

Life of David: Discipleship Lessons from 1 and 2 Samuel

Handouts for Group Participants

If you're working with a class or small group, feel free to duplicate the following handouts at no additional charge. If you'd like to print 8-1/2" x 11" or A4 size pages, you can download the free Participant Guide handout sheets at:

www.jesuswalk.com/david/david-lesson-handouts.pdf

Discussion Questions

You'll typically find 3 to 4 questions for each lesson, depending on the topics in each lesson. Each question may include several sub-questions. These are designed to get group members engaged in discussion of the key points of the passage. If you're running short of time, feel free to skip questions or portions of questions. These notes also contain key maps and charts to help your students understand David's life.

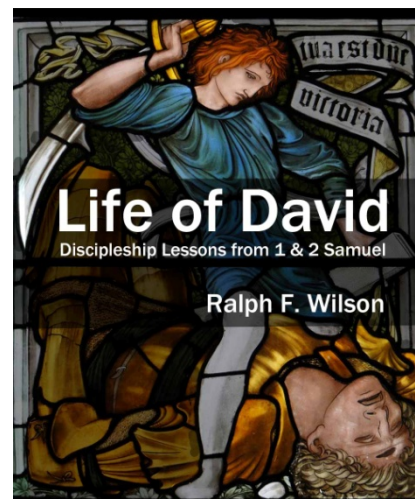
Introduction to the Life of David

1. Samuel Anoints David as King (1 Samuel 15-16)
 2. David and Goliath: Bold Faith (1 Samuel 17)
 3. Jonathan's Friendship, Saul's Jealousy (1 Samuel 18-20)
 4. David Flees from Saul (1 Samuel 21-23)
 5. David Sparing the Lord's Anointed (1 Samuel 24-28)
 6. David Strengthens Himself in the Lord (1 Samuel 29-2 Samuel 1)
 7. David Becomes King and Conquers Jerusalem (2 Samuel 2-5)
 8. David Brings the Ark to Jerusalem (2 Samuel 6)
 9. The Davidic Covenant (2 Samuel 7)
 10. David's Rise, Fall, and Punishment (2 Samuel 8-12)
 11. Rape, Murder, and Conspiracy in David's Family (2 Samuel 13:1-15:13)
 12. David's Exile from Jerusalem (15:13-20:26)
 13. The Legacy of David (2 Samuel 21-1 Kings 2)
- David's Psalms of Repentance (Psalms 51 and 32, optional)

This series of lessons is based on *Life of David: Discipleship Lessons from 1 and 2 Samuel* by Dr. Ralph F. Wilson (JesusWalk, 2012), 280 pages. It is available for sale in paperback, Kindle, and PDF versions.

<http://www.jesuswalk.com/books/david.htm>

If you're the teacher or facilitator for a small group or class, it is strongly recommended that you get a copy of this book for yourself and the assistant leader. It contains a huge amount of background information about David's life and times that will help you interpret David accurately to your class.



Introduction to the Life of David

Date for David's 40-year reign from about 1010 to 970 BC.

Archaeological inscriptions pointing to the historicity of King David's reign:

1. Inscription from an Old Aramaic stela in Tell Dan (dated about 840 BC) refers to the "House of David" in the context of a king.
2. Inscription on the stela of Mesha King of Moab also refers to the "House of David" in about the same period.
3. An inscription at Karnak by Pharaoh Shoshenq I records a victory over Rehoboam and Jeroboam in 926/925 BC referring to a place name in the Negev or south Judean area as the "heights of David," an inscription carved within 50 years of David's own lifetime.

Composition and Authorship of Samuel and Chronicles

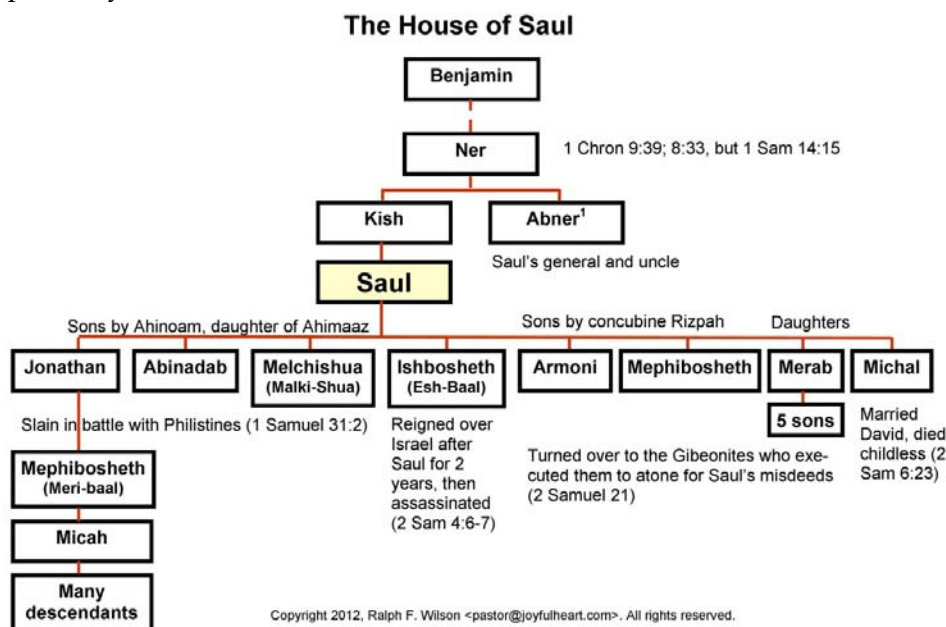
Our primary source material for the study of David's life is found in 1 and 2 Samuel and the first chapter of 1 Kings, with some supplementary information in 1 Chronicles.

First and Second Samuel are actually part of one book in the Hebrew Bible, along with 1 and 2 Kings. Composition is seen as the work of one or more editors, perhaps first in the time of Josiah and then again during the exile. They drew on ancient source documents.

1 and 2 Chronicles were probably written sometime after the return from exile, as early as 527 BC and perhaps up to a century later.

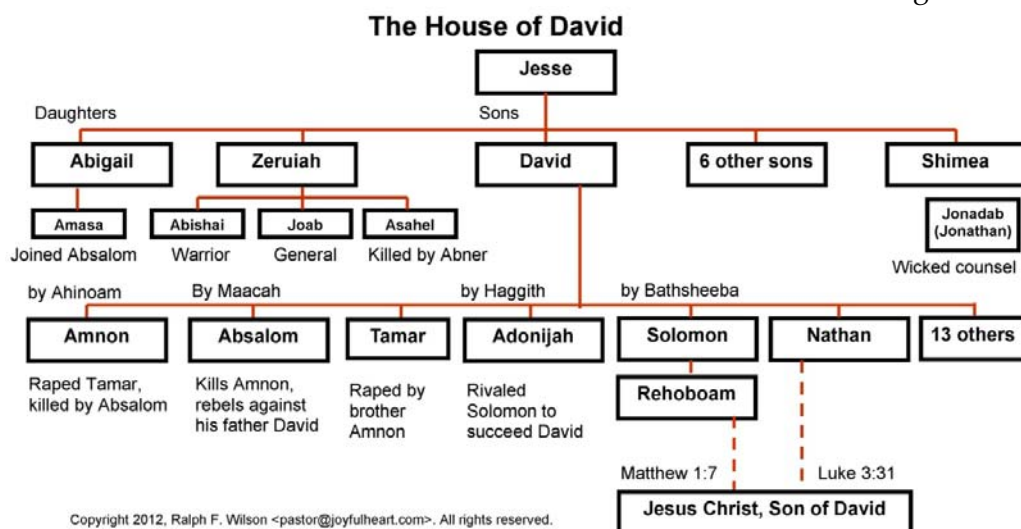
Who Were the Philistines?

The Philistines apparently immigrated from the Aegean area in the early to mid-twelfth century BC. They settled primarily along the southwestern coastal strip of Canaan, the name "Palestine" deriving from the name "Philistine." They seem to have been a loose confederation of five city-states: Ashdod, Ashkelon, Ekron, Gaza, and Gath (Joshua 13:3b). For the most part these city-states waged war singly, but on occasion they gathered together to wage a common battle. Gath is probably to be identified with Tell es-Safi.



Approximate Chronology of David's Life

Date	David's Age	Event	Reference
1040 BC	-	David born	2 Samuel 5:4
	~15-20	David and Goliath	
1012	~25-30	David is a fugitive from Saul	
1010	30	David becomes king at Hebron	2 Samuel 5:4-5
1003	37	David becomes king over all Israel and conquers Jerusalem	2 Samuel 5:4-5
	~37-47	Palace built, Philistine and Aramean campaigns	
	~47	David's kingdom established	
	~47	David sins with Bathsheba	
	~45-50	Amnon rapes Tamar	
	~47-52	Absalom kills Amnon, flees to Geshur, stays 3 years	2 Samuel 13:38
	~52-57	Absalom returns to Jerusalem	2 Samuel 14:28
	~54-59	Absalom sees David's face after 2 years in Jerusalem	2 Samuel 14:28
	~56-61	Absalom wins the hearts of Israel over 4 years	2 Samuel 15:7
	~61	Absalom becomes king in Hebron, David flees Jerusalem	
	~62	Absalom killed	
	~62-63	Sheba's rebellion	
	~65-67	David becomes exhausted in Philistine battle	2 Sam 21:15
	~69	Adonijah and Solomon vie for the throne.	
970	70	David dies	2 Samuel 5:4-5; cf. 1 Kings 2:11



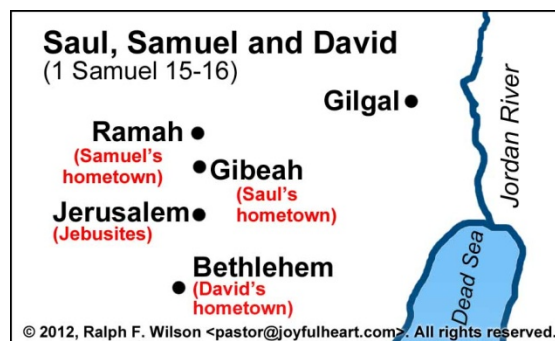
1. Samuel Anoints David as King (1 Samuel 15-16)

Q1. (1 Samuel 15:22-23). What is rebellion? In what way is rebellion as bad as witchcraft or occult practices? What does rebellion have to do with arrogance? What can we do when we find rebellion against God in our hearts? What happens if we do nothing?

