philistines when he was on the run from Saul but as king over God’s people he was hated. There is a lesson for us as well in this namely that the Moabites of the world, may live and let live as long as we are on the run from the things of God but make no mistake start to walk with God and His people and they will turn on you in a heart beat. The territory of the world needs to be put under the things of God never be held on an equal level you simple can’t trust a Moabite!

Vs. 3-13 ***The north***, was a confederacy of kingdoms located in Syria the whole northern area a trade rout and as such was quite wealthy as the text indicates. Now the Syrians, as the text seems to indicate with their vast amount of chariots, horses, the paying of tribute (taxes) and articles of gold, silver and bronze, deals with materialism. And again we note several things based upon the text of how David defeated this confederated enemy:

Vs. 3-4 So David went after Hadadezer (*beauty of assistance*), recovering his borders of Israel from the river Euphrates expanding the kingdom for the Lord in fulfilled prophecy of Gen 15. Here is what we can glean on how David defeat materialism:

1. Vs. 3-4 **Crippled it**: The hamstringing of horses would not fare well PETA (*People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals*) but was a military necessity as they could not care for so many horses while in battle and could not risk setting them free as they could fall back into enemy hands. Now in Deut 17 God spoke through Moses not to multiply horses or wives and it seems as though David only wanted to obey part of the scriptures. Hey isn’t that a lot like us as we tend to think two out of three isn’t bad be partial obedience will led to only partial victory and partial joy. I tend to think in terms of what I am doing right that would please the Lord and believe that what I am doing right will out way what I’m not doing. Now think of this, say you have $100 in ones, fives and tens and I see it laying there and pick up $15 bucks and put in my pocket and you catch me. “*What’s your problem man you’ve got $85 I’ve got 85% right*!” God will never be content nor should we with only part of our heart submitted to Him. David did spare enough of them for one hundred chariots but in as much as he did not spare all of them it reveals that he trusted in God and not in horses and chariots. So what does this say to us, well it suggests that we need to slow down the drive for materialism in our lives and keep enough of an income to protect us not control us. Hey we will either possess or possessions or they will possess us!

2. Vs. 5-6 **Controlled it**: David took a thousand chariots, seven hundred horsemen, and twenty thousand soldiers but only kept enough horses for a hundred chariots. This caused two of the capitals of Syria (Damascus and Zobah) to join together but this was no match for David as killed twenty two thousand men and what was left became servants and paid tribute clearly the “*Lord preserved David wherever he went*” verse 6.

3. Vs. 7-9 **Conformed it**: David took the shields of gold that were on the servants of Hadadezer, all the brass and silver and dedicated it all to the Lord. Here we see the beginning of David gathering the wealth necessary for the building of the temple. He took the glory from the enemy (*the shields of gold that had belonged to the servants of Hadadezer*) and transformed them into trophies of the power and goodness of God. Hey is that not the way of the Lord? He loves to take that which at one time were “*trophies*” for the enemy and set them in His temple as trophies of His power and grace. God had told David, “*You can’t build the temple, your son will rise to build it*”, but David said, “*Well He didn’t say I couldn’t gather the material*”. I like this picture for two reasons:

1. David was content to do what ever the Lord allowed him to do and that is always the right heart, “*God never closes a door that He does not open a window*” and David was willing to use the window where many times we aren’t.
2. Second, I like picture as the material to build a place of worship was all the more precious as it came from the spoil taken from a defeat enemy. Hey saint’s that is such a great picture for you and I to see in our own lives, as the Lord inhabits that which at one time was captive by the world and now is made more precious as it has been made a temple of worship.

Vs. 10-13 David also defeated the Amalekites whom Saul did not causing his reputation to grow but David kept giving God the glory. Hadadezer had actually fought against, and defeated Toi so Joram brought with him a blessing of vessels of silver, vessels of gold, and vessels of brass which David did dedicate to the Lord. So gathering together now, tremendous amount of gold, silver, brass. As neighboring nations realized the hand of God on David they brought gifts to honor him. David’s action not only blessed his kingdom it blessed those that surrounded them a well.

The truth is God’s ways bless not only those who have received Him but those who live under His principals as well. We see that not every pagan nation surrounding Israel was hostile to Israel or their God, and David did not treat them as if they were hostile. We make a mistake if we treat every unbeliever as an openly hostile enemy of the Lord. There are a great many in the world today that are not hostile to the things of God and we must remember that we are not at war with people we are at war with satan and the world system we are to love people be hate that which ruins lives.

According to verse 11 everything that was brought to him as tribute David “*dedicated to the Lord*”. How about it is all the God has gained for you in this world dedicated to the Lord? It is a rare man that can be as humbled by success as they are by failure! Even though God knew David’s weaknesses “*He still preserved him where ever he went*”, what comfort this ought to bring to our hearts and how it ought to spur a greater desire to yield more of our hearts to Him. Proverbs 16:7 tells us that “*When a man's ways please the LORD, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him*.” And so was the case with David as Hadadezer (*beauty of assistance*) was the enemy of Toi (*one who wonders*) and so David defeated the “*beauty of assistance*” for the “*one who wonders*”.

Vs. 14 ***The South***: Was inhabited by the Edomites and in psalm 60 David gives the Lord credit for the factory. Now Edomites were the descendants of Esau who always put pleasure above the things of God as he sold his birthright for a bowl of soup. So how did David deal with Edom? Well he moved “*throughout*” their land and established forts making them subject to the principals of God. Thus we are told twice that “*The Lord preserved David wherever he went*” verse 6, 14. Man does that ever speak to my heart concerning how to deal with the flesh that wants to go after the things of the world at the expense of the things of God we’ve got to set up garrisons around our hearts and not allow those Edomites to control us.

In Gen. 15:18 Abraham was told by God that “*To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates*;” thus God fulfilled His promise through David as Israel possessed more of the promised land under David than at any other time.

Hey saint, there is a lesson here when compared to that of Saul you see David was able to do so because he did not spend his time attacking the people of God as Saul had. Far to much of the Church’s energy is spent attacking other brothers and sisters and not near enough taking back land that we have let the enemy trod for far to long. Every victory, every inch of land won, every tribute given was a testimony of what the Lord can do through a heart that is fully and wholly consecrated to Him. The picture here is quite fitting as David was blessed by the Lord in the 7th chapter he now ready go forward and take back land inhabited by the enemy. It seems that when we have recognized our strength is in the Lord, have seen that our blessings are only in the Lord then God can send us out to walk in His promises in complete victory and the more David went out serving the Lord the more his reputation grew.

**III. Vs. 15-18 Administering judgment and justice**

Vs. 15 What David accomplished in the Lord in gaining land must be maintained so he carried the same since of urgency on the domestic front as he reigned over all of Israel executing judgment and justice unto all of his people. Gaining ground once occupied by the enemy is only ½ of the battle the other is being wise stewards of what God has given you. To be a great warrior of the foreign front but lousy in domestic affairs would not be beneficial to God’s people, so we are told that David “*administered judgment and justice to all his people*.”

How was victory accomplished on the battle field as well as administering judgment and justice to Israel? Well God had subdued David’s heart and therefore God could use him to subdue nations as well as Israel. Here’s my point oft times victory is never obtained in outward things in our life because it has never been first won in our own heart! Can’t get a handle on your life, tired of having your life spin out of control? Hey why not let God have full control, as you well never have victory in your life until you give Him control of your heart!

What a great definition as to what the purpose of government is “*to administer judgment and justice*” In Rom. 13:3 Paul says, “*rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil.*”

Vs. 16-18 Part of administering judgment and justice to society involves selecting the right people in this endeavor so we have listed here some of the key people that God used to help govern and David did so by stream lining the government.

In the department of defense: Joab the son of Zeruiah was over the army

In the department of social services: Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder

In the ministry of the interior (*of hearts that is*): Two fellows were there, Zadok the son of Ahitub and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar were the priests.

In the department of justice: Seraiah was the scribe (lawyer)

Department of home land security: Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over both the Cherethites and the Pelethites (as these areas were the borders of the nation)

Chief’s of staff: David's sons were chief ministers, that is to say that David had his boy’s around doing what ever need to be doing to over see daily operations.

We are given over seven people who took up different positions to make sure that judgment and justice was being served in Israel properly. Now it is important to realize that this group of folks had greater authority but with it came greater responsibility. Most folks would be more then willing to have the authority but not the responsibility so David sought out men who were “*ready, willing and available*” and part of the success of his reign as king was do in large part in his ability to assemble, train, empower, and maintain such a team. And such is the case in the body of Christ as we are told in Eph. 4:12 “*the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ*”.

Hey saint there is a limit to what we can be and what we can do for the Lord without order and organization. Now I’m not saying that order and organization are requirements for the Christian life but God is a good of order and in so doing His Church becomes more like the Lord.

  It appears based upon these two names “*Cherethites and Pelethites*” that David hired some personal body guards from Crete. By so doing he could make sure that those that were around him would be loyal to him and not their own tribe. There is something to do this as it is good for the Church as well as any organization to have those around it that are loyal to it, those who want to pull the rope together instead of apart. David not only won battles he rightly managed the business of the nation. He appointed the right men to the right positions.

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

**V. Sovereign: 2 Samuel 1-24**

**1. Chp. 1-10 The King’s triumphs**

**2 Samuel 9:1-13**

**“To Kill With Kindness”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 1-6 Dropped, crippled and barren**

**III. Vs. 7-13 What the kindness of God looks like**

**I. Intro.**

Before us in these 13 verses is a story that serves to illustrate what the “*kindness of God*” looks like. There are two man characters in the passage David and Mephibosheth the only surviving son of Jonathon Saul’s grandchild. How can you and I know if we have ourselves been recipients of the goodness of God? Well the most visible way is to see how we distribute God’s goodness to others.

David had his mind blown by God’s promise to bring forth the Messiah from his loins and responded three ways:

1. 7:18-29 Praying in the promises: The first thing we do is begin by trying to get our hearts and minds around His goodness towards us this is accomplished by “Faith” looking at our unworthiness laid next to His faithfulness.
2. 8:1-18 Walking in the victory of the promises: The next thing we do is begin to apply those promises to our lives by ridding our lives of things that have defeated us and occupied far too much of our hearts, (*anger, lust, materialism and the pursuit of the things of this world*).
3. 9:1-13 Distributing the promises to others: Finally there comes upon our hearts a realization that what has happened to us must be given away to others who are in need.

**II. Vs. 1-6 Dropped, crippled and barren**

Vs. 1 When we come to this chapter David has been on the throne for close to 15 years. Here we see two important things:

1. David clearly remembered the covenant he made with Jonathan. (1 Sam. 20:12)

2. He clearly understood the goodness that had been given him by the Lord.

We are not told specifically what caused him to remember Jonathon and the promise made in 1 Sam 20:15 where Jonathan said, “*You shall not cut off your kindness from my house forever, no, not when the LORD has cut off every one of the enemies of David from the face of the earth.*” But David found himself and the nation in the place that God had cut off every one of his enemies, so he sees the faithfulness of the Lord and desires to be faithful to his promise. So David asks, “*Are there any family members left from Saul*?”

Now David did not ask if there were any alive from the house of Saul that he might take **vengeance** upon them, that he may **eliminate** them as a threat to his kingdom, but instead that he may show God’s kindness upon them. Only a man who has himself experienced the kindness of God upon his life can act so and then only upon continual reflection of such goodness.

Consider this in light of David; “*Is there any alive from the family of the man who twice tried to kill me with a spear, any alive who robbed me of my wife, who pursued me for 15 years seeking to kill me. Any alive from the man who made my life so miserable that I turned my back upon my God?*” Why do you ask David? “*Oh that I may shower God’s loving kindness that I promised my best friend Jonathan.*” Now this is important as we are told that David desired to do so for “*for Jonathan's sake*” this wasn’t just based upon feelings no it was because he had promised Jonathan. The desire to bless his enemy’s grandson was based upon a promise made to another. Hey saint, doing what is right based upon our feelings is a slippery slope we must not allow our feelings to dictate to our heart what is right, our obedience is based upon a promise made to our Friend, Jesus.

Vs. 2-4 The fact that David looked up Ziba reveals that Mephibosheth was in hiding, why even Mephibosheth’s Aunt Michal who is married to David has no idea of his whereabouts. So David asks Ziba’s (strength) and apparently he at one time was quite loyal to Saul. It is here that we begin to get a picture of the candidate that David seeks out to distribute “kindness of God” towards. Now as we look at this fellow Mephibosheth *pay close attention to him as you find that he fit the profile of the person today whom God desires to distribute His kindness towards*.

A. First we have his name, Mephibosheth. It means Idol killer but originally it was Meribbaal or “*Baal contends*” but was changed “*killer of idols*”. Here was a young man whose name extolled the virtues of an idol and so it was changed to killer of idols. In the Hebrew it came to be recognized as “*shameful one*”.

B. Second we note that he is the son of Jonathan and was lame in his feet. He had been dropped and the result of the fall had left him lame in both feet, as his nurse took him up in her arms upon hearing the news that his father and grandfather were dead. Gone from his memories and hope was that he was the son of a prince and himself an heir to the throne. How about you have you ever been dropped and the resulting fall left you lame crippled? I don’t think there is a one of us who at some time hasn’t experienced the sensation of being dropped in this life. Dropped by a boy friend or girl friend, dropped from a job, dropped by a parent who has left or died! The resulting fall has effected you, you still can’t put full wait on those legs, you still can’t get up and dance with joy or trust as you once did. “*He said she said they loved me*!”, “*They said they would always be there for me*!” “*They promised me a raise*!”

C. Third we note his whereabouts “*the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, in Lo Debar*.” Looking up the names Machir means to “*be sold*” while Ammiel means “*people of God*” while Lo Debar mean “*no pasture or barrenness*”. Here’s the picture Mephibosheth, living in someone else’s house in area called “***barrenness***”, on the other side of the Jordan river, in the area of Gilead, where the tribes of Manasseh, Gad, and Reuben, had settled. It became a place where when anybody was in trouble, they’d run to this area and this is where the nurse took the child. Mephibosheth is living apart from the people of God in a barren wilderness, he is the only ligament heir to his grandfather’s throne and he is living with some friends in Lo Debar.

Oh I can so relate to Mephibosheth, as he was yet five years old when someone came and told him that his father and grandfather were dead and life dropped him and it crippled him! I can still recall being only two weeks shy of my fifth birthday excitedly awaiting to go to my fathers airport in Hesperia to watch his stunt show when my grandparents came to our home to let us know that my father’s plane had crashed and he was dead. Life dropped me at that moment and the legs that had carried with joy to his arms were shattered. And for 17 years I lived crippled in a wasteland starving for the love of my father. Oh how my heavenly father longed to scoop me up and take me in to his table as His son. But I was afraid, angry and crippled by life! That’s my story of being dropped and crippled living in Lo Debar but it we all have the same experience.

Vs. 5-6 David wants to show the greatness of God, the goodness of God but how do you suppose that you can show the world the greatness and of goodness of God? Well you take a person any person one in whom you have promised to demonstrate the love of God towards one who has been dropped by this world and it has left him crippled and afraid. He has made his home far away in another person’s house living in a parched land all out of fear of being dropped once more and that person you reach out and love on. Mephibosheth is a picture of all of fallen humanity, dropped by life, living in bareness where not even those close to us care to know where we are.

Hey listen up as verse 6 says that David sought him out and called out his name, “*Mephibosheth*”! Oh he had heard his name called many a time but it had been years since he had heard spoken this way with such love and care. Perhaps Mephibosheth had feared that one day David would come calling and it would mean his life and the life of his family would be killed. Mephibosheth must have thought that things had gone from bad to worse as he know comes in before the man whom his grandfather had sought to kill and ruin. There are a great many that see God the way Mephibosheth saw David. But what did David see? When Mephibosheth looked at him and spoke, “*Oh how this man reminds me of my friend Jonathon*”, David saw in Mephibosheth the resemblance of the man he loved more than a brother. Is that not what God sees when he sees us in our struggle and failure, “*Oh I see that one through the eyes of my son, his voice oh how it reminds me of the voice of My Son?*”

On this day when he heard his name it was from the very one whom he had been hiding from. Do you not see the parallel? You have been dropped and it has left you crippled and you held in a dry and bitter place afraid of the very One who wants to bless you. Do you hear Him call your name, He is not angry, He has not come to take your life He has come to save your life and to give you back your life. And what of Mephibosheth reply? “*Here is your servant…such a dead dog as I*”. Oh the heaviness of hopelessness, “*Dare I trust, I’m crippled and bitter, I’ve been dropped so many times I have nothing to give. What kind of servant can I be one who can not walk, what burdens can I bare for a master worthy of saving my life?*”

**III. Vs. 7-13 What the kindness of God looks like**

Vs. 7-9 I believe that when David called out to Mephibosheth that it was in a tone that communicated love as David was thinking of his father Jonathan and his desire to fulfill that vow he had made with Jonathan. So though he could hear the excitement and love in the voice of David it should have brought comfort but based upon Mephibosheth’s reaction he was still uncertain and fearful of David’s intentions as David tells him not to fear and then gives the reasons why he has no worries.

Is that not the way our Lord treats us? He seeks us out while we were yet lost then gives us back all that we lost from His inheritance, then He invites us to sit at His table forever and provides for the well being of our future. And all this is for the sake of another because of His love and promise to another. David said, “*Do not fear*”! And then did not wait for fear to set in, “*I loved your father and I promised him I’d take care of you, I’m going to give back to you what is right fully yours.*” “*Hey, more than that I’d be honored if you would become my son and sit at my table the rest of your days*”. “*Why you can have the family of Ziba to work the fields to provide for them and your family but you, well you sup with me from here on out!*” That’s how we ought to pray, “*Father, it’s for Jesus’ sake, not for my sake you have been gracious to me you have given me not what I deserve, I come now in Jesus’ name, to receive Your grace that is extended to me*”

In the 3rd verse David declared that he was going to show the descendant of Saul the “***kindness of God***” but what does it look like?

1. Vs. 3-6 It is towards those least likely to be its recipients but yet need it the most
2. Vs. 7a Its first order is to move the person from fear to security
3. Vs. 7b It is distributed not upon the value of the person but upon the promise made to another.
4. Vs. 7c Its aim is restoration, to give back all that God wants to give the person
5. Vs. 7d Its heart is reconciliation, the kindness of God is not just about returning lost items but reuniting broken relationships
6. Vs. 10-11 It is not just after an immediate change but provision forever, changing our location and our sustenance, that which sustains us.

**Four times in seven verses David say’s that Mephibosheth shall “*eat bread at my table*”** **continually**, **always**, **like one of his sons**. Those three descriptions serve to qualify the meaning David’s words towards Mephibosheth of “*eating bread at my table*”. Clearly, *the greatest thing that David was giving was time with him daily, time with the king:*

* **Continually**, not just on a whim or when the king was in a good mood.
* **Always**, even when Mephibosheth had blown, messed up and had been what he should have been towards David
* **Like one of his sons**, not a 2nd class citizen but treated with all the rights and privileges of a full heir

In Luke 10:20 as the disciples whom Jesus has sent out came back to Him to give a report of all that had happened they were so excited about what they were able to accomplish in Jesus name but hear what Jesus said to them, “*do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven*.” Oh dear saint do you hear the heart of God towards you in the repeated phrase of David to Mephibosheth of “*eating bread at my table*”? **The Kings table is the place that through out eternity will hide crippled legs and imperfect walks and we will sit down at His Fathers (now our Father’s) table and His banner over us is LOVE**!

What a great exhortation this is for you and I to reach out to those who may have a beef with us and kill them with kindness. One wonders what would happen in a world where those who have miss treated us were paid back not with hatred or like kind but kindness of God. A world in where we would truly follow Jesus words to “*Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you*.” Oh, you just bombed us killed some of our family, well let me bless you with food and love! **Hate can not exist in a world where love and kindness are the only weapons**. Now that we have sat at the kings table we ought to be like David to Mephibosheth:

* Seeking out our enemies to bless them
* Looking for the poor, weak, lame, and hidden to bless them
* Bless others when they don't deserve it, and bless them more than they deserve
* Bless others for the sake of someone else

Vs. 10-12 We are told that Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants according to 19:17 but the 16th chapter as David is fleeing Absalom he comes with a tall tail saying that Mephibosheth doesn’t want to come and that he wants to be king but it’s all a lie as we are told in the 19th chapter so that Ziba and his family can have all that David had given to Mephibosheth. Even so Ziba and his descendants remained servants to Mephibosheth’s and his son Micha (who is like God) all of their days as they ate at the king table. There will always be those who will do what they are told but will change their toon when they have a chance but don’t let it “*eat at you*” cause it won’t change the truth that you still get to sit at the kings table and they will still have to be tilling the fields.

Vs. 13 Take a close look at verse 13 and the words “*So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem, for he ate continually at the king's table. And he was lame in both his feet*.” Do you see that? Mephibosheth simply made a choice to receive the king’s offer and moved to Jerusalem and ate continually at the kings table. You see there are a great many who do not take the King up on His offer and they in stead remain crippled living in Lo Debar. How about you? **Yes Mephibosheth was lame in both his feet but he didn’t need to be crippled living apart from the king and neither do you**! I can’t help but wonder how many of the promises of God go unclaimed simply because we refuse to believe in the kindness of God that has been bestowed upon us from the Son of David. Could it be that there are yet fast amounts of blessings that are ours by faith be they lay dormant because of the fear of unbelief?

So David restored what was Mephibosheth’s by way of his father and grandfather but more than that he invites him to be his son and takes care of his family from here on out. Oh how good is God as He more than restores the years of sin upon our lives. We have messed up our lives, family and our health, but God restores the years the locusts have eaten.

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

**V. Sovereign: 2 Samuel 1-24**

**1. Chp. 1-10 The King’s triumphs**

**2 Samuel 10:1-19**

**“I come in peace”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 1-7 Rejection of kindness**

**III. Vs. 8-19 I’ve got your back**

**I. Intro.**

The 9th chapter served as a wonderful illustration of the heart of God to mankind who like Mephibosheth have been dropped by life and the resulting fall has left them unable to walk. Yet it is these very people that our Lord searches out that He may invite to sit with Him forever at His table as one of His children. Now in the 10th chapter David’s desire to distribute the goodness of God this time will lead to war and not peace, as his act of kindness is misunderstood and leaves David to have to defend the honor of others and the honor of God. This too serves as an illustration of what some chose to do with the goodness of God has they misunderstand or fail to appropriate the kindness of God towards them and how we who are called to be His ambassadors should handle it.

**II. Vs. 1-6 Rejection of kindness**

Vs. 1-2 Here in these two verses we are given the reason for the war between Ammon and Israel and it was not as one might expect. You see the battle happened because Hanun listened to his advisers who clearly misunderstood David’s intentions (perhaps deliberately). Man does that not ever ring true today as many relationships have been severed based upon someone misunderstanding the intentions of another.

You might recognize the name Ammon as it is the capital of Jordan so that will give you a geographical idea of where Ammon was, (neighboring Moab). At any rate in verse 2 when Nahash (*snake*) died who had been friendly towards Israel David decided to send some folks to console the people and Hanun his son (*gracious*). Ammon and Nahash had history with Israel as Saul’s first military victory was over Nahash when they attacked Jabesh Gilead (1 Sam. 11). But in spite of this bad history David had developed a relationship with a king to whom at one time they had been at war with.

Brothers and sisters we too need to have a heart to develop and encourage relationship with people outside of our circle of friends even if at one time they were against us. If our heart has been touched by the goodness of God as we extend God’s kindness towards those who may have a beef with us. Notice as well David didn’t just talk about it he backed it up by sending an envoy to help and to grieve with the nation.

David is extending “kindness” to those that Saul and the nation had done battle towards. Hey saint it is important that having been invited to the kings table that we be personally involved in the invitation process ourselves. David was seeking peace with those who previously the nation had been at war with, may I make this suggestion to you and me? You have heard it said, “*If you can’t say something nice don’t say anything at all*”. Perhaps we can add to this and find something nice to say about those who for what ever reason can’t say something nice about us.

Vs. 3-5 We can not be sure what motivated Hanun (*gracious*) counselor’s to suggest this of David’s motives it could be that they generally suspected him or that they wanted to appear wise to the new king but it was a bad decision. Hanun did two things to embarrass David’s servants:

1. “*Shaved off half of their beards*”: According to the Torah (first five books of the Bible) the beard is a sign of masculinity so this was as great humiliation. The beard was seen as mans greatest ornament and cutting off half of it was a greatest insult especially to an ambassador of a king. A person would often swear or make a pledge by way of their beard “*I swear* *by the hair of my chiny chin, chin*” further more a beard was a sign of being a free man while clean shaven was a sign of a slave, so shave off ½ leaving the other half was a great insult.
2. “*Cut off their garments in the middle*”: Perhaps this is where the word em-bare-assed comes from? Again this was an act of great insult and humiliation as it would expose a person’s nakedness and with the Israelites the fact that they were circumcised and other nations were not brought about even more ridicule.

To insult the ambassador of a king was to insult the king it was an act that was just as if they had done so to David. Based upon Isa. 20:3-4 the act of Hanun was the way you would treat a prisoner of war, so this would have been viewed as a declaration of war. The truth is there was great racial hatred and David’s recent attack upon their close neighbors the Moabites furthered this hatred. In the case of Hanun immaturity and arrogance triumph over wisdom and humility. As they thought that this was espionage and that this act of kindness was for the purpose of future invasion and as it was the immaturity and insecurity of the new king this led to paranoia and his response was more or less a declaration of war as he shaved off ½ their beards and cutoff off ½ of their robes.

Hey saint, Jesus told His disciples in John 15:18 “*If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you.*” Our Lord takes it personal when folks mess with His friends and brothers. But notice that David cared more for the men then he did to use them to motivate hatred towards the Ammonites as he told them to remain in Jericho until their beards had grown out. David’s heart was to conceal the embarrassment of his friends, man that is a good word for us to conceal the hurt and heartaches of those of the body of Christ.

Vs. 6 Here David was doing a good thing wanting to be a blessing and the nation David thought was friendly towards him wants to cut him off and embarrass him. Hey saints I hate to say it but we will all go through times like this where we want to be a blessing to someone and they want to ***cut us and expose us***. How do we handle this, man I’ve got to say that it causes me to want to pull out and retreat but that’s not what the Lord would have us to do? Notice that David does four things:

1. Vs. 5b “*Wait at Jericho until your beards have grown, and then return*.” David’s first response was towards those that were embarrassed as he seeks to protect them and defend them. He did not send them out to take vengeance upon those who had done so, no he tells them to stay in Jericho until their beards have grown back. Now Jericho means “*pleasant fragrance*” so David sent them to a place of sweetness. Hey, when we have been cut and exposed by someone we have tried to show kindness too we need to head off to our “Rose of Sharon” our fragrant place and take sometime for things to grow back. Not to worry our wounded heart, like these fellows beards, will grow back our hurt and embarrassment won’t be permanent.

2. Vs. 6-7 The second thing I notice is that David didn’t immediately attack he waited to see the intentions of those who had embarrassed his men. The problem with this action was that Hanun had not counted the cost of his actions and could not militarily back it up so he higher mercenaries from Syria. So when he sees them gathering 33,000 Syrians to fight by paying them 2 million he sends Joab to gather the mighty men. Far too often when this sort of thing happens we want to rush out and attack instead of waiting to see the heart of the person or persons involved.

This restraint is even more amazing when we realize that the people of Ammon had no one to blame for David’s reaction other than Hanun the king and his advisers. Why do I bring this up? Well the tendency we have is to pick fights in reaction to those who have picked a fight with us and all this does is make a bad situation worse. In Rom. 12:10-18 Paul gives seven things necessary to maintain a good reputation:

A. “*Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another*”

B. “*Distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality*” “

C. “*Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse*”

D. “*Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep*”

E. “*Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion*”

F. “*Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men*”

G. “*If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men*”

Again remember to make matters worse the people of Ammon hired the Syrians as mercenaries and we are told in 1 Chronicles 19:6 that they paid Syrians 1,000 talents of silver in today’s market that would be well over 2 million dollars.

This is the first time in scripture that the army of Israel is called the “*the army of the mighty men*”, these were some of the same fellows who in 1 Sam were 22:2 came to David in the cave of Adullam that were the “*stressed out, put out, and bummed out*”. So what has happened to cause such a transformation? Well in the corresponding book of 1 Chron. 19:13 we are told Joab’s words to the troops “*Be of good courage, and let us be strong for our people and for the cities of our God. And may the LORD do what is good in His sight.*” “*Men let’s go for it and trust our mighty God*! Joab said.” They were the army of mighty men because they trusted in their mighty God! That’s how we can face off against our enemy and be of good courage, strong for our people and the cities of our God “*the Lord will do what is good in His sight*”!

Hey consider a few of these fellows one of them killed 800 men at one time, another killed a lion in a pit on a snowy day and still another took on a huge Egyptian and killed him with his own spear. My point? God does not look for extraordinary people; no He finds ordinary people who will simply trust an extraordinary God to do what is good in his sight! So may be you have a fight coming up with 800, or a lion in a pit on a snowy day or some big old Egyptian with a spear trust in your extraordinary God!

**III. Vs. 8-19 I’ve got your back**

3. Vs. 8-12 Based upon 1 Chron. 19 they sought the Lord and then relied upon the Lord on how to over come the situation. As Joab approached the battle he noticed that they were surrounded as in front of them were the Ammonites at the entrance of the gate and behind them were the Syrians. The mercenaries were the toughest ones so Joab put the rest of the mighty men into the hands of Abishai his brother to face the weaker force of Ammon while he takes the finest of the troops to face the Syrians, knowing that they are the stronger of the two. Ands then in verse l1, “*If I can’t handle the Syrians then you come and help me but if the people of Ammon are too strong for you, then I will come and help you*”

Next in verse 12 Joab reminded the troops to “*Be of good courage, and let us be strong for our people and for the cities of our God. And may the LORD do what is good in His sight.*” It does not seem to have occurred to him to surrender even though they were surrounded by the enemy instead he calls the army to have courage and faith and go for it. Perhaps you may be thinking why does Joab have courage be for trusting the Lord? Well I think about it what they needed was courageous trust not trust in their courage! Notice as well that Joab reveals to the army that such a decision was a matter of choice and not a mere feeling the soldiers need to make a courageous choice to trust God. He also brought into perspective that a loss here meant that their families would lose as well, finally Joab reminded them that behind them in spite of their weakness and doubt was a good God who was for them! In Joab’s speech was not one word of the strength of the enemy they faced, he simply said “*Fellows, lets role!*” Hey, saint there is a great balance between ***inspiration*** and ***perspiration*** in our ***preparation*** to which our God calls us too. “*We may be trapped we will plan right, we will take care of each other and most importantly we will trust the results to the Lord*”. Too much reliance on inspiration can cause us to do nothing and have a kick back attitude. Ah but too much reliance upon perspiration can cause us to be doing things in our own strength and not in God’s.

Hey, a lot of the times when we have been betrayed we feel as if we have been cut off, embarrassed and the situation leaves us with a since of being surrounded doesn’t it? So how did they handle this? Well they had each others back, “*Hey I’ll take care of this and you take care of that and if I get into trouble you help me and if you get into trouble I’ll come to help you*”. Man that’s a good word for you and I when someone comes in to cut into us and expose us, let’s believe the best and come to their aid!

4. Vs. 13-19 The Syrians sought reinforcements and went after David but he doesn’t leave the battle to just “*the mighty men*” no he enlists the nation. Here is what we glean from this, if we all come together when someone has been cut off and exposed, when they are felling surrounded then we will put the enemy to flight.

Joab and the army of mighty men never got to engage the Syrians in battle as the mercenary army of Syrians fled seeing God was with them. Now this speaks to me about motivation, how so? Well you can pay some people 2 mill to go out and do your fighting but in the end a dead man can spend no money! Hey saint, it is why God spends so much time sending you and I to the school of trials to develop right hearts in our service towards Him because He hasn’t called us to be soldiers but servant, not warriors but worshippers! Now the Ammonites saw the Syrians retreating they booked as well 2 million didn’t buy courage for them either.

They gathered men as far as way as the Euphrates and the defeat was we are only given the deaths the charioteers and horsemen but not the foot soldiers. After the defeat the Syrians were not interested in the dollars to help the people of Ammon. You see the Syrians realized that they had been defeated by Israel thought, “*Hey man we aren’t going to get to many more jobs as mercenaries if all we do is turn and run*” so they back together. Hey Christian our enemy may turn and run when we trust our God and go forward but you can bet he won’t quit after one defeat. David took this opportunity to gather some reinforcements as in the rest of the army and not just the army of mighty men. There are far too many Christians who are quite content to let a few go to battle protecting them and their cites but Christianity is a team not just a few mighty men, so David wisely gets everyone into the battle.

Consider the difference between Mephibosheth and Hanun: When David had desired to show the kindness of God towards Mephibosheth, it was received because Mephibosheth was broken and humble but the same desire to distribute the goodness of God to Hanun is rejected and even attacked. It all is a matter of the heart as to whether or not we will receive the goodness of God.

Finally, we need to take note that this battle took place in the fall which will set up what happens in the 11th chapter which happens in the spring. This was a great time for the nation and David is a strong king but as we shall see next week. Paul wrote in 1 Cor. 10:12-13 “*let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.*” You see next week we will see that the Ammonites are still in their city of Rabbah (*contentious*) and in the spring David sends Joab and the army back out while he waits in Jerusalem and it will be then that he fell into sin with Bathsheba.

What does this have to do with you and me? Well God doesn’t call us to be spectators but participants! Someone once called professional football 50,000 people who desperately need exercise watching a less than a dozen who desperately need a rest. Far too often this describes God’s church and it ought not to be so, so let’s get busy and at very least it may keep us from falling into sin!

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

**V. Sovereign: 2 Samuel 1-24**

**2. Chp. 11-24 The King’s troubles**

**2 Samuel 11:1-14**

**“For His eyes only”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 1-5 A stroll into sin**

**III. Vs. 6-14 Lying cheater**

**I. Intro.**

This week we had the Burns Tester debate at the PAC and I’m certain that neither one of them issued press releases speaking about all the reasons why you shouldn’t vote for them. But the biblical record is not about a campaign that elevates man’s goodness and why he is worthy of God’s love and attention it is about ordinary people who do incredibly dumb things and how God continues to work in their lives to accomplish His purposes. Consider these folks:

* Noah a man full of grace in the eyes of the Lord got drunk
* Abraham the great man of faith twice lied about his wife calling her his sister
* Jacob the man who would be called Israel (ruled by God) lied to his father to deceive his brother to obtain the birth right
* Moses the great leader and deliver of Israel twice lost His temper the first time killing a man the second time miss representing the nature of God
* David a man after God’s heart commits adultery and murder
* Peter the rock loses his courage and denies Jesus three times in one night

Man I feel better about myself already! It would take David nine months before he would come clean about his sin and only after the Lord revealed to his buddy Nathan. And though he would be forgiven he would pay for the consequences of this action the rest of his life. “*The good things God has for us have been paid for in advance, but the things of the flesh that we pursue are paid for on the installment plan*.”

**II. Vs. 1-5 A stroll into sin**

Vs. 1a Before we examine the fall of a man after God’s own heart we need to realize that this was not a sudden plunge off a ledge in the darkness, it was a gradual decent in broad day light over 20 years. Several points need to made up front when examining this:

1. **Not age related**: David is around 50 and I mention this to dispel the false notion that this is just a young man’s struggle. **Brothers, sisters we will need to be either dead or raptured to not struggle with lust**.
2. **Life not a mess**: The nation was at the peak of their power and prowess over their enemies. For 17 years David had walked in fellowship with the Lord, through hardships and prosperity, peace and war. Yet there lay within his heart a lack of trust, a tad bit of insecurity and an enemy that could not invade the nation from the outside found a way into that heart, a heart in which in every other way was for God. Hey saint take note, **Our enemy may lay defeated in ground won in battle but is still able to defeat us in land that he was never vanquished from**.

Here then is the history of David’s sin which culminated in adultery with Bathsheba. In chapter three we can count 7 wives including Michael Saul’s daughter. Then in chapter 5:13 we are told that he took “*more concubines and wives from Jerusalem*”. So this was a problem for some time, it was nothing knew. In Deut 17 were the rules for a king that said they were “*not to multiply wives, horses, gold and silver*” but David kept only two of those commands. Why were there such rules for a king? Well there is a price to pay when someone is called to serve and lead God’s people. God knows how easily distracted our hearts are by these things. You can look at David and see that he did not worship money as he dedicated it to the Lord (8:11) he was not a prideful man as he had a good grasp on his humble up bringing (7:18) but he had a problem with women. So David did what many do concerning their lives and compromise ***he compartmentalized God’s word*** by disregarding the clear teaching of Perhaps he thought, “*Hey I’m off duty*” so he indulged himself with, “*A thought and a thought led to a look and a look developed into a desire and a desire formed into an action*!”

Vs. 1b-3 If we look at James’ words in 1:14-15 where he says, “*each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death*.” Notice that James uses the word “enticed” which means to be entrapped it is our own fleshly desired that entrap us. We can see the same blue print of sin here with David:

1. Vs. 1b **Idleness**: “*In the spring, at the time when kings go off to war… David remained in Jerusalem.*” Spring time in our country signifies the start of baseball season but in Israel is signified the start of the ***battle season***. It was to cold to fight in the winter so they would go back and rest up for the spring time battles. As noted last week David’s act to distribute the kindness of God may have played a part in his decision to stay at home when the battle was not finished. Hey saint God has not designed you and me to be spectators, when we become spectators instead of participants we get into trouble. Consider the twin cities of Sodom and Gomorrah what do you suppose was their sin? Well most if not all would say sexual immorality but according to scripture in Ezek 16:49 “*this was the iniquity of your sister Sodom: She and her daughter had pride, fullness of food, and abundance of idleness; neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy*.” Sexual immorality is where these cities ended up but clearly they were blessed with full provisions, lots of time and instead of being a blessing kicked back and took it easy which led to sin. Idleness is not just inactivity it is activity without purpose and such Idleness will lead to a troubled heart. Someone once wrote “*If you are idol do not be alone and if you are alone don’t be idol*”! Remaining in Jerusalem is not automatically a problem as you will recall that Mephibosheth found strength and refuge in Jerusalem at the kings table. But I suggest that *the kings table is afar different place the kings roof pacing back and forth*. The Ammonites lay defeated but not destroyed, subdued but not in subjection and such can our fleshly passions trick us so that we will not go out and destroy the areas of our lives that seek to conquer us. The truth is David was safer in the battlefield than he was on his own roof!
2. Vs. 2 **Imagination**: “*From the roof he saw a woman bathing. The woman was very beautiful*”. David awoke from his siesta that he went up on the roof with its garden and all to look out over the city. He saw a woman who was bathing; and she was very beautiful to look upon. The fault lie not that he saw her bathing but rather that he began to fantasize about her in his heart. How do we know? Well it says that he saw that she was “*very beautiful*”. The moment he saw her he needed to come down off the roof instead he decided to linger and gaze which gave birth to sin. To further back up this the Hebrew form of the word “*walked*” suggests that David paced back and forth on the roof. Now this tells me that something caused him to be restless, perhaps this was because he wasn't where God wanted him to be. There are those who wish to find fault with Bathsheba suggesting that she is some way acted immodestly. However consider that the Bible does not indicate this, she was bathing at a time when most people were asleep and she had no way of knowing that David would be watching. Likewise there is no indication that David planned of seeing her, his sin did not lie that he saw her but the phrase “*the woman was very beautiful to behold*.” Indicates that he kept looking! Hey brothers the Bible says in Job 31:1 “*I have made a covenant with my eyes; Why then should I look upon a young woman*?” we need to keep our eyes on the Lord and not a any other woman other than our wife. It says that Bathsheba “*was very beautiful to behold*” But the problem was not in her beauty but in the heart of David. You see David had many wives who were very beautiful; Solomon his son had 700 wives and 300 concubines surly there were some beauties among them. Fellow’s the problem of lust is that it is comes from a heart that is never satisfied with what it has been given. Consider Joseph who was more than seduced daily be a beautiful woman he was attacked but he fled temptation yet David just looks upon her and the temptation was to strong. Was the difference to be found in Bathsheba being much better looking than Potiphar’s wife? No the problem lie not in the temptation but in the heart being tempted! David looked at Bathsheba and saw beauty but God looked at David’s heart and saw ugliness. Mankind wants to call it an “affair” but God calls it adultery. David wanted to call it love but God called it lust. David thought “*oh so sexy*” but God said, “*oh so sinful*”. Saint this is romantic” its ruin and destruction.
3. Vs. 3 **Inquiry**: “*and David sent someone to find out about her*”. He had already step over the line when he remained on the roof but when he sought to know more about that which in his heart he had already committed adultery seeking to make his fantasy a reality. The bottom line is you no you have a problem if you “send after your sin”. I mean did David do invite a few of his servants up on the roof to check her out and watch her bathe? What did he learn?
   * 1. Well that she like him (many times over) was married.
     2. He found out that she was a daughter of a mighty man and a granddaughter of a trusted adviser, and finally that her husband was also of mighty men. Those facts ought to have been more than enough to cause him to repent but all he heard was that Uriah the husband was away!

