

The Book of 2 Samuel

Listed Scriptures

2 Samuel 1, 6, 22

Lesson Aim

- 1) That the students may acquire knowledge about events in the life of David
- 2) That the students may learn to rely on God for all things, like David did
- 3) That the students may learn the true meaning of repentance

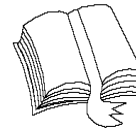
Memory Verse

“God is my strength and power, and He makes my way perfect. He makes my feet like the feet of deer, and sets me on my high places.” (2 Sam 22:33, 34)

Bible Reading For This Week (for students and teachers)

2 Samuel 1, 6, 22

B I B L E B A C K G R O U N D



The book of 2 Samuel could have been written by Nathan the prophet and Gad the seer (cf. 1 Chron 29:29). It is fundamentally a chronicle of the kingdom of David.

A Note about Mortal Sin

There are sins for which forgiveness can be asked but there are some sins which cannot be forgiven. 1 John 5:16 mentions such a distinction: “If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin which does not lead to death, he will ask, and He will give him life for those who commit sin not leading to death. There is sin leading to death. I do not say that he should pray about that.”

Your students may ask why David was forgiven even though he committed mortal sins, sins leading to death. Both murder and adultery are sins leading to death. If asked, it would be necessary to explain about sins leading to death.

Under the Old Testament, forgiveness came directly from God, through repentance, sin and trespass offerings (cf. Lev 4, 5) and also the yearly Atonement made by the high priest (Lev 16). Under the New Testament, our sins are forgiven directly because the Lord Jesus has fulfilled for us the eternal atonement. In Hebrews 10:19–27, the Bible tells us that Jesus Christ opens up a living way of salvation for mankind. “[B]y the blood of Jesus,” there is a “new and living way” (vv. 19, 20). Jesus is the High Priest who is prefigured by the high priests in the Old Testament. He “does not need, as those high priests, to offer sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people’s, for He did it once and for all when He offered up Himself” (Heb 7:24–27). Hence, “if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins” (Heb 10:26). “It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, . . . if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God” (Heb 6:4–6).

It is therefore necessary that we warn our students of the gravity of committing sins like David’s sins, adultery and murder.

W A R M U P



What do you think are the most important qualities of a successful walk in our life of faith, qualities that will lead us to the heavenly kingdom? (Students respond.)

To enter the kingdom of God, to gain God’s favor, one does not need to possess a lot of biblical knowledge or eloquence. Neither does God require us to offer a lot of money or sacrifices. It is also not about working a lot for God. But don’t be mistaken. It does not mean that offering our time, effort or even money to God is not important. Of course, we also must be equipped with the knowledge of God’s word so that we know how to walk in God’s way.

One of the most important qualities is something we studied last week, which is obedience to God. Today, we are going to continue to study about the life of David. We will learn that David is truly one who obeyed God and relied on Him always. When he slipped and committed sin, it was his genuine repentance that led God to forgive him and accept him again. David is certainly someone worthy of our emulation.



2 Samuel- *The Life of David*

The main narrative concerning David may be summed up in the following three sections: (I) David’s kingdom, (II) David’s sins & (III) David in his old age.



A. David’s Kingdom

After the death of Saul, David did not immediately become king over all Israel. Only the house of Judah followed him, and he ruled over Judah, at Hebron, for seven and a half years (2:10, 11). The men of Saul were at war with the men of David for quite some time before David finally became king over all Israel (3:1, 5:1). So, David reigned over all Israel for thirty-three years at Jerusalem. He led the Israelites against the Jebusites and conquered Zion, which was made the capital city and was named City of David.

Right after he became king over all Israel, David sought to bring the ark of the covenant into the capital city. However, during the journey, Uzzah was struck dead when he reached out his hand to touch the ark. That frightened David, who decided to leave the ark in the house of Obed-Edom. For this, the household of Obed-Edom was blessed. Upon hearing this, David’s fears were soothed and the ark was ultimately transported to the City of David. There was a big celebration for this special occasion and David even danced, joining in the celebration.

Being king did not cause David to forget God. David further thought about building a temple for God (7:2). But, God spoke through the prophet Nathan that his descendant would be the one to build the temple for Him instead. However, God made a covenant with David, that his house would be kings forever, as long as they obeyed the word of God (cf. 1 Kgs 1:1–4).