Q2. (1 Samuel 16:3-12) How does this story teach us the importance of listening carefully to God's voice? What is our instinctive way of discerning? How is God teaching us to discern? How do we learn to listen to the Spirit?

Q3. (1 Samuel 1:13) What is the significance of Samuel anointing David? What is the significance of the Holy Spirit coming upon David? How does this explain his success? How is the Holy Spirit upon us vital for our own success as disciples?

Q4. (1 Samuel 16:14-23) From Saul's perspective, why is David summoned to court? From God's perspective, what seem to be the reasons for this service in Saul's court? What things tend to prevent us from learning from God in the midst of the circumstances in which we find ourselves? What might make us more teachable?



Detail of Jewish kinnor player is found in a bas-relief in the palace of Assurbanipal (705-681 BC) at Nineveh, portraying the fall of the Judean city of Lachish.

Discipleship Lessons

1. **Obedience.** Negative lesson from Saul: as we grow as disciples, we must outgrow our tendency to self-will and rebellion.
2. **Listening.** From Samuel we learn the importance of listening carefully to the voice of the Spirit.
3. **The Holy Spirit.** From David: Being responsive to the Holy Spirit is the key to success as a king or a prophet – or in any venture God calls us to.
4. **God's Arrangements.** God uses “chance” opportunities to work out his will. Question shouldn't be: “Why, Lord?” but “What do you want me to learn here?”

Key Verses

“Does the LORD delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the LORD?

To obey is better than sacrifice,
and to heed is better than the fat of rams.

²³For rebellion is like the sin of divination,
and arrogance like the evil of idolatry.” (1 Samuel 15:22-23a)

“The LORD does not look at the things man looks at.
Man looks at the outward appearance,
but the LORD looks at the heart.” (1 Samuel 16:7b)

“So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the LORD came upon David in power.” (1 Samuel 16:13)

2. David and Goliath: Bold Faith (1 Samuel 17)

Q1. (1 Samuel 17:26-30) Why is David so upset about Goliath's taunt? Why is Eliab, David's brother, so upset with David? What does this teach us about David's faith? What does it teach us about Eliab's character?

Asiatic or Persian Lion (*Felis leo persica*). Males 350 to 420 pounds; females 240 to 260 pounds.

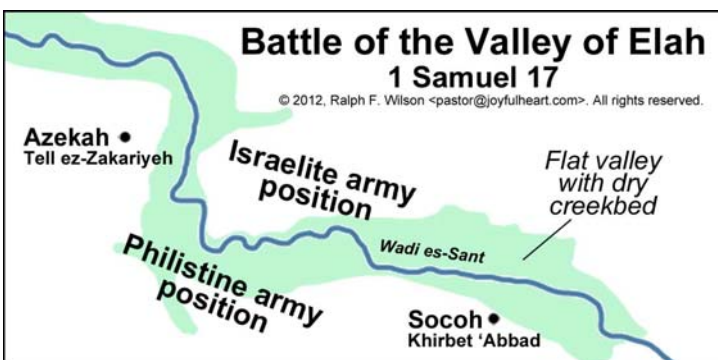
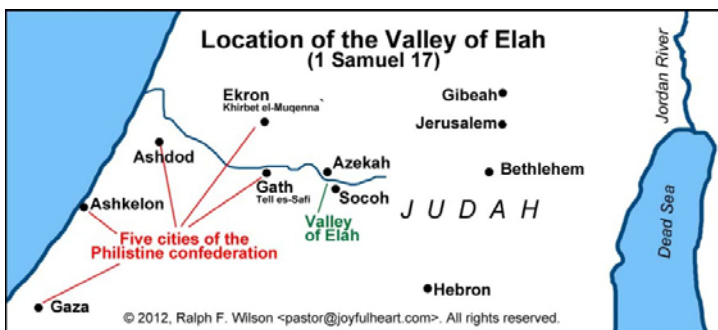
Syrian Brown Bear (*Ursus arctos syriacus*). Length up to 8'. Shoulder height 35-43". Males 220 to 660 lb; females 2/3rds.

Q2. (1 Samuel 17:34-37) What does David's explanation to Saul of his combat experience say about David's faith? How lethal is David as a warrior? Why do you think Saul allows him to go out to battle Goliath? Does Saul have faith? If so, what is the source of it?

Sling stones from battle of Lachish, limestone, round, 1-3/4 to 2-1/3 inches, speed perhaps 100 miles per hour!

The Battle is the Lord's! 1 Samuel 14:6b; 2 Chronicles 20:15; 32:8; Psalm 33:16-18, 20; 44:6-8; Proverbs 21:30-31; Hosea 1:7; Zechariah 4:6; Romans 8:31, 37; 1 John 4:4.

Q3. (1 Samuel 17:47) Why do we so often forget that "the battle is the Lord's"? What does that phrase actually mean? How can we avoid the arrogance of pulling God into our battles ("God is on my side"), rather than engaging in His battles ("I am on God's side")?



Sling stones from the battle of Lachish, Judah (701 BC). British Museum.

Disciple Lessons from David and Goliath

1. **Faith vs. fear.** We need to be motivated primarily by our faith, not hindered from action by our fears.
2. **God's glory** is more important than our own victory. David is concerned for God's reputation, not his own.
3. **The battle is the Lord's.** So often we think we're alone in what we're facing. But if we're living for God, he is present no matter what is going on in our lives. And if the cause affects his kingdom and his glory, it is *His* battle, not ours at all.
4. **Importance of preparation.** Even though we rely on the Spirit, we are not so foolish as to make no preparation. As St. Augustine once said, "Pray as though everything

depended on God. Work as though everything depended on you." Faith and preparation are not mutually exclusive.

Key Verses

"Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defied the armies of the living God. The LORD who delivered me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine." (1 Samuel 17:36-37)

"You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the LORD Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied." (1 Samuel 17:45)

"All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the LORD saves; for the battle is the LORD's, and he will give all of you into our hands." (1 Samuel 17:47)

3. Jonathan's Friendship, Saul's Jealousy (1 Samuel 18-20)

Q1. (1 Samuel 18:13-16). Why does Saul send David into battle? What is the result? To what does the narrator attribute David's success?

Q2. (1 Samuel 18:18-22) Which of the following is David's chief motive for marrying Michal, in your opinion? Argue for the motivation that makes the most sense to you: (1) pride in his military prowess, (2) obedience to Saul's desires, (3) love or desire for Michal, or (4) enjoyment in killing Philistines.

Q3. (1 Samuel 19:18-24) What does it tell us about Saul's faith that he pursues David even when he has sought the sanctuary of the prophet Samuel? Why do people prophesy when the Holy Spirit comes upon them? What is the relationship between this incident and the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2)?

Q4. (1 Samuel 20:35-42) What is the nature of the covenant between David and Jonathan? What does David receive? What does Jonathan receive? Who benefits the most from this covenant? Is it self-serving – or not? What is the significance that God is witness to the covenant?

Disciple Lessons

1. **Male friendships.** There can be deep, tender friendships between men without a hint of sexual attraction. This is a lesson that needs to be heard by our culture. Men don't need to be afraid of or apologetic for their love for other men.
2. **Fear and jealousy,** if we let them have a place in our lives, are evil and can be extremely destructive to those around us.
3. **Covenants or promises** between people can endure. God, who is witness to our promises, calls us to a high standard in keeping them.
4. **Enemies.** Living a righteous life doesn't make us immune to others seeing themselves as our enemies. We are responsible for our own lives, but we can't be responsible for others' reactions to us. Our motives may be pure, but that doesn't keep others from hating us. It happens to the best of us – perhaps *especially* to the best.

Key Verses

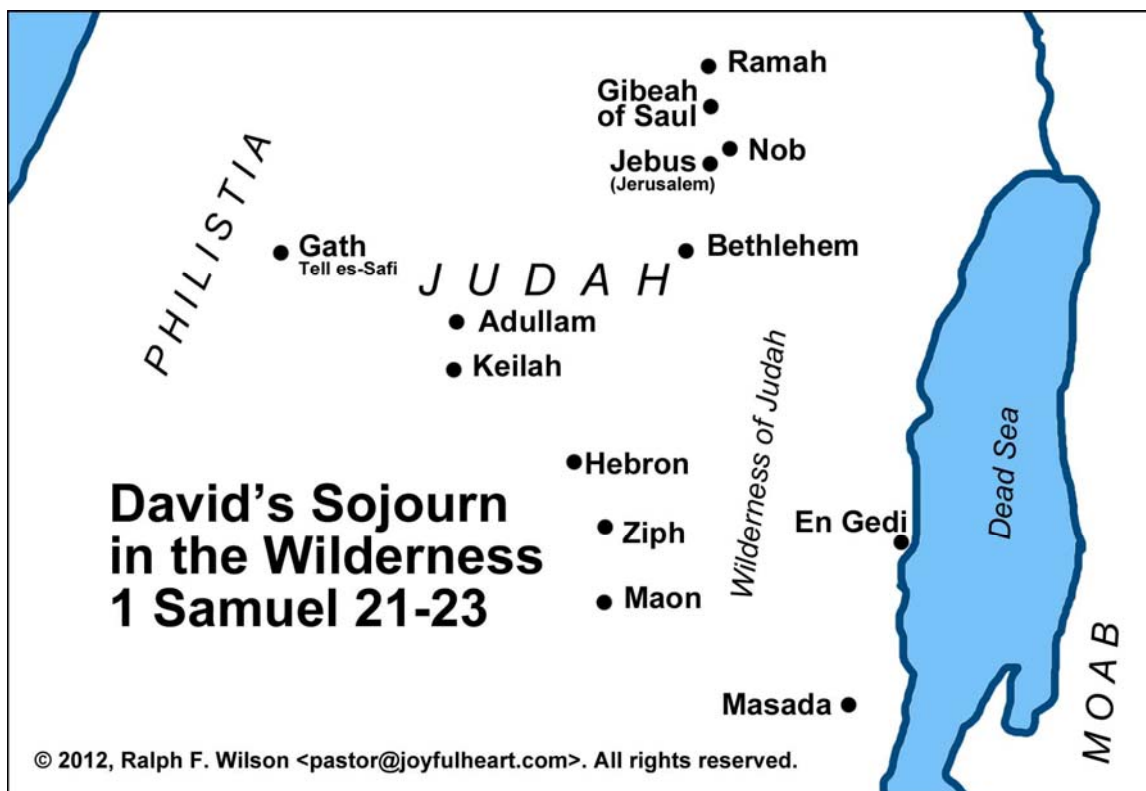
"After David had finished talking with Saul, Jonathan became one in spirit with David, and he loved him as himself." (1 Samuel 18:1)