Time must have temptation and temptation needs opportunity and all of this need to take root in a heart that has already been made fertile for the weeds of sin to grow. As soon as he was told it should have caused him to repent and turn away being that she was a married woman. Ahithophel was a close friend and in the Psalm 55:12-13 David makes reference of him as he will side and give aid to his son, Absalom when he rebelled against him. No doubt lost respect for David because of his relationship with his granddaughter.

In Num. 32:23 Moses told the men of Gad and Manasseh “take note, you have sinned against the LORD; and be sure your sin will find you out”. Hey Christian be it known there really is no such thing as a “secret sin” All sin is against God, and He sees it all Jesus said in Luke 12:2 “*For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, nor hidden that will not be known*”. I Chron 28: 9 tells us that “*the LORD searches all hearts and understands all the intent of the thoughts.*”

Vs. 4 Now though it is true that David committed adultery in his heart on the roof but the action he took afterwards was far worse. There are those who would suggest that the two are equal in some way but just ask anyone who has had their spouse commit adultery and ask them if it is the same? The phrase “*took her*” does not mean by force but that she did not offer any hesitation, simple put it take two to tango and Bathsheba is not with out blame! I’m not suggestion that she may have not been seduced by his power, looks and charm but she like him still had a choice.

One of the questions people ask is why Bathsheba was so willing to go with David’s messengers and then submit to his desires? Some want to say that it was Bathsheba that seduced David and that he fell into her trap of seduction. Other suggest that her public bathing was an invitation to any man. Or some say she went with the messengers for information about her husband and when he made advances felt she could not say no to the king for fear of what might happen to him. All or none of those scenarios could be but it still does not take away human responsibility. David’s life was going to be a mess all for a few minutes of stolen pleasure. Literature, movies and music have all romanticized adultery yet seldom do we really know the true cost of the breaking of promises. God take serious the promises made to Him even if those who made them to each other don’t. Further more why didn’t someone stop David as he was involving them in his sin? It is highly unlikely that no one knew of the situation it is more likely that they knew and turned the other way thinking, “*Well he has done so many good things for the nation, he once helped me so I’ll over look this!*”

We are told her that “*she was cleansed from her impurity*” which suggests three things:

1. First, that David was concerned about the levitical laws concerning having sex with someone during their time of the month. As it says that he “*took her*” after she had purified herself so that she could have sexual relations, oh the hypocrisy of such an action. Is that not amazing, “*Hey, can’t break that law but after your week is up let’s commit adultery*”. David was clearly able to compartmentalize his actions so as to not be convicted by his behavior.
2. Second it is clear that this statement confirms that the child was his as she was clearly not pregnant prior to being with David, in other words there was no question as to whom the father was.
3. Finally, this action reveals that David had adopted the world’s view for the purpose of sex as the pursuit of “*self gratification*”. This wasn’t about intimacy the union of man, woman and God, no it was, (no matter how much music and Hollywood want to romanticize it) the pursuit of personal pleasure at the expense of others, as it says that “*she returned to her house*”.

Vs. 5 David and Bathsheba did not plan on this as the pregnancy would prove their adultery as Uriah was away. In Leviticus 20:10 we are told “*The man who commits adultery with another man's wife, he who commits adultery with his neighbor's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress, shall surely be put to death.*” So Bathsheba’s words to David concerning her pregnancy was an attempt to thwart the consequences of their sin. “What was he thinking?” He wasn’t he was relying completely on emotions to which he completely blocked out any and all thought of the consequences. You see the consequences were:

* An unwanted pregnancy
* The murder of a trusted friend
* A dead baby
* His daughter raped by his son
* One son murdered by another son
* A civil war led by one of his sons
* A son who imitates David's lack of self-control and it leads him and much of Israel away from God

The only recorded words of Bathsheba in this entire incident are right before as she simply said, “*I am with child*” based upon 1 Chron 3:5 this was her first child who would die and later she would give birth to four more sons. There ought not to be a more joyous occasion in a couple’s life then to find out that God has blessed with a child, but not when the expected birth is from an adulterous relationship.

We just took note of the terrible waste of life and how many children lost their fathers and mothers on September 11, 2001, but the sad truth of it is that far more children go to bed every night without their dad or mom in the house because of adultery.

**III. Vs. 6-14 Lying cheater**

Vs. 6 The news of Bathsheba being pregnant should have caused him to repent but instead David acts as all unrepentant sinners do, seek to hide or cover their sin. God mercifully gives him another chance to get it right the moment that he realized that she was pregnant, he could of went and confessed his sin but he chose another path, of deception and cover up, which meant he had to keep lying. It all started in the garden of Eden with Adam and Eve as they sewed together fig leaves, to hide their nakedness. Then Moses who killed the Egyptian, tried to bury him. It’s just what man does who wants to cover their actions and not deal with the heart. But our sin all finds us out so to did David as Bathsheba tell him she is pregnant. And again God gives David a chance to repent but instead he tells Joab to send Uriah back from the battle.

What must have Joab thought concerning the kings request, “*Uriah, why would the king want to see Uriah, why did he not come out himself?*” Then upon hearing that Uriah had been given the sentence of death, “*What must have Uriah done to deserve this from a man who so praises and exalts God*?”

Vs. 7-11 All this discussion with Uriah was again hypocrisy as he did not care only that he could deceive him. David was seducing Uriah no doubt the way he had seduced his wife and perhaps believed that Uriah would like him give into his passions. David had no plans to kill Uriah or to take Bathsheba as his wife; it didn’t start out like that. Little did David count on the fact that a Hittite would have a greater passion for the glory and honor of Israel than did the king? Uriah was a team player who could not think of enjoying himself while his fellows in arms were not able to, he was not after his pleasure at the expense of others as was David.

Think of what this must have communicated to Bathsheba concerning his devotion and commitment towards her, “*Hey, I know I’ll bring your husband home from the battle and you can have sex with him and no one will ever know the difference*”. This suggests to me that he did not view her any more than an object of lust and an instrument to satisfy his pleasure as he is more than willing to have her go back to her husband. One can only wonder how that made he feel, perhaps as just a piece of meat? Oh such love and concern! David is the consummate planner and had a way to cover up the blessing that was growing in her womb. David orders Uriah home so that he would spend time with the women David found irresistible, but Uriah disobeyed the king and stayed with the servants in the king’s palace. David then planned a romantic dinner for Uriah and sent in to their home but he still did not go. The next day upon hearing that Uriah didn’t go home David gave the soldier a bad time for not doing so, to which Uriah gentle reproved the king. There was a rule that a soldier should abstain from intimacy while serving in a military campaign.

The only one hiding from his sin was David’s conscience as God clearly knew all that had happened. Far too many people are willing to cover their sin while talking about others, we have it backwards don’t we? You and I are called to cover others sins while exposing our own.

Vs. 12-14 Alcohol lowers a persons resistance and since of decency. Fast forward many years and here the words of Bathsheba to her son Solomon in Prov. 31:4-6, “*It is not for kings, O Lemuel-- not for kings to drink wine, not for rulers to crave beer, lest they drink and forget what the law decrees, and deprive all the oppressed of their rights. Give beer to those who are perishing, wine to those who are in anguish*”. Bud never made anyone I know wiser but it has ruined many lives and marriages as those who partook of it did thing that without they never would have.

So finally David thought, “*If I can’t get his to fellow to sleep while sober I’ll get him drunk and his passions will over ride his since of duty*!” Yet Uriah drunk was still a more honorable man than David was sober, and even though alcohol mat have weakened his defenses it didn’t change his commitment. Again I wonder how this made Bathsheba feel as she had been seduced been the king who could keep his hands off of her only to be dismissed back to a husband who even when drunk didn’t want to be with you. What a sad commentary on David who pursued what was not his sober and could not get the husband to do drunk what he had every right to do. David was drunk with lust when he slept with Bathsheba; he hoped that making Uriah drunk with wine would bring the same result.

There yet remained only one solution left in the eyes of David and it was not to get his heart right and confess openly his sin. Gone from David as well as many in the church today is the words of Nathan to David, “*by this deed you have given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme*” (2 Sam 12:14). David had not yet heard those words of Nathan and at this moment his contemplation was only to protect what was so carelessly disregarded and what this reveals is that David only sought to divert the consequences of the action and not get his heart right with the Lord. Until his heart was broken by Nathan’s words he had no repentance only diversion. Oh that we might understand the words of Paul in Rom. 5:20 “*Where sin did abound grace did much more abound*”.

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

**V. Sovereign: 2 Samuel 1-24**

**2. Chp. 11-24 The King’s troubles**

**2 Samuel 11:15-27**

**“Displeasing to the Lord”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 15-17 A second mistress**

**III. Vs. 18-27 There was a king that swallowed a fly**

**I. Intro.**

Here we see the man according to 1 Sam. 13:14 that the LORD had *“sought for Himself as a man after His own heart*”. Pay close attention as this as this quote comes **not** from David’s estimation of himself but rather from the Lord’s estimation of David. Yeh so? Well God is all knowing, He did not say, “*Well, that boy of mine* ***WAS*** *a man after My own heart.*” God knew full well that David would fail to get a hold of and surrender the area of lust over to Him. What this tells me is that a person after God’s heart is not added or scratched off based upon success or failure, no a person that is after God’s own heart is called such based upon their response to the Lord in both!

So how did things get so bad? It all started along time ago when David compromised with the Word of God and failed to surrender his life in simple obedience to God in the area of lust. For years the glances at the ladies was something he toyed with but it was harmless no big deal a “*victimless sin*”. Then opportunity came for him to add wives to his harem and it was politically expected, socially acceptable and after all he made them wives yet the clear teaching was not to multiply wives. Perhaps he reasoned, “*Hey I’m not multiplying just adding one at a time!*” Then there was that day when he was not where he was suppose to me “*the time when kings go out to battle*” and ***idleness*** created the pathway to view a woman bathing and his ***imagination*** kicked in as he began to fantasize about her. Finally fantasy not being enough he needed to ***inquire*** about her and soon after adultery and now murder.

Hey saints our flesh is real sneaky it will jump through every hoop, dodge every opportunity, make every excuse but there is one thing that our old nature will avoid at every cost DEATH to its self centered ways! Oh it will play possum, faint for a season, even yield up ground but DIE on its own? **NEVER!** Here Paul’s words in Rom 6:11-14 “*Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.*” Hey, saint listen carefully, do you know how to stop a speeding locomotive? Call for Super man! No, **don’t let it get started**, and then you will show that you know the Super Man, Jesus!

**II. Vs. 15-17 A second mistress**

Vs. 15 Joab was a murder himself and would again use deception in the 20th chapter so he must have read between the lines and deduced that David wanted Uriah’s wife. Now Joab knew that he could not send Uriah up to the wall by himself so he sent David’s own bodyguards (verse 17) with Uriah, perhaps they were in on the plan and if Uriah failed to be killed by the Ammonites he would be killed by some “*friendly fire*”. Remember David is not vengeful against Uriah; this action is not jealousy or a response for some wrong done by Uriah, not that this would justify his action. No this is **premeditated murder** and to make matters worse it is **done simply so David would not have to take responsibility for his action**. It is fear and deception that is ruling David’s life and not only does this cost Uriah his life it takes the life of David’s bodyguards as well.

David has become infected with sin and it is growing in ways that I’m sure he never anticipated as he is sending a note with Uriah the man he had been committing adultery against. The note to Joab was a conspiracy to murder Uriah placed in the hand of Uriah none-the less, man is that ever cold.

What must have Joab thought upon receiving the note? It is clear that Joab understood the note as he studied the city enough to know where he was most certain to die. You will recall that it was Joab who murdered Abner for the death of his brother by the gate in Hebron. David was very critical of Joab and Abishai saying in 3:19 “*the sons of Zeruiah, are too harsh for me. The LORD shall repay the evildoer according to his wickedness*.” David was so displeased with Joab that he demoted him until he needed someone to penetrate the walls of Jerusalem and Joab accepted the suicide mission and regained his position as commander of the army (1 Chron 11:6, 2 Sam 5:8). “*The son’s of Zeruiah to harsh for me?*” “*Hey Man I just avenged my brothers death by the hands of a wicked man I didn’t take another man’s wife and then sign his death warrant*.”   
Vs. 16-17 David had known that Joab was a harsh man and so he knew that Joab would see to it that Uriah would be killed and Joab could say, “*Hey, not my problem I was just following orders.*” What does this say about Uriah that he would send a death sentence by his own hand and trust that he would not open the message? I don’t know if you can get more wicked than this, to take advantage of a man’s noble character and use it to put him to death. Further more David trusted Joab to carry out a plan to have innocent man murdered. Having failed to cover his own sin, now all that was left in his eyes was to have Uriah killed. When ever we seek to cover our sin, as David did, we are revealing that we view what **we have as greater value than our relationship with the Lord**. Yes someone needed to die but it was not Uriah it was David’s self centeredness. What does this show us? Well it suggests that **David had two mistresses Bathsheba and his position as king and he certainly loved his position greater than Bathsheba as he was willing to sacrifice her but not his position**. It had taken 15 years for David to obtain the promise of God to be king and in about the same amount of time he had valued the promise above the Promiser and was willing to risk what he had waited so long in the Lord to obtain.

Consider this; David was of better character when he was a fugitive and a servant than he was when he was a king at home. As a fugitive twice he refused to take Saul’s life even though Saul was seeking to take his but as king he was willing to kill a friend to achieve a cover up after having taken his wife. ***Man does this speak volumes to our hearts as we are always in a better place as a servant knowing that this is not our home than we are thinking we are the kings or queens of our own castle!***

Hey saints make no mistake about it God’s servants are under a higher standard as Nathan will say by, “*this deed you have given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme*”. When I was in the jewelry business we used to have a saying that reminded us always to strive for excellence on every piece we made, “*You’re only as good as your last job*”. Oh the last piece may have been a masterpiece but if you don’t take the same care on the next one than all people will remember is the job you just gave them. Yes David was a great king and worshipper he had a great influence over the people and furthered God’s kingdom but one slip up and he not only caused his own down fall but gave opportunity for satan to bring others with him. I like you, have witnessed far too many ***godly*** and ***gifted*** men throw away their calling because ***they valued the calling greater than the One who called them***. Some over time became broken and repentive and have begun to value the Caller above the calling. Others only give lip service to the Caller and immediately seek the calling, showing that their mistress was the attention they got from serving. Listen up, ***ministry can be extremely intoxicating and too much of it with out enough of Him will leave a person drunk on their self importance and gifting***!

**III. Vs. 18-27 There was a king that swallowed a fly**

Vs. 18 Apparently Joab was a bit worried at David’s response as concerning the battle as he instructs the messenger to make sure David knew of Uriah’s death. He anticipated David’s response being “*Why were you fighting so close to the wall*”. And he makes reference to the book of Judges (*so apparently the book of Judges was written by then*); they had their history recorded by this point. Perhaps David was thinking, “*Man I love it when a plan comes together*” as Uriah was posted next to the wall and sure enough he was killed along with a few other soldiers but what does it matter if there were a few others that died as long as Uriah was dead. “*I mean if the brother had only not been so stupid he would still be alive*”.

Vs. 19-21 Joab knew David was a strategic commander and would want to know why the carelessness that cost unnecessary loses in battle. So the messenger was instructed to tell David the reason for the loss was that Uriah was dead so David would understand what the world system has long extolled “*The end justifies the means*”. Joab sights the passage out of Judges chapter 9 concerning what a bad move this was militarily and how Abimelech the son of Jerubbesheth was tricked and killed by the gate of Thebez when a woman dropped a millstone on his head. What make this story interesting is that it not only speaks of a bad military move by fighting to close to the gate, Abimelech was a guy who used deception and self interest to gain position as leader of the nation only to be judged by God for his actions and it was a woman that humbled him, sound familiar?

Vs. 22-25 The death of Uriah opened the door for him to marry Bathsheba and give explanation for her pregnancy, perhaps in some people’s eyes it would make him look even better as he was marring a widower as they would see how much he cared for Uriah.

Further revealing David’s callused heart is the quotation of a proverb regarding the misfortunes of war. Did David believe this himself had he succeeded in self deception? So as soon as messenger came in David was told what had happened and that Uriah was dead he sent word back to Joab saying, “*Hey, not to worry bro you win some and you lose some*!” The battle was lost because to David Uriah had to die and he had to die in such away as it would not come back upon him. All of this is reminiscent of words of Caiaphas towards Jesus in John 11:50 where he said, “*it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish*.” So Uriah becomes a type of Jesus as he died for David, as Jesus took our nails and our sin sent Jesus to the battle where he took upon Himself the death that was meant for us.

Hey, saint’s **how many battles have we lost because we have been more concerned with covering up our sins at the expense of others**? *Is the battle ground of our lives littered with the dead bodies of innocent people so we could continue to live a compromised life*? Is it not time for you and I to be courageous instead of cowards and head to the battlefield ourselves and die to the area of our lives that is defeating us instead of continually asking someone, everyone else to die in our stead?

Num. 32:23 Moses had spoke to the nation warning them, “*Be sure your sin will find you out*!” David thought, “*Not this time, I’ve committed the perfect crime and I’ve thought of everything!*” Except that God would speak to his friend Nathan! So 9 months pass you’ve added another wife to your harem and nation thinks you’re a great guy for taking in a pregnant widow, the armies moral is high as they see how you are for them and after 9 months you are expecting a child whom you will love as one of your own and know one will realize that he is your own. “*My image is intact; I had my cake and ate it too!*” But this will all fall apart shortly and David will have a mark on his record.

Now fallow me on this as this story would have never been know had it not been for David including it in his record as it is not recorded in Chronicles chapter 20 as it only says, “*that Joab led out the armed forces and ravaged the country of the people of Ammon, and came and besieged Rabbah. But David stayed at Jerusalem. And Joab defeated Rabbah and overthrew it*.” And then skips to 30th verse of the 12th chapter.

And it is here that we see that David is a man after God’s own heart. It was not his failure that disqualified him it was his heart to speak of his own failure and God’s goodness in spite of him that caused God to speak of him in such terms. Here is my point it is not our perfection that makes us great, no listen to David in 2 Sam 22:36-37 and psalm 18:35 “*Your gentleness has made me great. You enlarged my path under me; So my feet did not slip*.” David was a man who though many times blew it always spoke of his failure and God’s goodness and he made sure that through every generation people would know that **he was a flawed man who worshiped a perfect God** and such are we!

Vs. 26 It appears that David concealed his plan to have her husband killed from Bathsheba as she grieved at her loss and with David’s resent treatment of her had no hope other than that she may be put to death. The general period for morning was 7 to 30 days so Bathsheba’s expression of grief was no doubt sincere but it was also mixed with relief and excitement as she went from the “electric chair” to the “Queens chair”. This would appear to be no big deal for David as he had been adding wives all along as many may be tempted to think as David has become a sort of hero taken in a grieving pregnant soldier’s wife to take care of her. Perhaps David thought, “*Man that was a close one I almost got caught but now that Uriah’s dead and Bathsheba is my wife now one will ever find out, I think I’ll go up and take a look out from my roof tonight*.”

Vs. 27 This phrase “*The thing that David had done displeased the Lord*” is the first mention of God in the chapter and shows us that God witnessed every event and knew of every motive of the heart. Now David had sent the messenger back to tell Joab “*not let this thing displease you*” but he failed to realize in verse 27 that “*the thing that he had done displeased the lord*”. The sad truth is that ***oft times were more concerned whether or not our actions displease men instead of asking if it displeases the Lord***. Oh, to be sure there will be some who will say of our actions and attitudes “*do not let this thing displease you*” but they do not speak for God and be it known that He alone has the final word. A hireling is concerned with how their action will be viewed by men and if they can poll and persuade enough people concerning their action not being all that displeasing then they are alright. Oh we may be able to fool the courts, our friends and get off Scot-free but rest assured God will judge.

There was only one flaw with this plan, “*the thing that David had done displeased the LORD.*” But a true shepherd’s response will be what David wrote in Psalm 32:1-5 a year later, “*Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile. When I kept silent, my bones grew old through my groaning all day long. For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; my vitality was turned into the drought of summer. I acknowledged my sin to You, and my iniquity I have not hidden. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord," and You forgave the iniquity of my sin*.” What this psalm shows is that David was under intense conviction during this time and that all the joy in his life evaporated. He was living in stress and agony because of living a double, false life and found no relief until he repented and got right with God. Someone has well said “*The better the man the dearer the price he pays for a short season of sinful pleasure.*” David had too much of the Lord to be happy and too much compromise and sin to be happy in the Lord. He was at a breaking point and would either chose the Lord and humble out seeking repentance and restoration with the Lord or the path of compromise. “*Those in most need of repentance are often the last too seek it as sin and compromise blind the eye, stifle the conscience and make ignorant the heart of that would seek God*”. Hear the words of Hosea in 6:1-3 “*Come, and let us return to the LORD; For He has torn, but He will heal us; He has stricken, but He will bind us up. After two days He will revive us; On the third day He will raise us up, That we may live in His sight. Let us know, Let us pursue the knowledge of the LORD. His going forth is established as the morning; He will come to us like the rain, Like the latter and former rain to the earth*.”

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

**V. Sovereign: 2 Samuel 1-24**

**2. Chp. 11-24 The King’s troubles**

**2 Samuel 12:1-14**

**“Bearing the brand of Christ”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 1-6 A parable of no pity**

**III. Vs. 7-14 The stranger in the mirror**

**I. Intro.**

The first thought of a person who is convicted of their sin is always to run from God and hide in excuses and blame shifting. Oh but once we realize that we have run from the goodness of God we will return to the wounded side of Jesus where the guilt and punishment of our sin has been paid for. When we have truly confessed and turned from sin we will place the label of our failure squarely upon our own shoulders and not on others, it is then that we will truly know of what Nathan told David, “*The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die*.” (verse 13) Our sin always leaves a scar Christian and none more sever than the realization that “*by this deed you have given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme*”. (verse 14) Of all the words spoken to our hearts this is the bitterest pill to swallow and the one which will leave us the most broken. Those words of Nathan to David ought to be engraved upon our hearts so that our wounded heart will recall that we can only walk in His grace and love! David wrote in Psalm 34:19, 22, “*Many are the afflictions of the righteous, But the LORD delivers him out of them all…The LORD redeems the soul of His servants, And none of those who trust in Him shall be condemned.*”

**II. Vs. 1-6 A parable of no pity**

Vs. 1-4 This is about a year later as the child is born and Nathan comes to David with a parable. We all have a problem with “*double entry book keeping*” don’t we? You know that is where we have one set of books for ourselves and another for all other people.

Hey, saints, David's sin “*displeased the Lord*” but **it didn’t keep the Lord from trying to reach David**. So when he wouldn’t listen to the Word, God tried the circumstances, and when he wouldn’t listen to the circumstances, God tried the conviction of the Holy Spirit upon his conscience. Finally the Lord sent someone else to speak to David and in all of this we see the lengths God’s mercy will go to reach a rebellious heart. I am convinced by personal experience that **God always uses the least means possible to get our attention, further more I believe that the more drastic the measures used to get our attention the more hard our heart**!

In light of this truth hear the words of God in Genesis 6:3, *“My Spirit shall not strive with man forever.*” Listen carefully if we continue to harden our hearts we will exhaust God’s patience that is why we need to heed the words of Hebrews 4: 7 that says, “*Today, if you will hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts*.” Sometimes you will hear folks boast saying, “*I don’t feel a thing, man what I’m doing doesn’t bother me*”. Now physically if part of our body becomes impervious to pain or to the since of touch it would not be something we would boast about but something that would concern us as we would have a serious medical condition that could signify the end of our life.

A. **Messenger**: Did you notice that God didn’t send an enemy or a critic to correct David he sent a friend? Why? Well because the Lord wanted David to get his heart right. You recall in chapter 7 that Nathan had presumed to know the heart of God concerning David’s desire to build a temple and had to go back and tell David that what he had said to him was not from God, a risky proposition for a prophet. In Deut. 18:20 there were laws concerning what a prophet said and if “*the prophet who presumes to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die.*” That situation had uniquely equipped Nathan to confront David now concerning his sin. How so? Well three factors are essential if we are going to be used to deal with another person’s sin:

1. We must have a **great concern and love for the person** we are to address
2. We must be **honest with our own failure** and need to get our heart right
3. We must have **a heart that honors God’s word above every thing else** even if it would cost us our life. (*twice Nathan demonstrated that he honored God’s word above his own life*)

Hey saints unless our hearts are broken towards the person who has fallen we are most likely not the one to be correcting them. Nathan was **the kind of friend who was welling to do more than just point out the dirt in another man’s life he was willing to bend down and help clean him up**.

B. **Message**: Second, God led Nathan to use a familiar story of a pet lamb and the injustice of a wealthy man taking that which did not belong to him. The case was one that shepherds would have been interested in hearing a case of sheep steeling. This lamb Nathan told David, “*ate of his own food and drank from his own cup and lay in his bosom; and it was like a daughter to him*.” Apparently David never made the connection of him being the “*rich man*” in the story having “*refused to take from his own flock*” instead took “*the poor man's lamb*”. Who is the traveler that the rich man had taken and killed the lamb for? Well the “*traveler*” would be the temptation of lust that visited David while he was on the roof and the problem was that David made the unwanted guest the master over his own heart!

There is a truth you and I all need to pay attention to as David was blind to his own depravity. Someone has well said, “***To many people have made strangers of their own character***”, oh how easy it is to become convicted about other people’s sins and not our own. Steeling another man’s sheep was not a capital offence so David exaggerated both the crime and punishment yet when he looked at his own sin he minimized both. Hey Christian that is the nature of our flesh we will always tend exaggerated others sins and minimize our own do we not? The words of Jesus in Matt. 7:2 are coming into play, “*what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you.*”

Nathan describes the sin of the wealthy man as theft, not many view adultery and sexual immorality as theft but they are when we consider it is taking something away from someone else that does not belong to us. “*Hey, wait a minute I didn’t take it from him or her they gave it to me.*” Maybe so but ultimately our bodies do not belong to ourselves they belong to our spouses or our future spouses according to 1 Corinth 7:4 we are told “*The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.*” According to Leviticus 18 this principal would include pornography and lust as it would be wrong to “***steal a look***” at their nakedness as it does not belong to us.

Vs. 5-6 David is so offended by the story that he assumed was true that he not only pronounces the man guilty but gives him the death sentence upon him as well even though this was not a capital crime. Our conscience is often more sever on others who are engaged in far less a sin they we are as an attempt to lesson our own guilt. David’s reasoning for such harsh consequences for Nathan’s fictitious rich man was that “*he had no pity*”. He despised the rich man for his disregard to heartache of the poor man while David had himself shown complete disregard to the hurt of others. Notice David’s words “*As the Lord lives*” showing how passionate he was as he calls God to witness the righteous judgment upon the hypothetical rich man but it was not enough to punish the rich man what he stole needed to be restored fourfold. Here is what we gain from David’s words; repentance needs to include restitution as clearly David understood what Ex. 22 taught concerning restitution. Biblical knowledge of right and wrong even extreme passion of this are not indicators for spiritual health as David had both of these. **I’m always amazed at how I can know God’s word and still be distant from its author, like David**.

Hey saint what David is being brought to by the Lord is the condemning of his own sin instead of seeking to defend, deflect or excuse away. Why is this important? Well, **we will never seek forgiveness until we have first condemned our own sin**!

**III. Vs. 7-14 The stranger in the mirror**

Vs. 7-9 As soon as Nathan heard David’s reasoning at such sever judgment he wasted no time in revealing David’s own sin. Suddenly David realized through his finger pointing that he had three pointing right back ay him. And the harshness of his judgment was staring him in the eye and what he now wanted was grace. Hey saint’s **until you and I abhor our sin with the same hatred we have for others sins we will never see the need to abandon ours and return to God’s abounding goodness**.

Nathan minced no words saying, “*You are the man*” but then moved immediately into the reason for David’s disregard to God word and that was to be found in his forgetting of God’s goodness towards him, this led to David despising God’s Word, which led to him to believe that he had earned the right to take that which was not his. David had broken four of the Ten Commandments, (coveting, adultery, bearing false witness and murder). David not only took Uriah’s life he used the sword of those who were against God to do so. God said through Nathan, “*David, I gave you everything; even with all your flaws and failures I loved you, when you were out on your own I stood by you and not for one day did I ever leave you. And if that wasn’t enough I would have given you more!*” Christian, littered on the roadway’s of our lives will be not only the consequences of our despising God’s word for our lives but also all that He wanted to give us but could not because we were to busy complaining and striving to obtain His promises in our own strength. Rom 2:4 tells us “*that the goodness of God leads you to repentance*”. When a person is brought under the reality of their sin it is easy for them to have remorse and fear of the consequences of their actions but that it not necessarily repentance.

True repentance comes about when our sin is laid next to God’s goodness which we have disregarded. The conviction of the sinful heart must have the brokenness of having grieved such a gracious God as the ***sole reason*** to get our heart right and not to try to minimize the loss of consequences. Far too often the thought is, “*Oh, I’ve been found out how can I minimize the damage*” and we go into the “***damage control mode***” instead of a heart that is broken that says, “***Oh, how could I have done this against God who has done nothing but love me***?” How do we know if someone is convicted of their sin and truly repentive or just seeking to minimize the consequences? Well what is it they are seeking after once they have been found out? If they desire is to restore their relationship with the Lord with out a mention of seeking to restore what they lost then it is safe to assume that there is true brokenness. Ah but if David would have said, “*What about my kingdom, do I still get to be king*”. If there are excuses, and the attempt to make oneself the victim and others the villain than what you have is a person who is only trying to manipulate the situation. In 1 Chron. 21:24 after David had sinned by numbering the people he was told to build an alter on the threshing floor of Ornan. But when he went to purchase the threshing floor of Ornan (the future sight of the temple) Ornan said he could just have it. But David wisely said, “*I will not take what is yours for the LORD, nor offer burnt offerings with* ***that which costs me nothing***.”

David had told Joab by way of messenger “*not let this thing displease you*” but we were told that though David thought his action was no big deal but it “*displeased the Lord*”. Here the Lord tells David, “*When you despised the Word of God you despised Me*! Oft time’s people say, “*I love God, I believe in Him and all*!” But they don’t follow His word; well here we see that **if we despise God’s Word for our lives we are despising Him**. Jesus said in 6:46 “*why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do the things which I say*?” The apostle John said in 1 John 1:6, “*If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth*.” There are folks in Church every week who have hidden lives where they aren’t living in obedience to God’s Word and they think, “*This isn’t affecting me, my life is going well*”. But here me out, the issue isn’t whether or not a Christian can go the bar and get drunk, tell lie’s or even commit adultery and murder as David did because clearly people have. No the issue is can a professing believer do things contrary to God’s Word and still have fellowship with God and the answer is NO! **If we are living apart from the word of God then we are living apart from the God of the Word!**

“*To do this evil in His sight*”, David thought that no one knew but God knew. You can’t despise the word of God for your life with out despise the author of the Word. David’s sin was based upon ingratitude, a feeling that he deserved better. So the correction that God gives is to recall to David how much He had given to him and how much more He would have given if that were not enough. God’s question to David is “*Why did you take when I have given*?” Brother and sisters, behind every sin that every human being has ever committed is an ungrateful heart, a heart of pride that has failed to appropriate the riches of His love towards us!

Vs. 10 God promised that from this day forward David would know violence and bloodshed among his own family members. This is **not** God causing this to come upon David’s family but rather the consequences of David’s disregard of God’s word. David had demanded a fourfold restitution from Nathan’s parable and the fourfold restitution for Uriah would come from four of David’s sons: Bathsheba's child, Amnon, Absalom, and Adonijah. David’s oldest son, Amnon, will kill by his brother, Absalom for committing insist with his half sister. David’s second son, Absalom, will be killed in battle after rebelling against David. David’s third son, Adonijah, will be killed by Solomon, when Solomon takes the throne. Oh the sword did not depart from David’s house.

David’s sin of adultery was a sin of uncontrolled passion but his sin of murder was premeditated. In 1 Kings we are told that “*David did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, and had not turned aside from anything that He commanded him all the days of his life, except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite*” saying nothing of Bathsheba as that sin was without thought while Uriah was well planned.

Vs. 11-12 What David did in the dark will come back to him in the light, what he sought to hide well be seen, what his pride caused will be open to humiliation. Because God likes to rub it in our faces? No because God wants us to lose our appetite for what our flesh craves, so when it is exposed we will think twice before we travel down that path again.

David was fully forgiven but there was still going to be repercussions for the rebellion. Remember sin can never pay off the debts it has accumulated, it may say to your heart, “*Yeh, I’ll pay for it no problem*” but in the end the price was way more than we had been convinced it would be. Consider Absalom when he rebelled against David, David left Jerusalem as he couldn’t bring himself to fight against his own son. But Ahithophel Bathsheba’s grandfather said, “*You want to show everybody your king? Go up on the roof and bring in your father’s concubines and have sex with each of them.*” So, it was Bathsheba’s grandfather who to embarrass David told Absalom to do this right where years earlier David had lusted after his granddaughter and embarrassed his family.

Vs. 13-14 David’s confession is an example of what true repentance is as he places the blame entirely upon himself and did not minimize his sin. In the Hebrew the phrase “*I have sinned against the LORD*” is only two words. Confession doesn't need to be long to be sincere and proof of it is not to be found in words but actions. David made no excuses, shifted no blame, looked for no loophole and pleaded for no position; he didn’t say “*We have a disease”* no he said “**I have sinned**”. He simply with a broken and contrite heart takes personal responsibility and agreed with God concerning his sin and his only aim is to renew his relationship with the Lord not to gain back his kingdom.

With David’s repentance God’s forgiveness was immediate, there was no probation or penance and mercy and grace were extended as David was not to get the sentence he would have proscribed for far less. So along with the sentence came pardon but it was not based upon the verdict not being true or the sentence being unjust all of which David simply stated “*I have sinned against the LORD*.” In psalm 130:3-4, we read “*If You, LORD, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with You, That You may be feared…*.” Then in psalm 103:3-4, 12-13 David would write, “*Who forgives all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases, Who redeems your life from destruction, Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies…..As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us. As a father pities his children, So the LORD pities those who fear Him.*” Dear saint do you not know that God longs to forgive you for more than you desire to get your heart right, He stands at the door of our hearts even now knocking waiting for you to open the door of your heart to Him.

There is a “*however*” (verse 14) in God’s words to David but this is not punishment but rather discipline by a loving Father who wishes His son to develop a godly character. God forgave David's ***for*** his sin, but He would still face judgment ***by*** his sin in the consequence from his sin. And the judgment ***BY*** his sin would be used of God to purify David as he never again commits adultery, perhaps when in the future he would look at a woman lustfully he would recall holding his son’s lifeless body in his arms and recall that such rebellion brings about death and separation. In psalm 51:11 David wrote “*Do not cast me away from Your presence, And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me*” which reveals that while living in unconfessed sin David was not experiencing the presence of the Lord in his life and that he longed for that back more then to divert the consequences of his actions.

Some have wondered if a fallen servant can ever be restored to their position, Spurgeon once said that “***A servant of God can be restored to a position only when their brokenness and repentance has become more memorable then their offence****!*” It is interesting to note that after this sin David would never again be the king he once was but he would become a better psalmist more open and broken about his failure and God’s faithfulness. **The restoration was not to the position but was very much to a sweeter communion with the Lord as he would plum the debts of God’s greatness**.

In Psalm 51 some time has passed and David is more articulate about his sin and he writes out what was in his heart at the time of repentance. The inscription above the psalm says too, “*The Chief Musician, A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came unto him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba*”. David would write in verses 1-4, 16-17, “*Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your loving-kindness; according to the multitude of Your tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against You, You only have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight - that You may be found just when You speak, and blameless when You judge. . . . For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, and broken and contrite heart - these, O God, You will not despise*.” It appears to me that as time goes on you ought to see a greater awareness of our depravity and a greater confession of our personal failure and not more excuses and a lessoning of responsibility.

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

**V. Sovereign: 2 Samuel 1-24**

**2. Chp. 11-24 The King’s troubles**

**2 Samuel 12:15-31**

**“Companionship for Compromise”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 15-25 The sweetness of heartache**

**III. Vs. 26-31 Loved of the Lord**

**I. Intro.**

In verses 10-14 God spoke through Nathan declaring **four safeguards** that He would put in place to the forgiven sinner.

1. Vs. 10 “*the sword shall never depart from your house*”: And we are told why this was in place “*because you have despised Me*” which we were told in verse 9 was the same as “*despising the commandment of the LORD*”. So the first safeguard has to do with David never again rejecting the Word of God and the God of the Word. The sword never departing from his own house was to drive David back to God’s Word ***instead of upon idleness and self reliance***, doing that which seemed right in his own eyes.
2. Vs. 11 “*I will raise up adversity against you from your own house*”. Again we are told what this would safeguard as it says, “*I will take your wives before your eyes and give them to your neighbor*”. David had indited himself in verse 6 as having “*no pity*” so God is going to bring upon his own heart ***a heart of pity by having to experience the pain he had caused others***.
3. Vs. 12 “*For you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, before the sun.*” Because of David’s cover up and attempt to conceal things God was going to make David’s life an open book so that he would ***not be able to hide his heart from his head***!
4. Vs. 14 “*the child also who is born to you shall surely die*.” Here again we have the reason given this time before the safeguard, “*because by this deed you have given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme*”. David was forever going to be made aware of the responsibility of those in leadership to live broken humble lives as when we don’t we aid the enemy and the sinners flesh in rejection of God’s truths and grace. So God says, just like the son that you loved and wanted to know was taken from you, you will know that such rebellion in you will cause others to be separate from My love.