David was a good king who treated all Israel well. Under his rule, there was peace for the Israelites as he subdued more Canaanite tribes, such as the Moabites, the Syrians and the Ammonites. He even went to great lengths to take care of the survivor in Jonathan’s family – his crippled son, Mephibosheth. David received Mephibosheth into his house and treated him like one of his own sons. This proves the nobility of David, and also his loyalty to the friendship he shared with Jonathan.

B. David's Sins- Adultery and Murder

As much as David was a God-fearing man, the peace and prosperity of his kingdom inevitably caused him to become complacent and lose his vigilance. One evening, as he rose from his afternoon nap and started taking a stroll on his rooftop, he saw a woman bathing (11:2). She was a very beautiful woman. Instead of checking himself, David went one step closer to sinning and decided to inquire more about her. He found out that the beautiful woman was Bathsheba, who was already married to Uriah, a loyal soldier of his army. This piece of information should have deterred David from thinking any more about Bathsheba. But, having been overtaken by his emotions, David allowed himself to succumb. He asked his men to bring the woman to him and he lay with her, thus committing the great sin of adultery. It was a violation of the seventh of the Ten Commandments! It is a sin leading to death.

If David had thought his sin could have simply been forgotten, he was wrong. Bathsheba became pregnant, and David had to come up with ways to hide his sin. Efforts to send Uriah home did not succeed. As a last resort, David arranged for Uriah to be stationed at the forefront of the most dangerous battle, and then for the army to desert him. It was murder albeit without using his own hands. Such ruthlessness is indeed unimaginable for a man whom we know as one after the heart of God! We can understand how frightening the sin of lust can become. One sin often leads to another, which is why we have to nip it in the bud before it grows on us. As the Bible says, "when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death" (Jas 1:15). We must never underestimate the destructive potential of the temptations around us!

David did not realize his grave sins until God sent Nathan the prophet to reprimand him (12:1–12). David was awakened from his stupor of sin. He repented immediately (12:13). Although God forgave him, God's punishment came upon David. The first calamity was the death of the baby born of adultery. Thereafter, more trouble befell David, as prophesied by Nathan, "the sword shall never depart from your house because you have despised [God]" (12:10).

Here is a list of the calamities that came upon David and his family:

- a. Amnon raped Tamar, his half-sister. Absalom, Tamar's brother, avenged his sister's rape and killed Amnon (Ch 13).
- b. Absalom fled from David's house after killing Amnon (Ch 14).
- c. Absalom gained many followers at Hebron and became their king. David had

to flee from his own son (Ch 15).

- d. Shimei cursed David (Ch 16).
- e. Absalom attempted to kill his own father (Ch 17).
- f. David retaliated against Absalom but instructed that Absalom be spared. Nevertheless, his men killed Absalom. David once again had to mourn the death of another son (Ch 18).
- g. After subduing the rebellion, David returned to Jerusalem only to face another revolt (Chs 19, 20).

Teaching Tips

If class size permits, it would be a good idea to have the students divide themselves into groups (or work individually) and take one of the above calamities each, read the biblical references in detail and retell the story to the rest of the class. That way, the students will be more familiar with the contents of the story, instead of the outline information given here.

C. David in His Old Age

- a. David's psalm of thanksgiving (Ch 22)
When God had given David rest from all his enemies, he praised the Lord God for having been his protection and shield (Ch 22). This psalm is a very good psalm for meditation when one is in trouble, for one can be assured that God will not forsake us just as He did not forsake David in his trouble. It is also a good psalm of thanksgiving, for God is worthy of our praises.
- b. David's census (Ch 24)
With the whole kingdom in peace and his own household in harmony after years of turmoil, David decided to have a census taken. As much as Joab, his general, advised against it, for it is a sign of pride and vanity to count one's subjects, David insisted on having the census taken. For this, David incurred the wrath of God and God gave him a choice regarding what punishment should be inflicted upon himself and the people. In the end, God sent a plague and seventy thousand Israelites were killed.
- c. Conclusion
As we look back at the whole life of David, we see that as a young lad, he was strong in faith and God's abidance was evident. By middle age, as

times became peaceful for him, he lost his vigilance, committing sins that finally implicated his whole family. This is a common pattern in the life of faith in many people. It is often hard to sustain one's faith all the way into old age, unless one stays watchful and relies on God all the time. We should also understand that no one is ever perfect in his faith and walk with God. Everyone has his or her own weaknesses. We should watch out for our own weaknesses, so that we may not falter.