"When the men were returning home after David had killed the Philistine, the women came out from all the towns of Israel to meet King Saul with singing and dancing, with joyful songs and with tambourines and lutes. As they danced, they sang: 'Saul has slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands.'" (1 Samuel 18:6-7)

"Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with David but had left Saul." (1 Samuel 18:12)

"Jonathan said to David, 'Go in peace, for we have sworn friendship with each other in the name of the LORD, saying, 'The LORD is witness between you and me, and between your descendants and my descendants forever.'" (1 Samuel 20:42)

4. David Flees from Saul (1 Samuel 21-23)

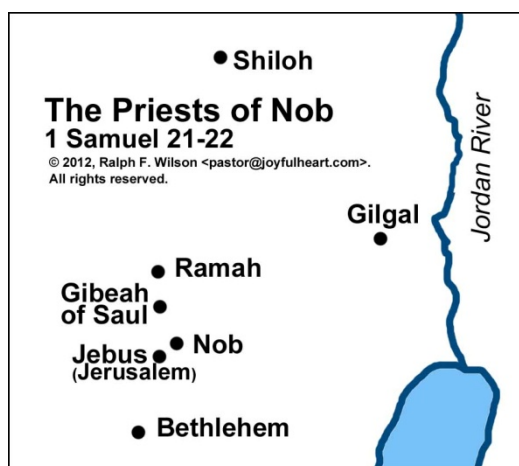


Q1. (1 Samuel 22:2) Why were David's men attracted to him? What did they have in common? Why kind of men were these? What difficulties do you think David probably had in leading them?

Q2. (1 Samuel 22:20-23:12) What did Abiathar and the ephod have to do with "inquiring of the Lord?" Why did David inquire of the Lord? What huge advantage does the person have who seeks God's will before acting? How can you find God's will at key points in your life?

Psalms from this time: 31:2-4; 18:1-3, 29, 33; 63:1, 4-8

Q3. (1 Samuel 23:14-18) Why does Jonathan visit David in the wilderness? What risk is there for David? What risk is there for Jonathan? What do you think it meant to David? Have you ever received a visit from a friend when you needed it most?



Historical Ascriptions of the Psalms of David

1 Samuel 19:11	Psalm 59. "When Saul had sent men to watch David's house in order to kill him."
21:12-15	Psalm 56. "When the Philistines had seized him in Gath."
21:13-15	Psalm 34. "When he pretended to be insane before Abimelech, who drove him away, and he left." A beautiful acrostic psalm.
22:9-10	Psalm 52. "When Doeg the Edomite had gone to Saul and told him, 'David has gone to the house of Ahimelech.'"
22:1	Psalm 57. "When he had fled from Saul into the cave."
22:1	Psalm 142. "When he was in the cave."
22:5; 23:14-16, 23f	Psalm 63. "When he was in the Desert of Judah."
23:19	Psalm 54. "When the Ziphites had gone to Saul and said, 'Is not David hiding among us?'"
Chapter 22	Psalm 18. "He sang to the LORD the words of this song when the LORD delivered him from the hand of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul."
2 Samuel 8:13-14	Psalm 60. "When he fought Aram Naharaim and Aram Zobah, and when Joab returned and struck down twelve thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt."
12:13	Psalm 51. "When the prophet Nathan came to him after David had committed adultery with Bathsheba."
Chapter 15	Psalm 3. "When he fled from his son Absalom."

Q4. (Psalms 18, 34, 54, 56, 58, 59, 142) In these ascriptions to these psalms, how many celebrate happy occasions? How many arise from struggles? What does this tell you about David's relationship with God? What does this tell you about his faith during trials? Which is your favorite among these psalms? Why?

Lessons for Disciples

1. **Provision.** God provides for his servants, even in times of desperate need, as David found bread and a sword in the house of the Lord.
2. **God's fashioning.** Every great person has times of seeming failure, as well as times of success and adulation. Don't judge too soon that God has forgotten you. He is molding you into a finely-crafted instrument that he can use in his work.
3. **Leaders.** Leaders tend to attract followers when they are struggling as well as when they're on top, as David gathered a band of mighty men in the wilderness. Look for a person that people are following and you'll find a leader.
4. **Learning.** Times of struggle are often when you learn the most and do your best work. Don't discount the difficulties you face in your wilderness as wasted time.
5. **Guidance.** The ability to seek God's will is a very precious gift. David had this in the presence of the Urim and the Thummim, the company of a prophet, and his own prophetic gift. You can find God's will if you seek him with all your heart, since, if you're a Christian, you possess the Holy Spirit of God who connects you with the very mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:10-16).

6. **Betrayal.** Even people you have helped may well betray you, as the residents of Keilah and Ziph will betray David. You will meet disappointment. But don't despair! You have an unshakable Rock, the Lord your God. He will never leave you or forsake you (Hebrews 13:5)!
7. **Praise.** We are to praise God in all circumstances (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18), as David did in many of his Wilderness-era psalms. Our joy is in the Lord himself, not in whether everything is going well or not.

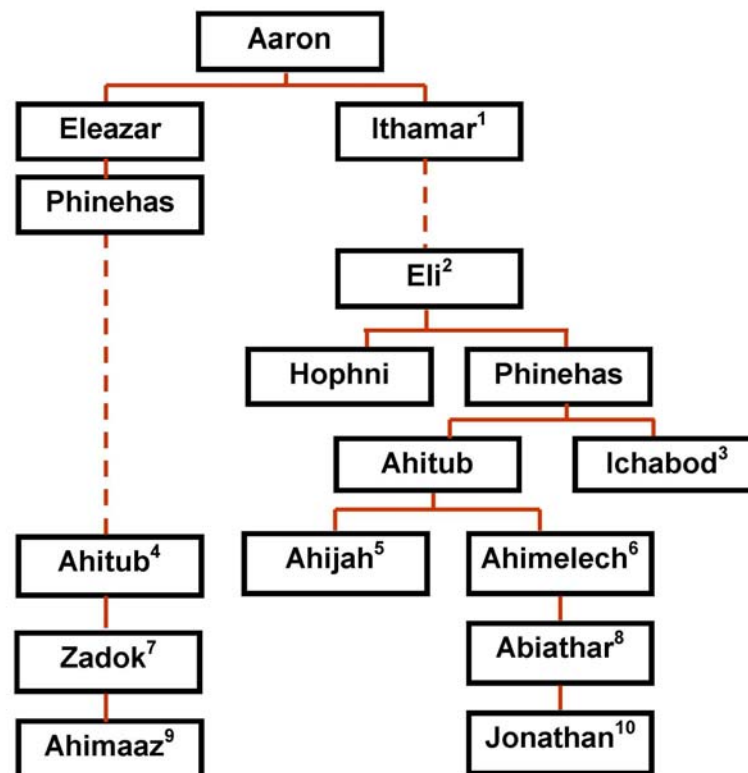
Key Verses

"David left Gath and escaped to the cave of Adullam. When his brothers and his father's household heard about it, they went down to him there. All those who were in distress or in debt or discontented gathered around him, and he became their leader. About four hundred men were with him." (1 Samuel 22:1-2)

"Once again David inquired of the LORD, and the LORD answered him, 'Go down to Keilah, for I am going to give the Philistines into your hand.' ... (Now Abiathar son of Ahimelech had brought the ephod down with him when he fled to David at Keilah.)" (1 Samuel 23:4, 6)

"David stayed in the desert strongholds and in the hills of the Desert of Ziph. Day after day Saul searched for him, but God did not give David into his hands." (1 Samuel 23:14)

Genealogy of the Priests in David's Time



Copyright 2012, Ralph F. Wilson <pastor@joyfulheart.com>. All rights reserved.

5. David Spares the Lord's Anointed (1 Samuel 24-28)

Q1. (1 Samuel 24:1-15) Why doesn't David kill Saul when he has the chance? What motive do he and his men have for killing a king who is trying to kill them? What is David's rationale for sparing Saul? What does this tell us about David's character? About his faith? What does it say about David's leadership ability that he is able to dissuade his men from killing Saul?

Lifting one's hand against the Lord's anointed" -- Genesis 20:7; 31:24; Psalm 105:15; cf. 1 Chronicles 16:22; Matthew 10:40-42; 1 Timothy 5:17, 19-20; Acts 23:5b, quoting Exodus 22:28)

Q2. (1 Samuel 24:12) How do we apply the principle of not lifting a hand against the Lord's anointed in our day? What provisions are there in 1 Timothy 5:19-20 for calling leaders to account. What do you think God will do to those who slander, persecute, and martyr his appointed leaders?