So these safeguards have to do **with dependence upon God’s word, a heart of compassions for others, a broken contrite heart before all and an eternal perspective that we are not our own**.

**II. Vs. 15-25 The sweetness of heartache**

Vs. 15 In accordance to Nathan’s words the child would die, there is Devine healing and now we see that there is Devine sickness. The sad truth is often the innocent are those that suffer for the sins of the guilty. Take for instance abortion, in which the parents were not married and choose to abort because they simply don’t want the responsibility of caring for a child. It was their choice to commit sexual immorality, their choice to disregard the word of God, their choice to terminate their child’s life but it is the child who dies not them! There are times when no human can comfort our heartbreaks and this is by design as the Lord is the only one that can comfort such pains. David spent seven days grieving over his own sin and the realization that this has come upon his son because of his own doing. But David has owned his own sin and has accepted God’s judgments and worship’s the Lord. So often we have mourned our loss because of the consequences of our action and when we have failed to bend the mind of God we curse Him for what our sin has brought!

Now though the child died God no doubt extend His comfort to the child during his illness and further more welcomed him home into His loving arms. So the judgment was truly upon David and Bathsheba as they would never get to enjoy the pleasures of watching their child grew into who God intended him to be. Hey saint’s let me encourage you a moment if you have ever lost a child and your heartaches from the separation and the loss of what might have been. One day you will be reunited with your child only you will see what they are in Christ and you will realize that you will have an eternity full of time and memorizes!

  Why does God allow the child to die and the sinning parents to live? I suggest to you that David and Bathsheba’s living was far worse judgment then their child dieing. What? This ought to change our perspective, concerning death and life for a believer. Jesus corrected that same error in mark 12:27 saying, “*He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living*” as the oft repeated phrase of God being the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob all of who were dead, so Jesus says, “*Hey folks these people aren’t dead but alive”*. You see heaven is not a place where dead people go but rather a place where those who were in the land of the dieing have gone to live forever. Rev. 21:4 tells us that in heaven “*God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.*” So God granted the child to be united to Him and that the child’s death would be a continual reminder to the parents to keep their hearts pure as sin always causes death and separation. God never approves of our sin. God does not think sin cute or unimportant and even when our sins are forgiven there is always a price that has been paid. There only son paid the price for sin, death! Hey that seems familiar does it not? An only begotten son who is innocent dieing for the sins of others!

Vs. 16-23 Do not assume that David is acting as if he deserves better as he says in verse 22 “*Who can tell whether the LORD will be gracious to me, that the child may live*?” Instead he is seeking the mercy of God crying out in repentance realizing he deserves nothing but our God has always rewarded us based upon who He is not whether or not David deserved it.

Now notice here that David’s fasting had no power to change God’s mind instead the death of his son changed his heart. God is not a genie who is bound by our formulas to do our bidding as that would make us god and Him our servant. Our actions and formulas have no power to change His mind, so why fast and pray when we are uncertain the outcome?

* Well first we fast and pray because though we are uncertain the outcome we are not uncertain in who holds the outcome.
* Second we do so that we may better surrender our hearts and love to His will not to manipulate Him to our wills!

Apparently David’s prayer was answered as we are told in verse 23 “*now he is dead; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me*.” How was this prayer and fasting answered? Well David had a sense of peace when the child died and saw that this would have a work in his heart that would draw him closer to God and one day be reunited with the Lord and his son. The ability to worship and praise God in a time of great uncertainty and heartache demonstrate the confidence and presence of God that David had. It also supports the fact that clearly David had repented and there was a renewed fellowship with the Lord, as the outcome not meeting his expectations did not alter his commitment towards fellowship with the Lord.

Here in verse 23 the phrase of David, “*I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me*”, is an indication that babies and perhaps children who die from believing parents go to live forever with the Lord at least until they are at an age where they can make a decision on their own which will vary from child to child.

The events of this section is but a foretaste of the future of David’s life as it will be filled with heartbreak. “*Hey I thought God had forgiven him so why the all the trouble?*” Hey Saint’s these troubles and heartaches were signs of God’s forgiveness not signs of the lack of it! Remember God disciplines those He loves and so the man who has drunk deep from the well of sin and has spent time trapped in its caverns needs to be in constant reminder of the dangers of taking a sip from its intoxicating fountain. Oh to be sure you and I would not want to be reminded of our ever present need and dependence upon our Lord but that would not be merciful but would cause us harm. Every where you drive in Montana you see signs warning of Meth use and what will happen if one tries it. This is what God does for David! Far too often **the kind of forgiveness we want from the Lord is the kind that simply over looks our sin’s but allows us to continue in them without any consequences from our actions**. *“Oh, God please don’t let me get caught, but don’t make me stop either.*” *“Just love me and forgive but don’t tell me I need to stop this destructive behavior just don’t let it destroy me*!” I’m a parent and I watched many a time when my children were young and were doing something that was endangering their wellbeing and I intervened on their behalf and then listened as they screamed their disapproval at me for interfering at their fun. “*Let me play in the street with on coming traffic just stop the trucks!*” As well I have witnessed my children not wanting to remain close to me as we were out and fighting every moment of holding my hand, Oh to be certain I was restricting their freedom but not out of being a spoil sport but out of love and devotion! Do you see now what the Lord has blessed David with? He has given David **companionship for compromise**, **dependence for deception** and **relationship for rebellion**! And through it all David will learn to hate any and all sin that would rob him of ***companionship, dependence and relationship***. There are far to may times that we want God’s pardon so we can go back to our sin. Thus any superficial forgiveness that only leads us back to what cause the separation to begin with is not what God has in mind. Far to often people would be content with a rope in the well not so that they can climb out of the pit of mire but so that they can grab a hold of it to keep them in the pit so that they would not slip further lest it the mire cover their head and suffocate them. So the question we need to ask is “*Am I content with a rope in my well or do I want deliverance from my well?*” In my planner for me to read is this phrase, “***Keep me from all things that keep me from You!***” That is what God wants to produce in our hearts. If our tears are only because we have been turned away from our Jerusalem, only because we can no longer enjoy the comfortable seat of our throne then we morn not the loss of relationship but only of what that relationship brought! ***Oh thank God that He has not removed the pain of our sin only the penalty and power as the pain of our failures drives continually back to the throne of His grace and the dependence of His presence***.

Vs. 24-25 Nine months are pressed into these two verses and during those months God wooed David back into a right relationship with Him. Now remember it was God who allowed the Bathsheba to conceive this 2nd time and deliver a healthy child. So David called Nathan to see his new boy and told him his name was Solomon “*peaceful*” but Nathan said that’s fine David but God’s calling him Jedidiah, “*Loved of the Lord*”. How interesting, David is on the right side of fellowship with the Lord and God grants him and Bathsheba a child and David says, “*Nate, I’m at peace man, I’m back on tract with the Lord*”. And Nathan corrects David and says, “*You’re only at peace my friend because you are Loved of the Lord*”! The old things have passed away and behold God has made everything new.

This is the first time in this whole story that we are told the woman’s name, other then the report that came from the servants. But now that David’s heart has been dealt with she is no longer “*the wife of Uriah*”. It is interesting to note that God had David honor his commitment to Bathsheba even though it originated in sin and was apart from His Word; the point is three wrongs won’t make a right! The Lord has called us to walk forward not backward, we can not undo our past we can simply repent from them and move forward. God does not hold grudges as he forgave and further more blesses as it is this son born from a marriage that began in adultery that will produce a son for the throne and from him the Messiah would come. **God always produces the most and best fruit in our lives through our brokenness and humility not pride and success**.

God had a purpose for this child, a child that was born after the brokenness of his parents. Do you hear me Christian? God always has a “*peaceable*” work after we have sinned and have come back to His loving arms a work in our heart that will cause us to realize the we are “*loved in the Lord*”. Saint the only one surprised by your failure is you the Lord knows you inside and out. Now go back with me to 2 Sam 7 12-13 where the Lord had told David that He would “*set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.*” My point? Namely this, we tend to think it is our perfection that ushers in God’s promises, if we do real well, practice real hard, read our bible through, and pray all night than God can fulfill His promises in our lives. But that’s not the case my friend as it would make God dependant upon man and He would never be able to bless us with what He so long desires to give us. Now David’s greatest failure will be the avenue to His promise. How so? Well David had come to complete surrender and brokenness and it is only in our surrender and brokenness where we no longer have any confidence in ourselves that we will be at peace and loved of the Lord. Every time David and Bathsheba would look at their boy they would be reminded that they were loved by the Lord and that only He can fulfill His promises we can never earn them by our goodness!

**III. Vs. 26-31 Loved of the Lord**

Vs. 26-28 These verses continue the war that chapter 11:1 spoke of that was going on simultaneously with David’s double sin. Apparently Joab had to gave David a hard time to get him to do what he was suppose to do as he says, “*Hey, king if you don’t come off that roof I’m going to take the city myself and they will name it after me*!” Joab was fighting against the chief city of the Ammonites called Rabbah or “*Great city*” and he defeated the city by taking the water supply and seeing that the city was about to fall he sends for David. Little by little the army began to conquer the Ammonites they took the royal city than they took over the power and water company. They were ready for the final push and Joab wanted the king to bring home the victory, amazing for all that David had done Joab still wanted his king to receive honor. This crown weighed some 50 to 75 pounds so David’s coronation was just ceremony declaring Ammon as territory for Israel. So David added the crown and the rest of the spoil to the funds set aside to the building of the temple.

It is interesting that Joab was unable to take the city for over a year until David got his heart right and went out and did what he was suppose to do a year earlier. Perhaps the Lord’s church’s ineffectiveness at taking the cites in which they are at is because those in leadership are not out front but rather behind hanging out on roof tops. There was a lack of power because the heart of the servant was not right. Oh but when David got his heart right with the Lord than victory was gained. That is what God exhorts us in 2 Chron 7:14 “*If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.*” So God gave David the victory even though he had been rebellious during the campaign as God does not reward upon our goodness but His. I love that about the Lord he just takes us and we are all beat up and broken and says, “*Hey, now that you have gotten your heart right Me I can use you*.”

Josephus says that David put them to death by saws, iron picks and axes. That the brick ovens that those Ammonites would cause their young ones to pass through the fires of Molech others say that David forced the Ammonites to drop their swords and picks and become slave laborers.

So then the final phase of David's restoration was that he went back to doing what he should have done all along, leading Israel out to battle, instead of remaining in Jerusalem. Notice that David’s failure did not condemn him to a life defeat and uselessness, yes he was disciplined and his life was forever changed by his failure but it was not “*ruined*” neither did his sin take away his crown as he had confessed and truly repented. Had he not heeded the word of the Lord through Nathan it might have been a further stripping away in his life. Hey, saint’s (those of us who have at times hardened our heart towards the Lord) the way up is down, and not upon insisting on self protection!

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

**V. Sovereign: 2 Samuel 1-24**

**2. Chp. 11-24 The King’s troubles**

**2 Samuel 13:1-22**

**“Lust Sick”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 1-14 Lust’s insanity**

**III. Vs. 15-22 Lust’s hatred**

**I. Intro.**

As we turn the page to the 13th chapter sadness comes upon the household of David, and the lifestyle that he had practiced comes back upon him in ways I’m certain he never expected. The rest of the book of 2nd Samuel deals with the consequences of what happened in the 11th and 12th chapter. Though David has been forgiven the effects his life style has had an adverse impact upon his children as often is the case. The remainder of this book is dark times for David, heart wrenching days where what life does to David will depend upon what life finds in David. The three heirs to David’s throne were Amnon, Absalom and Adonijah and before long the sword would take all three of them. These events are not far from each of us as the choices we have made in our personal private lives are often lived out in the lives of our loved ones. In Jer. 2:19 we are told that “*Your own wickedness will correct you, And your backslidings will rebuke you.*” Oh how true are those words of Jeremiah in my own life.

Again like David’s sin with Bathsheba and murder of Uriah this story does not appear in 1 Chronicles which simply means David wanted this included about his life. Paul wrote in 1 Cor. 10:11 with regards to the old testament that “*all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition*”. Here is my point God wanted us to look at the ravages of sin not only our lives but the cost of it in the lives of those of our own family. Someone has well said, “***Experience is the best teacher…but you can afford the tuition*”**! Better for you and I to learn from David as he paid for he paid for the classes himself and we can simply learn from his exams.

**II. Vs. 1-14 Lust’s insanity**

Vs. 1-2 “*After this*” is an interesting phrase as it ties David’s life and failure to that of what is recorded in the 13th chapter. You see David had at least six different sons from six different wives. Absalom (*father of peace*) and his sister Tamar (*palm tree*) were the children of David through his wife Maacah, who was the daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur (making her a princess from a small nation near the Sea of Galilee). Further more according to 2 Sam. 14:25 and here in 13: 1 both Tamar and Absalom were very good looking. Now Amnon (*faithful and true*) was David's first born son, born from his wife Ahinoam the Jezreelitess (2 Samuel 3:2). That made Amnon the crown prince and first in line for the throne. Here is a clear case where the names of these two fellows didn’t match their characters as Absalom was certainly not the “*father of peace*” and there appears to be nothing “*faithful and true*” about Amnon.

Amnon was obsessed with lust over his sister Tamar and it was so bad that according to the Hebrew he was **cramping up and weak**, this fellow was truly LUST sick. Amnon had a strong sexual desire for his half sister Tamar, he was attracted to her physically but he did not have love. Oh to be sure he thought he did and he is neither the first nor the last to confuse lust with love. How can we tell if it’s love or lust? Well there is a blueprint for love that we can lay what we have next to and it’s found in 1 Corinthian’s 13:4-8 “*Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails*.” True love is other-centered, not self-centered, the only person Amnon loved was himself all. Where is that interest or concern with her feelings when she objects to his advances, if he truly loved her, he would’ve respected the feelings that she had.

Amnon had his own problems being the oldest and the natural heir to the throne made him a spoiled kid and it seems as though he got his way in about everything. Tamar being a virgin princess would have been kept secluded in their own quarters apart from her brothers and this apparently produced such infatuation that it made his lust-sick. The passage says that she was a virgin which made this all the more difficult for Amnon as she was available for marriage but just not to him as she was his half sister. In Leviticus 18:6, 11 we are told that “*None of you shall approach anyone who is near of kin to him, to uncover his nakedness: I am the LORD… The nakedness of your father's wife's daughter, begotten by your father; she is your sister; you shall not uncover her nakedness.*”   
Vs. 3-5 Jonadab was a cousin of Amnon from David’s brother Shimeah. This fellow is no friend just a trouble maker as his name will pop up again in this chapter trying to take advantage of the situation before David even though it was him who suggested to Amnon to sleep with his sister in the first place. If Jonadab was truly a friend he would have said to Amnon, “*Dude, are you out of you mind she’s you sister get your heart back to God!*” “*Amnon you’re not in love you’re in lust and there is a cure for that it’s called repentance!*” Hey saint any friend or relative that makes it easy to sin when we are around them is not someone we should be around and certainly not a person that we should take advice from. Consider the outcome of Jonadab advice, Amnon commits rape and incest and ends up getting murdered.

Amnon has clearly confused lust with love as he says “*I love Tamar*”. Listen carefully it is never love if we view people as objects of desire to posses for our own self gratification, that never comes from God only from satan. Further more God’s love is about GIVING not GETTING! Notice the subtlety of the flesh as Amnon does what so many do today to justify the urges of the sin nature, “*I love Tamar, my brother Absalom's sister.*” Now if Absalom’s is your brother and Tamar is his sister what dies that make her to you? Certainly not your girlfriend or wife! Amnon lust has twisted his since of reality as he can not make a clear distinction. Jonadab’s bad council was to use his lust sickness to his advantage and arrange a meeting between Amnon and Tamar so that he could force himself on her.

Vs. 6-10 It is clear by this behavior that Amnon is very immature and that David should not have given in to it. One wonders why David was unable to see that what was wrong with Amnon, perhaps David acted this way towards his children out of guilt seeing that he had so many wives and children from each of them plus the responsibilities of being a king so he just let them get away with things.

In verse 7 David orders Tamar to obey her brother’s wishes and in so doing sent her to being raped and humiliated by her own brother. Through David’s indulgence he has set in motions the events that will lead the rape of daughter by his son and the eventual murder of that son by another son. Hey folks we do our children no favors by letting them have their way in the things of this world in fact we sentence them to a live time of heartache. In first Timothy 3:2-5 Paul wrote the qualifications of leadership for the church one of which was, “*A bishop then must be blameless,* ***the husband of one wife****, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous;* ***one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?****)*” What a sad state that often the most gifted of God’s servants fail to exercise the same towards their own homes and thus disqualify themselves for service.

Amnon shows his intent when he refused to eat, kicked every one out of the house and wanted Tamar to feed him in his bedroom. Hey a word to the bro’s, fellows the gal’s in this fellowship are your sister’s and as such are daughters of the King of King’s so show some respect by not putting them into situations where someone may observe behavior that is suspect. I’m not against hugging but I’m not going to do the chest to chest hugging accept to my wife and I’m going to avoid being in a home or a room with one of my sisters. Why? Because I never want anyone to impugn my sisters reputation.

And gal’s a word for you now, you have far greater value to your heavenly Father then what the world has advertised, don’t sell your self short. If there is some fellow Christian or other any other man who is friendly, flirtatious and he has your heart going pitter patter. Oh he is so handsome and he opens the door for you takes you out and treats you so well. He calls you all the time and listens to your every word buys you little presents just because. You find yourself wanting to be with him and he says that he wants to be with you intimately. Right then you have a warning signal, you see if he is really what you think he is he will never want to put you in a place where you will give up your body with out his first making a commitment before God of marriage. If you hear those words “*If you love me you’d let me*” look him in the eye and say “*If you loved me you never would ask*!” Gal’s listen to me please, there are far to many Amnon’s out their who are willing to say and do anything to get you to give them your bodies for their pleasure and once they get you to do so they will kick you out and bolt leaving you crying outside. How do you know if the guy is an Amnon? Well if he tries to get you to give up your body before he has committed his heart to God by way of a covenant then he is an Amnon. **If the marriage license is just a piece of paper before you get married it will be just a piece of paper after you get married and if you have to give a man your body to get them to love you then what makes you think if another woman offers them their body that they won’t take the same opportunity**?

Vs. 11-14 Finally Amnon shows what is truly in his heart and admits that Tamar is his sister. Tamar plead to Amnon to think of the nation, think of God, she plead to him to be a better man, than she tried to buy time an pleaded for him to simply ask their dad if she could be his wife. Clearly Tamar is just trying to get out of a bad situation as she suggest that they talk to dad and then they can get married, even though this was clearly forbidden. She clearly is repulsed by such a suggestion and how it was against the Lord and should not be a part of God’s people, “*You’ll be a fool and I’ll be shamed as no man will want me*”. But lust simply ignores reason and logic it refuses to listen to anything or anyone and plunges after that which it is possessed with SELF! Amnon can not see the results of his actions will do to him and others. This is noting but rape and incest as Amnon forces himself upon his sister. I personally long for us to dwell in a world where these kinds of things will not even be mentioned let alone happening but we are not there yet. And know this God’s heart brakes for those who have be victimized by the selfish lusts of others.

Hey, folk’s sex was God’s idea and His design is for it to be a beautiful experience, whereby two become one, in fact God’s thought concerning it was that by this act of two becoming one that the human species would be perpetuated upon the earth. Because this kind of intimacy is so precious to Him he placed it within the walls of a contract whereby two people promise to live selfless lives looking to the interests of each other before self. It is outside of God’s plan that we see sex perverted and people becoming to just objects of lust for self gratification.

Make no mistake about it this has nothing to do with love or sex as God designed!

According to the statistics on child molestation 80% of the times it is someone the child knows and the number of cases are growing each year. The statistics also show that this crime is directly tied to the growth of pornography on the Internet. Studies conducted by the FBI have shown that pornography is extremely influential in the actions of sex offenders and serial murders. 90 percent of the predators who molest children have had some type of involvement with pornography. According to Charles Keating of Citizens for Decency Through Law, research reveals that 77% of child molesters of boys and 87% of child molesters of girls admitted imitating the sexual behavior they had seen in pornography they had watched. Roughly 33% of girls and 14% of boys are molested before the age of 18, according to the U.S. Justice Department. Nearly 2/3 of all sexual assaults reported involved minors and roughly 1/3 involved children under the age of 12 and as horrible as these statistics are they are most likely far worse as only 35% of sexual abuse is reported.

Pastor why are you bringing this up? Two reasons, one it is in the text that we are looking at in a home where the head of the household was a man after God’s own heart yet he had lived a compromised life and that life affected those around him. Second, I’m declaring war against this kind of stuff in the body of Christ, if you have trouble with the internet get rid of it NOW!

**III. Vs. 15-22 Lust’s hatred**

 Vs. 15 Guilt over sin is what Amnon now has and he hates what he has done and has now transferred that hatred of self to the victim. Amnon didn’t have love for Tamar; no he only was interested in what he could get from her and had no concern for her. And where did Amnon learn such behavior? Well he only had to look at the example of his father even though Amnon takes to a much further level of wickedness. In Exodus 20:5 we are told that “*I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me*” and this is often how the iniquity is carried from generation to generation as children observe and model a parents sinful behavior only they add to it. “*The hatred with which he hated her was greater than the love with which he had loved her.*” The only thing that Amnon had for his sister after he a violated her was a since of wanting to remove any thought of his guilt from his presence. Clearly Amnon saw in Tamar a villain and he was the victim of her beauty or friendly conversation. True love does not violate another’s body just to satisfy selfish pleasures. There is a fine line between selfish lust and hatred and clearly after the fact Amnon crossed over. When people treat other humans as nothing more than inanimate objects simply to be used and tossed away the end will always be emotional damage.

Vs. 16-18 It is interesting to see Amnon’s reaction to Tamar after he had got what he wanted, this casual promiscuous sex that the world pushes was unfulfilling to both and left Amnon angry and Tamar brokenhearted. Notice that the word “*woman*” in verse 17 is italicized which means that in the Hebrew it’s not there. Simply put what Amnon says is, “*Put this one, this thing out and bolt the door*”. Amnon’s reaction to dissipate his guilt was to treat the woman he just raped with contempt and for him it was no doubt on to the next conquest. “*You said you loved me Amnon, you said you wanted me and in the end all you wanted was to please yourself and throw me away like a used tissue*!” “*Get her out of here and bolt the door, I don’t want to see that sleazy girl any more*”. How many times has this seen been repeated generation after generation? Men we need to change our hearts towards woman and see them as daughters of the king of king’s and not objects designed for our pleasure!

According to Exodus 22:16-17 and Deut. 22:28-29 the only honorable thing left for Amnon to do was to her the “*bride price*” which a type of alimony that would have to be paid for the rest of the woman’s life as she now less likely to get married seeing that she was no longer a virgin. But Amnon didn’t care about how his raping his sister affected her; he didn’t want to be saddled with the financial responsibilities to which she protests loudly and is thrown out by one of Amnon’s servants.

The “*robe of many colors*” was a garment that was like a formal gown which should that she was a person of privilege and status and didn’t have to work. She wore a garment that signified that she was a virgin, a special garment that only the king’s daughters would ware. And she tore it and put ashes on her head a sign of morning. Today folks look at young people as if there is something wrong with them if they stay virgins until marriage, but it is honorable thing to wait for the man or woman that God will bring you as you are wearing the robe of Christ’s righteousness.

Despite her tears, her being a fellow Israelite, relative, sister and princess they bolted the door behind them keeping her locked outside, not wanting to hear her wounded ness. Tamar had her virginity taken from her and then was simply discarded like trash. She was no longer considered marriage material and was not to ware her virgin robes. Dear saint’s I’m afraid that to far to long we have treated the victims of this kind of stuff in the church the same way that Tamar is treated kept outside in shame and shame goes to those who have perpetrated this sin and to those who have not been a part of the healing of a wounded life.

Vs. 19-22 Tamar didn’t seek to hide the crime that had been done to her, she tore her coat put ashes on her head all of which signified a great wrong and injustice done to her. Her sobbing caused her brother Absalom to ask if Amnon had sleep with her, so apparently he was already acting lustful towards Tamar. But although Absalom said, “*Hey, you know, he’s your brother, no big deal*”, in his heart he was planning revenge. Tamar didn’t go to her father but rather her brother as perhaps she held him some what responsible for indulging her brother and send her to him. But even her brother says, “*hold your peace, He is your brother do not take this thing to heart*.” So again Tamar is victimized this time by her full brother. Absalom told his sister, “*I’ll take care of this sis*” but all he wants to do is kill Amnon as Amnon is the first in line to the throne, so in essence Tamar is raped again by Absalom. Is there any wonder today that these kinds of things lead to drug and alcohol addiction, and domestic violence as we shall see next week as Amnon will be murdered by Absalom?

Perhaps they waited to see what their father David would do as it was David’s responsibility to discipline Amnon. Instead after David got angry, nothing else happened and what do you suppose that made Tamar feel? I’m afraid this happens far too much of the time, as David did nothing to either protect Tamar nor correct Amnon. Perhaps David felt he could not do anything because of his own sexual failings, so he doesn’t discipline his own son. He offers no comfort to Tamar and no correction to Amnon and instead decided to just let things slide. At very least David could have said, “*Amnon, I know what can happen in a life when sexual lust goes unrepented, I know what damage it can do in lives. Amnon you must not let lust conquer your heart you need to confess it before it grows*.” And to Tamar he could have said, “*I’m sorry for not being a better father and example to your brother and for not considering you and providing a safe place for you to live without fear of being raped by your own brother*.”

According to Deut. 22:28-29 if a man raped a virgin he had to pay her father a fine, marry her and never divorce her. But the scriptures also forbid marriage between ½ brothers and sisters. But David had committed to crimes that deserved capital punishment and had neither sentence lain upon himself. David was morally crippled by his own life style but listen up he later realized this and that is why we have this story in the Bible because later on David realized that he could have used his moral failure’s to speak to his children that lust kills and destroys and he could have spared suffering in his own house had he done so earlier. Mother’s father’s have you sat down with your children and told them the mistakes you made with not controlling your passions and how it nearly destroyed your life hadn’t been for Jesus perhaps the first place we need to witness for Christ is in our own home!

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

**V. Sovereign: 2 Samuel 1-24**

**2. Chp. 11-24 The King’s troubles**

**2 Samuel 13:** **15-31**

**“Parental neglect”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 23-29 Time to burry the hatchet**

**III. Vs. 30-39 Absalom fled**

**I. Intro.**

We find ourselves in yet another story in David’s life where the “*sword is not departing from his own house”.* In a much younger day as a young parent, I asked my mother who raised four boys pretty much on her own if parenting got easier when we became adults her response shocked me as she wasted no time in saying, “*Dale, it becomes much harder the older you get as the bigger messes you make*”. Now some 20 years later I’m not sure if the “*messes*” she was revering to were her own or ours? Listen up through out our lives each of us at times will either find ourselves under the judgment of sin which God has not forgiven because we have not repented, or we are suffering from the chastisement of our heavenly Father because of the sin He has forgiven and at times it is difficult outwardly to tell the difference. That is where David finds himself, in a pickle, longing to be with his estranged son but knowing as king he must be judged for his sinful behavior. So how does David handle this, he avoids contact, burry’s his head in the sand and waits it out. God faced the same with you and I, He longed to be reunited with His beloved creation but such rebellion and disobedience must be judge. So what did he do? His only begotten Son was willing to take our place and in so doing became the minister of reconciliation for all who wish to again become His children not just by way of His creation but by way of relationship!

**II. Vs. 23-29 Time to burry the hatchet**

Vs. 23-27 Now in verse 21 we were told that when David heard of all these things, he was very angry, but I suggest that what he should have had was not anger but grief and that such heartbreak should have been geared to comforting Tamar and correcting Amnon. All that anger produced was a release of emotions and as we shall see anger will be what powers Absalom to kill Amnon. Absalom played it cool for two years until the suspicions diminished but during this time Absalom did nothing but plot and plan for an opportune time to kill Amnon for his sin against Tamar. Absalom no doubt had a love for his sister in fact in the next chapter (14:27) we are told that he had a “*daughter whose name was Tamar. She was a woman of beautiful appearance*”, so he named his daughter after his sister.

Finally it came time for the annual sheepshearer’s convention in Baal Hazor (Baal’s Village) about eight miles north of Jerusalem in the town of Ephraim. These events were known for their celebrations as it was a time where you celebrated the wealth you had, it was a big party where prostitutes would come and people would get plastered. It was a party like this back in Genesis 38:13 that got Judah in trouble with yet another Tamar. Absalom knows his older brothers tendencies, he knows that Amnon wouldn’t be able to resist a party with scantly clad gals; you see Amnon has a problem with lust. Further more Absalom knows his father David’s permissive parenting style. So Absalom thinks, “*I can’t just go out and invite Amnon as it would raise suspicions so I’ll first invite dad to come on out with his servants to celebrate*” “*I’ll push the issue so that dad really thinks I want him to come but he won’t want to be a burden*”. Based upon David’s response in verse 25 Absalom’s plan worked to perfection as David’s words indicate that his reason for turning down the offer was so that he wouldn’t be a burden financially. Now this is an important detail as it also reveals that this celebration must have taken place in Absalom’s house. You see it tells us a lot about David being an indulgent father who not only didn’t require much from his children he gave them much. How do we know? Well these things were the type of party’s where the bigger the bash the more money you had. Hey saint’s I’m all for spoiling our children but let us make sure that it is not at the expense of raising them up in the “*training and admonition of the Lord.*” (Eph 6:4)

Perhaps David thought that this would bring the family back together as it seemed as though Absalom wanted to ***burry the hatchet*** but based upon his response in verse 26 “*why should he go*” it appears that he was reluctant as such good will from Absalom suggested a plot and David settles upon a compromise only allowing Amnon to go if all the brothers went as well. Again part of the cunning of Absalom was to try to convince his dad to go all the time knowing that David wouldn’t go but bless the occasion nonetheless. This tactic worked after having received his fathers blessing on the party he asked for Amnon to go, “*Hey dad since you can’t go how about my big brother, you know dad I want to burry the hatchet and all*”. And again the condition seems to be that not just Amnon but the rest of the boys as well and so off they go.

Hey a word to parents go back to when you were teenagers when you used all the tricks to manipulate your parents into letting you do what you wanted. Remember how careful you were to plan to go to the party that you knew your parents would not let you go to. Remember how you plotted and planned to go out with the guy you knew your parents wouldn’t approve of. Remember how you threw fits and manipulated your parents to get them to let you go out? **Well not to worry because your kids will never do that to you!** YEH RIGHT! Parents your kids are just as prone to the flesh as you and I were and we need not succumb to the tricks, why? Because we have been around the block ourselves and takes a con to know a con!

Vs. 28-29 David’s suspicions of Absalom’s motives should have caused him to set aside Amnon and Absalom and deal with the failure of both of them but he again shirks his God given responsibility to guide and train his children. Apparently David eventually learned this as proverbs 22:6 Solomon would write “*Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it.*” Because of this Absalom will cease the opportunity granted by his father to kill his brother for raping his sister. But he is not going to do it with his own hands he is going to have his servants do so and that only after Amnon is drunk and unable to defend himself. So as Amnon was staggering Absalom said, “*strike now*” and in front of them all Amnon was murdered sending all the boys mounting their mules (*the equivalent of our Hummers*) fearing they might be next. Amnon was no doubt a bit nervous about being around Absalom but the opportunity to party with wine, women and song was too great an opportunity for Amnon. One wonders if getting Amnon drunk was a trick Absalom learned from his father David when he attempted to cover up his adulterous relationship with Uriah’s wife Bathsheba. No worries about retribution as they were only acting on orders of the prince to kill the crown prince, so go ahead and kill him.

Absalom waited two full years for his dad to put out Amnon from the kingdom, to see if David’s anger would bring about justice. Didn’t David know that his two oldest boys had not spoken in two years, was he so removed from his family, so absent as a father that he has not noticed? Here is a rule of thumb **a neglected kid makes for a master manipulator and Absalom and Amnon both had become great at it.** Though David doesn’t yet know it he is sending Amnon to his death just as he sent Uriah to his and Tamar to her rape. Some may say, “*Well Amnon for all practical purposes had ruined Tamar life and further more Absalom’s revenge is based upon the fact that David did nothing and only got angry.*” So to some Absalom’s revenge may seem like justice after all Amnon did raped his sister and dad did nothing. It has been well said that, “***In taking revenge a man shows that he is his enemy’s equal but in forgiveness he shows that he is his superior***!” Consider Jesus when as we are told in 1 Peter 2:23-24 when “*He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously; who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness; by whose stripes you were healed*.”

David had morally failed and perhaps he felt as though he had lost the right to speak to either Amnon or Absalom and for the position of having practiced personal holiness he had lost that right but he could speak to them from the position of failure and brokenness, he could of held up his own ruin as reason to avoid lust and pride. Parents do not fall into the lie that because you have failed to live by God’s standard that you have lost the right to speak of its truth. *Our failure to live by God’s Word does not diminish its the truth it only shows the ruin of not having done so*. Satan would have us not speak of God’s word to our children but our kids are on loan from God they do not belong to us and we will have to give an account that is why in the bible there are 66 chapters on the life of David so we can learn from his mistakes.

**III. Vs. 30-39 Absalom fled**

Vs. 30-36 Jonadab liked being in the position of bringing good news to David but he has switched sides as he first told Amnon to go ahead and rape his sister and now he seems to be with Absalom in the murder of Amnon. Hey saint, when we look at Jonadab the phrase comes to mind, “*You don’t need to cleaver or smart to start a lot of trouble, only foolish.*”

Being that Baal Hazor is only eight miles away it didn’t take long for word to get back to David but what got back was that all the boys were dead by the hand of Absalom. The tearing of garments is a sign of extreme grief and upon hearing that all the heirs to the throne were dead caused David to immediately grieve and his servants with him. But you know what interests me is **there is no statement by David of disbelief at the suggestion of Absalom killing the heirs to the throne**; which suggests to me that **David was not surprised by what happened only grieved that it did**. Oh but thank God for Jonadab the same fellow who had suggested the means by which Amnon could rape his sister. He is right there saying, “*Not to worry uncle, Absalom wasn’t out to kill his entire brother’s just Amnon for raping his sister*”. I’m certain that David is not in his right mind at this moment because if he was he would have asked Jonadab, “*How do you know*”? “*Well Uncle it was my idea that led to Tamar’s rape and Absalom told me his plan to seek revenge against Amnon*”. Though David wept bitterly upon hearing the news of the death of Amnon the crown prince it was his apathy in correction that was partial to blame. But his grief was eased no doubt when someone saw a cloud of dust on the horizon and all David’s boys minus two were coming back and when they got together they all wept together, for the loss of Amnon and the separation from Absalom.

Hey parents what can we learn from this tale so far? I suggest to you that it is important to be involved in our children’s lives, to know what’s going on with them who their friends are and what they like and dislike. **It is also important that we understand that we are to love our children enough for them to not like us**!

Can you imagine Jonadab saying, “*No big deal David not all your sons are dead only the lust sick Amnon.*” As parents it doesn’t matter what our children have done, no matter how many sinful things they have gotten themselves into they will always be our children, and as such our hearts will break just as much. You go visit folks in prison and have them start talking about their mothers or fathers and how their actions have broke their parents hearts, talk to parents who have wayward children and see their tears flow. Listen up, **sin separates it destroys lives and ruins relationships and all are its victims**. But there is an antidote to sin there is **Someone** who is called “*the Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Streets to Dwell In*.” (Isa. 58:12) It is said of Him that “*there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved*.” (Acts 4:12) He said of Himself, “*I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.*” (John 14:6) And it is “*through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins*.” (Acts 10:43) So as we live in a fractured world where sin divides and destroys look upon the Son that, “*you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name*.” (John 20:31)

Vs. 37-39 Absalom did not go to a city of refuge because he was guilty, and those cities were only meant to protect the innocent. Instead he flees to his grandfather’s kingdom for three years. These are gentile grandparents and as such Absalom is leaving the land of Israel, leaving the land of promise. And after three years the death of Amnon was not greater than the separation from Absalom and David longed to be reconciled with him but didn’t bother to first have Absalom reconciled with the Lord. Again this indulgence towards Absalom was the same seen towards Amnon and both will meet with the same end.

Twice we are told that Absalom fled (verse 34 and 37) perhaps the first time to throw off the sent of his guilt and the second time when that didn’t work he ran 80 miles to his maternal grandparents where he would hold up three years. It appears as though two very different things happened during those three years, **David mourned the loss of Amnon and wanted to reconcile with Absalom and Absalom plotted how he could take his father’s kingdom from him (chapters 14-15)**. According to chapter 14:28 Absalom will dwell two more years in Jerusalem until David sees him. Now this is again significant as in 1 Kings 1:6 we are told of David’s lenient behavior towards all his third son’s Adonijah as it is said that David had not ever, “*rebuked him at any time by saying, Why have you done so?*” David’s discipline of Absalom appears to have been the silent method of avoidance instead of dealing with his sin.

As time past the heartache for the loss of Amnon became weaker and the longing for Absalom grew stronger. Three years is a long time to be separated and David is unable to condone or condemn and he wants to get it right but his pride won’t let him. If you are estranged from one of your children or one of your parents maybe this story will be a motive to go and make it right pick up the phone drop an e-mail and reach out. “*Yeh, but you don’t know what they have done*!” You’re right I don’t but is avoidance helping heal the relationship? If you never got the opportunity to say you’re sorry or that you loved them or to share God’s love for them again would you regret it? Because you never know, so why not be the first to initiate and attempt to restore the relationship otherwise you may never get the opportunity!

As we have looked at the plot hatched by Absalom to kill his older brother Amnon to avenge to the rape of his sister Tamar our hearts need to be broken by the horrible consequences of sin. ***The destruction, death and despair that lie in the wake of sin are far greater than the temporary pleasures it offered***. Sin advertises immediate self satisfaction without ever mentioning the cost or what will be lost, “*Enjoy NOW, don’t worry about the consequences!*” Every news cast ought to be a reminder of the price for sin and our hearts need to be broken by it, instead of being ***seduced*** by it’s false promises.

Behind every sorted story of lust is death, death of innocence, death of relationships. All ought to consider this chapter before they follow down the path of lust as we see a brokenhearted father, a sister Tamar who’s name suggested fruitfulness yet will be barren and depressed, Amnon murdered and Absalom angry and in self-exile. If we allow lust to be part of our relationships it will ruin all it comes in contact with. So why not heed the words of Peter in 1 Peter 2:11 where he says, “*I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul*”. **If we follow after lust we will have a little pleasure followed by a life time of pain but if we flee lust we will have a little pain followed by a life time of pleasure**.