C H E C K F O R U N D E R S T A N D I N G



1 How long did David reign in Hebron before he became king over all Israel and reigned in Jerusalem?

2 After David became king over all Israel, did he forget God? Name at least two incidents which showed that he honored God even after he was made king.

3 What was the result of David's complacency after his kingdom became settled as a superpower in the region?

4 Although God forgave David, what were the immediate consequences that he had to bear?

5 List some of the subsequent calamities that befell the house of David.

L I F E A P P L I C A T I O N



Part A- A Study of Psalm 51

Psalm 51 is a psalm of repentance, the prayer of David when Nathan the prophet went to see him and made him realize his grievous sins. Read the psalm once through. Then, answer the questions that follow:

1. In verse 1, David directly asks God to "have mercy upon" him. Locate other verses in which he also asks for forgiveness of his sins, even though he does not explicitly say "forgive me" or "have mercy upon me." (Answer: vv. 1b, 2, 7, 9, 14)

2. 1 John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." This tells us that to receive forgiveness at all, we must first confess our sins. Does David confess his sins before God in this prayer? In which verses can we find his confessions? (Answer: vv. 3–5)
3. David asks God to create in him a clean heart and renew a steadfast spirit within him (v. 10). What does it mean for a sinner to have a clean heart and a renewed spirit? (Answer: True repentance entails turning away from one's sins)
4. In verse 17, it is written "the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit . . . and a contrite heart." What are some other attitudes that one should have before God when asking for forgiveness?

Part B- Contrasting Examples

David sinned greatly against God. But, he repented sincerely and accepted God's punishment. In contrast, there are others in the Bible who did not repent of their sins, nor did they turn back even when given another chance. Below are a few examples. Do you harbor any of the attitudes present in these characters?

1. Cain and Abel were the offspring of Adam. When each of them made an offering to God, Abel's offering was found acceptable whereas Cain's was not. In his jealousy, Cain killed Abel, his very own brother. When God asked him where his brother was, did Cain confess his sin? How did Cain reply? (Read Gen 4:9)
2. Balaam was a prophet. Balak, the king of the Moabites, hired him to curse the Israelites, seeing that they were expanding in number and power. God specifically told Balaam that he was not supposed to go according to the commands of King Balak (Num 23:12). But Balaam did not heed the words of God. What happened to him finally, which managed to stop him from going on to curse the Israelites? (Read Num 23:22–31)
3. Saul was one who always tried to explain himself when found guilty of committing sin. When he unrightfully offered the sacrifices at Gilgal instead of waiting for Samuel to arrive, what was his excuse? (1 Sam 13:12)

When he once again did not keep God's instructions and spared the king of

Amalek and kept back animals, what was his excuse? (Read 1 Sam 15:15)

We see that Saul continued to be unrepentant throughout his life. In 1 Samuel 24:16–21, after David spared his life once again, he told David, “You are more righteous than I, for you have rewarded me with good, whereas I have rewarded you with evil.” One would think that he would have stopped persecuting David. But, he continued to try to seek David’s life. That is not true repentance.

4. Judas Iscariot succumbed to the lure of money and betrayed the Lord Jesus for thirty pieces of silver. Before he committed the sin that would smear his name for eternity, the Lord Jesus showed him His love and kindness. What was this great deed of love? (Read Jn 13:1–5) However, this act of great love and humility, which can be seen as a beckoning for one to turn from sin, could not touch the heart of Judas.

Final Thought:

In your own life, do you ever make excuses for yourself when you do something wrong? What were some of those situations? Discuss how you felt after the incident. What could you have done differently?

REFLECTION & PRAYER



“Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak” (Mt 26:41). These are the words of the Lord Jesus when He was at the Garden of Gethsemane. From the life of David, we know that even one who is truly faithful towards God can fall into sin. The lesson for us is to be watchful at all times. We have to watch out for sin, which creeps upon us slowly, often subtly disguised as the little pleasures or the cares and worries of life. As the Lord warns in Luke 21:34–36, “But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day comes on you unexpectedly . . . watch therefore and pray always . . .” May we always lead a watchful and prayerful life, to be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil in this perverse and crooked generation!