Bloodguilt

"You shall not murder" (Exodus 20:13), that is, commit unlawful killing. The word "murder" (NIV, NRSV) or "kill" is *rāṣaḥ*, "murder, slay, kill." According to Numbers 35, the person who has accidentally killed someone can find sanctuary in a "city of refuge," where he can't be killed by a relative, an "avenger of blood," before his case is heard in a court of law, before he "stands trial before the assembly" (Numbers 35:12). Numbers gives guidelines for determining whether a person was killed purposely or accidentally, whether the killer acted with hostility or "malice aforethought" (Numbers 35:21). This chapter concludes:

"Do not pollute the land where you are. Bloodshed pollutes the land, and atonement cannot be made for the land on which blood has been shed, except by the blood of the one who shed it. Do not defile the land where you live and where I dwell, for I, the LORD, dwell among the Israelites."
(Numbers 35:33-34)

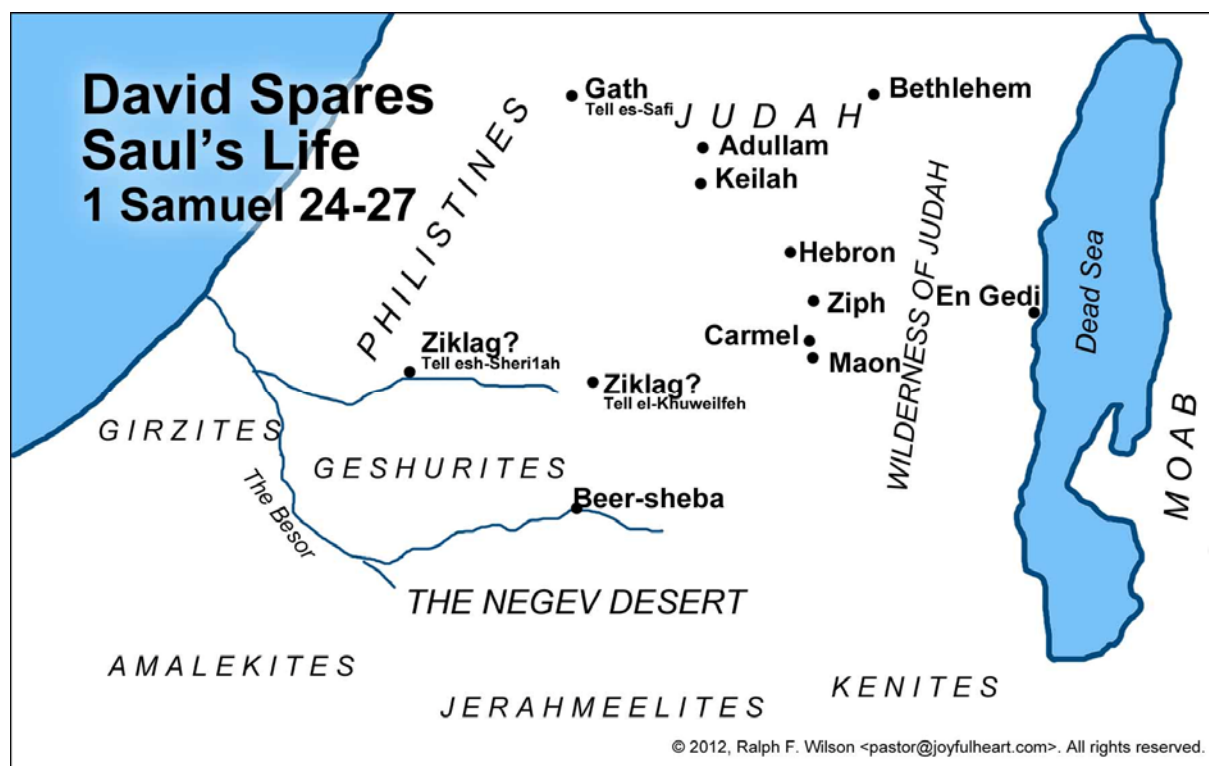
See also Genesis 4; 9:5-6; Exodus 22:2-3; 2 Samuel 4:11; 1 Kings 2:5; 2 Samuel 12:9

"Save me from bloodguilt,
O God, the God who saves me,
and my tongue will sing of your righteousness." (Psalm 51:14)

Q3. (1 Samuel 25) What do we learn about David's character in this incident with Nabal and Abigail? What do we learn about Abigail's character? Nabal's character? Why do you think this story was included in 1 Samuel? What important knowledge does it add to our understanding?

Occult Practices in the Ancient Near East

1. **Hepatoscopy**, divination by inspecting the liver of a sacrificed animal (Ezekiel 21:21), a widespread practice. Archaeologists have found clay models of livers at Megiddo and elsewhere.
2. **Hydromancy**, divining by water, perhaps seen in Genesis 44:5.
3. **Rhabdomancy**, divination using a divining rod (Hosea 4:12)
4. **Belomancy**, divination by casting of arrows (Ezekiel 21:21).



5. **Teraphim**, household gods or images, widespread in the ancient Near East, used as a symbol of authority, land ownership, and for divination (Ezekiel 21:21; Zechariah 10:2).
6. **Astrology**, common in Babylon, seeking the future in the stars and planets (Isaiah 47:13; Jeremiah 10:2).
7. **Necromancy**, consultation with the dead to determine the future, as is practiced by the “witch of Endor.”

Condemned: Leviticus 19:31; 20:27; Deuteronomy 18:10-11; Acts 8:9-24; 13:6-12, 16-18; 19:18-19; 1 Corinthians 10:20-21; Revelation 9:21; 21:8; 22:15.

Q4. (1 Samuel 28:7-14) Why do you think God condemns occult practices of communicating with the dead and channeling spirits of the dead? How might such practices open Christians to victimization and oppression by evil spirits? What should you do if you’ve been involved in such practices in the past?

Lessons for Disciples

1. **Respect.** We are to respect the leaders that God has appointed over us, even if they aren’t perfect – which they never are (Hebrews 13:17a). David had respect for Saul as the Lord’s anointed. God will judge those who rebel against His leaders, slander them, or speak evil of them (Acts 23:5b; Exodus 22:28).
2. **Appeal.** We can, however, respectfully disagree with our leaders, as David did before Saul, and appeal to their reason. And we can also appeal to God when a leader is out of line. God, who put the leader in place can (and perhaps will) remove that leader. Leaders must answer to God! (Hebrews 13:17b).
3. **Humility.** When we humble ourselves before a leader about to make a mistake, like Abigail did before David, and speak clearly and boldly, we can sometimes influence the

outcome positively. Humility is appropriate for two reasons. First, leaders often struggle with pride. Second, we don't see everything the leader sees and may be wrong in our assessment.

4. **Steadfastness.** When God shows us one of his principles, we must stand up for it, even if others don't understand us or criticize us, as David's men did when he spared Saul. We aren't to cave in under pressure.
5. **Faithfulness.** When we make a promise, we must do our very best to be true to our word, not like Saul, whose promise not to harm David was made and broken again and again. Neither God nor man have respect for a person who makes a promise and then changes his mind and does the opposite.
6. **The Occult.** We are to stay away from occult practices of any kind, and thoroughly repent of any involvement in the past that may have contaminated us spiritually or made us vulnerable to Satan's deception or oppression.

Key Verses

"[David] said to his men, 'The LORD forbid that I should do such a thing to my master, the LORD's anointed, or lift my hand against him; for he is the anointed of the LORD.' With these words David rebuked his men and did not allow them to attack Saul. And Saul left the cave and went his way." (1 Samuel 24:6-7)

"May the LORD judge between you and me. And may the LORD avenge the wrongs you have done to me, but my hand will not touch you." (1 Samuel 24:12)

"David said to Abigail, 'Praise be to the LORD, the God of Israel, who has sent you today to meet me. May you be blessed for your good judgment and for keeping me from bloodshed this day and from avenging myself with my own hands.'" (1 Samuel 25:32-33)

6. David Strengthens Himself in the Lord (1 Samuel 29-2 Samuel 1)

Q1. (1 Samuel 30:1-6) Why do the men blame David? Why is the situation so explosive at this point. What does David do in the situation? What is David feeling? Why doesn't he act immediately?

Scripture: Psalm 18:6a; 27:1-2; 34:1-6; 40:1-3; 42:1-6a; 56:1-4; 62:1-2

Q2. (1 Samuel 30:6) From the Psalms of David, how does David seem to strengthen himself in the Lord when things are going bad? What devotional exercises does he adopt? What is the focus of his faith?

Q3. (2 Samuel 1:19-27; 1 Chronicles 10:13-14) David is gracious in his memorial psalm. How does he remember Saul's life? How does the Chronicler remember Saul's life? How do you think God evaluates Saul's life? What do we learn from this?

Lessons for Disciples

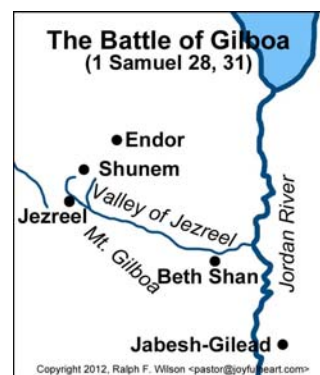
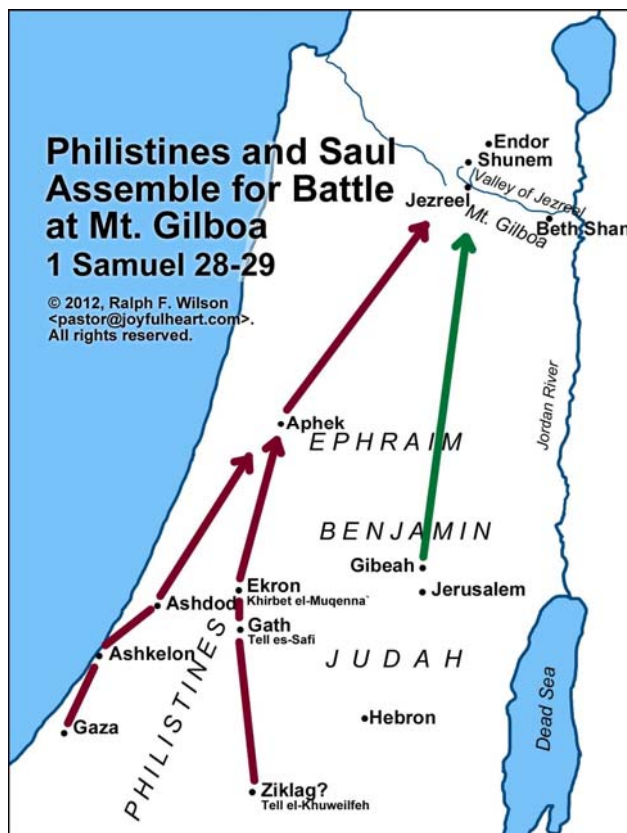
1. We must learn to strengthen ourselves in the Lord when our lives seem like they're falling apart. There are many examples of how to do this in David's Psalms.
2. When we can, we should share the Lord's bounty with others, even with those who may not deserve it.
3. We need to learn to die well so that our epitaph brings glory to the Lord, rather than disgrace.