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

**V. Sovereign: 2 Samuel 1-24**

**2. Chp. 11-24 The King’s troubles**

**2 Samuel 14:** **1-33**

**“Faulty Forgiveness”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 1-24 Mercy apart from justice**

**III. Vs. 25-33 Forgiveness apart from repentance**

**I. Intro.**

Back in the 12th chapter I commented that quite often people want “**the kind of forgiveness from the Lord that simply over looks our sin’s but allows us to continue in it without any consequences from our actions**. We need not look any further by way of illustration than David’s son Absalom who wants **mercy apart from justice** and **forgiveness without true repentance**. Although this is the type of mercy and forgiveness the world has come to expect it is not the kind that God offers and we can see why in the actions of Absalom. Simply put the distribution of mercy without satisfying the demands of justice is not true mercy. You see mercy is defined by “*not getting what you deserve*” but if the demands of justice are not satisfied than you may not be getting what you deserved but the victim is “*getting what they don’t deserve*” and this type of mercy apart from justice serves neither as it punishes the victim and teaches the perpetrator that there is no cost in wickedness. The challenge in biblical mercy is how can mercy be distributed to the guilty all the while satisfying the demands of justice? Well we are told in Rom. 3:24-26 that He “*justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented him* (Jesus) *as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus*.” Here in this section we shall see what mercy and forgiveness looks like apart from justice and repentance!

**II. Vs. 1-24 Mercy apart from justice**

Vs. 1-3 Over a few years David must have shown by his actions the effects of the estranged relationship with Absalom as he is not able to condone or condemn so he is torn between what to do. Perhaps he was visibly grieving for Tamar, Amnon and being separate from Absalom so Joab decided to take matters in to his own hand to bring about reconciliation. The chip hadn’t fallen to far from the post as neither David nor his son Absalom wanted to take the imitative to humble themselves and get their relationship right with the other.

Joab perceived what David’s heart was toward his Absalom but he also knew that David was not open to reconciliation with his son so he had to come up with an idea that would accomplish this. Part of the reason for Joab’s involvement might be explained by the fact that David is pushing 60 by now and with Amnon dead and Absalom in exile who would reign if David died? Joab thought, “*Hey I know that parable thing that Nathan used seemed to work pretty well*”, so he sent to Tekoa, and he fetched from there a wise woman slash actress. Tekoa is about five miles from Bethlehem (12 miles from Jerusalem); toward the Dead sea it was the birthplace of the prophet Amos.

David needed to make a decision concerning Absalom and just letting things stew was not helping the situation but he was in a difficult position in as much as he was king and it was his duty to uphold the law yet he was a father and as such no doubt wanted to see his son. Hey saint’s this is always a difficult situation to be in when you are in leadership doing the right thing concerning your children and family yet still being under the same standard as everyone else, David is not the first nor the last that has had to battle this.

Vs. 4-7 So she did exactly as Joab told her giving her sad story that was more about how this affected her then the justice of the situation as she gives her poetical conclusion “*they would extinguish my ember that is left*” (verse 7). Joab takes a page out of Nathan’s confrontation of David with his own fabricated story including an actor from Tekoa who came dressed for the part and well rehearsed with the lines that Joab put in her mouth. Her two sons sound a lot like Cain and Able as they fought in the field with no one being there to separate them the outcome being the death of one of her boys at the hands of the other. To further get David to rule with a pardon the story notice that Joab’s “*words in her mouth*” varied from David’s own situation in four key points when compared with the actual situation:

1. She was an elderly widow and with one boy now dead she only had one heir left, not the case with David.
2. She was receiving a good deal of pressure from outside family members to avenge her one son’s death by executing the other boy, again this was not the case with David.
3. She was alone in apposing this as she says that in so doing it would “*extinguish her ember as well*”, in other words this was a death sentence to not only the guilty son but to her as well. Again this detail did not fit David’s own situation.
4. Finally according to Ex. 21:12-14 we are told that “*He who strikes a man so that he dies shall surely be put to death. However, if he did not lie in wait, but God delivered him into his hand, then I will appoint for you a place where he may flee. But if a man acts with premeditation against his neighbor, to kill him by treachery, you shall take him from My altar, that he may die.*” The Word of God clearly provided a different slant on the sentence for the fabricated story as the surviving son was guilty but depending on the circumstances may be judged differently than “*premeditation*” which is what Absalom had done to his brother Amnon.

There was no police force, detective squad or crime scene investigation team that could sort through the evidence to determine the cause of death and whether or not it was premeditated so it was up too the next family member to be the avenger of blood. Now you might recall that there was a place the killer to could run too and it was called the city of refuge until he could get a trial to see if the killing was premeditated if it was not then they would be forced to stay in the city of refuge until the High priest would die.

Vs.8-11 David’s only response at first was in verse 8 where he agreed to take the case as being the king he wanted to take some time and consider the case to research it in the Word of God but that would not grant the decision Joab wanted. Joab couldn’t risk that so he has her pressure him for a judgment saying, “*Oh king make a decision and I’ll take the responsibility*”. And what she wanted was this snap decision that said “*Your son’s forgiven*” which would be based solely upon how this affected the woman not upon satisfying the demands of justice nor upon how it would affect future cases. To further get David to make a judgment she promises to assume the guilt of what ever decision he made on her behalf and is so doing she got him to take an oath concerning his judgment on her behalf thus it was now law and that is what she and Joab waited for.

Joab’s intent was to get David to bend the rules of justice, to extend mercy in her case and to forgo justice. But the truth of the matter was that these were two entirely different situations as in her hypothetical case the son’s death was not intentional but accidental as they were in a fight in which the son was killed. Yet David was trapped as he gave a judgment based upon emotion and not according to the word of God.

Vs. 12-20 David had agreed to protect a guilty son in a small family who he didn’t know how could he back out of protecting his own son whom he loved? Joab had her spring the trap “*Why is your judgment right for me but not right for the nation*?” “*You said that the son should be forgiven that I might have an heir, yet you have banished the future heir to the throne.*” To Joab the greater sin was found in David not seeking to reconcile with Absalom and not in Absalom’s murder of Amnon or Amnon’s rape of his sister Tamar his argument seems to be how does slaying the murder bring back the victim, so why not give him a chance. She further puts on the thumb screws by saying, “*Look once your dead you won’t get the opportunity to reconcile with your son*” and she is right as death ends our earthly opportunity to forgive, show kindness and reconcile with those that we are estranged from. Though it is true that ***God devises ways that His banished are not expelled from Him forever*** it is never at the expense of satisfying the demands of justice. Literally God “*devises means*” is “*He plans planning’s*” but He will not forgive a man his sin until He has satisfied what justice demands He can not His very Character forbids it. It is for this reason His only Son went to the cross where sin’s requirements were meant.

Hey saint’s pride is a horrible thing as it often causes people to not do what they will later regret for the rest of their lives. I’ve been at many funerals over the years where the biggest tears are often the tears of regret for not having said I love you and I’m sorry and now reality has set in that they waited to long and the opportunity has passed them by “*like water that’s spilt on the ground as you can’t gather it up again*”! So she says.

Now go with me for a moment and think of the means by which the Lord has gone to reconcile with us who’s sin has exiled us from His presence. God had a plan by which the sons of Adam born apart from Him would not have to spend eternity apart from Him. Ah but unlike Joab’s plan it was not by excusing justice for the sake of mercy it was by satisfying justice. What? Well you see **mankind wants to either avoid justice or do enough penance or work to satisfy justices demands**. Now all sounds fine until you ask yourself how you would feel if your son or daughter was murdered and the person who was guilty of the crime just got off scot-free or perhaps they didn’t get off but instead had to wash your car and mow your lawn for the rest of your life. You see as we look at Jesus Christ dying on the cross, we see how God was able to accomplish what justice demanded (death) and at the same time being able to grant us mercy by reuniting us to Himself.

Hey, saint’s we have the responsibility to not only do the right thing but to do so the right way. “*Find a way to make it work David just as God finds away to bring us back to Himself*”, though that is true God never does so at the expense of justice, **God only reconciles by satisfying justice never by ignoring it**. David was willing to set aside justice for the sake of sympathy and that was what Joab was proposing by way of the woman from Tekoa and it is what the world wants a “*cross-less gospel*” one in which God simply over looks sin and wrong but does noting to satisfy it. We have a court system at times in which a person guilty of murder gets off but what of the victims how is justice satisfied for them?

Apparently David’s suspicions have been aroused as he wants to know who put her up to this, so she flatters him by saying, “*I knew that your heart would be this way, because you’re like an angel of God*.” “*Ok, Ok, what ever now tell me isn’t Joab behind this*”, David says? So now he has her in a corner and she says, “*You caught us*!” but she the reason for the fabrication by Joab “*to bring about this change of affairs*” (verse 20).

Vs. 21-24 Joab must have been around the corner when the woman was telling the story to David as he suddenly appears and it seem as though based upon his words in verse 22 that Joab has discussed this with David prior. Apparently Joab does a little kissing up as well but although Absalom returned from his exile he still didn’t see David for another two full years according to verse 28.

Joab got what he wanted hoping that David’s reconciliation with Absalom would prevent civil war but it didn’t prevent it, no it usurered it in. But David’s reconciliation of Absalom was only back to the nation not with each other as he refused to see him two more years. Poor David who now is trying to compensate for his permissive indulgent parenting style now is trying a new tactic that of ignoring Absalom.

So why was Joab so intent upon restoring Absalom? It appears as though Joab may have had some motives of securing his own position in the future especially in light of his words concerning him and his brother in 3:29. So David gives in seeing he made a judgment but says, “*He can come home but I don’t want to see his face*.”

**III. Vs. 25-33 Forgiveness apart from repentance**

Vs. 25-27 For the first three years Absalom fled justice for the murder of his brother Amnon in a self imposed exile then at the manipulation of Joab David allows Absalom a sort of house arrest as he is allowed back into Jerusalem but not into the royal court.

Apparently that face was pleasing to the nation if it wasn’t pleasing to David, as we are told of his handsome appearance. The popularity of Absalom was clearly tied to his physical appearance and one is reminded of Saul’s similar election based upon his appearance in 1 Sam. 9:2. I have long watched in our democracy the popularity and the opportunities granted to those whose noses or hair style is deemed more attractive to the populace than others. What often seems to be a voting draw to people is how a person looks instead of the character and integrity or even their political positions. We are told that Absalom’s (now the crown prince) hair is what they seemed to like as when it was cut once a year it would weigh 5 ½ pounds no doubt all the girls swooned at (Fabio) Absalom even though he was a murder. It is interesting to note that that which Absalom and others gloried in will cost him his life in chapter 18:9 as he was escaping on his mule he went under a low lying tree causing his long hair to get stuck and leave him dangling, to which Joab will thrust in threw with three spears.

Vs. 28-33 There were restrictions placed on Absalom as he was to remain under house arrest and was not allowed to see his father. David had been guilty of pampering his two sons and he wanted to make sure he didn’t do so again only this time he went to far the other way. There is little doubt that Absalom felt justified in killing his brother and David’s avoidance only fueled his frustration of his father’s ability to rule the nation.

The lack of contact between David and Absalom didn’t hurt his popularity from the nation as apparently Absalom engaged in a little PR. The fact that he had plotted the murder of his brother and proved his guilt by running away all they cared about was his long flowing hair and good looks. We are told that Absalom had three sons and one daughter but according to 18:18 all three of those sons died as he had no heir to carry on his name, thus he had to erect an pillar to tell everybody how great he was.

So he sends for Joab but Joab feels that Absalom is to hot of a political topic so he does not answer his repeated calls. So Absalom thinks, “*Hey, I know Joab has a field next to mine I’ll set it on fire that’ll get his attention.*” This gives you a hint of what kind of person Absalom was as he was not fit to run a nation, no humility and brokenness in Absalom just pride and brutality. Being back in Jerusalem yet banned from the king’s presence meant that you were most likely not first in line to the throne and make no mistake about it Absalom wanted to be king. Perhaps Joab perceived the danger he and the nation was in if the egotistical Absalom was not at least shown some attention. But after two full years of waiting see be restored to his position he felt that he had suffered enough and made several attempts to get Joab to intervene but he wasn’t answering his phone. So he set his crops on fire to get Joab’s attention. Under the law the arsonist was to repay the owner for the lost crop, so that way no one would suspect anything. Absalom gave Joab two choices: either take his to his father for complete restoration of position or take him to court and prove he is a murder. Joab had no choice as Absalom’s popularity had grown that taking him to court would only make Joab look bad and if he ever became king would cost him his life. Absalom’s statement in verse 32 “*if there is iniquity in me, let him execute me*” is a very revealing statement as clearly he is unable to see that he premeditatedly executed his brother. Sin blinds the heart to it’s own wickedness and it is something that we clearly need to be on guard against. David’s act of kissing his son was a sign of forgiveness but it was without any confession or repentance. Absalom was never repentant nor did he seek forgiveness. David was about to lose everything again because he failed as a father to deal with his son’s sins.

David is unwilling to make sure that his son has truly forgiven but withholds the opportunity to get his son’s heart right. Reconciliation is finally made but far to late as bitterness has taken hold of Absalom’s heart towards his father. After all David was a man who had sinned greatly and gotten away with it and now he sat over and judged Absalom and puts conditions on it? This faulty forgiveness of Absalom didn’t lead to true restoration or repentance from Absalom, no it only ensured a further sin and rebellion. David and Joab hadn’t helped the nation or Absalom they only guaranteed further heartache and sin. Absalom should have cut and weighed his hair prior to chapter 18:9 as it will get caught in a tree and lead to his being spear three times by none other than Joab.

Some times I think God tries to get our attention time and again and we won’t respond as He is seeking to get us to reconcile with Him. And when we refuse His repeated attempts He will go out and set our fields on fire. Do you know what I mean? Has the Lord ever set your field on fire in an attempt to get a hold of you? “*Hey God what’s the big deal why did you go and burn my field down*?” “*Well, Dale first of all it’s not your field it’s My field that I gave to you as a stewardship. Second, I wanted to speak with you about this area of your heart.*” “*Man Lord if you wanted to talk to me all you had to do is tell me, what’s that you’ve been trying to get a hold of me for months and I wasn’t paying attention*?” “*Oh I’m sorry Lord I’m listening now so could you send some rain to put out the flames*?” If the pardon we want is the kind where He winks at sin, you will find none offered but if what we want is to be saved from self then we will find forgiveness.

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

**V. Sovereign: 2 Samuel 1-24**

**2. Chp. 11-24 The King’s troubles**

**2 Samuel 15:** **1-12**

**“Risen up to ruin”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 1-6 Stealing the hearts of people**

**III. Vs. 7-12 The conspiracy grew strong**

**I. Intro.**

To experience God’s power when you are facing giants, fighting the enemies of God or withstanding a sinful king is one thing. To cry out to Him when you are held up in the wilderness of despair in the cave of Adullam or to weep up His feet when your rebellion as been seen in the smoldering ashes of Ziklag is all note worthy. But who will we turn to when someone you love is tearing our world apart? I can think of no more difficult of a season in any life then when our own sinful choices have caused those we love a rip our hearts apart, too whom do we turn? God was discipling His son David and based upon his words in Psalm 3:2-3 (The inscription above the psalm reads “*a psalm of David when he fled Absalom his son*”) David knew whom to turn too as he wrote, “*Many are they who say of me, "There is no help for him in God." But You, O LORD, are a shield for me, My glory and the One who lifts up my head*.” David went on to say in that psalm in verses 4-5 “*I cried to the LORD with my voice, And He heard me from His holy hill. I lay down and slept; I awoke, for the LORD sustained me.*” He does not cry out to God in denunciation of the injustice of his discipline, no in David’s silence concerning this is his admittance that he is in need of every blow. But dear saint please hear me on this; “*Our reaping what we have sown, our spiritual discipline by our Loving Heavenly Father is not intended to cause us to draw away from Him but draw towards Him in brokenness*”. Praise God that even in His discipline for our own rebellion His heart is open to our heartache. Oswald Chambers wrote, “*God can only accomplish His purposes in this world through a broken heart, so why not thank Him for breaking yours*!”

**II. Vs. 1-6 Stealing the hearts of people**

Vs. 1-6 By way of review in David’s dysfunctional family a riff has developed between David and his son Absalom. The facts are David was a permissive parent and as such the lack of discipling Amnon for the rape of his sister Tamar led to Absalom taking matters into his own hands and killing Amnon to which he lived in exile for three years. Joab then manufactured a story to manipulate David into offering Absalom mercy apart from the demands of justice. This was followed up by David over compensating by offering justice apart from mercy leaving Absalom not allowed to see David for two more years. Absalom’s further impatience turned Joab’s field to ash this time he got forgiveness apart from repentance. Absalom was the oldest living son of David and the heir apparent to the throne of David but he had learned to be impulsive and decided not to wait until his father died and employed several marketing techniques to sell him self before the nation.

**Image is everything**: No donkey (Hummer) was good enough for Absalom no he needs a Lamborghini (*Chariot with 50 men in front*). The fact that it says that Absalom had 50 men to run before him suggests to us that the use of the chariot was to make an impact upon the people and not for military use. A chariot was for military purposes it was fast and agile, but when you put 50 men out front it was no longer being used for anything other than making an impression. This guy was a good public relations kind fellow as he knew what the people wanted to see and provided just that image. The gate of the city was where legal transactions took place and where legal council would be given and it was in this legal arena where Absalom began his challenge to the throne. Absalom wanted to appear to be a judge among the people so he hung around the gate where the people who were appealing the cases decided in lower courts would come to have their cases heard before David as the supreme court. In that role Absalom made sure he did two things:

1. He made sure **he knew their names and what city they were from**. Why? Well so all would say, “*Man I met the crown prince and he knew all about me what tribe I was from and we even knew of some of the same people*.” There are people who know what impresses people even in the church and so they quickly want to meet everyone and get to know the kids names and all. Now there is nothing wrong with getting to know people and being friendly but if the motive is to covet a position or to incur favor then it is just manipulation.
2. He waited outside the court and when the person came out who had lost the case he would say, “*Oh man if I would have heard that case I would have sided with you.*” This is another tactic and you will even see this done in the church where folks will stir up strife by finding those that are discontented and begin to give an ear to those who have not got the color of carpet or the type of music they wanted and say, “*Oh I know what you mean and if I was on the board or if I was in a place of leadership I’d sure play that song more often*.” Again it is good to listen to the people but it is not a good thing to give ear to things to further ones own standing or position.

So as David was busy governing the affairs of the nation Absalom positioned himself by the gates of the city meeting all of the differing tribes. Simply put Absalom was running for office all the while David was running the nation and it is easier to second guess every decision a person makes especially when they don’t care about the facts only about getting elected. Absalom would meet and greet them finding common ground and say, “*Oh your from that city well it’s my favorite place hey do you know so and so?*” “*Well you know dad is just real busy today after all he is getting a little old, man I sure wish I could help but I’ll just have to wait until dad’s dead then I’ll be right with you on that matter. Sure do wish there was some other way to become king*.”

These things are all about power and most often folks who are into these kinds of things find folks whom they can manipulate in order to gain power. Over the years I’ve noticed the same characteristics about them as they always seem to want the authority and recognition with out ***service and sacrifice***, and such was the case with Absalom. He knew how to play the people as they had a need to **feel important** and the need to believe they their **opinions were right**. There was one church in the town I was in that struck on these two needs and gave everyone a badge and a position so that they would feel important and believe they were right. “*Oh I’m important see my badge I’m in charge of the 2nd row chairs!*” This worked for awhile until some other person with a badge for the 3rd row seats had a different opinion about whose row it was then all hell broke lose.

What a master politician Absalom was as he campaigned for the hearts of the people, he didn’t directly say bad things about David but the impression was non-the-less given to the failed polices of his dad. “*He’s out of touch with the people, he’s been in Jerusalem to long; we need a change. It’s about time that Jerusalem looked a little more like Judean wilderness.*” When people would come to bow down to him he would put his hand out instead and embrace them projecting the man of the people image. “*Why that Absalom is so genuine so friendly that even though he is the prince next in line to the king he wouldn’t let me bow down instead he hugged me like he’d know me all his life*.” It is interesting to note that **Charisma has two definitions according to Webster’s dictionary**:

1. An extraordinary power given a Christian by the Holy Spirit for the good of the church.

2. A personal magic of leadership arousing special popular loyalty or enthusiasm for a public figure a special **magnetic charm or appeal** like that of a popular actor.

The sad truth is people can be easily taken in by “*magnetic charm and personality*” and think that what they are following is “*extraordinary power given by the Holy Spirit*” for the good of the Church. How can one tell the difference? Well usually time will tell as we shall see in the case of David and Absalom as **David was willing to sacrifice his position for the good of the people** and ***Absalom was willing to sacrifice the people for the good of the position***. The truth of the mater was that Absalom didn’t consider the people his equal; I mean how equal were these people to Absalom as he rode around in a chariot with 50 men running in front of him? How equal to the people was he when he acted above the law that he as a king would be sworn to uphold when he premeditatedly killed his brother by getting off on a special law that granted mercy apart justice and forgiveness apart from repentance? Why he knew everybody thought he was the best looking guy around he was selling his hair on e-Bay and apparently making a living doing so. He must have had a great publicist as they had crafted his image very well to appeal to the masses. “*Of coarse now a days we would never be so easily swayed by the public image over the character of who the person we vote for*.” So finally in a very crafty way Absalom “***stole the hearts of the men of Israel***” the word “*stole*” in the Hebrew means to “***steal by use of deception***” as you will recall that Absalom hadn’t fought in any wars, he hadn’t slain any giants, wrote any psalms, sacrificed his life for the people, no he had just hired a publicist to look the part. And over a period of time Absalom was able create an image that was:

* **Attractive and exciting**: He had long flowing hair like Fabio and was the best looking guy in the nation and he drove a chariot with 50 men out in front.
* **A hard worker**: He rose early we are told, so he looked like he was hard worker but the truth of the matter he was a spoiled son who hadn’t worked a day in his life.
* **On the side of the disconnected and disenfranchised**: Those that nobody knew he knew and those who couldn’t get justice he spoke as though he wanted to give them justice.
* **A man of the people, a man of change**: Though he didn’t outright attack David he left an impression if elected he could do better.

Absalom was a forerunner to many a politician who **instead of using their authority to help people that used people to gain authority**. He had several natural qualifications that aided him in this pursuit:

* According to 14:25-26 he was blessed with outstanding good looks
* He was from royalty from both sides of his parents
* Clearly he was intelligent even if he had used that in evil means
* Finally he was charming when it gained him the advantages he wished

The fact that he was devoid of godly character and integrity mattered little as **he majored in the art of telling people what they wanted to hear and giving them what they wanted to have**. I’m certain that he would most likely win in a landslide the seat for the US senate here in Montana. One news paper editor put it this way, “***A politician is a person who proclaims lies to people he hopes are idiots*!**” that was Absalom to a tee.

What further aided Absalom’s ascent to power can be found David’s psalms written during this time. Most commentators believe that there are at least eight so called “*exile psalms*” written while David was fleeing his son and perhaps as many as 12. In the words of David in psalm 41:3-4 a possible reason he was so easily taken by Absalom as we are told “*The LORD will strengthen him on his bed of illness; You will sustain him on his sickbed. I said, "LORD, be merciful to me; Heal my soul, for I have sinned against You."*” David had won the hearts of the people through sacrifice and service, he was a **hero**. Absalom won the hearts of the people by **advertisement** and creating an image, he was a **celebrity**. In my opinion it is a sign of the fall of a nation when we prefer celebrities to lead us over heroes! This fellow Absalom was a born politician as he was able to steal the hearts of the people without ever actually condemning his fathers rule. This guy was the original “*Slick Willy*” as you just couldn’t pin anything on him and when you did he could spin it another way. To make this even more amazing is the throne was his in time anyway after all he was the crown prince. How arrogant is Absalom who didn’t deserve the throne in the first place but wanted to unseat his father to get it. Have you ever noticed that ambition and arrogance always seem to go hand in hand?

**III. Vs. 7-12 The conspiracy grew strong**

Vs. 7-10 Apparently it took only four years of Absalom’s sway the fickle hearts of the nation and he did so with out raising a sword. It took only 9 years from the time Hitler was on trial for treason to when he took control of Germany and it was won in the media. Hey, saint’s there will come another we are told in Rev. 13:3 that “*all the world will marvel and follow the beast*.” This is nothing new and Jesus warned us in John 5:43 *“I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive*.”

There seems to be a discrepancy here in the original as some think the forty refers to Absalom's age while others based Josephus and other manuscripts suggest that it should be four years of time passed (*perhaps both are correct*). At any rate Absalom was willing to commit treason under the guise of worship. Absalom came to his dad asking if he could go and fulfill a vow he had made and maybe David thought “*Praise God Absalom is finally going to get his heart right*!” So he appears to be the first in line of many who give a little religion to appeal to the people, the sad thing is that he was doing this to the man who was king his father whom he has planned to take his kingdom from. Why did Absalom choose Hebron as the city of revolt? Two reasons:

1. First it was his home town
2. Second it used to be the capital until David moved it to Jerusalem so perhaps he was hoping to pick up a few more votes.

How could Absalom behave like this? Well it is likely that he felt that this was God’s will and justified his deception by convincing himself that he was acting in the best interest for the people saving them from a man like David. “*Oh Lord for such a time like this you have raised me up*”, is there any thing worse than self deception? Someone has well put, “*Divisive people never see themselves as divisive instead they are crusaders for God's righteous cause and the hope of all rests upon God's hand upon them*”. David’s lasts words to his son Absalom are recorded here in verse 9 “***Go in peace***” and they were the words to the son who was at that very moment planning to overthrow his father’s kingdom. Did his father’s words **burn in his heart or fuel his cause**? Well it seems as though they fueled his cause as he continues to go forward.

Hey saint there have no doubt been times in our lives where someone said a word and though they may have not been aware of it at the time it was a Word from the Lord sent to burn in our hearts a last ditch effort of the Lord to get us to stop what we were about to do an “make peace” with Him. Be careful saint in the future that you listen as **Jesus admonished people 16 times in the N.T. to listen to what He is trying to tell them**. So how about it are His words burning in our hearts or are they fuel for our cause? Absalom’s goal was to win public opinion by making his treason look like succession so that the people would back him and not his father.

No sooner then David saying his final words to his son “*Go in peace*” then Absalom sent spies throughout the land telling everyone that Absalom had succeed from the nation to form his own kingdom. David had begun his reign in Hebron for seven years until he came to Jerusalem now he hears that his own son has committed treason. He hand selected a group of folks that were prominent people some probably didn’t know that they were even siding with Absalom, the most notable of them all Ahithophel the Gilonite, David’s chief counselor and grandfather of Bathsheba who apparently had lost great respect for David when he had seduced his granddaughter and murdered her husband. The momentum changed and the people went with Absalom but most importantly God had not gone with him.

Vs. 11-12 Absalom left for Hebron with two hundred hand selected men from Jerusalem, these folks were his endorsements, his list of supporters from David’s reign as king. Some of them no doubt really believed David needed to go, others went along hoping to gain positions in the new administration, others had an ax to grind with David and some hadn’t a clue that they were involved in a cue. But no where do you see anyone seeking what God wanted, no where is God’s word consulted accept as an excuse to commit treason.

Turn with me back to chapter 5 where we read in verses 1-2 that these same people said, “*we are your bone and your flesh…you were the one who led Israel out and brought them in; and the LORD said to you, 'You shall shepherd My people Israel, and be ruler over Israel*.” Now they reject his leadership to follow Absalom who had stolen their hearts. Hey, saints in Revelation 2:1, we are told that “*He …holds the seven stars in His right hand*,” and it is believed that this refers to pastors but I’m afraid that there has been far to much tendency for people to worship what Jesus holds in His right hand instead of the One who holds them. My point? Only this there has been far to much star gazing and not enough Son worshiping! That is why Absalom could steal the hearts of the people because folks had been star gazing. Paul tells us in Rom 16:17 to “*note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them*.”

To further bolster his causes Absalom was able to get David’s top counselor to join him, Ahithophel the Gilonite. You can tell that what Absalom had for God was mere religious appearances as all the while he was offering sacrifices he was sending for Ahithophel. Perhaps he was asking God to bless his conspiracy. In chapter 16:23 we are told that “*the advice of Ahithophel, which he gave in those days, was as if one had inquired at the oracle of God. So was all the advice of Ahithophel both with David and with Absalom*.” Ahithophel according to chapter 23:34 had a son Eliam who was one of the 37 mighty men along with a man Uriah. Apparently Eliam thought enough of Uriah and his character that he allowed Uriah to marry his daughter Bathsheba. So when David took and seduced Bathsheba and killed Eliam’s close friend and son in law, Uriah this destroyed the relationship that David had with Ahithophel and apparently he went back Giloh (exile) because he couldn’t stand the thought of his granddaughter lying in bed with the murder of his son’s best friend and disgraced his family. This root of bitterness grew in his heart and caused him to defect to Absalom and later on he will hang himself when his council is rejected by Absalom. The moral of the story? Well only that bitterness left in the heart will cause you to defect and left unchanged will cause you to get hung up on yourself.

By backing Absalom he was denying Solomon his true great grandson. It was no doubt Ahithophel that David was referring to when he wrote in psalm 41:9 “*Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, Who ate my bread, Has lifted up his heel against me.*” And again in Psalm 55:12-14 “*it is not an enemy who reproaches me; Then I could bear it. Nor is it one who hates me who has exalted himself against me; Then I could hide from him. But it was you, a man my equal, My companion and my acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, And walked to the house of God in the throng.*”

This is the saddest episodes in the life of David his fleeing the kingdom because of the treason of his son, making matters worse was the fact that according to psalm 41:4 where he wrote “*LORD, be merciful to me; Heal my soul, for I have sinned against You.*” He knew was reaping what he had sown! And when David left his beloved city and his kingdom we are told in verse 18 that only 600 men from Gath (converted Philistines) left with him. The nation that he had sacrificed so much for had their hearts stole by Absalom his family and best friend all were left behind. And what comfort does he find? Hear David’s own words in psalm 55:6-7 “*Oh, that I had wings like a dove! I would fly away and be at rest. Indeed, I would wander far off, And remain in the wilderness*”, escape offered nothing as he realized it would just cause he more grief. Then in psalm he says 61:1-3 “*HEAR my cry, O God; Attend to my prayer. From the end of the earth I will cry to You, When my heart is overwhelmed; Lead me to the rock that is higher than I. For You have been a shelter for me, A strong tower from the enemy. I will abide in Your tabernacle forever; I will trust in the shelter of Your wings.*” Then finally in Psalm 143:10 “*Teach me to do Your will, For You are my God; Your Spirit is good. Lead me in the land of uprightness*.”

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

**V. Sovereign: 2 Samuel 1-24**

**2. Chp. 11-24 The King’s troubles**

**2 Samuel 15:** **13-37**

**“I will go wherever you will go”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 13-23 You are my king**

**III. Vs. 24-37 In the hands of God**

**I. Intro.**

In chapter 5:1 the men of Israel said “*we are your bone and your flesh*” now they go after one who had stolen their hearts. David recognized the doom that awaited him as well as the city if he stayed and fought and he determined for the good of the nation to leave and he left behind 10 concubines including his legitimate wives this would make over 18 that were either married to him or were his mistress. There in lies the problem with David he has compromised with his own flesh. Consider the story of Uzziah in 2 Chron 26 where we are told “*as long as he sought the LORD, God made him prosper*.” Ah but we are told in the 15th -16th verse that “*his fame spread far and wide, for he was marvelously helped till he became strong. But when he was strong his heart was lifted up, to his destruction*.” Oh dear saint heed the words of Paul in 2 Cor. 12:10 “*I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong*.” We too need to seek the Lord and guard our hearts against taking credit in God’s help. How do we do so? Well Listen to the words of these 600 men who said in verse 15 “*We are your servants, ready to do whatever my lord the king commands.*” I’m reminded of what will be said of the 144,000 Jewish evangelists in Rev. 14:4 these are those “*who follow the Lamb wherever He goes*.” There you have the clearest definition of what a Christian is a person who follows the Lamb where ever He goes!

**II. Vs. 13-23 You are my king**

Vs. 13-18 David’s last official acts as king was to make sure that his family and close officials were safe. In leaving David was risking his life but saving 1,000’s of others and this is always a shepherd’s heart. One can only imagine what those words “*The hearts of the men of Israel are with Absalom*” must have felt like to David, as he loved his son, was aware of his own failure, and also realized what all this meant for the nation. He knew the heart of his son and realized that if he did not make haste not only would he and his servants be dead but Absalom would destroy the city to get at them. He could have held out in Jerusalem as it was a walled city but David knew his son and that he was determined and this would only cause innocent people to be slaughtered by Absalom.

Remarkably David is able to accept that God’s chastening does not mean that God doesn’t love him rather it means that He does love him so he can say “*Arise, and let us flee; or we shall not escape from Absalom. Make haste to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly and bring disaster upon us, and strike the city with the edge of the sword*.”

There has been much to find fault with in examining David’s life over the last several weeks, his uncontrollable lust for women (*which we again see here in verse 16 where he leaves 10 concubines to keep the palace while he was gone; you see concubines were legal mistresses but not legal wives*). We also took note of his permissive parenting style and all the heartache and grief that was brought upon his family as well as the nation. Though all of those are visible and inexcusable we can still see that he has a shepherd’s heart as he was not willing to sacrifice the people for the sake of his position.

In the wake of yet another high profile pastor being forced to step down from ministry do to immorality I went on the church’s web sight and read his letter to his fellowship. In this 2 page confession was a heart of a true shepherd, one who takes full responsibility for his sins calling himself a “*deceiver and a liar*” he goes on to say that not all the “*accusations are true*” but enough of them are that he has been “*appropriately and lovingly removed from ministry*”. He accepts the fact that he “*created the entire situation*” and is responsible and in “*need to be disciplined and corrected*” because “*an example must be set*”. His confession goes on to describe his “*permanent removal*” from being senior pastor and never serving in a leadership role of the church again as well as encouraging his former congregation to support the new pastor calling him “*a fine leader*” and telling them they are “*blessed to have him*”. Why he even asks the congregation to forgive and thank God for his accuser. Hey saints the truth is we sin, we make messes of our lives and are in need of God’s discipline. But it is often what we do after we have blown it that determines where our hearts are truly at. You see stepping in the muck and mire doesn’t make you a pig only staying their can do that.

The Cherethites (executioners) and Pelethites (curriers) along with the Gittites who from Gath all left with David they most likely comprised his special forces and bodyguard and were 600 in all. Now there is an interesting parallel between David and the Son of David Jesus. You see in verse 17-18 we are given nationalities of the 600 people that went with David and they were Philistines from Gath who had followed David out of Ziklag and wish to remain with him. Simply put **his own countrymen rejected Him but gentiles follow him**. Do you see that? So too with our Lord as we are told in John 1:11-13 “*He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood* (**not a birth right**), *nor of the will of the flesh* (**not by religion**), *nor of the will of man* (**self effort**), ***but of God***.” They have **joined themselves to the man not the trappings of the office**, **not for what the king provides but to his character and his relationship too God**. Oh, dear saints **that is what it means to be a follower of our KING Jesus we go where He goes**, “*ready to do what ever He commands*” because **we are *not* joined to Him for what He brings us we are joined to Him because of who He is**!

Vs. 19-23 As David viewed the procession of men there was one fellow that caught his eye Ittai the Gittite and the reason for this was that he was a new arrival in Israel and in following David he was following an uncertain future. Now it is interesting to note that his name means “*with the Lord*” “*Why are you also going with us*?” David couldn't understand why this newly-arrived foreigner should risk such loyalty to him so he says, “*Hey buddy your in the wrong line you need to go with the king it’ll be better for you and your family*”. “*If you hang with me I’m only going to make it harder on you, so go on back!*” That’s a great heart even though David was in need of having some loyal people around him he didn’t want people around them if it was going to be hard on them. Seven times in four verses David is referred to as king yet notice in verse 19 when he himself is speaking to Ittai the Gittite he calls his son Absalom the king.

Now listen up saints this relates to you and me and our relationship with the Lord as we will need to determine if we will be “*with the Lord*” even if He causes us to leave our city, our family and friends. It is no big thing to make Jesus our king when coming to Him benefits our present circumstances. Ah but are we still going to be “*with the Lord*” when following Him causes our present circumstances to be uncertain or even worse? Notice that Ittai went with the king publicly, voluntarily even when he knew that following the king would bring him difficulties. Why? Well Ittai wanted to be “*with the Lord*” because of His character not just for how being with the king would benefit him.

Oh to God you and I would pledge the words of Ittai in verse 21 “*As the LORD lives, and as my lord the king lives, surely in whatever place my lord the king shall be, whether in death or life, even there also your servant will be*.” Now we get some insight to why Ittai was willing to follow the king as he said, “*as the Lord lives*”. It seems as though God had worked in the life of David in one day by observing his life that he already had come to know the living God through the things he had witnessed. What had he witnessed? Brokenness, humility, trust and love of God and of His people in spite of their fickleness. Clearly Ittai was joining himself to a person not to an office; he was following a person no matter what the consequences.

In our society, in our nation we know very little of this type of commitment, this kind of conversion, for most of us it does not come upon our lives at first. But listen up there will come a time in everyone’s life when those who profess to know the KING will sense Him leading them away from the city and comfort that they have come to expect and it will be then you will see if you have been following the office or the person! Will we say to Him and to all “*In what ever place my Lord the KING shall be, whether in death or life, even there also your servant will be?*”

Consider the numbers as only 600 left with their king and the rest of the nation had their hearts stole by an imposter and stayed behind and forfeited the journey of faith for a the easy life. I want you to notice **four important things concerning Ittai’s decision to follow the king**:

1. Vs. 22 “*Ittai the Gittite and all his men and all the little ones who were with him crossed over*.” Ittai’s decision to be wherever the king was had an immediate impact on all that were around him. Here’s my point far to often we are afraid to “*go and cross over*” thinking that those around us won’t go with us but the truth is often the opposite as those around us are waiting to see if we truly believe what we say by our actions.
2. Vs. 23a “*And all the country wept with a loud voice, and all the people crossed over*.” Such a journey is always comes at a price and part of that price will always be brokenness where we will be leaving that which is familiar to that which is uncertain.
3. Vs. 23b “*The king himself also crossed over the Brook Kidron*”: The name “Kidron” means “*dark or sadness*” it only had water in it during the winter and spring then it would run about 2 ¾ miles separating the temple mount from the Mount of Olives. In John 18 Jesus the Son of David would cross this same brook of darkness and like David he would be betrayed by one He loved. Ah but the night that Jesus crossed over it was blood red as 1,000 lambs had just been sacrificed for the Passover. As such we see that this brook represents sacrifice and death to self and **Ittai was only going where the king himself went**. In Matt. 16:24 Jesus said, “*If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.*” Oh dear saint hear me on this if we will follow the king he will take us on a journey to the cross and in so doing we will enviably cross over our own “*place of darkness and sadness*”. Ah but not to worry because we all know that **any place that causes there to be less of us will at the same time be a place where there will be more of Him** as we are told in psalm 30:5 “*Weeping may endure for a night, But joy comes in the morning*.”
4. Vs. 23c “*and all the people crossed over toward the way of the wilderness.*” Finally Ittai and the rest of the 600 people new that where they were heading was a wilderness, a time of uncertainty. There are a great many people who are willing to follow the king when the destination is better than where they are. Ah but what if you follow the king and in so doing you are following Him away from what you want? Again there are a good many of us who follow the king for what He may provide instead of who He is and we will find out if that is true of us when we see Him get up and cross over the Brooke of Kidron.