Key Verses

"David was greatly distressed because the men were talking of stoning him; each one was bitter in spirit because of his sons and daughters. But David found strength in the LORD his God." (1 Samuel 30:6)

"The share of the man who stayed with the supplies is to be the same as that of him who went down to the battle. All will share alike." (1 Samuel 30:24)

"How the mighty have fallen in battle!
Jonathan lies slain on your heights.
I grieve for you, Jonathan my brother; you were very dear to me.
Your love for me was wonderful,
more wonderful than that of women. How the mighty have fallen!
The weapons of war have perished!" (2 Samuel 1:25-27)



7. David Becomes King and Conquers Jerusalem (2 Samuel 2-5)

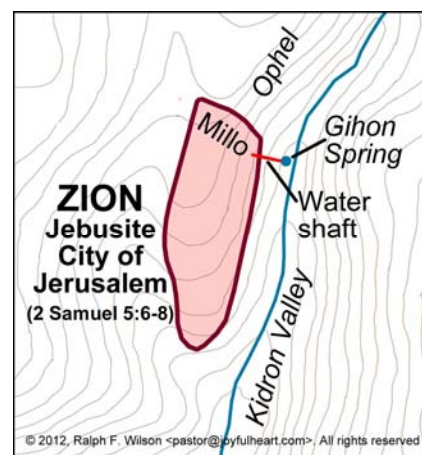
Q1. (2 Samuel 3:22-39) Why does Joab slay Abner? Is he justified in doing so? How does this affect his king's unification plans? Why do you think Joab is so blind? How can our spiritual blindness get in the way of God working out His plan in our lives?

Q2. (2 Samuel 5:1-5) Approximately how long has it been since David had been anointed king by Samuel? (See chart: Chronology of the Life of David). Why did the fulfillment of God's word take so long? How would you evaluate David's patience concerning this prophecy that he would be king? How would you measure your own patience concerning what you believe God has promised you?

Jerusalem (5:6-8)

- **Jerusalem** is the most-frequently mentioned name. It appears in Egyptian Execration texts of nineteenth-eighteenth centuries BC, in diplomatic correspondence from Tell el-Amarna in Egypt, and in the Assyrian account of Sennacherib's 701 BC siege.
- **Salem** is probably a shortened form of this (Genesis 14:18; Psalm 76:2).
- **Jebus** recalls the Jebusites that lived there (Joshua 18:28; Judges 19:10-11; 1 Chronicles 11:4-5).
- **Zion** refers to the stronghold taken by David (2 Samuel 5:7; 1 Kings 8:1). Later Zion comes to refer to the whole city, not just the east ridge.
- **City of David** is used to name the city after its conqueror (2 Samuel 5:7), though the term sometimes refers specifically to the original city David captured (2 Chronicles 32:5).

Q3. (2 Samuel 5:17-25) Why does David inquire of the Lord before he attacks the Philistines the first time? What would have happened if he thought he knew how to attack the Philistines, and didn't inquire of the Lord the second time? Why do we often want to figure out the process so we can act independently, rather than wait on God as a way of life? What does that say about



God? What does that say about us?

Discipleship Lessons

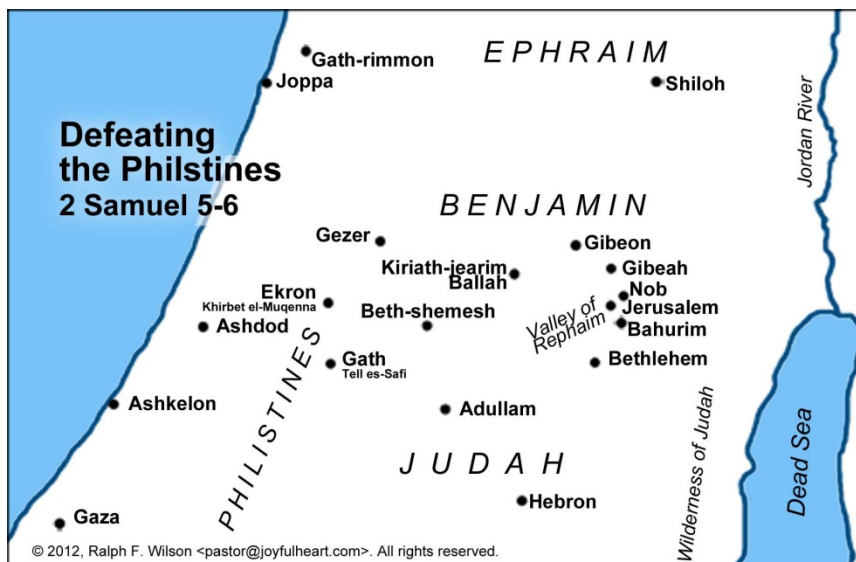
1. **Patience.** Samuel had anointed David as king when he was perhaps 15, but he doesn't become king over Judah until he is 30, and doesn't become king over all Israel until he is 37. We have to be patient as God works out His will in His time.
2. **Diplomacy.** Sometimes we have a very simplistic view of doing God's will. Sometimes our efforts on God's behalf look like "a bull in a china shop." Just as David developed relationships and worked through careful diplomacy to bring about a united kingdom, so our ministries must be characterized by grace, wisdom, and love in the way that we work with people and groups as agents of God's Kingdom. Knowing God's will isn't enough; how we facilitate it is important, too.
3. **Seeking God.** David inquires of the Lord on three occasions in these chapters: (1) Where to settle after his exile, (2) How to attack the Philistine troops, and (3) How to attack the Philistines when they come again. If we think we know it all and stop seeking God, we get in a lot of trouble.
4. **Self-interest.** One of David's biggest obstacles to uniting all Israel is Joab's single-minded intention to avenge Abner's killing of his brother Asahel. Joab not only lacked the right to extract blood vengeance, but by his actions he delayed David's peace initiative by months or years. We have to surrender our own priorities if we are to serve the King.

Key Verses

"Then the men of Judah came to Hebron and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah." (2 Samuel 2:4a)

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

the LORD said to you, 'You will shepherd my people Israel, and you will become their ruler.''" When all the elders of Israel had come to King David at Hebron, the king made a compact with them at Hebron before the LORD, and they anointed David king over Israel." (2 Samuel 5:1-3)



8. David Brings the Ark to Jerusalem (2 Samuel 6)

Q1. (2 Samuel 6:1-10) Why does God strike Uzzah? Why is David so angry?

Q2. (2 Samuel 6:11-13) How should the ark have been transported? How are Uzzah and David responsible if they don't know the provisions of the Mosaic Law? What does David's mistake in this incident teach us about seeking to do God's will?

Q3. (2 Samuel 6:14, 22) How would you describe David's approach to worship? What does his dancing here teach us? What do we learn about praise from the psalms he wrote? Does what others might think affect your ability to worship? How has God been working in your life to teach you to worship him in spirit and in truth?

Q4. (2 Samuel 6:16, 20-23) What has happened to Michal that she is so bitter at David? How does her bitterness cause her to misjudge what she sees? Are you bitter towards God about something in your past? What effect might it have on your spiritual life? How can you find healing from the bitterness? What would have happened if David had conformed his worship expression to his wife's preferences?

Discipleship Lessons

1. **Seeking God's Way.** David brings the ark to Jerusalem, but he doesn't take time to study the Word to see how it should be done. When he consults the Word, God blesses his efforts. We are to do God's will God's way!
2. **Desire to Worship.** David sets an example before us of joyful, self-less worship. He doesn't seem to care what others think; he will worship his God! So often we are passive about worship. One of the messages of this lesson and the Book of Psalms is involvement in and love of worship.
3. **Bitterness and Despising.** Michal despises her husband's enthusiastic worship of Yahweh because she allowed bitterness into her heart. We should search and cleanse our hearts so that our hurts don't keep us from understanding what God loves and desires of us.

Key Verses

"David and the whole house of Israel were celebrating with all their might before the LORD, with songs and with harps, lyres, tambourines, sistrums and cymbals." (2 Samuel 6:5)

"David, wearing a linen ephod, danced before the LORD with all his might, while he and the entire house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouts and the sound of trumpets." (2 Samuel 6:14-15)

9. The Davidic Covenant (2 Samuel 7)

Q1. (2 Samuel 7:1-7) Why is Nathan so quick to give David approval to build the temple? What should have Nathan done instead? What is the danger of leaders and followers too quickly approving major spiritual directions without really waiting upon the Lord? David's heart is *partly* right about building the temple though. Which part does David have right?

Promises: (1) a great name (7:8b-9; cf. 8:13), (2) a secure homeland for his people (7:10-11a), (3) peace (7:11b), (4) a dynasty (7:11c), (5) a son who will build the temple (7:12-13), (6) an everlasting kingdom (7:13).

Ten psalms presuppose this covenant with David, the so-called Royal Psalms (2, 18, 20, 21, 45, 72, 89, 101, 110, 144).

Q2. (2 Samuel 7:8-13) What are the main promises of the Davidic Covenant? Are these promises conditional or unconditional? Why does conditionality make a difference? Which of these promises is most important to you as a Christian?

Q3. (2 Samuel 7:14-16) There is a conditional aspect in the Davidic Covenant – that God will discipline David's descendants when they sin. How did God discipline David & descendants?

Did God Forsake His Covenant with David? Psalm 89:35-39, 46; Jeremiah 33:14-22; Isaiah 9:7; Daniel 2:44; Matthew 26:64; Daniel 7:13-14; Luke 1:32-33.

Q4. The Davidic kingdom did end in 587 BC – temporarily. How did God fulfill his promises in the Davidic Covenant? In what ways is it fulfilled in Christ?

Disciple Lessons

1. **Partial Revelation.** We may have a glimmer of what God's plan is, but we must be patient until he reveals it and confirms it to us.
2. **Quick to Speak.** Don't be too quick to confirm someone else's vision, like Nathan was. Rather say, "Let me pray about that." Then seek God and listen for his voice. Don't speak before God speaks.
3. **Patience.** Don't be discouraged if God's promises don't seem to come to pass. If he has indeed promised something, he will fulfill it in his time.
4. **Jesus Christ.** Jesus the Messiah is the fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant, which will be complete when he returns.

Key Verses

"This is what the LORD Almighty says: I took you from the pasture and from following the flock to be ruler over my people Israel. I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have cut off all your enemies from before you. Now I will make your name great, like the names of the greatest men of the earth." (2 Samuel 7:8-9)

"The LORD declares to you that the LORD himself will establish a house for you: When your days are over and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, who will come from your own body, and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.... Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever." (2 Samuel 7:11-13, 16)

"I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with the rod of men, with floggings inflicted by men. But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you." (2 Samuel 7:14-15)

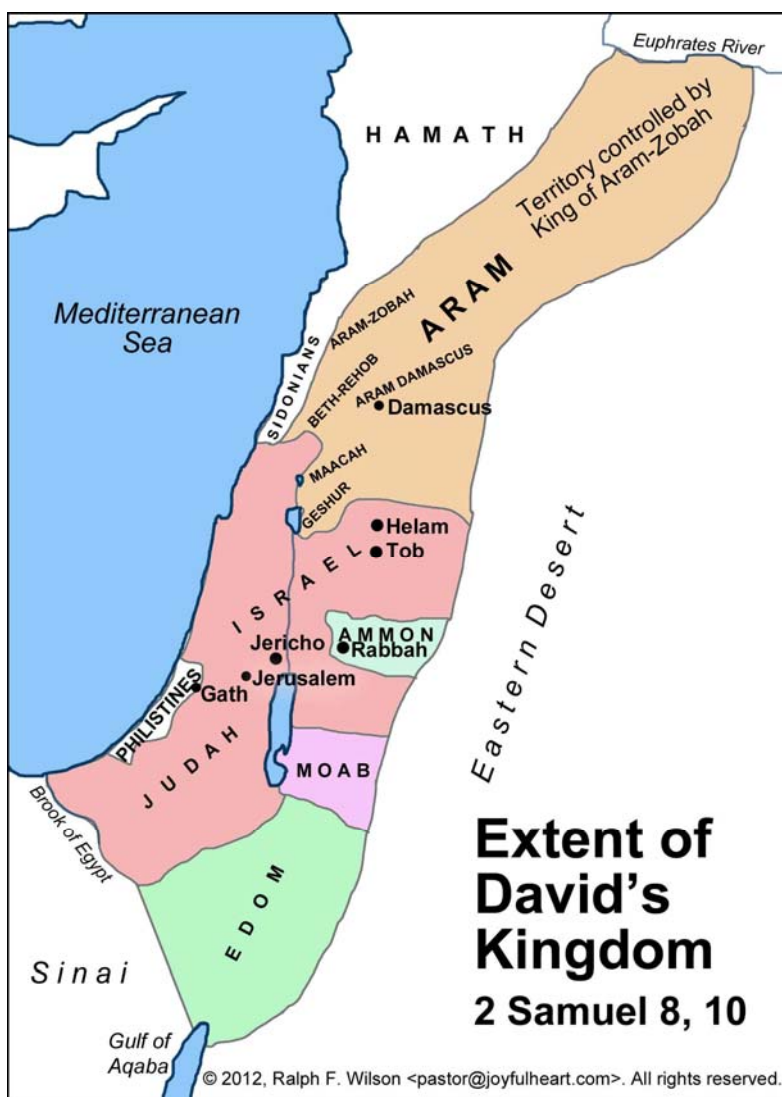
10. David's Rise, Fall, and Punishment (2 Samuel 8-12)

Q1. (2 Samuel 9:1-13) Why does David honor Mephibosheth? What does this teach us about David's character?

Q2. (2 Samuel 11) How can a "man after God's own heart" do something so ugly, so despicable as this – first adultery and then murder by proxy to cover it up? What does this teach us about our human condition? What is our problem as humans? How can David ever recover his integrity after this?

Q3. (2 Samuel 12:1-10) Why might it be dangerous for Nathan the prophet to confront the king? What device does Nathan employ get the king to listen to him? How does David's condemnation of the rich man's greed help him acknowledge and condemn his own actions?

Q4. (2 Samuel 12:10-14) What punishment does David deserve? What does he get instead? How does this punishment relate to the provisions of the Davidic Covenant in 2 Samuel 7:14-15? How do David's sins hurt God's glory? How do our sins reflect on Jesus Christ?



Lessons for Disciples

1. **Faithfulness.** God expects us to fulfill our promises, as David does when he honors Jonathan's son Mephibosheth – at his own risk.
2. **Arrogance.** God's blessings can make us feel self-sufficient, arrogant, and spiritually dull to God's voice unless we are very careful to remain humble and thankful. Don't let blessing make you spiritually soft.
3. **Temptation.** Even godly men and women can be tempted and fall. We must put a guard around ourselves so that we don't ruin what God by his grace has built in our lives. You are not immune.
4. **Confession.** Covering up our sin can be worse than the sin itself. Honesty and confession are better than covering up (Psalm 32:3-5).

5. **Confrontation.** Confronting people with their sins is a delicate task that God sometimes asks his servants to perform – with gentleness (Galatians 6:2-3). Don't take this upon yourself, but if God shows you how to do it, you can save a precious believer from ruin.
6. **Repentance.** God will honor repentance, if we come with humility and turn away from our sin. Psalm 51 can help you do this. (See Appendix 8. David's Psalms of Repentance.)
7. **Mercy.** Our God is merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in love and faithfulness (Exodus 34:6-7; Numbers 14:18; Psalm 86:15; 103:8). You can trust your future into the hands of such a God, even if you have sinned grievously. Jesus is your Savior!

Key Verses

"The thing David had done displeased the LORD." (2 Samuel 11:27b)

"Nathan said to David, 'You are the man!'" (2 Samuel 12:7a)

"Then David said to Nathan, 'I have sinned against the LORD.' Nathan replied, 'The LORD has taken away your sin. You are not going to die. But because by doing this you have made the enemies of the LORD show utter contempt, the son born to you will die.'" (2 Samuel 12:13-14)

11. Rape, Murder, and Conspiracy in David's Family (2 Samuel 13:1-15:13)

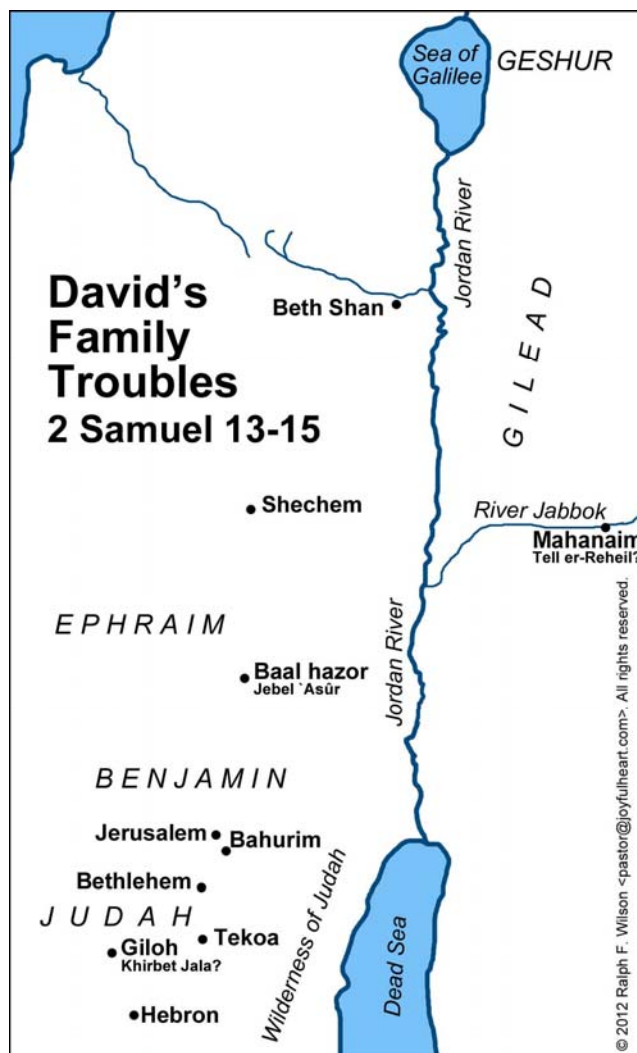
Q1. (2 Samuel 13:21-22) Why do you think David doesn't discipline his son Amnon for his sexual assault on his half-sister? What are the consequences of David's inaction?

Q2. (2 Samuel 13:39-14:24) Why do you think Joab conspires to get David to bring Absalom home? Why do you think David does not immediately show Absalom his favor?

Q3. (2 Samuel 15:1-6) What are the elements of Absalom's public relations campaign to win over the people to his side? How effective is it? What should David have done differently? Which of David's weaknesses does Absalom exploit?

Factors in Absalom's Favor

1. **David's Age.** David is now over 60, Absalom about 30 years old and in the prime of life. David's most ardent supporters are now old men. David is an honored "has-been," while Absalom is the up-and-coming king for the new generation.
2. **David's Corruption.** David is rich and arrogant, less spiritual influence David's sin weakened his throne and "made the enemies of the Lord show utter contempt" (12:14).
3. **Absalom's Title.** Absalom has been crown prince. For nearly a decade.
4. **Absalom's Beauty.** Absalom is a handsome man – and studies show that handsome men and beautiful women succeed in life more easily than others, all things being equal.
5. **Absalom's Perceived Power.** Projects an image of power and glory with his chariot, horses, and 50-man escort.
6. **Absalom's Populism.** Absalom has positioned himself as a man of the people. David is out-of-touch (see 19:5-7), while Absalom promises hope and change.
7. **Tribal Resentment of David.** David is resented by elements of Saul's tribe of Benjamin, (2 Samuel 16:5-13; 20:1-2) plus tension between Judah the 10 northern tribes (19:41-43).
8. **David's Taxation and Conscription.** We see hints of taxation and compulsory military service David's census. (2 Sam 24; 1 Samuel 8:11-18).
9. **Absalom's Brilliant Execution of a Coup.**



10. **Yahweh's Judgment.** Prophecy: "The sword will never depart from your house" (12:10).

Discipline: "When he does wrong, I will punish him with the rod of men, with floggings inflicted by men" (7:14).

Q4. (2 Samuel 13-15:13) It's difficult to find positive spiritual lessons in these sad and grim chapters. What negative spiritual lessons do you find?

Disciple Lessons

1. **Prophecy.** Nathan's prophecy (12:10-11) comes to pass – with terrible results. God's judgment is inevitable.
2. **Learned Behaviors.** The sins of the father often become the sins of the son. We don't sin in isolation. Our children see us and emulate our behavior. Parents, your most important ministry is to raise your children in the Lord by your godly example.
3. **Discipline.** We must discipline our children so long as they are under our authority. In many cultures, children are considered adults in their late teens. In other cultures, children are under their parents' authority far longer. We must do what we can. To neglect our responsibility to discipline shows a lack of love for our children (Proverbs 3:12; 13:24; 19:18; 22:15; 23:13; 29:15; 29:17). Showing favoritism to your own children rather than disciplining them lowers you in others' minds. When the king excuses his children for blatant crimes, he rapidly loses any credibility for righteousness and justice.
4. **Situational Awareness.** Pay attention to what is going on around you! Take action early, if you need to. David should have been aware of Absalom's attempts to undermine him, and taken steps to protect himself and his kingdom. In this case, neglect is extremely costly. Leaders in churches and other organizations need to know who is conspiring against them. We serve Christ in a fallen world.