Four times in two verses we are told that people “*crossed over*” this is the 2nd time in David’s life that he has to flee into the wilderness to save his life. Hey **sometimes we need to flee with our king to the wilderness of uncertainty to save our lives**! Saints it was the wilderness that prepared David to be king and oft times the Lord needs to send his children back again to the wilderness so that they may walk where He walks and be further prepared to reign with Him. Now notice that Ittai choose this destination and is given every opportunity to not go but instead says “*Where ever you go I will go in life or death I’ll always be your servant*”. Oh the waters of darkness and sadness are colored red with the blood of our brothers and sisters who have made such a decision. Ittai stood by David when he didn’t need to despite the circumstances, no matter the cost. This fellow was sold out for the king, how about you are you sold out for the King of King’s are you ready to say I’m with you Lord whatever place you go I’m going too and if it means that it will cost me my life then I’ll serve you there as well? When we have made such a commitment as “*whatever place my lord the king shall be, whether in death or life, even there also your servant will be*” we will “*cross over*” into a new fresh relationship with Him.

**III. Vs. 24-37 In the hands of God**

Vs. 24-29 Zadok and Abiathar shared the priestly duties and according to 1 Chron 15:11 they were the two that had helped bring the ark into Jerusalem so they wanted to take it out of the city to keep it with David but David didn’t want the Ark of God to be treated like some “good luck” charm or religious relic. No if God’s favor was truly upon David then He would be with him in the wilderness and He was perfectly able to bring him back to Jerusalem. Apparently all the priests were loyal to David, even though it would probably mean death for them if Absalom succeeded. Zadok means “*just or justified*” and they were taking the promises and presence of God out of the city going with David which was a visual demonstration that God was with David and not Absalom. Now you see in David’s words to Zadok that it is in God whom he trusts and not in a box to “*justify him*”? “*If God has no delight in me bring that box isn’t going to change His mind and if He does delight in me He can do what ever He thinks is in my best interest!*” Far to often Christians are trying to tell God what to do carrying their agendas putting God in a box of His promises but that is not what David does he says, “*Take the box back if he wants me to come back to see it He’ll bring back Himself.*” Fast forward again to Jesus as he stood in that same area right after He crossed over the same brook and prayed in the Mount of Olives saying, “*Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done*.”(Luke 22:42) And just as Judas would come and betray Jesus so too did Ahithophel David.

So how about it are you willing to surrender your path and direction to Him? Job would say 13:15, “*Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him*:” Or consider the words of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, in Daniel 2:17-18 when they said “*our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king. But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods*”. Those men had the same heart as David does here when he says, “*If I find favor in the eyes of the LORD, He will bring me back and show me both it and His dwelling place. But if He says thus: 'I have no delight in you,' here I am, let Him do to me as seems good to Him.*” Around God’s throne in heaven no one is amazed at what He does but they are amazed at who He is, as they cry out HOLY, HOLY, HOLY is the Lord God Almighty.

Apparently David knew that Zadok was a prophet and wants to know how come he isn’t acting like it. David would be better served if he stayed in such a position. It will be Zadok whose council will conflict with Ahithophel in chapter 17 that will lead to him hanging himself. David’s council here reminds us of Oliver Cromwell who said, “*Put your trust in God, my boys and keep your powder dry*!”

Vs. 30-37 As Jesus left the Last Supper on His way to pray in the Garden of Gethsemane He went the exact route as David. And although they ***both suffered for sin*** David was suffering for his own sin while Jesus suffered for our sins. As David took the walk up the hill he did so with “*his head covered and feet bare*” which were visible signs of mourning. Ah but this was no pity-party over the consequences of sin no He was crushed by the consciousness of the discipline he deserved and the effect it had upon his family, friends and nation. These actions reveal David to be a broken and repentive man and therefore a forgiven man who wore the garments of grace and brokenness the rest of his life.

As David crested the Mount of Olives he worshipped God, is that not an amazing verse dear Christian? Stop and consider the facts as David was having to flee Jerusalem because of his own failure yet he stopped and took time to worship God and wanted to worship God not just when thing were going well but in the midst of failure and defeat.

A.W. Tozer once said, “*The Bible was written in tears and in tears it will yield its best treasures*”. How true may a page of our Bibles have our tears upon their pages and rest assured they have our Lords on each and every page as well. Hey did you notice that David’s weeping did not deter his worship? Isaiah said in 61:3 that God “*gives them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness*”. In times and seasons of great heartache try worshipping, when you are wiped out reach out to the Lord in adoration and He will give “*The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness*”.

As David worshipped God Hushai (haste) came to David in grief over his departure. Hushai (Who-shy) is David’s companion but he is older than David and he believes that in taking him it will not be save for either so he sends him back with the other two Zadok and Abiathar to be his eyes and ears. Five men will risk their lives to serve their king and went back into the city to keep David in formed, some times it is a stronger act to stay then it is to leave with the king. Ahithophel gave council that was right on so David prayed that the advice he would give Absalom would be foolishness. David’s prayer in verse 31 is answered in verse 32 as Hushai comes but note this the answer to the prayer of verse 31 happens after he has come to the mount top and worshipped. Oh how many times have our prayers been unanswered because we have not first worshipped.

Now listen up Ahithophel joins himself to Absalom not because of political agreement, not for the betterment of the country but **to serve his own bitterness**. You say, “*Well I can understand why!*” Bitterness is as murder and adultery they all stem from pride and self centeredness and left undealt will cost you your life. In the 16th chapter Ahithophel is going to suggest to Absalom that he goes in and sleeps with his father’s mistress on the top of the place so that all of the nation could see. Now that was far worse than what David had done with Bathsheba. **Was Ahithophel bitterness satisfied by the violation and rape of 10 women**? **Was Absalom’s disappointment quenched by raping 10 of his fathers mistress, did that make up for Amnon’s actions and the lack of his fathers actions**? No bitterness only causes us to act more like those that we have become bitter towards!

Solomon is around 10 years old at this time and he is watching all of this and goes with his father. In Prov. 3:11-12 Solomon would write to his son something that no doubt he had learned from David, “*My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, Nor detest His correction; For whom the LORD loves He corrects, Just as a father the son in whom he delights.*” I wonder are our children learning this lesson from us or do they hear and witness from our actions that God is unjust or uncaring by His chastening?

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

**V. Sovereign: 2 Samuel 1-24**

**2. Chp. 11-24 The King’s troubles**

**2 Samuel 16:** **1-23**

**“When it Rains it Pours”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 1-4 Lies will never hurt me?**

**III. Vs. 5-14 Sticks and stones can break my bones**

**IV. Vs. 15-23 Whom shall I serve?**

**I. Intro.**

David will soon find himself in a situation in which there will be a civil war with his son in which neither his victory not his defeat will be desirable. What do you do when there is no plausible solution to the situation or circumstance you are in? Well you can’t ***look out***, you can’t ***look ahead*** no the only comfort you will find is when you ***look up*** according to the words of David in psalm 61:1-2 “*HEAR my cry, O God; Attend to my prayer. From the end of the earth I will cry to You, When my heart is overwhelmed; Lead me to the rock that is higher than I*.” David faces three things in this chapter that would break the spirit of any man let alone one that is already down:

1. Vs. 1-4 The supposed rejection of a friend in whom you been a blessing towards
2. Vs. 5-14 The consistent torments of a malcontent upon your forced departure do to personal failure
3. Vs. 16-23 And a no win situation with someone you love

Truly at this stage of David’s life he must have been feeling “*when it rain’s it pours*” and all that he can do is to avoid what one Greek philosopher said, “*I have often regretted my words but never have I regretted my silence*, so David remained silent. You see dear Christian the Lord is using all of this to further develop David’s character. Someone once noted that “***Christians are far more likely to be destroyed by praised then they are willing to be saved by criticism***”.

**II. Vs. 1-4 Lies will never hurt me?**

Vs.1-4 Now back in chapter 16 David met this fellow Ziba because he wanted to show kindness to the house of Saul fulfilling the promise he had made with Jonathan. So he called in Ziba, who had been Saul’s servant and asked, “*Are there any of Saul’s descendants still alive?*” “*Yea there is that little crippled kid living over in the area of Gilead, Mephibosheth I think his name was*” So David called him in and gave him all his father’s and grandfathers land and he gave Ziba the responsibility to serve Mephibosheth as he had his grandfather Saul.

Now fast forward many years later and David is leaving Jerusalem and this same Ziba comes up to David showing up at a time of great need for David with a couple of donkeys loaded with supplies. And David apparently thinks it’s a gift of kindness from Mephibosheth but Ziba takes credit for it and says that Mephibosheth is hoping to become king once David and Absalom destroy each other. Now David must be thinking of that old Jewish proverb that says, “***No good deed goes unpunished***!” This fellow Ziba is adding “*insult to injury*” to get in good favors with David as clearly he believes David will be successful against Absalom. The truth of the matter won’t be found out until we get to chapter 19:24-30 where we will find out that it was Mephibosheth who was behind the blessing and that he had not cared for himself from the day that David departed. So Ziba was lying and apparently he didn’t want to be taking care of Mephibosheth, instead he wanted the land that David had promised to his master. So why was David fooled by Ziba? Well because of all the negative things that were happening and he makes a snap decision based upon emotion and in so doing goes back on his word to Give Mephibosheth his fathers and grandfathers property. The lies of Ziba caused David to feel as though his goodness towards Mephibosheth was unappreciated, now follow me on this what did it matter if David’s act of goodness was unappreciated? You see if what we do is unto the Lord than we aren’t doing it so others will do so towards us sometime we are doing it for the Lord. Jesus said in Matt 25:40 “*I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me*.”

Hey saints when we are down and feeling attacked it is better for us not to make any decisions as we aren’t in the right frame of mind, so why not go and give what troubles you to the Lord before you make any decisions that you will regret? It is never a wise thing to make a decision on incomplete information. And even though Ziba tells lies it’s only going to get worse for David because Shimei will hurl lies and stones as well.

**III. Vs. 5-14 Sticks and stones can break my bones**

Vs. 5-8 David’s departure took him out into the wilderness through the area given to the Benjamites and as such they were still loyal to Saul. Notice that Shimei stayed up on the bluff while David and his men were in the ravine as geographically this show what is going on as Shimei is kicking a man while he is down which is always a cowardly thing to do. Shimei according to verse 6 is not only hurling insults, stones and dirt at David he is also doing so “at all the servants of King David. And all the people and all the mighty men were on his right hand and on his left.” Now this guy really is not in his right mind as you really don’t want to tick off these guys as we are told in 2 Sam 23:18 that Abishai alone “*lifted his spear against three hundred men, killed them*” Apparently Shimei didn’t believe in Jesus’ words of John 8:7 “*He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first.*”

Hey saints only Jesus has the right to carry stones to chuck at people but He choose to carry our crosses instead, hey maybe we can do the same. What? Yeh you know Gal. 6:2 “*Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ*.”

Shimei’s assessment of David’s troubles is way off base as David had nothing to do with Saul’s demise instead it was his own rebellion that caused that. To make matters worse David was exhausted and discouraged yet with that said he shows that he is on far higher ground than Shimei as he does not even raise his voice to silence his critics. We can not be certain for how long this went on but it must have been for hours as the men were weary in the end as Shimei walked along hurling insults dirt and even stones. And his words were tuff to hear as he kept on saying “*Get out get out you murdering son of satan!*” No one can be certain to whom Shimei was referring too as he could have been speaking of Saul or Ishbosheth neither of which David had anything to do with. Perhaps he was referring to the fact that at the time of Saul’s death David was officially part of the Philistine army even though he was sent home from the battle. Now David was guilty of murder and that was with Uriah which speaks to our hearts concerning those who say things about us that aren’t true with regards to a specific situation they very well may be true in reference towards something else.

Vs. 9-14 This is the 2nd time David has to stop Abishai from acting impulsively the first time was back in 1 Sam. 26:11 in the cave where Saul had to go and do his business, so apparently Abishai had remained a hothead. This “*dead dog*” phrase must have been pretty popular in Israel at this time as it is repeat three times in 1st and 2nd Samuel, I suppose there is not much you can do with a dead dog so that is what is behind the phrase, as a dead dog doesn’t put up much of a fight and their bark isn’t heard. How could David accepted Shimei’s abuse? Well according to verse 15:26 “*Let Him do to me as seems good to Him*” David saw it as coming from God. Notice that **David handles it by doing three things**:

1. Vs. 10 **Looked away**: “*let him curse, because the LORD has said to him, 'Curse David.' Who then shall say, 'Why have you done so*”? David took this attack before the Lord and realized that God was in control and if the Lord didn’t want Shimei to hurl insults and rocks at him then he would have stopped him. Now Shimei wanted to destroy and discourage David but the Lord was using him to further develop David’s character.

2. Vs. 11 **Looked about**: “*See how my son who came from my own body seeks my life. How much more now may this Benjamite? Let him alone, and let him curse; for so the LORD has ordered him.*” “*If you think Shimei’s words are harsh they are nothing compared to what Absalom is trying to do to me and he’s my own boy*”. Hey saint when someone puts you down, hurls insults at you go and look in the mirror. What? You go and look in the mirror they are being far to kind you are twice the sinner they think you are! Then after you have looked in the mirror open your Bibles to John 3:16 and read the words of Jesus when he told Nicodemus “*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*” Paul told the Romans in 7:18 “*I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells*”, it is a great day when you realize that you don’t need to defend yourself, protect your reputation but rather take a page from our Lord when we are told in Philip 2:7-8 that He made “*Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross*.”

3. Vs. 12 **Looked ahead**: “*It may be that the LORD will look on my affliction, and that the LORD will repay me with good for his cursing this day*.” Ah we are told in Matt. 7:11-12 “*Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven*”. Hey Christian God knows what you are going through and the Lord is keeping score not to worry He knows who to bless and who to discipline.

Shimei wished David was dead and in the end according to chapter 19 he pardons Shimei and then in 1 Kings 2:36-46 he suggested to his son Salomon that he be restricted to Jerusalem so that he could be watched and when he arrogantly overstepped his bounds he was put to death. Interesting that his arrogance and over stepping his boundaries cost him his life. So even though Shimei was throwing insults, rocks and dust David was refreshed. Is it possible Christian that we can be refreshed under such a barrage of insults? You bet as long as we “**Look away**”, **“Look about**”, and “**Look ahead**”. Solomon would write in Prov. 10:19 “*In the multitude of words sin is not lacking, But he who restrains his lips is wise*.” That is the key to the Christian life **DEATH TO SELF CENTEREDNESS**: **Don’t seek to be blessed but to be a blessing, don’t seek to be understood seek to understand, don’t seek to receive seek to reach out**!

Hey saints be it known that the Lord will often test our words with situations which will put to test what we say! “*You’re my everything Lord, I’ll follow you where ever, even if you take everything from me*!” “*Wow Lord what’s happening, everything that I had is being stripped from me, I know what I said but I thought you’d just take my word for it*!” Now go with me a minute back to 12:3 where the Lord used Nathan to bring David into repentance as he said, “*I have sinned against the LORD*.” And Nathan said to David, “*The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die.*” You see David was living by grace; he was alive on borrowed time he should have been put to death for his transgressions. That’s the way it is for us as well Jesus has pardoned us from the penalty of our sins by accepting the penalty upon himself, we are alive not because we aren’t guilty but simply because our guilt has been covered by the blood of Jesus. My point? Why do we get all flustered when we experience injustice towards us; I mean do you really want justice? You have probably herd the saying “*Better to keep your mouth shut and everyone think you a fool then open your mouth and remove all doubt*.” In his book A Tale of Three Kings, the author put these words in David’s mouth, “*The throne is not mine. Not to have, not to take, not to protect, and not to keep. The throne is the Lord's*”, so too with our reputation! Next time you have to go through a situation just recall the fact that you were once dead and now alive and you have been pardoned, so what’s a little name calling, stones and dirt? God will one day balance the ledger sheet; it’s not our job to do so.

If we follow David’s ascent into the wilderness by way Bahurim we will discover that it offers up **two interesting details**:

1. Some 20 miles beyond this he would have needed to cross over the Jordan near or at the area of Gilgal and it was there where 100’s of years earlier Joshua was lead by the Lord to lead the Israelites this way into the land of promise. The Lord instructed the priests to take up 12 stones from the midst’s of the Jordan and they were to be “*stones of remembrance*” so that the nation would recall that “*the hand of the LORD, that it is mighty*” (Joshua 4:24). I suggest to you that this was an appropriate time for David as he was dejected and down trodden when he came upon those 12 stones where his forefathers discovered that the hand of the Lord is mighty. Ah but two other things happened at Gilgal according to the 5th chapter of Joshua that also spoke to David as it was their that God commanded the “*circumcise the sons of Israel again the second time.*” You see God was telling these Israelites and now David that there needs to be a continual cutting away of the flesh of our lives. Then in the 13th verse Joshua saw the pre-incarnate Jesus standing opposite him with His sword drawn in His hand and Joshua said “*Are You for us or for our adversaries*?” and the Lord said, “*No, but as Commander of the army of the LORD I have now come.*” Do you get the picture? David was taken to three truths:
   1. **The hand of the Lord is mighty**: He was reminded that no matter what the situation, no matter what the odds the Lord was going to advance David to where He wanted him to be. Those 12 stones stood as a tribute to the plans of God for the life of His people which can not be thwarted. Oh to God we would remember this during times of discouragement, defeat and doubt. God never has us retreat my friends, only advance!
   2. **The way of advancement is further death to self**: Paul said to the Corinthians “*I die daily*”! God took David by this path to show him that he needed to continually die to the self centered life, just as 100’s of years earlier those fellows were circumcised a 2nd time.
   3. **That the sole purpose in life is be a worshipper**: Every event, every circumstance is designed to draw away from worship of anything other than God. Joshua wanted to know whose side Jesus was on and He responded HIS! To which Joshua worshipped and then wanted to know what the Lord wanted and he said just what you are doing!
2. The 2nd place David will go is found in chapter 17:22-24 a place called Mahanaim. Now it was here we are told in Gen. 32 that Jacob wrestled with the Lord as he awaited the meeting with his brother Esau. So the Lord was taking David by this place to remind him that it is only in losing that we win! Jesus said in Matt. 10:39 “*he who loses his life for My sake will find it*.”

**IV. Vs. 15-23 Whom shall I serve?**

Vs. 15-23 What we are told here picks up the narrative of 15:37 and the first thing we see is that Hushai wins the confidence of Absalom. Hushai is very careful with his words making sure that he speaks in generalities with regards to saying “*long live the king*” and “*whom ever the Lord chooses, his I will be and with him I will return*”. Absalom needed to do two important things to rule the nation:

1. He needed to let the nation know that he was in charge and knew what he was doing. And in verse 20 he asks Ahithophel for council and thus he was turning to man whose council was universally respected.
2. He needed to demonstrate that he was a decisive leader and that David was no longer around. It is for this reason that Ahithophel told him to abuse his fathers concubines which was declaring he was now the man in charge. It also should the nation that there would be no bridge of reconciliation between the two.

Absalom was great a rebellion but not good at leading, he knew how to campaign but didn’t know what to do once he got elected, sounds like a lot of politicians.

David had prayed for in 15:31 that God would “*turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness*” so why did he not just trust the Lord to do what he prayed for? Well there are a good number of people like David who specifically pray for the Lord to do something and then turn around and not trust Him to answer the prayer. Oh dear saint remember the words of Jesus in Matt. 6:8 that our Father “*knows the things you have need of before you ask Him.*”

It is interesting that out of these dark hours of David, there came forth a depth of commitment to God that preserved him during these difficult times. God puts us in a corner where we have to just turn to Him, and depend upon Him, and commit the situation to the Lord as “*There’s nothing we can do*.” Hey saints it’s when we come to where just give up because there’s nothing more we can do then God has the opportunity of taking over, and doing His work, and showing His salvation. Then someone will come up and ask you how did you do it? “*Well I was through, I’d given up, I’d tried everything, used up all of my resources. I’m telling you it was over, but just then God came in and saved me.*” Isn’t that our story over and over? How about it are you still kicking?

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

**V. Sovereign: 2 Samuel 1-24**

**2. Chp. 11-24 The King’s troubles**

**2 Samuel 17:** **1-29**

**“Friends”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 1-14 The words of friends**

**III. Vs. 15-29 The actions of friends**

**I. Intro.**

In the 23rd verse of chapter 16 we are told that “*the advice of Ahithophel, which he gave in those days, was as if one had inquired at the oracle of God. So was all the advice of Ahithophel both with David and with Absalom*.” At one time Ahithophel and David had been best friends as David wrote of his surprise at his defection with Absalom in Ps. 55:13-14 saying “*it was you, a man my equal, My companion and my acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, And walked to the house of God in the throng*.” David had obvious respect for Ahithophel’s gifting as when he first heard of his defection he prayed in 15:31 “*O LORD, I pray, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness*!” This chapter is about friendship and David will be surprised at where he finds it. Someone has well said that “*you can always tell a real friend by the fact that when you've made a fool of yourself they don't feel you've done a permanent job*.” David will come to realize what we have experienced in our own lives that “*the truly great person is the one who makes every person feel great.*” “*A friend is one who* ***knows you as you are****,* ***understands where you've been****,* ***accepts who you've become*** *and still* ***gently invites you to grow***.”

**II. Vs. 1-14 The words of friends**

Vs. 1-4 As new king Absalom had two main objectives:

1. Make sure that the nation saw him as the ruler not David
2. Make sure that David didn’t try to return and take the kingdom

The solution to both of these was to find and kill his father so he turned to his two advisers for counsel on how to obtain the objective. Quite simply from a military perspective apart from divine intervention had Absalom followed Ahithophel’s advice David would be dead. In Ahithophel’s 2nd council to Absalom is an underlining tone that he wanted to be the one to put David down, he would select 12,000 men, he would lead the army and he would kill David by way of a sudden attack at night while David was still west of the Jordan River. Militarily his council was solid as it was quick and unexpected and would have spared civil war. One can only wonder how Ahithophel words calling David the *king* might have caused Absalom to wonder about his council. David saw Ahithophel as his friend but clearly this was not how Ahithophel saw David as he says to Absalom “*I will strike only the king*” (verse 2) “*Give me 12,000 men and I’ll take care of your dad*”. Ahithophel’s counsel was right on the money as David was weak and with 12,000 men against 600 he would have been defeated accept for the fact that God would not have allowed it.

Man that’s a heartache to find out that someone you have been close with now wants to come and kill you and further more that this counsel pleased your son as well as all the elders Israel who once were on your side. If you have ever been in a place of leadership within the church or a boss at work and then you go through a difficult season you will sadly discover who your friends are and aren’t. Don’t miss understand me David isn’t innocent he’s messed up and certainly has blown it but he is also a broken repentive man that now needs friends to ensure that they point him towards the Lord.

Vs. 5-11 Hushai’s advice and reason’s for it had many points:

* Vs. 7 First with regards Ahithophel’s plan was a “Good idea bad timing” so as not to make enemies.
* Vs. 8 Second He supported this be making mention that David would be twice as fierce as normal. Hushai does a masterful job of selling Absalom on his plan by saying that David would be like “*a bear robbed of her cubs in the field*”.
* Vs. 9a David would be to smart to stay with the troops and the soldiers were after all mighty men experienced in warfare having done this while Saul chased them.
* Vs. 9b-10 Hushai also suggested that Ahithophel winner take all approached lacked a back up plan as defeat would mean defection.
* Vs. 11 What seemed to appeal the most to Absalom concerning Hushai’s plan was that he would lead the army and defeat David and not Ahithophel. Psalm 33:10-11 says “*The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; He makes the plans of the peoples of no effect. The counsel of the LORD stands forever, The plans of His heart to all generations.*”

This is a clear indication that David's prayer in 2 Samuel 15:31 was answered as Absalom asked for a 2nd opinion after such wise, well-received counsel. In this case God used Hushai as a double agent to do two things:

1. first take the “***fight***” out of Absalom by calling attention to what David used to be “*a bear rob of her cubs*”.
2. Then by taking the “***flight***” out by suggesting time to gather a full scale invasion.

Hey saints sometimes **God confuses the counsel, sometimes he defeats the enemy** but it matters not the method He employs as the battle belongs to the Lord. You will recall that in 15:31 upon hearing the news that his one time trusted friend and chief adviser had defected to Absalom David prayed that God would turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness. **Perhaps David thought that God would some how change the wisdom of Ahithophel but God chose rather to change the heart of who heard it**. My point? Don’t put the answers to your prayers in a box let His will be done His way, His timing and keep trusting! You see sometimes our lack of being able to figure out how God is going to do something will hinder either our prayers before hand or our trusting in the midst of circumstances. Paul wrote in Rom 11:33 “*How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out*!” In Hab. 1:5 God spoke through saying “*I will work a work in your days which you would not believe, though it were told you*.” (See Acts 13:41). I have yet in all the years of following the Lord have had Him come to me and say, “*Now Dale I’m going to do this and that this way, what do you think*?” If God ever did I’d be saying, “*Your going to do what, when, where WHY*?” Consider the plan of God for our redemption, the sending of His only son in the likeness of sinful man and by His death we gain victory the proof of which was His resurrection. Now how many resurrections had happened prior to Jesus’? Hey saints, God is not limited by our comprehension, our understanding, He who spoke the world came into existence is able and as we sing “*more than able to do much more than I can ever conceive*”.

Vs. 12-14 The suggestion that Absalom go in battle in person appealed to his sense of vanity so that he could appear to be a mighty soldier like his dad. That is one of major differences between Ahithophel’s plan and Hushai’s as Ahithophel was to lead the battle but In Hushai’s plan Absalom was to lead the battle.

This was the first time anyone favored someone else’s advice over Ahithophel’s. The truth of the matter is that the throne of Israel didn’t belong to Absalom or David it belonged to the Lord and only David understood that. Absalom had the wise counselor on his side but as we are told in James 5:16 “*The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.*” Thus this proves that the bended knee moves the hand of God not the wisdom of any man. Hey saints mark this down we can not escape God, oh we may be able to outwit halfwits, we maybe able to pull the wool over on those who can’t see straight but never will we be able to slide one by the Lord. He alone knows the thoughts and intents of the heart and there is no place we can hide from His eyes. Take note that even at this time God was with David, far too often we confuse God’s discipline with abandonment. Hey saints God to “*never leave you nor forsake you*”, so even when His hand is heavy upon us it is not for our destruction but rather for our instruction.

Verse 14 tells us the reason why Hushai’s advice was taken over that of Ahithophel. The Lord wanted to bring Absalom’s pride down to defeat in battle so He has caused Hushai’s words to appeal to his flesh. Now this council appealed to the flesh of Absalom and it made him feel like a king so all around him said, “*Hey Id’ go with plan B*”. Hey Christian listen up, any council that appeals to our flesh, any council that causes us to appear to be great and makes us feel like we are the most important person around you can bet is not from God. The Lord had been at work to defeat the advice of Ahithophel so no matter what God was not going to let Absalom reign a king and even if he had the best and wisest counselors God was going to turn their advice to foolishness. **What is interesting to note is that there was no external evidence that the Lord was at work in David’s life but he was at work behind the scenes.**

**III. Vs. 15-29 The actions of friends**

Vs. 15-22 Now Hushai needed to get word out to Zadok and Abiathar the priests so they could let David know that he needed to cross over the Jordan so they send their two boys Jonathan and Ahimaaz to tell David and end up having to stay the night outside the city by the well of Enrogel which literally was a Lander mat. David and his 600 men were camped 20 miles from Jerusalem and Hushai had the two sons of the priests as runners about 1 mile from the city who then ran to another house but a young lad saw them who told Absalom who went on a search for the hidden spies. This story reminds us of another brave gal “Rahab” who hid two spies in Joshua 2 and later on is found to be the mother of Boaz and as such in the genealogy of Jesus. Now what’s interesting is that this is the very area in which Mephibosheth had dwelt all those years until David sent for him. Apparently they were seen by a you fellow who went and told Absalom so they had to go further into the area of Gilgal and hide in a well so that when Absalom’s men came in search of them they were well hidden.

Hey saints here are folks who haven’t ever met David who are risking their lives to protect him and they are showing themselves to be better friends then those who were at one time the closest to David. Consider Jesus who knew we were sinners, knew that we were against Him even mocked him and yet He still was willing to die for us, amazing what kind of friend Jesus was towards us even before we made Him our best friend.

Vs. 23-26 Ahithophel having known that his counsel was rejected realized under Hushai’s plan Absalom would be defeated and he would then be implicated in the conspiracy so he feels the only way out is to committed suicide or self-murder. When a person gives into suicide they are showing that they have given in to the lies and deceptions of Satan, whose purpose is to kill and destroy (John 10:10). As we saw in the case of Saul when a person has gotten to the place where they are wanting to kill their physical body they are committing the ultimate selfish act. Instead of killing off the physical they out to kill off the self centered life that refuse to die even to the place where it will end its earthly existence to sustain its selfish ways. Spurgeon noted that Ahithophel’s action were paradoxical as “*putting his house in order revealed that he was a prudent man but hanging himself showed that he was a fool*”. Shall a man have discretion and desperation, mind and madness?

Ahithophel this wise man sets his house in order but then kills himself. What happened to him? Well for 11 plus years Ahithophel allowed bitterness over his granddaughter Bathsheba and best friend of his son Uriah’s murder fester in his heart. So when things finally turned to where he had the opportunity to get even for these situations and it failed he took his own life. So what killed Ahithophel? A rope, no his heart drowned in its own bitterness, the rope was merely the instrument that took away his breath but his life had been slowly choking on bitterness for 11 years. Listen because Ahithophel’s death can speak to our hearts about the danger of bitterness remaining in our hearts towards someone, your hatred of them isn’t hurting them as much as it is killing you so why not give that over to the Lord? I’m not telling you that Ahithophel’s anger towards David was not justified what I am saying is that he couldn’t afford the price even on the installment plan. Someone well said that “*Bitterness is like swallowing a bottle of poison and waiting for the other person to die*!” Your bitterness like Ahithophel will “*hang you up, it’ll burry you*” or you can take all that anger and bitterness and place it upon Jesus and let Him burry it for you so that He can raise you up a new person. It is interesting to note that both Ahithophel and Absalom will end up hanging but they are two very different men that end up the same, Absalom never got started and he finished the same way but Ahithophel started well but just didn’t finish as he had started.

Yet there are multitudes who have not heeded the words of Jesus in Matt. 6:19-21 to not “*lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also*.” Far to many in the world (put their household in order) by saving their money, gather possessions at the expense of the hearts in eternity, we were talking about this the other night at men’s prayer: “*Mankind are eternal beings the only question that remains is what destination have we chosen to make our eternal home* ”?

Vs. 26 Absalom crossed over the Jordan with all the men of Israel which made him look good but with out any experience on the battlefield it was a bad personal decision. As such Absalom’s pride and wanting to appear what he wasn’t ensured his death, pride kills. He made Amasa (burden) captain the son of a niece of David and a cousin of Joab instead of Joab.

Vs. 27-29 Mahanaim was the former capital when Ishbosheth was king as well as the place where Jacob had wrestled with the Lord. The mention of Shobi (glorious), Machir (sold) and Barzillai (strong as iron) is because they helped David in a great time of need.

Now note this Christians these fellows were not warriors they were servants who step forward to aid those in need. So often we think, “*Man, I can’t do anything I have no special abilities*!” God isn’t in need of our abilities He is in need of our availability! To step up when people are in need to offer aid when people are down was as great as what the army could offer David because without these three men the army what have had no strength to fight. The beds and basins were of greater use than swords and shield, the pots of wheat, barley, flour and beans of greater need than an army of 100,000. The honey and curds, sheep and cheese of greater service than the wisest of councilors. Never underestimate what God would have us to do for others ***perhaps the smallest of offering is of the greatest of need***! David comes to Mahanaim where Jacob had wrestled with the Lord and lost

And all of these fellows come out to bless David and to refresh him. Now these three fellows have every reason not to be of service:

**Shobi**: “*Glorious*” Now we are told that he was “*the son of Nahash from Rabbah of the people of Ammon*”. Yeh so? Well his brother was Hanun whom we were told in 2 Sam 10 shaved the beards and cut the garments of David’s servants causing them to be “*embarrassed*” and then waged war against him and defeated them soundly taking the fight out of them. Now this fellow stands in stark contrast to that of Ahithophel as he could have said help David, why that guy killed my brother and wiped out my family. Now that’s “Glorious” as he comes to aid his brother’s enemy.

**Machir**: “*Sold*” He is the fellow in whose house Mephibosheth stayed all those years until David came and got him. He could have said, “*Help David man I’ve been involved in serving for a long time it’s someone else’s turn this time*!” But he didn’t why? Well because Machir is “sold out” for the Lord the guy is a servant, **ready willing and available**.

**Barzillai**: “*Strong as iron*” in 19:32 we will find out that this fellow is 80 years old, and he could have said, “*Man I’m 80 I’ve hauled my fair share of beds in my life, I’m retired, I’m going to take it easy*”. But he didn’t see it that way, and went out to be a friend.

We all could take a lesson from these three men when it comes to serving as its “*glorious to be sold out in the Lord’s strength*”. Now notice that they went to David when he was hungry, tired and in the wilderness that’s our calling saints, that’s what we are called to do even to someone who has done you wrong, even if you served last time, even if you’re old.

Joshua entered the land of promise by faith and David left the land of promise by faith. Hey brothers and sisters lets do to each other what Hebrews 10:24-25 says, “*let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.*”

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

**V. Sovereign: 2 Samuel 1-24**

**2. Chp. 11-24 The King’s troubles**

**2 Samuel 18:** **1-33**

**“On the run”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 1-18 Hung by pride**

**III. Vs. 19-33 A message without words**

**I. Intro.**

We come now to the tragic end of Absalom and David hearing of his death. Absalom has been in a hurry to become king and he didn’t care what he had to do to get there. Again in it is a character issue and the lack of interest in developing a heart for God that causes his to get “*hung up on his pride*”. Oswald Chambers wrote, “*There is only one relationship that really matters, and that is your personal relationship to your personal Redeemer and Lord. If you maintain that at all costs, letting everything else go, God will fulfill His purpose through your life. One individual life may be of priceless value to God’s purposes, and yours may be that life.*” When it is all said and done **we will be either running from God or running to Him**!

**II. Vs. 1-18 Hung by pride**

Vs. 1-4 Knowing that Absalom’s attack was emanate David arranged his army into three groups under three commanders Joab, Abishai and Ittai the Gittite. The dividing of the troops into three companies was to insure that what ever approach Absalom and his army took they would be met with force. Further more David’s supporters (based upon verse three) had grown to more than 10,000. Joab and Abishai are brothers but Ittai was the fellow who in chapter 15 had only came to Jerusalem the day prior to David’s departure apparently his actions towards David matched his words in 15:21 when he said to David “*As the LORD lives, and as my lord the king lives, surely in whatever place my lord the king shall be, whether in death or life, even there also your servant will be.*”

Hey saints, Ittai was willing to walk with David no matter what and so now he is giving the opportunity to work for David. Note that Christian as it is always the pattern God uses to those He calls as Jesus said in Matt. 4:19 “*Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.*” Far too many folks get a hunkering for being fishers of men but they neglect the greater part which is “*following Jesus*”. Now how do we know if a person has succumbed to this? Well they cease to be teachable; they desire to teach more than they are open to learn. Look at David as no man had greater authority in the nation perhaps in the world at that time then did David and yet he is a man who will submit when he is wrong as he desires to learn more than he does teach.

Now David felt that he belonged out in the battle perhaps he was thinking of 11 years ago in chapter 11:1 where we were told that “*in the spring of the year, at the time when kings go out to battle… David remained at Jerusalem.*” The people around David gave three reasons why they felt that David ought not to go out with them into battle:

* “*You shall not go out*!”: They understood that it would be hard for David to fight against his own son Absalom
* “*For if we flee away, they will not care about us; nor if half of us die, will they care about us? But you are worth ten thousand of us now*”: His life was more valuable, that is Absalom was more interested in defeating his father than he was winning the battle.
* “*For you are now more help to us in the city*”: David was over 60 now but he could still manage the war by bring reserves and supplies if needed.

David may not have wanted to repeat the mistake of 11 years ago but neither was he unteachable as he responds with a humble heart towards those that he was over. Even though David was a seasoned commander but he was not insistent upon having things his way, he had good wise men around him so he listened to what they had said. So as David observed the troops upon their departure he himself stayed behind. What a humbling thing for David as thousands of men went out to battle against their friends, brothers and family members who were willing to sacrifice their lives all because of David’s own failure.

Vs. 5-8 David’s final instructions were towards his sinful rebellious son that he wanted to make sure he was taken alive. “*Deal gently for my sake with the young man Absalom.*” In chapter 15 Absalom had stood by the gate and put down his father to steal the hearts of the people and here we see David standing by the gate of the city protecting the life of this same son.

Hey saints isn’t that the heart of our Lord towards those who do battle against Him? His desire is to take them who are dead and make them alive. In Matt 18:12-13 Jesus said, “*If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them goes astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine and go to the mountains to seek the one that is straying? And if he should find it, assuredly, I say to you, he rejoices more over that sheep than over the ninety-nine that did not go astray*.” Peter reminds us in 2 Peter 3:9 that God is “*not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance*.”

Apparently David wanted the battle to be in the “*woods of Ephraim*” which according to history was seen as quite secure form opposing armies do to the density of the forests. God didn’t need a sword to stop Absalom He used tress and bushes as the location of the battle proved to be a greater opponent to Israel than did David’s army as more were devoured by the trees and bushes than by the swords. Now no doubt the experience of David’s men played a part in this as they were accustomed to this fighting style. God has His own ways to raise people and set people down, He who has to silence the rocks least they cry out (Luke 19:40) and silence the storms has little trouble having a tree or a shrub reach and put down man’s pride, no wonder we have tree huggers maybe they have read this passage and are trying to make friends?

Vs. 9-18 Upon finding Absalom dangling in a tree the soldiers obey David’s wishes but not Joab. Absalom had rejected Ahithophel’s counsel to kill only the king but Joab thought it a good idea and put three spears into Absalom. Remember that it was Hushai’s counsel that obliged Absalom's vanity placing him in this battle. Josephus tells us that it was the hair of Absalom that got hung up on the tree, so the Lord many years earlier caused a tree to grow up in this area so that one day it would be used to judge Absalom. It appears as though Absalom goes out hot Roding in his Hummer (Mule) with the top down and with the thick brush and trees he is left dangling by what his pride and glory was in, his good looks and long flowing hair. Both Absalom and Ahithophel die hanging on a tree is that not interesting in light of both Deut. 21:23 “*his body shall not remain overnight on the tree…for he who is hanged is accursed of God*” and Gal. 3:13 “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree” the Jews what have seen this as a curse. Ah but Jesus died on a tree, our curse was placed upon Him.

Absalom whose hair was a source of pride got his hair hung up in a tree. Now listen up there are a great number of people who because of their pride get hung up on THE TREE, speaking of the cross. Paul wrote of them in 1 Cor. 1:23 “*we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness*”. Notice that he is hanging between heaven and earth (verse 9) because he felt he was elevated above his peers but clearly not fit for heaven. Hey saint’s that is what pride is like as it causes us to think we are better than everybody else but it also keeps us from being in the Lord’s presence.

The soldier that had heard the heart of David for his son came back and told Joab who wanted to know why he didn’t kill him as their was a bounty on his head. Now I kind of like the way the KJ puts the offer of Joab to this fellow as it says that Joab “*would have given thee ten shekels of silver, and a girdle.*” Now some how I don’t think the offer would have been all that attractive to the men up her in Montana. Ah but if what Joab offered was some money and the belt Buckle which is closer so what it would have been seen as then he might of got some takers.

Hey folks there are some people who can be bought to be unfaithful and disobedient to the Lord, is there a price that someone can offer us to not obey God’s word or be faithful to Him? Don’t dismiss this too quickly as I’m afraid at times the price of unfaithfulness and disobedience is nothing more than the price of comfort.

David has lost the ability to correct Joab as he was in on the murder of Uriah and he was the one that orchestrated bringing Absalom back into Jerusalem and now he is the very one who takes the initiative to kill the very man at one time he had backed. In verse 14 you can tell that Joab is convicted by the obedience of this soldiers to keep his kings words so he keeps the bounty and the belt for himself and gives three spears to the heart of Absalom as change. Joab offered justice instead of mercy and he did so for the best interest of the nation if not for David, and in Absalom’s death was what he should have gotten long ago for murdering his brother but it was Joab who had suggested that he should be pardoned. The irony of the story is that Joab gave Absalom justice and according to 1 Kings 2:5-6 at David’s final words to Salomon he said “*Joab the son of Zeruiah did to me, and what he did to the two commanders of the armies of Israel, to Abner the son of Ner and Amasa the son of Jether, whom he killed. And he shed the blood of war in peacetime, and put the blood of war on his belt that was around his waist, and on his sandals that were on his feet. Therefore do according to your wisdom, and do not let his gray hair go down to the grave in peace*.” Apparently three spears in the heart weren’t enough to kill Absalom so the 10 men who bore his armor surrounded him and did him in. Pride is a tough thing to kill in the human heart isn’t it three spears aren’t enough. You see in an interesting twist according to chapter 16:21 Absalom had gone and raped his fathers 10 concubines out in the open so too now he is killed by his 10 servants out in the open.

Absalom was a self centered and self-promoting kind of guy so he made sure that people would remember his life. When you go to Israel in the Kidron Valley southwest of the temple mount you will see all of these tombs carved into the sandstone and you will see this pillar which the Jews to this day call Absalom’s pillar as it is what he wanted to be remembered but his memory is not a good one and the pillar just stands to the height of his arrogance and pride. Joab wanted to make sure that Absalom’s body was not memorialized so he through him into a pit and heaped stone upon him. The truth is that people will remember our lives the only question is how will they remember them? I personally would rather be remembered for my name being written in the book of life. It has been said that “*Man's life is made up of 20 years of his mother asking him where he is going, 40 years of his wife asking him where he has been and one hour at his funeral when everyone wonders where he is gone*.”

Hey pay attention to Absalom’s story Christians as he was a man who once stole the hearts of the nation in 15:6 now has his heart stilled and ends up in a pit. This fellow who thought so much of himself that he erected a pillar in his own honor ends up in a pit. Do you get it? Absalom had stacked stones upon each other to impress folks of how great a man he was but in the end is thrown into a pit with stone stacked over his dead body in a forest where no one would remember him. Now that reminds me of the words of Jesus in Luke 20:17-18 where he said of Himself, “*The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone'? Whoever falls on that stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder*?” Remember friend that that you can fall on the chief cornerstone and be broken of your pride or it will fall upon you and grind you to powder as in Absalom’s case.

**III. Vs. 19-33 A message without words**

Vs. 19-32 The war was over, Absalom is dead, now all that remains is to notify David but Joab knew that there would be no celebration as the enemy was from David’s own son. Apparently Joab wanted to spare Ahimaaz the son of Zadok the priest the burden of being the messenger of bad news even though Ahimaaz was faster than the Cushite. Yet Ahimaaz was so eager he volunteered to run even though he didn’t have all the information as Joab questions him in verse 22 “*Why will you run, my son, since you have no news ready*?” Ahimaaz reminds us of that verse in Rom. 10:2 having “*zeal but not according to knowledge*”. We can’t be sure but it seems as though Ahimaaz wanted to seem important even though he hadn’t anything to say so he ran anyway.

Hey there is a lesson in this for you and I as well you see far to many people are like Ahimaaz who are so eager to go that not only did he out run everyone else they out ran the message they are suppose to bring. Consider the path’s the two took as they were very different the Cushite (dark skinned man) took the more difficult route while Ahimaaz took the plain. Again there are a great many who want to “*run ahead*” of the Lord and though they arrive faster and with more style they lack the content. The moral of the story? Well ***the job of a messenger is not to be found in the delivery but in what you are delivering***! In to many cases the person who arrived first has nothing to say when they get there that is why Paul wrote to Timothy in 2 Tim 2:15 saying, “*Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*” The Lord told Habakkuk in 2:2 to “*Write the vision And make it plain on tablets, That he may run who reads it*.”

Vs. 33 Seeing one man running is usually good news but if you see the army running it wouldn’t be a very good sign. Ahimaaz called out saying, “*All is well*” but didn’t want to say anything negative about Absalom’s death. The Cushite had tact in giving bad news but none the less it still broke his heart. It is always wise to sympathize as far as we can than to sit in judgment over a case that has never been ours. David's only concern was for his son not for the nation and such is the heart of a parent. We won, we won was all Ahimaaz has to say but all David wanted to know is Absalom safe?

The thing that David desired, but could not do, he could not die in Absalom’s stead but that is exactly what God did do for us, in that Jesus died in our stead, in order to redeem us unto God. David was willing to overlook all Absalom’s faults he wanted to forgive him even though it was Absalom’s desire to kill his father. Spurgeon said, “*Our children may plunge into the worst of sins, but they are our children still. They may scoff at our God; they may tear our heart to pieces with their wickedness; we cannot take complacency in them, but at the same time we cannot unchild them, nor erase their image from our hearts*.” In David’s morning for Absalom he calls him his son five times because in Absalom he saw his own failures and foibles. “My son, My son”, cried David. “*Your weakness are my weakness, your fleshly pursuits my fleshly pursuits and your destruction my failure, if only I could die in your place*.” And son in the cry of David is the heart of God the Father for all the lost who gave His only son to die in our place!

So why didn’t David weep for his son in 12:23 after the baby died and yet he does here? The words of the Cushite broke the heart of David because of two reasons:

1. He bore part of the responsibility
2. He knew his son would not be in heaven as David had said of the dead child of Bathsheba, “*I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.*” You see David knew where the little child would be in the presence of the Lord and he knew that Absalom wouldn’t be there and it broke his heart. Now this ought to cause us to be broken hearted for those who right now if they were to die would find themselves apart for eternity from God’s love.

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

**V. Sovereign: 2 Samuel 1-24**

**2. Chp. 11-24 The King’s troubles**

**2 Samuel 19:** **1-23**

**“The Frailty of Feelings”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 1-8 A changed perspective**

**III. Vs. 9-15 A united purpose**

**IV. Vs. 16-23 An offer of pardon**

**I. Intro.**

Five times in this chapter (*four of which are in the section we will be studying*) we see the idea of bringing back the king. You see even though this is after the death of Absalom David was still in Mahanaim (two camps). Now he belonged in Jerusalem and he was the right king but years of division and civil war had divided the nation. There were two issues at hand; his heart (verses 1-8) and the heart of the people towards him (verses 9-15). What we shall see is that David won’t lift a finger to force himself upon the nation; his return to the throne was not by crushing the opposition but rather by voluntary submission as they lovingly surrendered to the obedience of his will.

How does this relate to us? Well there will always be strife (*civil war*) in our lives until the right king is on the throne of our heart. Now we may be slow in making the right decision to let Jesus reign as Lord of our lives in the first place but what if it isn’t the first time, like Israel with David? Perhaps you gave Him your heart but He has been exiled because you have chosen another king to reign like Israel had done with Absalom? The truth is that **it is often harder to bring the King back then it is to put him on the throne to begin with.** Why is that? Well it is because the biggest issues of Who He is and His right to reign on the throne of our hearts has already been settled. And reason for His exile has nothing to do with Him and everything to do with us. You see we were seduced by the lure of this bogus king, we felt he had something to offer us that would make us feel better and now because of our failure we wonder if the Right King will have us back? So we are afraid to come back, it’s our fault we have failed but it’s only when we surrender to His goodness and away from our pride do we return. Listen up now, God is more relieved to have us back then we are to have Him back on the throne.

**II. Vs. 1-8 A changed perspective**

Vs. 1-8 When the soldiers who had risked their lives and suffered losses themselves returned from battle instead of a celebration for the victory they were met with David’s mourning and pinning for the loss of his son Absalom. The result of David’s behavior was that those who had risked so much and suffered the loss of so much experienced shame instead of joy. Joab’s rebuke was that David’s obsessive mourning made it seem as though that he loved his enemies and hated his friends. “*Hey king this isn’t all about you and what you have lost is your loss any greater than those who sacrificed everything to see you reign as king, snap out of it*”. “*You are making people feel guilty that they are a live and Absalom is dead and these are the very people who lost people themselves*.” “*Get up out of your pity party and encourage those who have lost loved ones are these people will leave you*!” Now had Absalom prevailed David and all his family and friends would have been slaughtered by Absalom. This reminds me of the words of Jesus in Matt. 23:37 when He said, “*O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing*!” It is a good thing to be broken hearted for the lost but we must also realize that the lost bares the responsibility and obsessive bemoan over the lost at the expense of the victory only cheapens the cost!

What David was experiencing was the guilt of his own failed life and the consequences it had on the life of his family one that he wished was upon him. David had the desire to atone for his own mistakes and the effects it had upon his family but he couldn’t (18:33). You may recall David’s own words with regard to this in Ps. 42:11 when he spoke to himself saying, “*Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God; for I shall yet praise Him, The help of my countenance and my God*.” **David’s problem and ours at times is not what he remembered but what he had forgotten**. He was overwhelmed with the loss of his son and his own personal responsibility in this but he had forgotten that in spite of this failure God was still in control and had just granted him a victory and saved the nation at the cost of other lives. To put this in perspective where was David’s weeping at Uriah, where were the words “*O my friend Uriah; my friend, my friend Uriah; if only I had died in your place! O Uriah my friend, my friend?*”

Now in the 24th chapter after David sins by numbering the people God gives him three choices as to which judgment would befall David and the nation and says “*let us fall into the hand of the LORD, for His mercies are great; but do not let me fall into the hand of man*.” (including himself) It seems as though David had learned by then that God’s mercies are greater than His judgment and that we are far harder on ourselves than He is on us. You see even though the armies of Absalom had been defeated there was still a spirit of rebellion amongst many in the nation and if David didn’t change his tune the efforts of those valiant would come to nothing as the rebellion would continue and they would place someone else on the throne.

So David responds by doing what I’m sure he didn’t feel like doing and that was getting on with his life, moving beyond his own failure and the loss of his son. Hey saint’s we can’t afford to allow our feelings to dictate our actions if we do we will become enslaved to our passions, some times you have to get up and go over and stand in the gate even when every part of your emotions wants to stay in bed.

We don’t always realize how our outlook affects those around us. Far too often our feelings and actions seem to indicate that we are without hope but Paul wrote in Rom. 15:13 “*may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit*.” We aren’t a people that have no hope because we trust in the God of hope and are abounding in hope by the Holy Spirit. We like David need to snap out of it. Life is full of choices and joy is one of the most important ones we can make, “*I’m going to trust you Lord even though I may not feel like it or see in this life the answer to my questions of why because I already have the answer to the most important question* ***WHO***!” You know that verse in Rom. 8:28 “*all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose*.”

There were **three things that God did to reconcile the nation back to Himself and the first one is right here:**

1. Vs. 1-8 **He changed their perspective**: David the father forgot for a moment that He was David the servant of the Lord. The Scottish pastor Andrew Bonar once said, “*Let us be as watchful after the victory as before the battle*”. David was in danger of winning the battle but loosing the victory as he turned what should have been a time of celebration into a time shame and guilt. Hey saints pay attention as we can do the same. Huh? Well here we have been victorious in Jesus, we who were once dead have been mad alive but we can spend far too much time moping around with the “*Woe is me attitude*!” **There are far too many times that we lose our heavenly perspective because of earthly trials**. We like David can become obsessed with the things dieing around us in the world and become cynical and sour. It is very easy for me to slip into this and people become far too aware of what I’m against but have no clue what I’m for. So go stand by the gate and let them know what you are for.

**III. Vs. 9-15 A united purpose**

Vs. 9-15 There remained a question in the hearts of some of the people concerning the David’s competence in being able to defend the nation because he had run from Absalom to which others responded, “*Well he was able to do so in the past and the man you appointed died on the run*”. Based upon verse 11 this debate was reaching into David’s living room as well and the fact that Judah had made a decision either weighed upon his heart so he sends the two priest back to find out what was going on. He also sent word to his sons commander Amasa, who was his cousin saying “Aren’t we cousins?” I’ll put you in charge of my army instead of Joab. There were no doubt two reasons for this:

1. He was angry at Joab for taking the life of his son and disregarding his orders to take him alive.
2. He thought that this may go over better to help consolidate the two parties even though Amasa was clearly not as good at commanding the army as was Joab and his brother Abishai.

Apparently this worked as we are told in verse 14 that this “*swayed the hearts of all the men of Judah, just as the heart of one man, so that they sent this word to the king: "Return, you and all your servants!*” David wouldn’t come back as king of the nation until the people wanted him back as their king. So when they said “*Return, you and all your servants!*” he came back. So while David was at Gilgal (verse 15) Judah came out to meet him and escort him back into Jerusalem wanting him again to reign as king. Now David didn’t want to force his reign on Israel and would only come back as kings if all those who rejected him for Absalom wanted him back as king. He could have forced the issue but instead he wanted the voluntary submission to his reign as king.

Now that is what Jesus does as well He won’t force His reign on us, He won’t put a gun to our heads and say, “*You better make me your king or I’ll kill ya*!” Fast forward to the Son of David, Jesus, who said in Luke 13:34-35 “*O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you were not willing! See! Your house is left to you desolate; and assuredly, I say to you, you shall not see Me until the time comes when you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!*” Then in John 19:37 which a partial fulfillment Zech. 12:10 we are told that “*They* (the Jews) *shall look on Him whom they pierced.*” The final fulfillment of that prophecy will be in Rev. 14 where 144,000 Jews during the tribulation period will recognize Jesus as their messiah and begin to tell the world. Finally John himself in Rev 22: 20 says, “*Even, so, come, Lord Jesus*”. Hey saint’s the Son of David will only return to reign in hearts that say, “*Return, you and all your servants!*” He has always been invited and will never force His reign upon people so let’s begin to say as John, “*Even, so, come, Lord Jesus*”. That is the 2nd of the **three things that God did to reconcile the nation back to Himself is right here:**

1. Vs. 9-15 **He united their purpose**: The nation was divided between loyalties to Absalom and loyalties to David. David had complicated this by two separate things, his choice to flee Absalom instead of fight, and his above mentioned attitude of focusing on his lose instead of the Lord’s gain. The leaders of all of Israel should have sent an envoy welcoming him back as king but they didn’t and instead a national debate ensued as to his qualifications to lead. How did he unite them?
   1. Well first he **acted as king** not waiting to see how the debate went he took action. He first went to the elders of his tribe Judah using priests as intermediaries and he wanted to know why they hadn’t taken action upon his return. Now that is interesting he pushed them into making a decision a deceive move for David. The Lord is not concerned with the polls as to whether or not He is the King of Kings; instead His election upon the throne of your heart needs to be made quickly without hesitations.
   2. Second he **revealed his heart as king** towards those that were once against him by appointing Amasa to be the general of his army instead of Joab. Amasa was his cousin but he had been Absalom’s general and if Judah was concerned with how David would receive those who had a tone time apposed him this appointment of shown his heart of reconciliation as it was Amasa who had been put in charge of searching out to find David and killing him. Joab was removed because he had disobeyed the king’s commands and had gradually been increasing his importance in the eyes of the nation. In fact he will kill Amasa in the next chapter because he is threatened by his authority.
   3. Finally all this took place at Gilgal where the nation **renewed its commitment to the Lord.** So too like David when ever we have been divided against the Lord and rebelled we need to make a fresh commitment to the Lord by rededicating ourselves to Him.

**IV. Vs. 16-23 An offer of pardon**

Vs. 16-23 As David is being ferried across the Jordan this Shimei comes swims over to make things right as it this same fellow who had hurled insults, rocks and dirt at David and his men at his departure. So now he comes saying, “*I’m sorry David for all those words, rocks and dirt I didn’t mean it please forgive my stupidity, see I’m the first guy here today to get right with you*.” You see He hadn’t thought David would survive Absalom and now he needs to get it right.

Consider Shimei’s words of repentance which had every sign of being genuine:

1. “*Shimei the son of Gera fell down before the king*”: They appear to be **humble** as he fell down before David.
2. “*Do not let my lord impute iniquity to me, or remember what wrong your servant did on the day that my lord the king left Jerusalem, that the king should take it to heart*.” Three times Shimei reveres to David as the king and so his repentance appears to **honor** the king.
3. “*For I, your servant, know that I have sinned*”: Clearly his words appear to be **honest** as they make no excuses for his sinful behavior.
4. “*Therefore here I am, the first to come today of all the house of Joseph to go down to meet my lord the king*”: Finally his repentance is appears to not be mere words as it is tied to **behavior**.

But later on David before he dies told his son Salomon to put this guy’s true attentions to test and said, “*After I’m gone tell Shimei that he is under house arrest and he can’t leave Jerusalem for any reason and if he disobeys kill him*.” You see David saw over time that though Shimei’s repentance appeared to be humble, sincere, and even seemed to be tied with change but over time he was still the same fellow. So three years later Shimei had a couple of his servants ran away, and he ran down to Gath himself to get them and that was it. Now this reminds us the words Paul said to King Agrippa in Acts 26:20 when he had declared to those in Damascus, Jerusalem, the region of Judea and then to the Gentiles, “*That they should repent, turn to God, and do works befitting repentance.*” There are works “*befitting repentance*” In John 6:29 Jesus said, “*This is the work of God that you believe in Him whom He sent*.” How is that seen? Well through obedience and the willing submission of our lives to His word. So clearly Shimei didn’t want to be subservient to the king, he didn’t want to obey him thus his repentance was not real.

Hey saint’s there are a lot of folks like Shimei who chose another king to reign on the throne of their hearts until following him ruins their lives and when things don’t work out like they expected they seem to want to place Jesus upon the throne. But the truth is Shimei hadn’t wanted David to be king in the first place and he only wants him now because he has cursed him and now he is afraid David is going to kill him. In 1 Kings 18:21 Elijah came to all the people, and said, “*How long will you falter between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.*” Then we are told that “*the people answered him not a word*.” There are far to many of us professing believers “*faltering between two opinions*” switching back and forth between the Lord and the world. Listen up following any other ideology, placing anything or anyone upon the throne of your heart will only bring you misery and confusion you can not have a little of Jesus and a little of the world they are mutually exclusive. There are those who legitimately want Jesus to reign as king (like Israel) over their lives and when they ask His to return it is for real. Ah but then there are folks who are a lot like Shimei who say and do all the right things but time bears out their true hearts as they just are trying to purchase some fire insurance. Abishai still wants to take the guys head off, perhaps he had been hit by one of Shimei’s rocks but David says, “*Let it go bro, I’ve just been made king today and my not going to kill this little punk on this day*”. The 3rd of the **three things that God did to reconcile the nation back to Himself is:**

1. Vs. 16-23 **He offered all a pardon for their rebellion**: Shimei was a descendant of Saul who had kicked up dirt on David and his men. Shimei deserved death for what he had done and Abishai for the 2nd time offers to take off his head and again for the 2nd time David stops him from doing so. The first time David said that Lord must have felt that he needed it. But now the reason is that today was a day of rejoicing not a day of revenge and in so doing for all those who were truly repentive of their sins they were pardoned from their rightful punishment. David promised not to kill Shimei in his life time but he warned Salomon about him and to keep him under house arrest and if he ever left Jerusalem to put him to death. Now Shimei showed his true heart because he would not submit under the king’s authority and showed that he didn’t appreciate David’s mercy or Salomon’s grace and in his arrogance went and did what ever he wanted even when he knew the consequences. Hey folks mark that as there are far too many who think that once they mouth the words of repentance they then can spurn God’s rightful authority over their lives and reject his mercy and grace.

Now note this friend if you are trying to **bring the King back and put him on the throne** that He is the one who will:

* **Change our perspective**
* **Unite our purpose**
* **Pardon our rebellion**

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

**V. Sovereign: 2 Samuel 1-24**

**2. Chp. 11-24 The King’s troubles**

**2 Samuel 19:** **24-43**

**“The greatest Gift”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 24-30 Give me the Giver not the gifts**

**III. Vs. 31-39 More blessed to give than receive**

**IV. Vs. 40-43 The right reason for the season**

**I. Intro.**

I don’t know about you but this time of year seems to creep up on me, I mean I just get so busy that just the other day I looked on my calendar and realized that next weekend is Christmas. The truth is I had become so busy with preparing all the activities associated with this time of year that I was missing the reason for all the activities, you know what I mean? Something similar could have happened with David’s return in this section as we are given three examples of having the right heart about the David’s return to the throne.

Last week the key thought was “*the king’s return*” but here the thought changes to right reactions associated with his return, in these three reactions I see a heart that desires the Giver above the gift. I was reading “*Our Daily Bread*” this week and the author Peter Larson wrote this concerning Jesus that just jumped out when he wrote: **Jesus’ life was encompassed by two impossibilities:**

1. **The virgins womb**
2. **The empty tomb**

**Our Lord entered our world thru a door marked “*no entrance*” and left our world thru a door marked “*no exit*”! And in between those two impossibilities He lived a life that said to all “*No one left out*”!** The only question that remains is what will our response to Him be?

**II. Vs. 24-30 Give me the Giver not the gifts**

Vs. 24-30 In 2 Sam 9 David fulfilled the promise he made to Jonathon by showing kindness towards his only surviving son Mephibosheth. When David became king he inherited every thing that had belonged to Saul but to honor his friend Jonathon, (Saul’s son), David sought out and found Mephibosheth and blessed him by giving him his ancestral lands. It seems that Ziba had been Saul’s servant and as such had been carrying for the lands as if they were his until David gave them to Mephibosheth. Thus the events of chapter 16:1-4 as David was leaving Jerusalem Ziba met David with supplies and claimed the supplies were from him and that Mephibosheth had wanted the kingdom for himself; a lie that was designed to get David to give him his masters lands and property.

So now we come to the events of this chapter and based upon verse one Mephibosheth has become **Mephibo-mess** since the day the king has departed from the throne. Simply put David could see and smell Mephibosheth’s sincerity. There are many things about Mephibosheth that I can relate too:

1. There is the fact that he was dropped by life and this left him unable to function in life, as was crippled.
2. The there is the fact that he was taken in by a benevolent king who not only restored to him what he had lost, he also adopted him and invited him to dine with him at his table.
3. Then I can relate to the mess my life becomes when the king is not on the throne, how my former life has a way of creeping back in and pretty soon I begin to look far more like my former self, a mess.
4. Ah but I can also relate to the elation of wanting to have the King come for me and take me home and the things of this world grow faintly dim.

Mephibosheth who had been made a son had fallen apart without the king daily in his life. Is that not true in our own personal lives when the king is not ruling on the throne of our hearts we can’t walk and we become un-kept a real smelly mess?

So when David saw him he wanted to know why he hadn’t gone with him (verse 25) to which Mephibosheth says, “*Hey I saddled my donkey, packed my bags and Ziba stole my donkey and told lies about my intentions to you but that’s not why I’m here today I’m just glad your back in my life.*” Here’s what’s cool even though Ziba had lied and David had believed the lie, Mephibosheth doesn’t demand justice, he doesn’t want what David gave to Ziba when he believed the lie. Why? Well because as far as Mephibosheth is concerned he had already gotten from the hand of David far more than he had ever deserved, even though he lost everything he was still far ahead of where he should have been. I think it is always the **truest sign of personal restoration with the Lord when you aren’t out to get anything back, even if it was taken from you because you are too elated to have the King back in your life**! As far as Mephibosheth was concerned having at one time gotten to eat at the kings table was more than enough even if he never ate there again or got what he had been given back. Man I’ve got to tell you I want what Mephibosheth has in his life an attitude of gratitude, a heart that says as the psalmist in 84:10 “*Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere; I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of the wicked.*”

How is that possible? Now follow me on this saints, as this not only reveals the heart of Mephibosheth it also reveals something greater and that **is how great it was to be at the kings table**! We can only have this attitude if we have dug deep into the food of intimacy with the king. *I’m afraid that the reason many are more concerned with the* ***things of this world*** *instead* ***of time with the King*** *is that they have never sampled the wonders of dinning at His table*!

So why does David only offer back half of the lands that Ziba tricked David in giving instead of restoring it all? Well I suggest that David was testing Mephibosheth to see if his heart was I the right place. You may recall the story in 1 Kings 3:16-27 when two ladies came both claiming to be the mother of a baby to which Salomon suggested to cut the baby in two and give a half to each knowing that the true mother would rather the child go be with the other woman then see her child dead, well a young Salomon is watching his father deal with Mephibosheth. So here David says, “*divide it up*” to which Mephibosheth next words must have blown his mind, “*Man, I’m so glad your back in my life he can have it all*!” How about it do we care more for the “Giver” than the gifts? Is it more important that the king has come home in your heart or is it about the “stuff”? Oh dear saints that our hearts would be like that of Mephibosheth’s who cared nothing for his rights and everything for ***being right with the king***. Mephibosheth’s love for the king was far greater than his love of things that the king had given him. If that is our heart then it will be no big thing if what he has granted us in terms of possessions is given over to someone else. How is this possible? Well verse 28 tells us “*You set your servant among those who eat at your own table*”; it is possible only if we continually enjoy dinning at the Lord’s table. Salomon would write in Song of Salomon 2:4 “*He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love.*” To Mephibosheth what he missed was dinning at the kings table far more than the property of his father. Truly Mephibosheth has it right as martyred missionary Jim Eliot once said, “*He is no fool who gives up what he can not keep to gain what he can never lose*!” What are you trying to tell me pastor? Only that there needs to be a lot more of Mephibosheth in us and a lot less Ziba!

**III. Vs. 31-39 More blessed to give than receive**

Vs. 31-39 Now you might recall that it was Barzillai (Bar-zil-lay-i) along with Machir and Shobi who brought help to David and his men in 17:28.

* You see **Shobi** brought aid even though his brother had been an enemy of David
* **Machir** brought aid even though he had been giving aid to Mephibosheth
* And **Barzillai**? Well here we are told that he brought aid even though he was 80

Based upon the text we learn two important things about Barzillai:

1. He was a **very wealthy man** and he is the fellow who along with Shobi and Machir came down to David supplying beds and basins and all sorts of food supplies to refresh those that were “*hungry, weary and thirsty in the wilderness*” (17:27-29).
2. The other thing we learn about Barzillai is that he is an **elderly man** being 80 years of age. His name means “*strong as iron*” and when it came to serving the king that was his disposition as nothing could break his desire to be a blessing to the king.

Here’s my point some folks use their handicaps as excuses not to serve the king while others see not handicaps but rather opportunities to serve the king bringing aid to all who are “*hungry, weary and thirsty in the wilderness*” (verse 29).

This guy Barzillai may have been old but God had blessed him with great resources and he was willing to use them for the king and his kingdom. So perhaps your thinking, “Man I’m too old to serve the King I don’t have the resources” take it from old Barzillai who is a great example of Jesus words in Luke 12:21 who laid up treasures in heaven and not on earth. I think that is the truest example of a wealthy person, “***One who knows how to spend God’s treasures to best bless the King***”. He didn’t want to be:

* Reimbursed
* He didn’t care about getting a tax right off
* He didn’t want to be noticed.

Oh to God that we all despite our age had the disposition of Barzillai when it came to spending his resources to bless the king.

Barzillai came to greet David and escort him back not because he wanted anything from but just to be a blessing. What Barzillai didn’t want or need for himself he wanted others to enjoy, that’s the right kind of heart to have. David wants him to go with him and he wants to return the favor. It’s clear by Barzillai’s description of himself that he is loosing his senses, “*the sense of taste and hearing*” and he can’t remember things. So he says, “*Thanks king but I’m too old and I’m forgetting more things then I can enjoy.*” Now that’s a switch, “*I’m not too old to* ***be a blessing*** *but I’m too old to* ***enjoy the blessings****, so spend them on someone who can appreciate them more*”. What did he ask for? Well verse 37 says, “*Hey David I want to give you my servant Chimham*”. Now most commentators believe that this was the youngest son of Barzillai (1 Kings 2:7) but what fascinates me is that his name means “*longing*”. David offered Barzillai the blessings of the palace to which Barzillai offers his son to the king to be David’s servant. That’s the kind of man I want to be like the kind of fellow who would rather be a blessing than to be blessed. How is that possible? Well Barzillai saw himself as a man who had already been blessed not as one who needed to be blessed. Consider his old age when we could have been selfish and said, “*I need my family around me, I’m getting old, I like familiarity*”. But not Barzillai as he wants to bless the king as well as his son so he gave David his youngest boy “*longing*” to have the blessing of being a servant of the king. Oh dear saint that you and I would be “*longing*” to be a servant of the King of Kings. There is a book that traces this Barzillai’s family and it suggests that his son Chimham started an Inn Bethlehem for wayward people in honor of his father and it was this Inn that Joseph and Mary went too to which they were told that there was no room and that one of his descendants found room in a stall.

**IV. Vs. 40-43 The right reason for the season**

Vs. 40-43 Now as the king Chimham and ½ the people of Israel went on to Gilgal Judah David’s tribe acted as an escort. Apparently the northern tribes felt excluded in the ceremony of bringing back David from the Jordan River they didn’t want to appear to be any less supportive of the king. “*How come we weren’t invited to the party*?” The argument of Israel had nothing to do with the king and everything to do with who had greater patriotism. This “*two tribe*” system of government will eventually lead to a divided nation where it was all about how the actions of Judah made Israel look less enthusiastic towards the king.

Judah’s response was, “*Were doing this because he’s our family*, *we haven’t set down to the table yet and we aren’t eating at the king’s expense or opened any presents so what’s your beef*?” Judah has **the right reason for the season in as much as they are there for the King not to get something from the king.**  It appears as though Israel was worried they were being left out and Israel offers two reasons they deserve to take the lead:

1. **We have ten reasons**: They crunched the numbers and they have ten tribes to two as Judah had absorbed the tribe of Simeon.
2. **It was idea first**: And we were the first to advise bring Him back.

Doesn’t that just sound like children? A few weeks earlier these folks fighting against David now they are fighting over him Hey. People are fickle and if you serve them because they always respond to you then sooner or later they will say we don’t want you. Over the 20 years or so I’ve been involved in ministry I’ve found that the best way I can be of use for Jesus is when my sole motivation in serving God’s people is when I’m doing so out of love for “Him” instead out of love for “them.”

Saint’s there is enough of the king to go around for all of us and we need not bicker over who has the most right to Him, instead let’s get together and further his kingdom. Far too often God’s people are in competition with each other as to who is the greatest. This is nothing new as in Mark 9:34-35 the disciples “*disputed among themselves who would be the greatest. And He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all.*” So there you have it go for it win the race to being the greatest and Jesus even tells you how to do it by being servant of all.

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

**V. Sovereign: 2 Samuel 1-24**

**2. Chp. 11-24 The King’s troubles**

**2 Samuel 20:** **1-26**

**“Why can’t we all just get along?”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 1-5 The danger of tooting your own horn**

**III. Vs. 6-13 The damage of friendly fire**

**IV. Vs. 14-26 Cutting off a head to save a city**

**I. Intro.**

In the Christian life there is very few “*breaks in the battle*” life doesn’t come with “***time outs***” or “***easy buttons***”. We can see this in the life of David:

* He had just put down the civil war led by his son Absalom
* Then he had to deal with a tug of war between Judah and the 10 tribes of Israel as to who wanted him more
* That is barely over when there is another squabble and rebellion led by Sheba

Perhaps David was the first to utter the words of Rodney King, “*Why can’t we all just get along*?” The hardest part of life has got to be human relationships and our inability to get along with each other? The 20th chapter reveals some common pitfalls we make in our relationships with other people and how to avoid them.

**II. Vs. 1-5 The danger of tooting your own horn**

The first two guys make the same mistake but for very different reasons:

* Sheba takes advantage of a situation to “*get a head*” and will in the end lose his
* Amasa, he seems to be a good guy who has been placed in the wrong position and he won’t realize until he has “*a stabbing pain in his gut*”

Make no mistake Christian it is a dangerous thing to either try to be in a position or be placed into a position God has not called you too. Let’s consider the text then we will draw our application:

Vs. 1-2 Based upon the text Sheba (*oath*) the son of Bichri (*first born*), exploits the dissention that already existed between Judah and Israel for his own personal gain. He did this by taking advantage of David's weakened position from the conflict between Judah and the other ten tribes (verses 40-43) and ceases upon it to create a split. Israel had already been squabbling with Judah as too who had more rights to David and Sheba this man of Belial, or (son of Satan) **blew his own horn** and said, “*Forget David, we don’t need him his from the tribe of Judah, let’s just do our own thing*”.

Now saint’s conflict is a part of life and no one enjoys it but oft times it will be a crisis that will bring out either the best or worse in people. In this case all it took to rekindle the flame of conflict was this self serving fellow. And to make matters worse this all took place at Gilgal where in Joshua’s time **the nation came together to recommit themselves to God and each other**. Follow me on this and you will see the root of the problem when conflict comes in as most of the time the problem arises because people lose the bigger picture. Instead of rededicating themselves to the Lord folks are jostling for position and power. How different this might have been if they all had laid aside their agendas at the alter in Gilgal and circumcised the flesh of their hearts?

Now let’s look at the tune Sheba played on his own horn to Israel as it follows a familiar three fold pattern of rebellion of all those who rebel against the King:

1. “*We have no share in David*”: **Refuse to recognize his position**. How did Sheba do this? Well he denied the claim that David had the right to reign over him or anybody else. This is no different than many people to day that reject God’s authority over their lives. Remember back in the 60’s when people publicly declared that God was dead and that there was a new day dawning “*The Age of Aquarius*” in which people would be liberated from God.
2. “*Nor do we have inheritance in the son of Jesse*”: **Devalue his identity.** That is the 2nd part of rebelling against the king is to kick him down a few notches. Man is that not ever popular today as we are told in Dan Brown’s novel that Jesus wasn’t God the son no He was just a mistaken revolutionary who according to the DeVinci Code had sex with Mary Magdalene and so on.
3. “*Every man to his tents, O Israel*!” **Place yourself in his position**. The final act is that of **self will** “*Let’s go home, let’s go and do what we want to do*”. So Sheba not only did his thing for himself he wanted others to join his rebellion taking others away from the king as well.

The sad truth is that this works as we are told in verse 2 “*So every man of Israel deserted David, and followed Sheba the son of Bichri.*” At first it looked like most of Israel followed (*so every man of Israel deserted David and followed Sheba*) but in the end there was only a handful of people who went up into a walled city and even there they weren’t that loyal as they would rather take off his head then lose theirs. There have been many a church that started out of a split like this where it looks like the whole thing is going to come apart and in the end the loyalty was to rebellion and not over any real issues.

In my opinion Sheba **wasn’t so much against David as he was for himself** and it is never hard to get people to leave the king when you set yourself up as one. The Lord spoke through Jeremiah saying “*My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, And hewn themselves cisterns; broken cisterns that can hold no water.*” And Jesus said in John 8:43 saying I “*have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive.*” The flesh is always after self exaltation as it was these same ten tribes who argued with the tribe of Judah over who honored David more. Now based upon their response to Sheba's rebellion we can see that their desire to honor David had nothing to do with him and everything to do with self exaltation and that Sheba offered them an easier way of doing so.

Now listen up as we can see three important things based upon this by way of application:

1. We see what the primary cause of rebellion and its sister disunity is: **Self centeredness** when people follow their own agendas and not the King’s! Simply put it is when people insist upon their way and not submitting to God’s way that disunity happens in the body of Christ.
2. Second you see the price of loyalty in Judah’s commitment: Saint’s there will be times when following the Lord is not popular with family and friends perhaps even fellow followers of Christ. They will turn away and “*go back to their tents*” and what’s more bid you to follow along. You see the men of Judah remained loyal to the king even when their fellow country men deserted him. And like them we will have to decide the primary reason we are following the King. What? You recall Jesus questioned His disciples when many didn’t want to follow Him any longer in John 6:66-68 saying, “*Do you also want to go away? But Simon Peter answered Him, Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life*.” Hey saints it’s at times like these that we are brought to the very core of why we are following the Lord, as you know it’s not always easy, nor does doing so always benefit us the way we expected it too no we are following Him because He alone has “*the words of eternal life*!”
3. Finally, in verse one we are told that Sheba “*blew a trumpet*” of self promotion and in verse 22 we shall see that the others will “*blew a trumpet*” as they yelled “*heads up*” when Sheba’s head comes sailing over the wall. My point? Hey make sure you really like the tune you’re playing as you toot your own horn as it may be the last one you ever hear! Yeh, the song may have be a real “*head turner*” but the problem was that only head that was turning was Sheba’s.

There are far too many Sheba’s around the body of Christ I’m afraid, who want to blow their own horns and cause division and dissention, looking for opportunities to draw people after themselves.

Vs. 3 To illustrate this point consider David’s opposite reaction when he came back into Jerusalem as apparently he has learned from his dysfunctional home and realized that he need to make some changes and he started with the area of lust. Remember that in chapter 16:20-23 that Absalom had raped these ten concubines as part of his rebellion against David. So upon his return, David “*put them in seclusion and supported them, but did not go in to them.*” Jewish commentators tell us that the widowed queens of Jewish Kings were not allowed to marry again and were obliged to live the rest of their lives in seclusion. So it appears that David treated his exmistress’ as if they were full wives (Queens) and not just concubines. Yet he didn’t divorce them and abandon them as he could have instead he supported them but didn’t continue in an improper relationship with them. Further more their secluded life was not punishment but the only option left for them. All of this seems to suggest that David finally got a hold of his problem with lust and did the right thing towards all that it had affected. If that is the case then it gives hope that we like David too can finally learn from our mistakes and move on in our lives towards the Lord.