Key Verses

"In all Israel there was not a man so highly praised for his handsome appearance as Absalom. From the top of his head to the sole of his foot there was no blemish in him." (2 Samuel 14:25)

12. David's Exile from Jerusalem (2 Samuel 15:14-20:26)

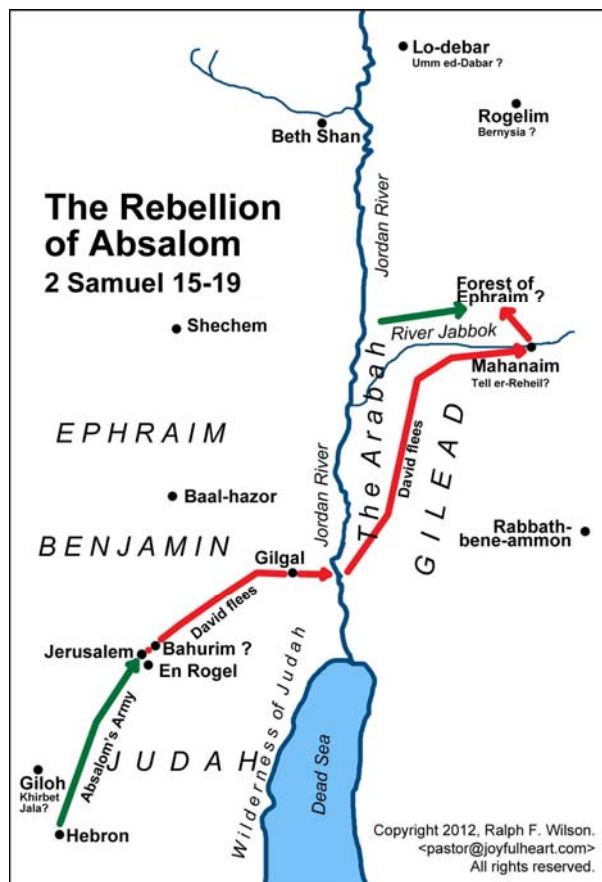
Q1. (2 Samuel 15:14-30) Why does David flee Jerusalem rather than stay and fight? What are David's emotions during this retreat? Why doesn't he take the ark with him into exile? Does this exhibit faith, fatalism, or submission? What does this tell us about his faith?

Q2. (2 Samuel 16:5-14) Why doesn't David silence Shimei son of Gera from cursing him? Is this a political decision or a spiritual decision? What does it tell us about David's faith?

The Psalm of a Pursued King at Peace with His God (Psalm 3)

Q3. (2 Samuel 18:1-19:8) Why does David command mercy for Absalom in the battle? Why does Joab kill him against David's orders? How does David's loud mourning threaten his kingdom? What does this say about his followers' loyalty? What does it say about David's faith? About his weaknesses?

Q4. (2 Samuel 16-20) What does this passage teach us about David's character and faith? What does it reveal about Joab's character? What kind of faith do you see in Joab? What does this passage teach us about the importance of friends? Is Joab really David's friend?



Characters in 2 Samuel 15-20

Absalom – David's son, usurper to David's throne.

Abiathar – high priest, loyal to David, with son Jonathan.

Abishai son of Zeruiah – one of David's generals, brother of Joab and nephew of David.

Adoniram – in charge of forced labor for David.

Ahimaaz – son of Zadok, a priest who carries news to David from Jerusalem, and later from the battle in the Forest of Ephraim.

Ahithophel – David's trusted counselor who has deserted David to support Absalom. Later hangs himself when his wise counsel isn't followed.

Amasa – Absalom's general, a nephew of David and cousin of Joab, later made commander by David, then murdered by Joab.

Barzillai the Gileadite – a long-time wealthy friend of David's from Rogelim, who brings food and bedding, later asks David to honor his son Kimham or Chimham in his stead.

Cushite – a messenger who brings news of the battle in the Forest of Ephraim.

Hushai the Arkite – David's friend and counselor who agrees to stay in Jerusalem, pretending to support Absalom, but actually there to frustrate Ahithophel's counsel.

Ira the Jairite – David's priest.

Ittai the Gittite – general who is loyal to David, who leads 600 Gittites from Gath.

Jehoiada – later David's general over the Kerethites and Pelethites.

Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud – David's recorder

Joab son of Zeruiah – David's commander and general, nephew of David, brother of Abishai, and cousin of Amasa.

Jonathan – son of Abiathar, a priest who carries news to David from Jerusalem.

Kerethites or Cherethites – Soldiers from a Philistine clan from the Negev desert who formed David's bodyguard along with the Pelethites.

Kimham or Chimham – son of Barzillai the Gileadite, who enters Jerusalem with David at his father's request.

Makir son of Ammiel – one of David's supporters from Lo Debar, who brings food and bedding.

Mephibosheth – son of Jonathan, Saul's grandson, who is crippled in his feet and who had been honored by David. He is betrayed by his servant Ziba.

Pelethites – Soldiers, probably Philistines who served as David's bodyguard along with the Kerethites or Cherethites.

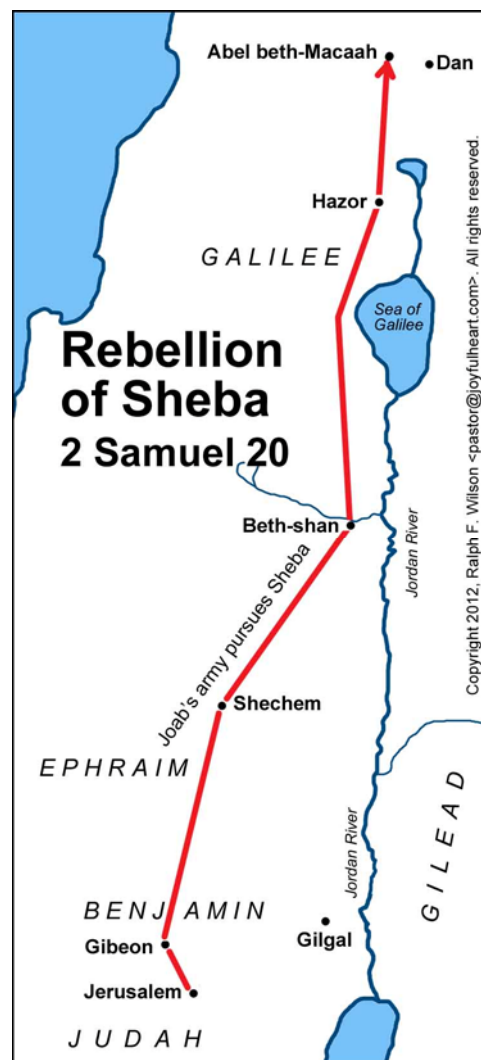
Sheba son of Bicti – a Benjamite from the hill country of Ephraim, who rallies the northern tribes of Israel to rebel against David.

Shimei son of Gera – member of Saul's tribe of Benjamin who curses David as he leaves Jerusalem.

Shobi son of Nahash – one of David's supporters from Rabbah in Ammon, who brings food and bedding.

Zadok – high priest, loyal to David, with son Ahimaaz.

Ziba – servant of Mephibosheth, who supports David but tries to get David to believe that Mephibosheth supports Absalom.



Lessons for Disciples

1. **Weakness and strength.** When we are weak and struggling, we often turn afresh to the Lord and become stronger in him (2 Corinthians 12:9-10)
2. **Friends.** Our true friends are those who rally around us when we're down and they have nothing to gain by the friendship. Friends show generosity in our times of trouble. Which friend of yours does God want to bless through you this week?
3. **Submission.** In defeat, we can learn submission to the Lord's will, much better than when we've fresh from victory.
4. **Sovereignty of God.** The battle is in the hands of the Lord.
5. **Emotions.** If we're not careful, our emotions can sabotage God's will for our lives. David's love for his son and his grief at Absalom's death almost ruined what God intended – victory and return. Sometimes, when we are overwrought, we need to listen to our friends' counsel and follow it.

Key Verses

"Take the ark of God back into the city. If I find favor in the LORD's eyes, he will bring me back and let me see it and his dwelling place again. But if he says, 'I am not pleased with you,' then I am ready; let him do to me whatever seems good to him." (2 Samuel 15:25-26)

"Let him alone, and let him curse; for the LORD has bidden him. It may be that the LORD will look on my distress, and the LORD will repay me with good for this cursing of me today." (2 Samuel 16:11b-12)

"For the LORD had ordained to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, so that the LORD might bring ruin on Absalom." (2 Samuel 17:16)

"When David came to Mahanaim, Shobi son of Nahash from Rabbah of the Ammonites, and Machir son of Ammiel from Lo-debar, and Barzillai the Gileadite from Rogelim, brought beds, basins, and earthen vessels, wheat, barley, meal, parched grain, beans and lentils, honey and curds, sheep, and cheese from the herd, for David and the people with him to eat; for they said, 'The troops are hungry and weary and thirsty in the wilderness.'" (2 Samuel 17:1-29)

"The king ordered Joab and Abishai and Ittai, saying, 'Deal gently for my sake with the young man Absalom.' And all the people heard when the king gave orders to all the commanders concerning Absalom." (2 Samuel 18:5)

"The king was deeply moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept; and as he went, he said, 'O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would I had died instead of you, O Absalom, my son, my son!'" (2 Samuel 18:33)

"Shall anyone be put to death in Israel this day? For do I not know that I am this day king over Israel?" (2 Samuel 19:22)