Vs. 4-5 Now again let’s consider the text as it relates to Amasa. In 19:13 David showed his heart towards those who had at one time been sworn enemies by making his rebellious son’s chief general the commander of his own army displacing Joab. When David heard of Sheba’s rebellion he immediately sent word to Amasa to gather the troops within three days so that he could nip the insurrection in the bud. But Amasa didn’t show up with the army in the three day time frame, the most logical reason for this is that the men of David’s army didn’t know or trust Amasa who had been the general of Absalom’s army as following an in experienced commander was a dangerous proposition. Though Amasa hadn’t prepared the troops in time he still wanted to go out to the battle but his inexperience will cost him his life but not by the hand of Sheba and his rebellious army but by those who were suppose to be with him. When Amasa finally got some people together he met Abishai at a rock in Gibeon 6 miles from Jerusalem to join the battle (verse 8) but Joab had no love lost for Amasa even though they were cousins as Amasa sided with Absalom against his father David.

Amasa is a clear example of a good guy in the wrong position, placing him as commander was a politically correct move it helped unite the nation for the moment but there was a problem with it, **he couldn’t do the job**. What do I mention this? Well I think at times the Church has fallen into the same error by placing those who have successful professional lives but lack the spiritual life to hold a position in the body of Christ. There are whole chapters devoted to this subject in the Bible but consider the words of Paul to Timothy in 3:6 when he said that the person in leadership should “*not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil*.” And again his words in 5:22 when he says, “*Do not lay hands on anyone hastily*”. Today I suppose we would call Amasa a “**poser**” and you can see how dangerous it is in the body of Christ not to have the right person in the right position. Amasa came up short as a man who could lead others as he was not disciplined enough to follow the kings orders and in the end he “*got the point*” as he spilled his guts on the side of the road.

**III. Vs. 6-13 The damage of friendly fire**

Vs. 6-10 Apparently Abishai, (Joab’s brother) was still the commander over David’s secret service even though Joab was no longer in charge of the army, so he gives them orders seeing that Amasa had not done what he was supposed to do. David was a seasoned commander and he realized the delay in going after Sheba would cause greater loss of life and greater risk that his rebellion would have a greater effect of the already fractured nation. This is the third murder committed by Joab as he gets rid of the competition you may recall that he did the same thing to Abner who was the general of Saul army, then he disobeyed David’s command and killed Absalom, and now Amasa, perhaps he just didn’t like fellows whose name started with “A”. That is why when David was dying, he said to Solomon, his son, as he takes over the throne, he says, “*Take care of Joab. That guy has given me a lot of grief, and he’s shed a lot of blood. Don’t let his gray hair go down to the grave in peace*”.

I again think this warrants comment with regards to loyalty and making decisions decisively. It is a wise seasoned leader who knows what to do when rebellion occurs in the body of Christ, one must always understand that these sheep all of them (including those that are in rebellion) belong to the “Good Shepherd”.

Holding the beard and kissing a fellow on the cheek was a sign of affection and the sword falling to the ground all made it seem as though things were copasetic. Joab killed Amasa for several reasons:

1. He was jealous of his position: Amasa as general was wearing Joab’s uniform and it didn’t go over too well. Joab had unusual job security as it was difficult to fire Joab as he just kept killing his replacements
2. He questioned his loyalties seeing that he was not quick in gathering the troops to peruse the men he used to command
3. He didn’t think the guy was competent and felt that his leading would mean defeat and loss of life

If Amasa was a good guy in the wrong position Joab was a bad guy in the right position. This fellow was a ruthless murder but a good leader as David’s men naturally wanted to follow him as he had never been defeated. Hey saint’s this is why natural abilities, gifting and success are not prerequisites for service in the body of Christ as God has higher standards of character of the heart. Consider Joab in verse 14 as he was able to go through all the tribes of Israel and find men loyal to David and Sheba couldn’t assemble an army when it was right in front of him. Further more when Sheba and his rebellious army held up in the city of Abel, Joab began a siege against the city. This was no small under taking as months and years could pass before those held up in a city would be starved out.

Joab serves as another example of why it is difficult to get along with people. Here they had a rebellion to put down and **Amasa lacks the discipline** to deal with it and **Joab wants to use the opportunity to place him self back in leadership**. Notice three mistakes that Joab makes:

* + 1. Vs. 10 **Joab’s sword is a powerful weapon but he uses it against the wrong person**. Hey Christian listen up there are far too many believers out there today that “***drop***” their sword to be seen or use it to kill their brother or sister. **God’s Word ought not to be used to be seen or to hurt but for Him to be seen that He might heal**.
    2. Vs. 11 **Joab links following him with following the king** and I see that happen a lot today as well “*Who ever is for my pet doctrine is standing up for Jesus!*” Jesus is added on to far too many personal causes and private opinions instead of being in line with His will and heart we try to a line Him to ours! And what happens when we do so? Well the walls come up as we harbor an intruder which forces folks to come and lay a siege against them just like the city of Able.
    3. Vs. 12 **The killing of Amasa by Joab halts the progress of the King’s army against the real enemy**. This scene has been repeated many a time on highways where an accident happens and people slow down to see. Far too often the Church is fighting and killing each other and we all stand around the carnage instead of heading on down the highway.

**IV. Vs. 14-26 Cutting off a head to save a city**

Vs. 14-22 Sheba had really put some distance between he and David’s men as he was in the northern part of Israel near the area of Tel Dan. Again Joab is a master negotiator as he suggests to just throwing out Sheba head from the city and he would end the fight. The city would have been destroyed if it hadn’t been for a wise lady who suggested that the city needn’t be destroyed for the rebellion of one man. This wise woman spoke of the history of the city as a place where guidance and disputes were settled and so Joab and this gal strike a deal in which Sheba’s head would be cut off and thrown over the wall, perhaps this is where the phrase “heads up” came from?

Sheba wanted to “*get ahead*” and in the end he ends up “*losing his head*” when he sought to be served rather than to serve. Sheba thought he had numbers on his side, he thought he was safe held up in a walled city but none are safe when they rebel against the king. “*Every person’s heart is an enclosed city and hidden there in is a traitor to our souls called sin. We need to cast his head out of the walls for why should we love our sin more than life*?” The rebellion of Sheba was gone but not the division in the nation as after the death of Salomon civil war will permanently divide the nation and only foreign occupation will bring temporary unity. So too our lives if the King is not on the throne we will continue to strive against each other but when we all unite around King Jesus all is come and bright.

The chapter ends when we are given a list of men who served in different capacities when in the kingdom in harmony all doing their part for the betterment of all. Yet David is forced into another bad decision concerning who would control his armies by allowing Joab to again take control as it was now his 3rd time around having been put out each time because of murder. Apart from Joab David assembled seven other men to be apart of his leadership team to govern the nation:

**Benaiah**: “*Built by Jehovah*” was over the secret service and staff. Now we are given this guys exploits in 2 Sam 23:20 as we are told he “*killed two lion-like heroes of Moab… had gone down and killed a lion in the midst of a pit on a snowy day….and killed a spectacular Egyptian man…by wresting the spear out of his hand, and killing him with his own spear.*”

**Adoram**: “*My Lord is exalted*” Apparently this fellow held his office through out three reigns. His position was “*over the men subject to task work*” which means he was the head of the department of forced labor for the government from those people whom Israel conquered. He will be murdered by Israel when Rehoboam Salomon’s son becomes king as he used his own people for forced labor.

**Jehoshaphat**: “*Jehovah-judged*” He apparently served under David and Salomon as recorder.

**Sheva**: “*Jehovah contends*” who was a scribe or secretary of state

**Zadok and Abiathar**: “*Just*” and “*liberal*” were the priests.

**Ira the Jairite**: “*Watchful citizen*” From the tribe of Manasseh (not a priestly tribe), the idea behind “chief minister” is that Ira was a personal chaplain to David an accountability partner, now if David was a man after God’s heart and the sweet psalmist of Israel and he felt he needed someone to help with his devotional life how much more you and I? Ah there is the key to healthy relationships with each other as Hebrews 10:24 reminds us to “*consider one another in order to stir up love and good works*”.

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

**V. Sovereign: 2 Samuel 1-24**

**2. Chp. 11-24 The King’s troubles**

**2 Samuel 21:** **1-22**

**“Reassignment not Retirement”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 1-14 Going through dry spells**

**III. Vs. 15-22 Going through faint spells**

**I. Intro.**

The 21st chapter doesn’t seem to follow a chronological order but rather gives us two stories offering a different few of life under David’s reign.

* The first story (verses 1-14) appear to look back to a time when David first became king of the untied nation around the time when he took in Mephibosheth.
* The second story (verses 15-22) was written at a time near the end of David’s life.

But the question is why are these not written in order? My opinion is that the author wanted to show David as from two different perspectives, how he made **tough decisions** and how he **equipped others** to do the same.

But these stories serve another purpose by way of application as they reveal to us how to handle two very difficult seasons in life, **dry spells** (verse 1) and **faint spells** (verse 15). If we are granted long life then rest assured we will go through some dry spells and some faint spells, yet in **David**’s actions we see that he **didn’t resign he didn’t retire** from life **he was** simply **reassigned**.

**II. Vs. 1-14 Going through dry spells**

Vs. 1-6 The first story centers on a three year famine that occurred in the days of David. Now this is an interesting story for three different reasons:

1. **We have the situation**: The land is plunged into a famine where they have had three successive years of drought and supplies are running short. Agriculturally Israel for the most part practiced what would be common in Eastern Montana called “*dry land farming*” in which they would grow crops in an area that had as little as 15 inches of rain a year. This is accomplished by leaving stubble standing after the harvest of the crop so that it would catch and hold moisture in the soil. Now with proper management of resources it would be possible to survive a drought for a few years but after that they would be in big trouble. But here there was something about this prolonged drought as David sought the Lord that indicated to him that this wasn’t just bad weather patterns. I’m not sure what to make of this but to say that David who was a man after God’s own heart must have had something pressing his spirit that indicated that the reason for the famine and drought was greater than natural occurrences. Hey saints in times of adversity in our lives it is a wise thing to seek the Lord so we can determine what’s going and to continue to do so until we have an answer. Jesus said in Matt. 5: 45 that our heavenly Father “*makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust*”, so why not to seek Him concerning the sun and the rain?
2. **Second, why did it take David so long to seek the Lord**?: You see it says that, “*David inquired of the Lord …and the Lord answered*”, so David literally sought the face of God for the situation and the answer came immediately after doing so but why did he wait three years? Hey saints **perhaps the dry spell in our land is because of a dry spell in prayer**? Could it be that we have not heard from the Lord because we have not sought the Lord concerning our situation?
3. **Finally we are given the reason for the famine**: “*It is because of Saul and his blood thirsty house, because he killed the Gibeonites*”. There are three things that we often think gives us an out concerning our sin:
   * 1. **Time**: First, the events of Saul’s sin of killing the Gibeonites in order to break the treaty is years removed without any incident. The point is that **time doesn’t lesson the effects of sin** and although God is amazingly patient our sin always finds us out.
     2. **Knowledge**: Second, this massacre isn't recorded any where in 1 Samuel but apparently some time during Saul’s reign he killed a lot of the Gibeonites. Which tells us that the lack of **knowledge doesn’t lesson the effects of sin**. In Joshua 9 (*400 years before David*), Israel swore an oath to God not to harm the Gibeonites and God expected His people to keep their promise even though the Gibeonites had tricked Israel into making the agreement. Further more even though Saul has died the nation is suffering because they looked the other way when he did it.
     3. **Omission**: Finally, the famine upon the land was because of Saul and Saul is dead so what’s the problem. The events spoken of had nothing to do with David yet he was suffering under the effects of it. Though that is true there were none who stood up and stop it neither were there any willing to make it right, until the famine brought about the truth. We are prone to think that if we didn’t commit the act then we bare no responsibility. There are sins of “*commission*” and sins of “*omission*” and all that needs to happen for evil to triumph is for good people to do nothing. Take for instance Paul who stood by with others coats at his feet while they stones Steven.

This story also reveals three truths:

* ***God expects us to keep our promises***: The Gibeonites were the people who made a deal on false pretences with Joshua by faking their proximity to Israel and having signed a treaty with Israel Joshua promised to let them live among them in peace albeit they would have to be Israel’s servants. Now of further interests is that they were to be servants in the area of gathering the wood and water for the temple sacrifices. You see oft times God will use our foolish decisions to forever ***gather fuel for our devotion***, He will use ***our relationships with people we shouldn’t have been hanging with to wash our hearts***.
* ***Time does not diminish our obligation***: Hear then is what we see based upon this: God expected Israel to honor their covenant {*even if they were tricked into it*} {*even if it wasn’t David’s fault*}, {*even if it many years had passed*}so why all the fuss now? Well God doesn’t sweep anything under the carpet and He had been waiting for the opportune time to deal with all concerning the matter. In 2 Peter 3:9 we are told “*The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance*.”
* ***God will keep His promises and correction***: It is safe to assume that what Saul did was some sort of misguided zeal but good intentions don’t undo bad actions and reconciliation and restitution must be sought. Notice verse 2 that Saul’s zeal was **before man and not the Lord**, it is in his being a man pleaser not a God pleaser that this sin was committed. Many believe that this occurred after his refusal to kill the Amalikites as he tried to look right before the people by killing the Gibeonites. As difficult as this passage is to us in as much as we don’t know all the details we must interpret the scripture not on what we don’t know but rather upon what we do know and that is according to Gen. 18:25 “*Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right*?” What I find interesting is that David sought only the reason for the famine not the solution for this he need to seek the offend Gibeonites. My point is that knowing the problem is not enough we still need to seek the solution.

Vs. 3-6 So in verse three we see that David initiated reconciliation by coming to them no doubt the famine encouraged this. David didn’t come as a king but rather as a servant seeking to atone for Saul’s and the nation’s sins. “*How can I make this right with you and with God*?”, David asks. And the Gibeonites immediately say, “*We can’t be bought off from the gold or silver of Saul neither can you execute just anybody in Israel*.” “*What do you want name it and I’ll do it*?”, David said. “*We want the man that did this to our families to have the same done to his family, take seven men of his descendants and will hang them up* ***unto the Lord*** *in Gibeah of Saul, whom the Lord did choose*.” So, David said, “*Alright, you’ll have them*”.

Vs. 7-9 Mephibosheth was the most notable descendant of Saul and it would have made the most sense for him to be the first of the seven to be delivered for execution but David promised Jonathon to protect and bless Mephibosheth and he would not fulfill one promise at the expense of another. So he took two sons of Rizpah (a concubine of Saul) Armoni and Mephibosheth whom Jonathon’s son was named after. And five sons of Merab the daughter of Saul, whom Saul had promised as a reward for the man that killed Goliath and afterward had given her to Adriel instead of David according to 1 Sam 18:19. The fact that these son’s are said to have been Michal’s instead of Merab’s (verse 8) tells us that Merab must have died as it says that Michal “*brought them up for Merab’s husband Adriel*”. Further more we know that Michal remained barren according to 2 Sam 6:23 and here even the boys she raised die. Now we can not be certain but it appears that these seven were part of the “*bloodthirsty house*” of verse 1 and were some how involved in the killings which is further indicated by David’s agreement without any hesitation as he knew that these descendants had directly benefited form the massacre. According to Numbers 35:30-34 “*the shedding of innocent blood defiles the land*” only the shedding of blood would give legal retribution for the crime but not just any blood the blood of the one who had committed the crime. So seven of Saul’s grandsons are given to the Gibeonites and seven is the number of completion so sin unrepented of will come to completion if we don’t deal with it.

Saul’s life is a puzzle as he refused to obey the Lord and kill the Amalekites in first Samuel 13 yet he tried to exterminate the Gibeonites whom Joshua promised to protect. Making this even more bizarre is that Saul’s great Grandfather was himself a Gibeonite so Saul is killing his own relatives and we know that Gibeon became a Levitical city with in the boarders of the tribe of Benjamin Saul’s tribe. Hey saints, oft times we think that God by His silence is unconcerned with our rebellion and disobedience but His patience doesn’t mark His indifference but rather grace that we will on our own address our sin. But if we continue to not deal with it ourselves He will take action on our behalf to drive us to the throne of grace.

Vs. 10-14 So these seven were given to the Gibeonites who hanged them altogether. The law required the bodies to be taken down by sundown and buried but to be certain that Saul’s crime had been dealt with David allowed the bodies to remain until the rain’s came. Interestingly only Rizpah came and spread sackcloth upon the rock from May to October not allowing the birds or wild animals to get at them but there is no mention of Michal doing so. But after the rains came David went and got the bones of Saul and Jonathan from the men of Jabesh Gilead who had taken them and brings all of their bones and buries them in the tomb that belonged to the father of Saul.

There is a good lesson for us in this story as oft times we go season after season in dryness wondering why nothing is growing in our lives. Times when we are thirsty and hungry but the things we are trying to satisfy ourselves with just aren’t fulfilling. So what do we do? Well like David nothing until the situation gets so desperate that we finally ask the Lord to search our heart and when we reckon the old man to be dead He will send refreshment upon our lives and things spring back to life.

**III. Vs. 15-22 Going through faint spells**

Vs. 15-22 Here is the story of David and his continual conflict with the descendants of Goliath, kind of reminds you or the Rocky sequels. We are about six years before David’s death and it’s been a while since he had gone out to battle but we find him out fighting with his army beside him, impressive considering his age, but he is not physically up for the fight. David was holding his own against one of the son’s or brothers of Goliath whom David had slain as a teenager but he was faint not from fear but fatigue, ah the heart was willing but the flesh was weak. Now if you hang around the people God uses long enough you will discover that they are not “*supper man*” the greatness we observed was not their own rather it was what David will say in the next chapter in verses 36-37 “*Your gentleness has made me great, You enlarged my path under me; So my feet did not slip*.” There is a difference when we see weakness in a servant based upon **physical imitations** and one that is based **upon** character as even great effective men of God grow old!

Hey saints, I personally would rather ware out from use than rust out from in activity. In Psalm 139:14 we are told “*I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well*.” In Eph. 2:10 Paul told us that we are “*created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them*.” I have wasted far too much time on myself and have not spent enough time “*walking in the good works*”, so why not make a “***New Years***” resolution to see more of “*the good works God prepared beforehand*”? As that relates to David he is in his 60’s and the good work is not the giant killer he once was as his presence on the battlefield became a liability instead of an asset.

  We are told in verse 17 that Abishai the son of Zeruiah came to his aid and rallied around his king and supplied what David could not. In other words God put another person in a place where he could make up what the other needed to complete the work God had. Consider the words of Solomon in Eccl. 4:9-12 when he says, “*Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him who is alone when he falls, for he has no one to help him up . . . Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him*.” Apparently one of the four born to Goliath had or brothers had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot a condition known as “hexadactyly” a congenital defect.

The other side of this is what the prophet Clint Eastwood said, “*A man’s gotta know his limitations*”. It was time for David to walk into a new work which God had prepared beforehand and hang up his shield and sword. God rises up three other fellows to take care of Goliaths descendants’. David was a light for the nation, his purpose was to continue to reveal the way in which the nation was to go but not necessarily clear the path ahead and if he was involved in clearing the path he would jeopardize quenching the lamp and plunge the nation into darkness.

Now here’s what’s cool based upon verses 18-21 it is clear that the nation could slay giants without David’s hand upon the sword but the time had come that people stepped up to fill the void. In Eph. 4:15-16 we are told that the head of the body is “*Christ; from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.*” We are to be “*joined and knit together by what every joint supplies*” it is by this that the effective working of the Holy Spirit causes us growth in His love. So you see God rose up three giant killers to replace the one that was too old. Sibbechai (*weavers beam*), Elhanan (*the grace of God*) and Jonathan (*the gift of God*). Hey don’t miss this as the purpose and plan of God is to continue to rise up folks that will slay giants and that is why we are called to equip the saints for the work of the ministry. You see **David's legacy was not only in what he accomplished, but in what he left behind, “*a people prepared for victory***”. In verse 22 David is given some credit for killing the giants along with these other servants and rightly so as it was David’s example and guidance that had an influence upon the new batch of giant slayers. Oh to God we had more of David’s who after a long season slaying giants didn’t see their job as finished and instead provided the light and guidance enabling a new generation to slay giants.

So David is found fighting even at the end of his life which tells us two very important things:

1. **Their will be giants in our lives all the way to the end**
2. **There is no such thing as retirement in the army of God, just reassignment**

Next week we will see the “lamp of Israel” writing a song of God’s faithfulness and then move into some of the final words of David’s life.

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

**V. Sovereign: 2 Samuel 1-24**

**2. Chp. 11-24 The King’s troubles**

**2 Samuel 22:** **1-51**

**“Same song different place”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 1-4 Nine truths about God**

**III. Vs. 5-46 Delivered from three obstacles**

**IV. Vs. 47-51 Praise God**

**I. Intro.**

How significant is it that the very end of David’s life we find a psalm proclaiming God’s goodness! No matter how painful life had been to him, how riddled with personal failure in his life he was still able to look back and thank God for His faithfulness. David’s life song was not one that echoed defeat and failure by rather victory which had been granted him because of God’s grace and goodness. The key word in this psalm is “*deliver*” as it is used 6 times and it literally means to snatch away from danger. For more than ten years David was pursued by Saul and he draws upon his experiences of deliverance by calling God his “rock and fortress” words that convey God’s strength and stability no matter how many times his life was in danger God was faithful.

David will start out with nine truths about God (verses 1-4) and then apply those nine truths to three progressive obstacles or seasons he had faced during his life (verses 5-46), then in the final five verses (47-51) he will sum up those truths about God and his response.

**II. Vs. 1-4 Nine truths about God**

Vs. 1 The introduction of this song tells us that David spoke these words to the Lord on “*the day when the Lord had delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul*.” With some minor variations the words are the same words he wrote in Psalm 18 composed when he first took the throne in 2 Samuel 8:14. What this tells us is that David originally wrote this psalm almost 40 years earlier and yet it is placed out of its chronological place, or is it? As the words of this psalm are right before what we are told are the final words of David (23:1) they appear to be the anthem sung summarizing his life’s experience with God.

Is that not a blessing that 40 years have passed and yet David could sing the truths of God’s faithfulness with the same since of adoration as when he first wrote the words? You see life’s experiences do not disprove the truths of God’s character, no they rather prove it. This gives a reason to why David in Acts 13:22 we are told that “*I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will*.” It appears that this psalm is a rewrite, a reflective psalm where David takes stock of the truths he wrote about his early encounters with God and 40 years later he says nothing had changed his mind. You see the greatest evidence of God is still a transformed life that continues too trust God despite every adversity and in this no atheist can find and argument against His existence. The history of our life’s will always best viewed under the microscope of God’s gracious hand throughout it all.

Vs. 2-4 David speaks of **nine characteristics** of God that had been consistent through out his 40 years in verses 2-3 then based upon that the only logical response in time of trouble in verse 4. Why is this so significant in light of the fact that David wrote these 40 years earlier? Well it suggests that nothing had transpired in those 40 years that had changed his mind of those essential characteristics in fact he has added one “*my Savior*” which can only be sung through the experiences of the last 40 years. I’m not the least surprised that these characteristics are true of God but when examined next to David’s failed life over those same forty years we come to the conclusion that not even David’s failure to live a life committed to the God to whom these characteristics belonged effected the reality of them being exhibited towards him. Consider his personal failure with Bathsheba and the murder of Uriah and yet God was still willing to be David’s “*Rock, Fortress, Deliverer, Strength, Shield, Horn of salvation, Stronghold, Refuge and Savior*”. What am I getting at? Well namely this, “Cause and effect” are natural occurrences in the material world in which we live and yet the David’s “*cause*” did not change God’s “*effect*” towards him as God was still willing to be those 9 things towards him. Hey saints these words speak of the reality that the worship song of our salvation sung by faith will become a song we sing by experience the longer we walk with our Lord.

Now what is the common denominator of those 9 characteristics? Well they are all elements by way of which a person would seek **deliverance when in battled**! It has been well said many times that the Christian life is **not a play ground**, no **it’s a battle field** but to whom do we go when we need deliverance from the storms of life, why our ***Rock***. How about when there is an army of things coming after us, well that would be our ***Fortress***. What happens when life has taken us captive, our ***Deliver*** will come a free us. And when we are weakened by circumstances then He will be our ***Strength*** and when we need protection from the enemies flaming arrows He will be our ***Shield***. And when need a place to rest from the constant barrage He will be our ***Stronghold*** and ***Refuge***. All of which makes Him alone our ***Savior***!

So what will David do with these 9 truths? “*I will call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised; So shall I be saved from my enemies*.” (verse 4) There is a powerful truth here in this statement of David and it lies in what just proceeded his words as David first reminded himself of who God is, recalling the countless times He had demonstrated that He was David’s “*Rock, Fortress, Deliverer, Strength, Shield, Horn of salvation, Stronghold, Refuge and Savior*”. This 9 fold statement is no mere empty words of praise nor are they listed as a theory of some hopeful list of intellectual truths rather they come from David’s personal experience with God. Hey saints, why not start with what you know to be true about God and use that to interpret your present circumstances instead of taking your present circumstances and using that to interpret who God is.

**III. Vs. 5-46 Delivered from three obstacles**

Based upon these verses **life is made up of three obstacles to which the Lord is our only deliverer.** These verses also seem to follow a progression in David’s life through out three seasons of his recorded life

* Vs. 5-20 **A *flood***: The first part of his life made up of over 10 year (1 Sam. 16-30) as David spent those years knowing he was to be God’s choice for king but having to hide from Saul who sought to kill him.
* Vs. 21-30 **A tight spot**: The second part of his life starts in 1 Sam. 31 and continues through 2 Sam. 10 where he is king of a nation that faces opposition from with in and from without.
* Vs. 31-46 **A slippery slope**: The final stage of his life is from 2 Sam. 11-21 where his personal choices has caused him to slip and fall which effects every part of his life.

Now what I find interesting is that these are not unique to David as sometimes “***waves*** *of death and* ***floods*** *of ungodliness*” surround us and make us afraid (verse 5). Sometimes even though we have “*kept the ways of the Lord*” (verse 22) we find ourselves in a **tight spot** where the Lord will need to “*enlighten our darkness*” (verse 29). And there will be times when our own foolishness has placed us upon a **slippery slope** and we have chosen to disregard God’s “*perfect way and proven Word*” (verse 31) and it is then that we will need His “*gentleness to make us great*” again (verse 36).

Vs. 5-20 **When life comes at us like a Flood**:

David describes the Lord in these verses as the one who delivered him from a great storm that caused a flood in his life. He found himself surrounded on every side physically, spiritually, emotionally and socially on the brink of ruin when he cried out to God. Satan would have us think that we can’t call upon the Lord when the storms of life comes flooding in but it was “*When the waves of death surrounded me, The floods of ungodliness made me afraid*” (verse 5) that “*In my distress I called upon the LORD, And cried out to my God*” (verse 7). Not only does God hear us when we cry out in times of distress but according to verse 8-20 He takes action.

Hey now listen up, is the “*world shaking you up*” well David’s testimony is that God will shake the world up to meet our need. He pictures the Lord rising up from His throne over every situation as “*darkness is under His feet*” (verse 10) and the Lord is ready to consume what ever is in his way to get to us. David pulls back the heavens and sees the Lord coming with speed and glory to meet his need (verse 11), God is never late always on time. And when He spoke in verse 14 all His creation responded to the need of His child.

So what do these poetic words reveal? Well David pictures God as so loving that He will bend His whole creation to meet the need of His children. Then in verse 17 and 18 David says the Lord “*took me, drew me out of many waters and delivered me from my strong enemy*”. “*Oh I was drowning man, in a strong currant going under but the Lord reached down and pulled me out*!” Then in verse 19 David says that the Lord sustained him for a season then He brought him “*out to a broad place*”. Have you ever felt that life is holding you under and you are on a narrow ledge no room to move and what you are facing is “*too strong for you*” (verse 18)? Well the Lord will sustain you and hold you in place until He can take you out and place you in a broad place.

Oh but why did He do this, why did He come to your aid you ask? Well “*He delivered me because He delighted in me*”, don’t pass by this to quickly because no one knows you like He does and yet He still delights in you. God has made a choice in spite of what you have done and the mess you are to delight in you. You are **not** His *job*, His *obligation*, He does not look at His watch toss back His head and give a sigh and say, “*I owe, I owe so It’s off to save Dale I go*!” No, **you are His delight and He comes to you not with a wagging finger but with open arms to deliver you!**  Were His son’s and daughters and he loves us, He literally “*bends*” towards us. Oh to God you and I would begin to see ourselves as those that our heavenly Father delights in, perhaps then we wouldn’t get our self’s in situation over our heads.

Vs. 21-30 **When life finds us in a tight spot**:

Vs. 21-25 The next verses declare a Father’s heart towards a child who has maintained a relationship with Him. But when David first proclaimed these words he hadn’t yet become an adulterer and murderer so how could he proclaim is purity now? Well in psalm 51 he confessed his sin and he has washed from his iniquity and now he rests on how God saw himself in God’s gentleness and goodness not his own. This speaks to me not to beat myself up over my failures once I have repented. We can not add to the blows already laid on the back of our Lord on our behalf. There is a need to move beyond self condemnation God is not disappointed in you and if you are in yourself then you need to repent of your pride that considered you better than you were to start with.

My point? Well that just because we have blown it, separated yourself from experiencing the benefits of the love of God **doesn’t mean that it needs to be a permanent condition**, you can sing the song of your faithfulness to His love if you turn back. In 2 Sam 12:13 Nathan revealed the results of David’s repentance saying that the Lord had put away his sin, so now **his hands were clean because of what the Lord had done to cleanse them which is greater than what David had done to dirty them**. Romans 5:20 declares this truth by saying, “*where sin abounded, grace abounded much more*”. “*I may have fallen in the muck*”, David says “*But I didn’t make it my home*!” (verses 22-24). How did he keep himself from his iniquity, verse 24? Well we are told in verse 25 **David’s cleanness was according to God’s eyes not David’s**, in other words this was by faith not by way of works. It was based upon what Jude wrote of in verse 24 “*now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, And to present you faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy*”. David’s keeping was by way of remaining under the spout where the love comes out.

Vs. 26-30 The reason for this action of the Lord towards David is simple, “*With the merciful You will show Yourself merciful*”. David had demonstrated the fruits of repentance in his changed life being a man of mercy, integrity and fairness so the Lord gave to him what he had given to others. Ah but to the man who is twisted then God will allow him to become twisted.

Hey saints the eyes of God are not on the haughty but rather on the humble as he gives grace to the humble but resist the proud (verse 28). When the Lord came to David’s need it was to “*enlighten his darkness*” you see God doesn’t first remove us form our circumstances instead He does something better by shedding His light upon them the result of which God enabled David to “*run against a troop and leap over a wall*.” Now saints mark this passage as God doesn’t always remove us from the battle sometimes He enables us to do what ordinarily we wouldn’t be able to do and that is run against a troop and leap over a fortress wall. It seems as David is saying that God will allow us to go through situations to further develop us and make us more effective for His work. David’s life went from a flood of opposition to a time where he got himself into some ***tight spots*** to which the Lord enabled him to “*run against a troop and leap over walls*” (verse 29). In Jeremiah 33:3 the Lord said to Jeremiah, “*Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know*.” Now the context of this verse reveals that Jeremiah was in trouble, and he had just spent in the night in prayer, so the Lord invites us to seek in times of desperation.

Vs. 31-46 **When life finds us on a slippery slope**

After times in his life spent **in a flood** and then a season spent in a **tight spot** David faced a self imposed time when his life was on a ***slippery slope*** when the consequences forsaking “***God’s perfect way***” and “***proven Word***” left him with enemies from without and from within and here David proclaims that the Lord “*made his feet like the feet of deer, And set him on my high places*” (verse 34).

Hey saints there will always be seasons in our lives when:

* Life comes in like **a flood** and what we are facing has left in over our heads under the waters of life.
* Times we have gotten ourselves into a **tight spot**.
* Times when because of our own foolish choices we are on a **slippery slope** and can’t get our footing.

In these verses David describes how his deliverance was accomplished:

* “***His way is perfect***”
* “***His Word is proven***”

Because this is true “*He is a shield to all who trust Him*.” Now looking at David’s life after his sin and repentance God worked through those situations putting down those that would come against the kingdom (verses 38-43) and the wisdom to deal with those within the kingdom (verses 44-46).

The Lord worked in David’s life by:

* Vs. 29 By being his “***Lamp****, O LORD; The LORD shall enlighten my darkness*.”
* Vs. 35 By ***strengthen*** him “*So that my arms can bend a bow of bronze*.”
* Vs. 37 By place him on a ***broad way*** “*You enlarged my path under me; So my feet did not slip*.”
* Vs. 44 By ***keeping*** him “*as the head of the nations*.”

With God at the steering wheel of our lives our “*strength, power and ways are perfect*” (verse 33). Consider David’s illustration of a deer in verse 34 as there are these mountain goats that can even climb in trees there footing is so good they have perfect balance as they skip around from difficult place to difficult place. Man is that not true as the Lord in our lives brings balance and footing when before we would have slipped, why we can even bend a bow of bronze (verse 35) as the impossible become possible with the Lord in our lives. But we are not just designed for battles, no His “*gentleness has made me great*”, verse 36. God had made David more than a conqueror in verses 38-43. But the enabling of God did not stop at keeping the enemy at bay it also enabled him to keep his head when all around him was losing theirs. All of this was because David saw the throne as belonging to the Lord and not to himself. Hey saints you have heard it said that we only have one life it’s true but that one life belongs to the Lord and it is in realizing this that things in our lives “*armed with strength for the battle*” and will realize victory as our lives will be subdued (verse 40).

**IV. Vs. 47-51 Praise God**

Vs. 47-51 The conclusion of the psalm is that “*The Lord lives! Blessed be my Rock*!” David’s thought is, “*This is the Lord's victory. He has won it for me. The glory goes to Him.*” David’s faith was not one that merely “*hung on*” no it “*sung out*” loud and to all including the gentiles. Is it any wonder that David proclaims the truth in verse 47 “*The LORD lives! Blessed be my Rock! Let God be exalted, The Rock of my salvation*!” We will all like David see how it was the Lord who:

* *“Took him out of many waters*”: When he was in **a flood**
* Caused us to “*Run against a troop and leap over walls*”: When he was in a **tight spot**
* And “*Made his feet like the feet of deer, And set him on my high places*”: When he was on a **slippery slope**.

Is it any wonder that David closes the book on his life by saying, “*I will give thanks to You, O LORD, among the Gentiles, And sing praises to Your name*.” (verse 50)

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

**V. Sovereign: 2 Samuel 1-24**

**2. Chp. 11-24 The King’s troubles**

**2 Samuel 23:** **1-39**

**“Thanks for the Memories”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 1-7 The last words**

**III. Vs. 8-39 All the kings’ men**

**I. Intro.**

The death of David is not recorded in 2 Samuel but it is recorded in 1 Kings 2:1-12 where he gives some final instructions to Salomon. In the 23rd chapter we are given David’s final psalm and a list of his greatest soldiers, but why does David list these two things? Well it seems as David reflected upon his life he believed that **his success as a king was tied to two things**:

* Vs. 1-7 **God’s faithfulness towards him**
* Vs. 8-39 **The people God placed around him**

The next two chapters conclude the life of David’s but it’s easy to forget that the Lord spent over 30 years training him. He sent David first to *shepherd* school, then David spent some years in *military* school then finally David spent some time in *flight* school as was fleeing from Saul. Martin Lloyd Jones said, “*It is a tragic thing when a young man succeeds before they are ready for it*.” A.W. Towzer was found of saying, “*Never follow any leader until you see the oil on their forehead”*. Hey saints it is good to be educated by men but far better to be trained by the Lord. In Acts 4:13 we are told that the religious leaders of the day heard the words of Peter and John they “*perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus*.”

**II. Vs. 1-7 The last words**

Vs. 1-7 In the Bible there are 150 Psalms originally placed into four hymn books and out of those 150 at least 73 of them are attributed to David but the last one recorded isn’t found in one of those four books but rather right here in this text. As we consider David’s psalms we find that the clearest words of praise and adoration were birth during the seasons of his greatest trials as they resonate with God’s greatness in spite of his difficulty. These are not the last words of David chronologically but they are the last in a psalm. The theme of this psalm seems to be upon **what makes a great king** and one wonders if this was written for Salomon? In the first two verses David lists five things necessary if you are going to lead people and these fives characteristics are autobiographical as David reflected upon the necessity of these traits in his own life:

* 1. “*Thus says David the son of Jesse*”: **Humility**, in mentioning his humble upbringing, his serving in obscurity, I believe David is giving a picture to a quality of humility and viewing oneself only in relationship to the Lord and not based upon us.
  2. “*Thus says the man raised up on high*”: **Calling**, here David makes sure that we understand that he is just a man who God called and raised up. David didn’t climb the latter of success but rather that he allowed God to raise him up.
  3. “*The anointed of the God of Jacob*”: **Anointing**, clearly David saw his gifting as coming from God and not himself, further more such anointing was based upon God being the promise keeper and not upon his goodness. His anointed was from God, his empowerment and gifting were not by him or merely by man opinions.
  4. “*And the sweet psalmist of Israel*”: **Devotion**, here it seems that David is looking at the idea of devotion first to the Lord as his psalms were words of praise to God and then devotion to serving God’s people Israel as the greatest aspect that any leader can exude is leading those he is in charge of to worship God. David declares what he considered to be the most important part of his life which was to be found in his devotion to God and His people.
  5. “*The Spirit of the LORD spoke by me, And His word was on my tongue*”: **Holy Spirit’s empowerment**, lastly and most importantly a constant flow of the Holy Spirit’s work in and through him.

Vs. 2-4 Now there is a curious confession in verse 2 as David say’s “*The Spirit of the LORD spoke* ***by*** *me, And His word was on my tongue.*” It appears that David was clearly aware at times that what he heard and spoke was divine inspiration. In 2 Tim. 3:16 we are told that “*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God*” Further more in 2 Peter 1:20-21 we are told that “*that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit*.”

So as we look as verses 2 and 3 we see that the Lord spoke “*BY*” him and in verse 3 “*TO*” him. I’m equally amazed by this statement as David wrote the psalms he clearly realized that the Lord was speaking “BY” him but as king he was being spoken “TO” on how to rule the nation. Now what is our part in both “by and to”? Well it is to be willing to listen! Far too much of the time we are to busy talking to the Lord that we aren’t willing to listen first, there is a reason why God designed us with two ears and one mouth!

Now in the 3rd verse David takes stock of the importance of two characteristics the person to whom God places over others must have:

A. He who rules over men must be just: Can’t have two standards, two sets of books.

B. He must be a person ruling in the fear of God: A person who realizes that all they do is before God who will require an account for every idle word.

Integrity is the issue before man because it is the issue before God without this a person can become a dictator driving people instead of leading them. **David was a ruler who served and a servant who ruled!** To the person who rules that way he shall be “*like the light of the morning when the sun rises*” what? Well he will his leadership will be like a new day dawning, fresh alive healthy.

Vs. 5-7 In the 5th verse David compares what God could have done through him during his 40 year reign with what actually occurred during his time as king which had seasons filled with personal scandal, repeated family crisis, civil war and three years of famine.

One of the things I wonder about in heaven will be this **time of realization** of what could have been in my life had I rested more on God’s grace and less on my self effort, had I only chosen to trust Him, His ways and Word more. I think David is taking the time to examine his life and realizes this as he states “*Although my house is not so with God, Yet He has made with me an everlasting covenant, Ordered in all things and secure*.” “*Oh what could have been, ah but what is good and great is because of God*”, David says. God sought after a man after His own heart but in the end God’s blessings were not upon David’s perfection but rather upon God’s commitment to His word. Like David no one can ever say, “*You have blessed me because I’m perfect in all my ways.*” In stead David proclaims God’s promises to him were secure because they are solely based upon God’s faithfulness to him.

Hey saints in the final analysis we will see **two very contrasting commitments**:

* **Ours towards God**
* **God’s towards us**

What we will see is ours was not always consistent, our commitment to Him was conditional and there were far too many times that the ink of our signature pin was not on the paper. Yet with that said we will reflect upon His commitment towards us and we will see that:

1. Never one time did God fail to work out in our lives that which was best for us.
2. Never was anything permitted to come in our out of our lives that didn’t serve His best and highest purpose on our behalf.
3. Never was there even one mistake or lapse by Him towards us.

And even more remarkable is that even our failures to fully commit to Him did not alter his commitment towards us. So what part does our obedience play? Well verse 6 and 7 tells us that though the covenant is based on God's faithfulness, obedience still matters as it is what **initially places us in the contract** and it is what **keeps us enjoying the benefits** of it.

**III. Vs. 8-39 All the kings’ men**

Vs. 8-39 Here we are given a list of David’s mighty men:

* 1. Vs. 8-12 His top three men
  2. Vs. 13-17 Three that sacrificed as an act of worship
  3. Vs. 18-23 The heroism of two more
  4. Vs. 24-39 Thirty more out of the 37 great men.

Vs. 8-12 We are first given the names of David’s top three guys. The truth is God’s hand was not just upon David it was on these 37 fellows as well and what David accomplished was equally a part of the daring exploits of these men. Now you may recall that these 37 didn’t start out as “*mighty men*” as we were told in 1 Sam. 22:1-2 that they were part of the “***put out, stressed out and bummed out***” that had come to David while he was held up in the cave of Adullam. That ought to warm our hearts as perhaps you have come this morning to the “Cave of Calvary” “***put out, stressed out and bummed out***” well you can realize afresh that Jesus is our portion and refuge in the land of the living and instantly you can be transformed from an out cast to mighty man or woman! The time has come for God’s people to get together and allow the Lord to do work in us so that He might do a work through us. In Ezek 22:30 the Lord spoke to the nation through the prophet saying, “*I sought for a man among them who would make a wall, and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one*.”

I don’t believe God has changed and he is still looking amongst the “***put out, stressed out and bummed out***” for those who will come forward and stand in the gap. I know what you are thinking that “***gap standers***” doesn’t really sound all that glorious but it is when we are just willing to stand in His finished victory with the testimony of His unfailing love that lives become impacted. Some of you came forward to “*stand in the gap*” and adopted children for G.F.A and the bridge of hope and lives are going to be transformed and souls won because of it.

Now we are given the first three names of David’s mighty men:

1. Vs. 8 Josheb-Basshebeth also called Adino the Eznite: Adino (must have been an Italian fellow). Now according to the parallel passage in 1 Chron. 11:11 his name is “*Jashobeam*” which mean “*to whom the people turn*” and here it is rendered “*that sat in the seat*” so the idea behind his name is the same as it means a person in authority over others but David called him “*the adorned one*” who “*lifted up his spear*” (Eznite). Now there is a discrepancy on this guy’s heroic deed as 1 Chron. 11 claims that he killed 300 and here we are told 800 so what is it? Well we can’t be sure but the best explanation is that he attacked 800 and killed 300 by himself. I suppose that lifting up your spear 800 times and killing 300 is still a mighty deed as lifting that spear that many times would mean he was still batting around 400. So what does old Adino tell us about being a mighty man? Well I think it speaks about being **consistent** in what we do as he lifted up his spear over and over. So often you and I get weary in our service especially when we don’t hit the target all the time, but not old Adino he just keep on lifting up his spear and the end at least 300 of the enemy lay dead.
2. Vs. 9 Eleazar the son of Dodo, the Ahohite: His name means “*help of God*” and we are told that he was the son of, and I want to be careful here because either way I say this isn’t going to sound right Dodo or du-du (Eleazar a son of du-du so he was a relative of mine) but the name meanings “*loving*”. Dodo is a Hebrew nickname for David but in English it wouldn’t be thought of as a very good nickname. His exploit came when the rest of David’s men had retreated while he advanced and kept on attacking until they gained a victory as his hand stuck or molded to the sword. This fellow was not a do-do or a du-du he was tenacious as he just kept his hand upon the sword. So what do we learn from this fellow about being mighty men? Well the sword is called the word of God, so I rather think that we need to continue to find our “*help in God*” by **use of the word of God** and to do so with such frequency that we become molded with the sword of the spirit. Oh that you and I would so “*love*” his word that our Bible’s won’t have any chance to get dust on them because they will wear out from use and it is in this that all will return for the plunder.
3. Vs. 11-12 Shammah the son of Agee the Hararite: Shammah was used in a battle recorded in 1 Chron. 11:13-14 at Pas Dammim. Now his name means “*astonishment*” or “*stands alone*” and his father’s name means “fugitive”. Interestingly here is a guy by way of his exploit who was willing to station himself when everyone else took off in a “*bean field*” and defended it against the enemy. So what **stood out,** pardon the pun with thus fellow? Well **he was faithful** to guard a bean field when every body else took off. Hey saints sometimes what makes us mighty men and woman doesn’t seem to be all that important when we start out, we are just doing our job, just standing alone in a been field some where cause no one else wants too but it is in faithful obedience that God uses to distinguish a person and it is through such action when we stand alone that “*God can bring about a great victory*”, verse 12.

**Vs. 13-17 Next we come to these verses where we are told of 3 out of 30 of David’s leaders did something for him that is recorded for us.** The three men that went to get David water traveled 12 miles to do so. It all took place during a time when David and his men were held up in the cave Adullam or “*refuge*” as the word means. These men had first come to David when they were “***put out, stressed out and bummed out***” in 1 Sam 22:1-2 and latter on they come back to their “*rock*” their place of refuge as the enemy was attacking and David became parched and longed for a drink of fresh water from the well by his home town but the enemy stood between the water supply and the cave of refuge. It’s like David says, “*Oh I wish I had an In & out burger*” but there is no way I can get there.

Hey saints there is a great picture in these words as we can always count on the enemy trying to keep us from a time of refreshment, there will be times when you and I will have a dry spell even while we are held up in our “Rock of refuge”. So how do we “*break through*” this you ask? Well these three fellows broke out of it by serving their king when they brought David some water to which he poured it out before the Lord as an act of worship. The pouring of water as an offering symbolized a persons pouring out their life for service and devotion to the Lord. So what do we learn from this story? Well namely that what makes us mighty men and women is that we are willing to break through the enemy no matter what and worship the Lord! David emptied out that which at that moment was most precious to him. **Oh dear saint has your time with the Lord become dry may I make a suggestion why not pour out to the Lord that which is most precious to you as an act or worship**. **These three men *were willing to sacrifice everything to get that which would bless their king* and in so doing they are noted as mighty men.** Hum think about that a moment won’t you is that not what worship is all about, “*a willingness to sacrifice everything to get that which blesses our King Jesus*”?

**Vs. 18-23 Now we turn our attention to two more of David’s mighty men**.

1. Vs. 18-19 Abishai the brother of Joab: It was Abishai, the brother of Joab who saved David’s life when David had weakened in battle, and a giant was gonna kill him in 2 Sam 21:15. God often uses very unlikely vessels to contain His love, and unlikely instruments to do His work. Interesting that he is listed among David's mighty men as is his brother Asahel (verse 24) who died by the hand of Abner but not their more notable brother Joab. What got him listed was a battle in which he killed three hundred men, God has away of looking at the works of His servants in a whole different way than we do, doesn’t He? Sometimes the mighty men and women are not the ones that we think have done the most things but rather lived their lives the most consistent in service to the king.
2. Vs. 20-23 Benaiah the son of Jehoiada: You may recall I mentioned this fellow before as his name means “*made by the Lord*”. Benaiah was born to serve as priest based upon 1 Chron. 27:5 but became a commander instead. He met the worst *combatant* on the worst of *circumstances* on the worst of *conditions* and still won! It will be him who kills Joab when he tries to make Adonijah king instead of Salomon, 1 Kings 2:5-6.

Three progressive acts are attributed to this guy.

1. Vs. 20a “*He had killed two lion-like heroes of Moab*.”
2. Vs. 20b “*He also had gone down and killed a lion in the midst of a pit on a snowy day.*”
3. Vs. 21 “*And he killed an Egyptian, a spectacular man. The Egyptian had a spear in his hand; so he went down to him with a staff, wrested the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and killed him with his own spear*.”

So what does Benaiah teach us about being a mighty man or woman of God? Well it appears to me that we can learn several things from him. First **he always seems engaged in battle** sometimes it was two lion like heroes of Moab, other times it was a lion in a pit on a snowy day and sometimes wrestling a spear away from a spectacular Egyptian.

I find also some three observations in his opposition:

1. Satan is described like roaring lion and sometimes we will find out that we are up against people who are on our enemy’s side.
2. Sometimes you will find yourself in a pit on a snowy day against old “*snagle puss*” himself.
3. But most likely you will be going up against our own “spectacular” flesh and it desire to live according to the world (Egyptian) and you are going to have the wrestle the spear out it and kill your old man.

**Vs. 24-39 Here then we are given 30 more names of David’s mighty men.**

Included in this list are two men that bare mention the first is found in verse 34b where we are told his name is ***Eliam*** but what makes this interesting is that he was the father of Bathsheba (2 Samuel 3:11) and his father was David’s closest adviser Ahithophel until he chose to follow Absalom and when his counsel was rejected he took his own life. Also of note is the last entry that of Uriah the Hittite the murdered husband of Bathsheba whom David put to death so as not to be caught in the act of adultery.

There is a lesson in this to us concerning our position as mighty men and women and that is there are many whose work was cut short because of how they were treated by other mighty men and women. It is a very unfortunate truth that many of the exploits that might have been were quenched because of how people who were supposed to be with us in battle were treated by us. Yet David still lists them no doubt with regret for what happened. Thirty-seven in all as these remarkable men were the fellow soldiers with David in God’s army. Now they did not come to David as great men but God transformed the “***put out, stressed out and bummed out***” into mighty men of God.

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

**V. Sovereign: 2 Samuel 1-24**

**2. Chp. 11-24 The King’s troubles**

**2 Samuel 24:** **1-25**

**“No worries, just worship”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 1-9 Counting on people instead of God**

**III. Vs. 10-17 Falling into the hand of the Lord**

**IV. Vs. 18-25 Trading our sorrows**

**I. Intro.**

At last we have come to the end of 2nd Samuel and except for some final notes next week, the end of David’s life. I suppose if it was me I would have stopped with the 23rd chapter as David proclaimed the two things that made his reign as king successful, the faithfulness of God and the men that God placed around him. The chapter before us seems to fly in the face of those two truths as David is reduced to insecurity in numbering his army as a source of pride and confidence. So why include this section in his memoirs? I believe it is to show the progression that led up to David purchasing of Araunah (Ornan’s) threshing floor where Solomon David’s son would build the temple. According 1 Chron. 21:26 the offering was consumed by God before he could light the fire then in 1 Chron. 22:1 we are told that after this David said “*This is the house of the LORD God, and this is the altar of burnt offering for Israel.*”

Now consider this a moment won’t you. You see if you and I were to interview David and ask him what were the biggest regrets in his life I’m certain that he would mention two:

* Adultery with Bathsheba
* Numbering of the people

Hey saints both of these sins point to the temple of God as Bathsheba gave birth to Solomon who would build the temple and the numbering of the people led to the purchase of the land in where it would be erected. My point? Look at what God can do through a broken and contrite heart as He alone can turn our greatest failures into an altar of worship!

**II. Vs. 1-9 Counting on people instead of God**

Vs. 1-2 A careful reading of verse 1 clears up **three difficulties** with this passage:

* + 1. Why did God judge the nation for David’s sin of numbering the people?: Well the text reads, “*Again the anger of the LORD was aroused against Israel*” so there was something that the nation had been involved with that God was going to discipline and he simply used David’s sin to do so. Hey saints, God requires more out of His children than He does those who have not come into a relationship with Him. Sometimes it seems as though those who don’t know God get away with more, they can cheat and nothing happens to them but if we take so much as a paper clip we get busted but that is because he has a relationship with us. You see when my kids were younger and they had friends over I couldn’t discipline them as I would my own kids and if they acted up all I could do is send them home and that’s the way it is with God.
    2. Why did God move David to sin and then Judge the nation for it? In 1 Chron. 21:1 which is the parallel passage to this we are clearly told that “***Satan stood up*** *against Israel, and moved David to number Israel.*” In the Hebrew there is no capital letters, and apparently the translators added one, had they read the parallel passage of this same event they would have noticed that it wasn’t God that moved David to number the people but satan. How could they make such an error? Well folks there are a lot of things that satan is behind that God gets blamed for!
    3. So what’s up with this numbering the people thing? There was nothing wrong with taking a national census as long as it was done according to God’s word. In Ex. 30:12 they were told, “*When you take the census of the children of Israel for their number, then every man shall give a ransom for himself to the LORD, when you number them, that there may be no plague among them when you number them*.” You see the census was used to levee taxes called the ½ shekel tax which was for meeting the needs of the temple but David wasn’t doing so in order to make certain that the worship of the nation would continue but rather to count how big his army was. Joab’s words in verse 3 suggest that David’s numbering was based upon pride to show how successful his reign had been.

Vs. 2-4 The census was complete in as much as it took almost ten months to complete and covered every part of the kingdom. Apparently Joab understood that only God could so order a census of the people and addresses David’s insecurity by questioning if this was based upon pride or insecurity. And it seems as though David wanted to number the people in an attempt to gain confidence as size meant strength.

Hey saints it never ceases to amaze me at how insecure I am and how I constantly seek my confidence in out ward numbers instead of the inward reality of His presence and peace. David is at the end of his reign where he has just extolled the reason for his success was **the faithfulness of God** and **the people God had placed around him** and now David thinks, “*The people God placed around me, hem I wonder just how many that is after?*” We may quote verses like Zech 4:6 “*Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' Says the LORD of hosts*” but the truth is often “*By my power and might and not by the Spirit says my flesh!*” Oh had David only remind himself of his own words he spoke to Goliath in 1 Sam 17:47 “*all this assembly shall know that the LORD does not save with sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord's, and He will give you into our hands*.” Or read his own 65th psalm where he wrote “*O God of our salvation, You who are* ***the confidence of all the ends of the earth****, And of the far-off seas*”. In psalm 118:8 we are told that “*It is* ***better to trust in the LORD Than to put confidence in man****.*” In Isa. We read “*thus says the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel:* ***In returning and rest you shall be saved; In quietness and confidence shall be your strength.***” Finally in Phil 3:3 Paul said “***worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh***”.

Vs. 5-9 The census took nearly 10 months to complete and David should have called it off long before it was completed but he didn't. It seems as though the 1 Chron. 21:5 the number included all men where as the number of men recorded in verse 9 was only the “*valiant men who drew the sword*”. The outcome of the 10 month census is that there were 1.3 million fighting men at David’s disposal.

Hey Christian’s, David is making the mistake that so many pastors and Christians make and that is counting people for security and identity instead of ***counting on God***. Strength is not in numbers it is in God! In Gen 22:17 God told Abraham that “*blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies.*” In Acts we are told that it is the Lord who adds to His church daily as He sees fit. God’s into keeping His promises and satan is into causing security or insecurity based upon statistics, if the number was to low then David wouldn’t think they had a chance and if it was too high he would get a big head.

**III. Vs. 10-17 Falling into the hand of the Lord**

Vs. 10-13 Over six times in scripture we see David confessing his sin before the Lord and this time his sin he considered greater because it effected much more than four lives. God had given David 9 months to get his heart right and his pride had kept from seeing it for what it was but when he finally heard the number he realized that he was looking for numbers to satisfy his need for security instead of realizing that his security was in the strength of the Lord and not in the numbers. He was in such a hurry to get the number and as soon as it was counted he’s bummed out. It reminds me of Saul when the song of the land was “*Saul had killed his thousands and David his ten thousands*”, I’m certain Saul would have loved the song as long as it hadn’t mentioned that David had a bigger number then he did. But David confesses it all, the act as well as the motive behind it. What we learn from this is three fold:

1. A man after God's heart, a man to whom God in His grace chooses to us is by no means sinless. There will always be a discrepancy between how the Lord can by His greatness use an instrument and the flaws and imperfection of the instrument its self!
2. How vulnerable we are to failure, as David had just proclaimed God’s faithfulness and the next minute he is acting in total distrust of what he had just sung about.
3. Finally this teaches us that maturity in Christ is not necessarily measured by lack of failure but rather upon the quickness it takes to get right with God after failure, (verse 10).

I can only wonder how many times daily my insecurity has led me to trust in numbers instead of the Lord! Twice in the 23rd chapter we were told that David’s mighty men killed 300 all by him self so why worry about your strength when all God had done had been wrought by His own hand, because **our flesh is always looking to claim some value based upon its goodness**. ***What is of greatest value is not what we can count but Who we can count on!***

In Deut. 28 these same three disciplines are named as consequences for Israel’s rebellion if they break the covenant with God so these shouldn’t have been a surprise. And in verse 13 Gad is directed by the Lord to offer David these three choices to test David whether or not he would again turn to human wisdom or trust God: All three would signal the loss of life but would affect different groups.

* **Seven years of famine**: This would affect those who were financially disadvantaged as they would have less to rely on and it would make the nation more dependant upon foreign nations for their food supply.
* **Flee three months before your enemies**: This would mainly affect the soldiers and it would make the nation more susceptible to invading foreign armies.
* **Three days' plague in your land**: Again this would cause the death of many in Israel but it would be indiscriminate striking anonymously and as such put a risk David and his family equally.

By the use of the phrase (verse 14) “*Please let us fall into the hand of the Lord, for His mercies are great*” is an indication that David was choosing the third as he exposed himself and his family to God’s discipline. Had he chosen famine his wealth would have protected him, had he chosen battle there was already an ordinance (21:17) for David not to go out to battle, but he made himself of no reputation and made himself equal with his subjects.

Vs. 14-17 Now God gave David a choice a chance to choose 1 of three disciplines and two of which would give no opportunity to effect him or his family and the other placed him on the same field as every one else. Why the choice by God? Well it related to David’s insecurity which was making sure that he was safe by crunching the numbers, so here God places him into an insecure position to see if he would again seek security outside of trusting God. Notice as well that the next morning God sent Gad to David and David is going to have to go through him as an intermediary. It seems as though this is also meant to teach David who had tried to circumvent trusting in God so God says you don’t want to trust me with your security then I’ll have you see what’s it like to have to go through a man to get to me. The outcome was that in 6 hours 70,000 died many of those were no doubt the soldiers that David sought security in and in one moment he realized that one angel of the Lord is more powerful than 70,000 valiant men that he counted on being his strength. God forgives our sin but He doesn’t pamper us or wink at our indiscretions instead He teaches us that though He forgives us there is always repercussions for our actions, consequences for our choices that even He won’t change the coarse of our disobedience. That is the reason for his discipline so that we will see for ourselves that rebellion against Him and His word only destroys us.

Hey folks we are a lot like David aren’t we, we tend to crunch the numbers, do our spread sheets to determine if we are secure in life. Why we check our bank accounts, count our calories and our cholesterol in a futile attempt to find security in this world. Hear the words of Jesus in John 16:32-33 “*the hour is coming, yes, has now come, that you will be scattered, each to his own*”…. “*These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world*.” I left out why Jesus said we can have peace apart from counting the numbers as He proclaimed “*I am not alone, because the Father is with Me.*” In the failure passage of Isa 53 we are told “*The chastisement for our peace was upon Him*”, did you get that? Jesus endured no peace so that we might “*Know His Peace*”, so why do we seek it in other places? That is why Paul proclaims in Eph. 2:14 “*He Himself is our peace*”. David wanted stats, he wanted to see if the numbers were on his side and the only number God gave David a stat 70,000 dead from the plague and it broke David’s heart. The number one killer in the world is, (are you ready for this?) WORRY! Our fretting and worry kills us but make no mistake about it but our neurosis kills countless others as well. Jesus said, “*Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life*?” and “*do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul*.”

**IV. Vs. 18-25 Trading our sorrows**

Vs. 18-25 In Chronicles his name is “Ornan” and it means “active” and here it means “Ark” but it’s the same guy. And this fellow was willing to give every part of his threshing business to David for the sacrifice a right heart, that’s a heart of sacrifice and it spoke to David about his need to sacrifice everything to worship as well. According to Gen. 22:14 is where Abraham offered his only begotten son and where God offered His only begotten son. Threshing floors were usually on a high place flat places so they could catch every breeze, based upon the Hebrew David paid fifty shekels of silver for the threshing floor and oxen and in 1 Chron he then paid five hundred shekels of gold for the field that went with it and this was where the temple would be built.

It is an interesting fact that if you look at the sight to day you see the Dome of the Rock Mosque tradition says that it was built on top where the temple was but it can’t be so geographically as underneath it is not flat enough for a threshing floor where a team of oxen would pull stones to separate the wheat from the chaff. Now if you go three hundred and twenty two feet north of the dome of the rock Mosque, on the western side, there is a little dome there, called the Dome of the Tablets, or the Dome of the Spirits where it is flat enough for a threshing floor which would place the Dome of the Rock Mosque right where Ezek and Revelation would place it in the court of the gentiles. Interesting to me that God would instruct a temple from a place where chaff was separated from wheat as worship is always produced when Lord separates our heart from our old fleshly nature!

Now Araunah had a good and generous heart by wanting to give David what ever he asked for but had Araunah’s offer been accepted it would have been his and not David’s sacrifice. David didn’t want to look for the easy way out instead he knew it would not be a gift or a sacrifice if it didn’t cost him something. Hey saints if our worship or service that we offer the Lord costs us nothing it will be worth exactly what we paid for it, nothing! In Jesus’ parable of the pearl of great price (Matt. 13:46) we are told that He “*went and sold all that he had and bought it*” so clearly Jesus sees you and I more valuable than “all”. You will recall the words of martyred missionary Jim Elliot who said, “*He is no fool who gives up what he can not keep to gain what he can never lose*!” The purchase of the threshing floor to erect an altar for a sacrifice suggests that the death of 70,000 didn’t atone for sin and only the sacrifice of an innocent one can do that. David made two types of offerings upon the altar based upon verse 25 burnt offerings for sin as well as peace or fellowship offerings so we see that a time of cleansing is always tied to a time of renewed fellowship.

Now Gad had given David the antidote to the plague, **worship in sacrifice**, he even told him where he wanted it done, (the threshing floor of Araunah “Ark”). And Araunah says, “*Wow you have come at a good time I’ve got the place, the oxen, tool’s to cook with and even the fuel for the fire, all for free”*. Now I don’t know about you but I would have seen this as a God thing as it didn’t cost me a thing and I still get to worship. But David said, “*No way man how can I not give everything to God who gave His everything for me?*” I’ve got a confession; I’ve become accustomed in giving God my “*leftovers*”. He can have my **leftover time** which is after work, after relaxation and hobbies after my family minus the time I need for me He can what’s left. Then He can have my **leftover talent** that which is available after I’ve given my very best to my career, hobbies and honey do’s. Oh and He can have my **leftover treasure**, minus tax’s of coarse as long as I can afford it. But David said “*No way, I’m going to pay full price for the one that paid full price*”. Folk’s this just convicts me so personally as I realize that I’m not near as much a worshiper of God as I’d like to be because if Araunah had offered me that deal I’m afraid I would have taken it!

I think sometimes we tend to think that what makes a person great is well, “*their individual stats*”. We are obsessed with the numbers aren’t we? We are so concerned with a standard that will give us an accurate measure of how well we are doing. Consider the stats comparing the spiritual batting average of Saul when compared against David and I rather think that if we compared the numbers in most categories Saul would have come out on top, yet it is David who God declared was a man after. That is what the Lord had told Samuel way back when we first started this study in 1 Sam 16:7 “*the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart*.”

**David, A Man After God’s Own Heart”**

**VI. Epilog: 1 Chron. 29:1-20 1 Kings 2:1-4, 10-11**

**“David, a willing offering”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. 1 Chron. 29:1-20 The preparation of the people for the temple**

**III. 1 Kings 2:1-12 The preparation of his son Solomon to lead the nation**

**I. Intro.**

It appears that David lived around 10 years after the civil wars of Absalom and Sheba and during those years he seems to be focused upon two events which he saw as **essential for the future of the nation**.

1. (**Worship**) *The preparation of the people for the temple*: Now the way I’ve worded this may come as a surprise as clearly 1 Chron 29 is concerned with bringing in the supplies necessary for the temples construction. But look at the words in verses 1-20 reveals (1-9 the heart of the people, David’s prayer to God) and you will see that this has more to do with the people’s heart than merely bring in supplies to build the temple.
2. (**Walk**) *The preparation of his son Solomon to lead the nation*: This is seen in 1 Kings 2:1-12 where David says verses 2-4, “*prove yourself a man, keep the charge of the LORD your God* and then goes on to tell his son how that will be accomplished saying, *“ walk in His ways, to keep His statutes*”.

**II. 1 Chron. 29:1-20 The preparation of the people for the temple**

Now prior to David’s exhortation to the nation he had some time for his 16 year old son in which he gave Solomon three things to the temple prior to giving of resources.

1. 28:11-12 **Gave plans**: “*David gave his son Solomon* ***the plans*** *for the vestibule, its houses, its treasuries, its upper chambers, its inner chambers, and the place of the mercy seat; and the plans for all that he had by the Spirit, of the courts of the house of the LORD, of all the chambers all around, of the treasuries of the house of God, and of the treasuries for the dedicated things*”.
2. 28:20 **Gave encouragement**: “*David said to his son Solomon, "****Be strong and of good courage, and do it; do not fear nor be dismayed, for the LORD God; my God; will be with you.*** *He will not leave you nor forsake you, until you have finished all the work for the service of the house of the LORD*.”
3. 28:21 **Gave people**: “***Here are the divisions of the priests and the Levites for all the service of the house of God; and every willing craftsman will be with you*** *for all manner of workmanship, for every kind of service; also the leaders and all the people will be completely at your command.*”

Why is this important to mention? Well it speaks to me that David spent a lot of time thinking over where God’s people were headed and how to best get them there. As you know we have just come back from a pastors and leadership conference seeking the Lord and listening to what He wants for this fellowship. I suppose some folks just think we just do our own thing but the truth of the matter is that the leadership regularly spends time seeking the Lord and listening to the people as to where the Lord would have us. It was so encouraging to hear from the Lord through the speakers that we are right where He wants us; now all that remains is for us to execute His vision.

Vs. 1 There are two very important declarations David declares as he spoke to all the assembly:

1. First he reminded them that God had chosen **a young and inexperienced person for a great work**, I wonder how that made his 16 year old son feel? Hey saints I want you to realize that God often does this kind of thing, choosing the young and inexperienced for great works. I rather think that God believes in apprenticeships and on the job training as he seems to do this over and again in scripture, He takes great pleasure in development of people. I have often said that from a pastor’s perspective there are two types of people: **Products and Projects**! Now the truth is all of us are PROJECTS and God is into discipleship that is why Jesus exhorted us to go out and make disciples (learners of Jesus) and not just converts. We are so impatient when God begins to use a “*project*” as they aren’t products like us. Hey saints I’m into projects and you know why? Because Jesus took a bunch of young and inexperienced people for the greatest work there has ever been, reaching the world with the gospel. He has got all those angels up there who I’m certain could do a better job then the projects and He went a head and chose you and I.
2. Second is this statement which leaps off the page at me, “***the temple is not for man but for the LORD God****.*” In our day of *commercialization* where we have been told that the “*customer is always right and the most important person*” we are taken back as we find that the temple is **not for man but for God**. Over the years of pastoring I have had people come up to me and say that they are “*Shopping for a Church that will meet their needs*”. Often if someone is not happy like a customer in a department store they come to me as “*store manager*” and tell me why they aren’t going to be shopping with us any more, sometimes they have even told me that they love the store but just don’t like the store manager (I always tell them I don’t either). These words of David fly in the face of the modern church goer who believes that the temple is for man. God is preparing us for the temple and the temple is not about us it is all about God! “*Well then I’m going to go where they treat me as if it is all about ME*!”

Oh dear Christian we have fallen victim to this “*consumer mentality*” in God’s church and it has left us ***chasing after pleasing people instead of a people who live to please God***! There is a world out there wanting to hear about Jesus who alone can mend their broken hearts and ruined lives and where is the body of Christ? Well you will find far too many of us concerned that the church service that wasn’t up to where we thought it should be. Am I making you mad yet? There are volumes of books and seminars that we pastor types can get to learn how to make sure our “*front doors are larger then our back doors*” and the truth is there shouldn’t be any doors or walls. Peter wrote of this in 1 Peter 2:3-5 that we are to “*Come to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*”

David in verses 1-9 lists three things that we must have as we ready ourselves to come into His temple:

1. Vs. 2 **Preparation**: “*Now for the house of my God I have prepared with all my might*”. I find two very interesting observation concerning this first step:

* + 1. First is the statement, “*with all my might*” this phrase suggests that this was no haphazard approach, no casual consideration but rather David gave his very best attention and consideration to this endeavor. David thought, “*I’m going to meet with God and He with me*”. Can you imaging going to meet with the Lord and there was music that was playing and you didn’t know the words too or the color of the carpet wasn’t much to your liking so you turn and walking out? The most important person in the meeting Christian isn’t us **it’s Him** and when we come to meet with Him it is far more important to be more concerned with the environment of our heart being right with God then the trappings of the meeting place!
    2. The second observation is what David prepared with all his might as he lists 9 things. I’m not going to go into the specifics of those 9 things but I’d like to make two statements about them. **First** it is obvious ***they are all valuable***, simply put David offered that which had intrinsic value to him. His preparations with all his might were with nine things that were precious. Instead of coming to God’s house with anticipation of getting David prepared with all his might in anticipation of giving, again **David didn’t view himself as a consumer but rather God was the consumer**. **Next** notice that six times in verse 2 the idea is that which was given with all his might have ***a specific purpose or use***. This implies that David saw that what he was giving not only was valuable but that it never belonged to him in the first place. In all of this we have the idea being conveyed **that the temple was to be a place where people would prepare with all their might to gather to give that which had been given to them things of great value to be used for the purpose that they were created for in the first place**.

2. Vs. 3-8 **Adoration**: “*I have set my affection on the house of my God*”. In the first list of items David was speaking of the temple treasures but here he is mentioning his own reserves. Again notice that David refers to this as the “*house of my God*” it is God who is personal and relational to David not the house. Hey saints the greatest aspect about gathering together is not the house that belongs to God or the worship service but that our God will be meeting us, hang around us, speaking to our hearts of His goodness and greatness. Notice that David mentions three things concerning worship here:

a. “*I have given*”: **Personal**, David came to the temple with a heart that wanted a personal encounter with God and to do so he came giving not expecting to get. There is a saying that says that “*Your getting will be in direct proportion to your giving*” no wonder so many church goers say they don’t get anything out of Church as they are there to get not to give to God.

b. “*Over and above*”: **Sacrificial**, David came and didn’t give the bare requirements, no way he came giving over and above. Paul said in Romans 12:1 that we are to “*present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service*.” I’m afraid that far to many times we come out of our time with the Lord empty handed because when we came to Him there was no since that we were here as a living sacrifice.

c. “*My own special treasure*”: **Special**, David brought before the Lord that which he most valued, he held nothing back he didn’t worry that there wouldn’t be enough left for himself. Hey saints, it is only when we come to Him with our “*own special treasure*” that we can receive from Him all of that which He desires to give us. It appears to me when we think of what church is suppose to be that it ought to be a place where we “*hang out and then go out*”.

3. Vs. 9 **Exaltation**: “*Then the people rejoiced, for they had offered willingly, because with a loyal heart they had offered willingly to the LORD; and King David also rejoiced greatly.*” Twice in this verse we are told that the “*people rejoiced and that David greatly rejoiced*” it seems as though the worship of God came about because with a “*loyal heart they had offered willingly to the Lord*”. My point is that **the consumer mentality is an obstruction to personal satisfaction**. Hey saints when we come into God’s house and make everything about us it’s no wonder we come out dissatisfied and unfulfilled. Ah but when we offer willingly to the Lord with a loyal heart then we will come out rejoicing greatly.

Of further interest to me is that David’s devotion led the nation to the same heart as he says in verse 5 “*Who then is willing to consecrate himself this day to the LORD*?” The word “*consecrate*”, literally means “*to fill his hand*” and by it the idea of giving of ones self is placed on the same level as devotion. And from the leaders of the families to those over the army to the “who so ever’s” of verse 8 came and offered willingly and rejoiced greatly. There is always a correlation in our worship between “*offering willingly*” and “*rejoicing greatly*” and the reason oft times for a lack of “*rejoicing greatly*” is because we don’t “*offer willingly*”. How willingly? Well we are told that they gave from the spoils of battle, 3,750 tons of gold, 37,500 tons of silver, and David from his own bank account gave 110 tons of gold and 260 tons of silver. The leaders of the people are the ones that stepped up and offered “willingly”. We see the principal in place that those that led the people were givers demonstrating that they trusted God and realized that what they had was not theirs but belonged to God. David wanted the people to see that they weren’t offering what was theirs but what was God’s to begin with. Oh to thank God for the privilege of giving what was first given to us that’s the heart I want to cultivate.

Hey saints, Jesus taught “*For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*” (Matt. 6:21) There is an interesting point here as David didn’t command that the people give instead modeled the heart of a giver and then simply gave them the opportunity to do like wise. There was no temple thermometer on the wall people gave without restraint and compulsion. God doesn’t need our money He wants our hearts and it’s when we give selflessly to Him as an act of worship that we are revealing who controls our lives. It is far to easy like the “rich young ruler” for us to become possessed by what we posses so what not set your self free and give as an act of worship.

Vs. 10-20 Here are David’s official last words to the nation and Solomon his son and new king. In verses 1-11 David proclaims the greatness of God, “*Yours, O LORD, is the greatness, The power and the glory, The victory and the majesty; For all that is in heaven and in earth is Yours; Yours is the kingdom, O LORD, And You are exalted as head over all. Both riches and honor come from You, And You reign over all. In Your hand is power and might; In Your hand it is to make great And to give strength to all*.” Next David turns his amazement to what God worked in the hearts of the people as they donated so much for the building of the temple, verses 14-16. “*Hey wait a minute now I gave this and that, why are we giving thanks to God?*” We are so prone to thinking that all we have time, talent and treasure has come for our creation and not God’s. The ability to give and the heart to give equally come for God as Paul wrote in 1 Cor. 4:7 “*what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it*?” **Saints perhaps the greatest manifestation of the greatness of God is what He is able to do in and through human hearts**. You see when he spoke the world into existence He created something from nothing, an impressive act. Ah but when he creates a clean heart from a dirty one and then uses that new heart to touch another dirty heart it shows how truly great He is.

Praise to God merged into prayer for Solomon and the people that they would keep God’s commandments. It only takes becoming inconsistent for our heart to go back the way it had been. David in verses 14-16 walks the nation down memory lane looking at how God took a small family of shepherds and the youngest son of the family and created a kingdom that in only 40 years became the greatest in the world. How was such a thing possible? Well the Lord didn’t need the prosperity or strength of the nation but what He did look for were those people who would consistently avail themselves of His greatness, those who would not see just their own limitation but see God’s limitless greatness and goodness. David then prays for the people and for his son (Vs. 18-19) not ever forget this, “*O LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, our fathers, keep this forever in the intent of the thoughts of the heart of Your people, and fix their heart toward You. And give my son Solomon a loyal heart to keep Your commandments and Your testimonies and Your statutes, to do all these things, and to build the temple for which I have made provision.*” Finally in verses 20 we have the coronation of Solomon recorded also recorded in 1 Kings chapter one but with a completely different perspective, both record the conflict which was behind the selection of Solomon but 1 kings gives the details while 1 Chron only records the outcome.

Notice in David’s prayer that he prayed that the heart of nation would move closer to the Lord after they were willing to let go of the temporal things. Verse 22 tells us that “*So they ate and drank before the LORD with great gladness on that day*.” They were lighter in the wallets but they hadn’t done so begrudgingly there was a huge party because they gave with a heart that held nothing back giving God there all. I wonder if our lack is do to our lack of giving. Hey folks we need to break free of this “*consumer mentality*” and get back to the fact that everything about our lives as Christians is suppose to be about Jesus.

**III. 1 Kings 2:1-12 The preparation of his son Solomon to lead the nation**

The first time Solomon was proclaimed king was right after his brother Adonijah tried to steal the throne in 1 Kings 1:39 and now David is doing it right. And when it all comes down to it no matter if you are a shepherd boy, giant killing, worship leading king there will be another who reign in your stead. The greater question is who is reigning in your stead now in this life, who is on the throne of your heart?

Vs. 1-4 David knew that his time had come and so now he wants to anoint his 16 year old son to be king. In the first four words David tells him the keys to “*proving yourself a man*”, it is by “*keeping the charge of the LORD your God*” which is “*to walk in His* ***ways****, to keep His* ***statutes****, His* ***commandments****, His* ***judgments****, and His* ***testimonies****, as it is written in the Law of Moses*”. Simply **put proving ourselves a man is directly tied to being a person of the Word**! Living a consistent obedient life to the Word of God is the key to a prosperous life. The first thing he tells his boy his be a man of the “word” Paul said something familiar when he spoke to Timothy “*Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth*.” (2 Tim 2:15).

In verses 5-9 David lists certain individuals that were to be singled out for special considerations two of those are to be judged and one rewarded Barzillai (verse 7). David needs to deal with some unfinished business concerning two men Joab, Shimei. Remember here that Solomon is 16 years of age here and his dad realizes that these men if unrepented are a threat to the nation.

David was 30 years old when he began his reign as king. The number 30 always seems to be associated with training and preparation and 40 with the years of service before the Lord.

Hey saints we are either being prepared for service or engaged in service for our Lord but you realize that this leaves out all together the idea of the commercial Christian who is shopping for services within the walls of their home church. Instead of the attitude that says, “I don’t like this, I don’t like that” as it relates to the events going on around the church we ought to be looking at our hearts in the mirror of the Word saying, “*I don’t like this and I don’t like that, oh God please by your spirit change my heart*!” “*Even the greatest of people will be put to bed with a shovel*” says an old Russian proverb but those who belong to God will be raised in glory. From here on out all kings will be measured against the bar of David and only one “the Son of David” will ever exceed him.