13. The Legacy of David (2 Samuel 21-1 Kings 2)

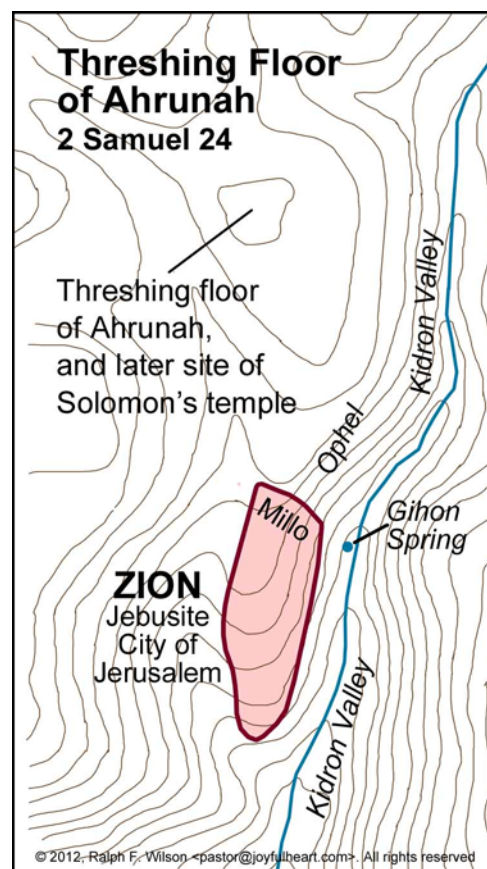
Hebrew Poetry

1. **Imagery.** Hebrew poetry often uses vivid images. In this psalm we see rock, fortress, stronghold, “waves of death” swirling, “cords of the grave” entangling one’s feet, and so on. Don’t expect to take this imagery literally. These images are figurative, used to bring thoughts and feelings to the fore. Psalms are designed to be read aloud and experienced, not just studied and analyzed.
2. **Parallelism.** We normally see two types of parallelism. Occasionally, we’ll see antithetic parallelism, where the first line says the positive, while the second line says the same thing in a negative way (e.g. Psalm 1:6; 34:10; Proverbs 3:33). But much more common is so-called synonymous or synthetic parallelism, where the first line says it one way, and the second (and occasionally third line) says the same thing with a bit of variation, moving the idea forward slightly.
3. **Beat.** There are many theories about how the beat of a line worked, but Hebrew scholars don’t really understand it very well.
4. **Acrostic.** Nine psalms in the Psalter (but neither of the two we examine in this lesson) are acrostic in nature, that is, each verse or section begins with a successive letter of the Hebrew alphabet (Psalms 9, 10, 25, 34, 37, 111, 112, 119, and 145).

Q1. (2 Samuel 22 = Psalm 18) What do you find the most inspiring in the language of this psalm? What encourages you the most? Write down all the various titles and metaphors used of God in this psalm.

David is represented in 2 Samuel 23:1-7 as:

1. **Prophet.** “Oracle,” which appears twice in verse 1, is *ne’um*, “utterance, oracle,” a root that is used exclusively of divine speaking. He also recognized elsewhere in the Bible as a prophet (1 Chronicles 28:19; Matthew 22:43; Acts 2:30; 4:25).
2. **Israelite.** He is the “son of Jesse.” As a true Israelite, he is qualified to be king (Deuteronomy 17:15).
3. **Appointed.** He is a humble shepherd who has been “raised up” or “appointed” to this role by God himself. David is “the king the LORD your God chooses” (Deuteronomy 17:15).
4. **Anointed.** He was anointed by Samuel, of course, but at the direction of “the God of Jacob.” The Holy Spirit who comes upon him at his anointing is to change the course of his life. He is the ancestor of the Anointed One, the Messiah (Hebrew *māshîaḥ*).



5. **Sweet Psalmist** (KJV). “Israel’s beloved singer” (NIV margin) or “the sweet psalmist of Israel” (KJV).

Q2. (2 Samuel 23:1-7) How does David describe himself in verse 1? In what sense was David a prophet? What is the main message of verses 3-7? How can this psalm guide government officials and elected leaders in our day?

What’s Wrong with a Census? Possibilities include:

1. Failure to collect the half-shekel tax. Exodus 30:11-12; Numbers 1:2-3; Exodus 13:2; 18:15-16; Numbers 35:31-32).
2. Placing excessive burdens on the people. 1 Kings 12:4, 10-11; 1 Chronicles 21:6)
3. An attitude of pride and lack of trust. 1 Samuel 14:6; Isaiah 31:1

Q3. (2 Samuel 24:14-25) Why does David choose the punishment of a plague on the people rather than his other choices? David insists on paying Araunah for the threshing floor and the sacrifices. What principle drives this decision? How should this principle guide our own giving to God? 1 Chronicles 22:7-10, 11, 14, 19; 29:5b, 9; 28:11-12, 19; 22:1-2; 23:2-5 and chapters 24-26).

Q4. (1 Chronicles 22-29) Why do you think David prepares for the temple, even after the Lord refuses to let him build it? How did David cooperate with the Holy Spirit in designing the temple and its worship? How did David’s example in giving motivate others to give?

Discipleship Lessons

1. **Difficult Decisions.** It’s hard to know what to make of the incident where the Gibeonites demand justice. David seeks the Lord, he does his best to walk a tightrope between covenants, promises, and law. Some situations that leaders face have no great solutions at all. We can’t hide from making decisions, even though the decisions may leave no one happy.
2. **Time to Step Back.** David’s men finally prohibited David from going out to battle with his troops, because he was too weak. Knowing when to retire or step back from active work or ministry is difficult for us. Often our friends and family know better than we. We need to listen.
3. **Praise and Faith.** There are many lessons contained within 2 Samuel 22 = Psalm 18. These are lessons of praise, of faith, of God’s great power, of righteous living, and of salvation to those who trust in God. We need to learn to praise God with a vision of faith no matter what we are going through.
4. **Leading Righteously.** David’s “Last Words” remind us of the importance of ruling righteously. You may not be a king, but you may be a boss, a supervisor, a church officer, or on a board or committee that makes decision affecting the lives of others. God expects you to lead with righteousness, rather than with self-serving or partiality.
5. **Trusting in God’s Grace.** In the incident of the census, David has to make a decision about which penalty God will bring on the people. Though we don’t normally have a clear choice as leaders, we see that David makes his choice based on his strong trust in the mercy of God. Trusting in God’s mercy when we don’t deserve anything but punishment is a good example for us to follow.
6. **Sacrificial Giving.** When David is offered a ready-made sacrifice for free, he refuses to take it without paying because he understands the principle of sacrificial giving: “I will

not sacrifice to the Lord my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing." If our giving is just a token or a pittance, where we could afford more, it doesn't honor God.

7. **Preparing for the Future.** David spends much of his later years in stockpiling materials for the temple that he knows won't be built in his lifetime. As Paul says,

"So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. The one who plants and the one who waters have a common purpose, and each will receive wages according to the labor of each." (1 Corinthians 3:7-8)

If we focus only on short-term goals, we short-change the future.

8. **Participants with the Sovereign God.** It is God's plan to put Solomon on the throne rather than Adonijah. To accomplish His will, God uses some leaders who believe the prophetic vision concerning Solomon's reign: Nathan, Benaiah, Zadok, Shimei, and Rei. God may well be using you to accomplish His will in your community. Will you be faithful to the vision God has given, even though it is risky?

Key Verses

"Never again will you go out with us to battle, so that the lamp of Israel will not be extinguished." (2 Samuel 21:17c)

²The LORD is my rock,
my fortress and my deliverer;
³my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge,
my shield and the horn of my salvation.
He is my stronghold, my refuge and my savior –
from violent men you save me.

⁴I call to the LORD, who is worthy of praise,
and I am saved from my enemies." (1 Samuel 22:2-4)

²The Spirit of the LORD spoke through me;
his word was on my tongue.

³The God of Israel spoke,
the Rock of Israel said to me...." (2 Samuel 23:2-3a)

"Let us fall into the hands of the LORD, for his mercy is great; but do not let me fall into the hands of men." (2 Samuel 24:14)

"When David saw the angel who was striking down the people, he said to the LORD, 'I am the one who has sinned and done wrong. These are but sheep. What have they done? Let your hand fall upon me and my family.'" (2 Samuel 24:17)

"I will not sacrifice to the LORD my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing." (2 Samuel 24:24a)

"As surely as the LORD lives, who has delivered me out of every trouble, I will surely carry out today what I swore to you by the LORD, the God of Israel: Solomon your son shall be king after me, and he will sit on my throne in my place." (1 Kings 1:29)

"Praise be to the LORD, the God of Israel, who has allowed my eyes to see a successor on my throne today." (1 Kings 1:48)

(Optional) David's Psalms of Repentance (Psalms 51 and 32)

Q1. (Psalm 51:1-9) It seems that in verses 1-9 David emphasizes God's mercy, his own sinfulness, and the completeness of God's hoped for cleansing. Is it healthy to dwell on your own sinfulness? Why or why not? Does a person who has sinned greatly appreciate forgiveness more than one who has not? Why or why not?

Q2. (Psalm 51:10-11) In what way can God give us a "pure heart" after great sin? How would you define a pure heart? How does God purify our hearts? How does he purify our minds?

Q3. (Psalm 51:16-17) How does one achieve a truly "broken and contrite heart"? What are the earmarks of this condition? How does this differ from "being sorry" for a sin? How does humility relate to this condition?

Q4. (Psalm 32:2-5) How does self-deceit operate with sin to enslave us? How does confession enable us to get free from sin? Why do we sometimes resist the truth about ourselves? What does it take to get us to see truth sometimes?

Q5. (Psalm 32:8-10) How does sin make us stubborn? Why is it nearly impossible to discern God's will for us when we hold on to unconfessed sin.

Key Verses

"Against you, you only, have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight." (Psalm 51:4)

"Surely you desire truth in the inner parts;
you teach me wisdom in the inmost place.
Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean;
wash me, and I will be whiter than snow." (Psalm 51:6-7)

"Create in me a pure heart, O God,
and renew a steadfast spirit within me.
Do not cast me from your presence
or take your Holy Spirit from me." (Psalm 51:10-11)

"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart,
O God, you will not despise." (Psalm 51:17)

¹Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven,
whose sins are covered.

²Blessed is the man whose sin the LORD does not count against him
and in whose spirit is no deceit.

³When I kept silent, my bones wasted away
through my groaning all day long.

⁴For day and night your hand was heavy upon me;
my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer. *Selah.*

⁵Then I acknowledged my sin to you
and did not cover up my iniquity.
I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the LORD' –
and you forgave the guilt of my sin." (32:1-5)