

Bible Study # 23
August 23, 1988
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Old Testament Series—II Samuel 1—20 and I
Chronicles 11—20

This evening we **are continuing our historical survey of the Old Testament**. We are focusing quite a bit on King David. In reality, two whole Bible studies in this series, the last Bible study and this one, **focus almost entirely on King David**. There is a reason for that. Next Bible study we will get the concluding matters pertaining to David and the beginning of Solomon's reign. These sections dealing with King David are very important. *They provide a background for the future history of Israel; and in reality, they provide a background for all of prophecy.*

There are lessons here for the individual in the example of David and others whose lives are mentioned and detailed here. If we are going to learn from someone's example, it is important to see what the person or various individuals did. Then you are able to read God's reaction to what they did and gain insight.

There is the broad grouping of the law, the Prophets and the Writings. Notice the difference by which we're taught. All through we're taught God's law, but in the books of the law—the first five books—we are given direct statements, "thou shall do this, thou shall not do that." There is a direct statement of law. Of course, there are also some examples, and we went through that, but there are many direct statements of law. We are taught in that way.

Now in this section, the Prophets' section (this is the historical portion of the Prophets), we are taught and instructed not primarily by any direct statement or Commandment. Direct statements or Commandments are virtually not given in this section. What we have, *continually in this section, are the examples of individuals, what people did and how God reacted to what they did.*

As we continue the outline of King David's life from last Bible study, basically, we would outline David's life in four sections: David the shepherd boy, David the hero, David the outcast, and David the king. Last Bible study we focused on David the shepherd boy, David the hero, and David the outcast. This evening, we **are focusing in on David the king**. We ended with the death of Saul last time, and we pick up the story in II Samuel. We will go through the first

20 chapters of II Samuel this evening. There is a parallel account in I Chronicles 11-20.

We start out with David's lamentation for Saul and Jonathan. Then we focus in on David ruling over Judah. David did not immediately become king over all Israel. Rather, David was acknowledged as king over Judah from Hebron. Then David captured Jerusalem from the Jebusites after about seven years of reign over Judah from Hebron—then he began to reign over all Israel, over all twelve tribes.

We then note David bringing the ark into Jerusalem. The ark had been in various places since the time that Israel had brought it through the wilderness in the tabernacle. There wasn't one permanent sanctuary. Shiloh was the location for a period of time. The ark was at various locations, but now David brought it into Jerusalem.

Then we find God making a covenant with David, called the Davidic Covenant. It is an important section. It becomes very important for prophecy to understand the special covenant God made with David. We notice the boundaries of David's kingdom being extended and established.

Then we focus on David's sin with Bathsheba, the story of Amnon's crime and Absalom's subsequent rebellion. Next is David's sin in numbering Israel, Adonijah's rebellion, David's charge to Solomon and finally the death of David.

From a prophetic standpoint, II Samuel 7:12-16 is one of the most important sections of Scripture because we have the promise that God made to David, that David's dynasty would go on forever. This obviously ultimately looks forward to the Messiah because notice here in II Samuel 7:16, "And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever." That obviously goes on into the future. Forever is a long time.

What did we find stated of the Messiah in the book of Luke when the angel announced the birth of Jesus to Mary?

Luke 1:32, "He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give Him the throne of His father David." Jesus Christ is going to sit upon David's throne. That's what it says in Luke 1:32. Jesus Christ the Messiah is going to sit upon the throne of David, and He is going to reign forever. This is based on II Samuel 7:16 where God told David, "your throne shall be established forever." This is obviously a promise that has overtones of the

Messiah because if the throne is to be established forever, then it has to ultimately be inhabited by someone other than just a simple human being. It is ultimately going to be occupied by Jesus Christ. That's what the angel told Mary prior to His birth, that He would sit upon the throne of His father David and His Kingdom would continue forever (Luke 1:33).

Is Christ, right now, sitting upon the throne of David? I think it's important to understand that, and you can prove very clearly that Jesus Christ is not sitting on the throne of David right now. Notice what it says here in Revelation 3:21, Christ's message to the Laodicean Church.

Revelation 3:21, "To him who overcomes, I will grant [future tense] to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame [past tense] and am sat down [present tense] with My Father on His throne."

Christ is going to sit on His throne, and whose throne is it? It's going to be the throne of David. He is going to sit on the throne of David and those that overcome will sit on that throne with Him. 'As I also overcame and am [presently] sat down with My Father—God the Father—in His throne.' Christ, right now, is not sitting on the throne of David; He is sitting with God the Father on the Father's throne in heaven.

David's throne was not in heaven. David's throne has never been in heaven. David's throne is a throne on the earth over Israel, and ultimately to expand out to rule over all the earth. Christ overcame; He conquered and as a result, was seated with the Father on the Father's throne. Those who overcome will sit with Him (future tense) on His throne when he returns to occupy that throne. Then we will also be able to sit with Him on that throne.

That's what He says in Matthew 25:31, "When the Son of man shall come [future tense] in all His glory and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory."

Verse 34, "Then shall the King say to them on His right hand, 'Come you blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'"" When Jesus returns in glory, He is going to sit upon the throne of His glory, which is the throne of David. He's coming back to sit upon a throne that does exist. He's not coming back to a non-existent throne. He's coming back to a throne that does exist; otherwise, how could He occupy it. If the throne of David ceased to exist thousands of years ago, how can it be said that Christ is coming back to sit upon that throne?

That's a remarkable prophecy in II Samuel 7:16. In fact, we might note what God told David through Nathan the prophet.

II Samuel 7:12-16, "When your days are fulfilled and you shall rest with your fathers, I will 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 [this is referring to Solomon]; I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men. But My mercy shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I removed from before you. And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever."

God specifically told David, 'Look, I am going to establish your descendants upon a throne forever. If they sin, if they transgress, I will correct them, punish them and chasten them. I am not saying they won't be dealt with if it's needed, but what I am promising you is I will not take my mercy from them in the way I took it from Saul when I just simply removed his family from the kingship. Regardless of what they do, I am not going to break the promise I am making to you. I will punish them if they need it, but I am not going to take my mercy from them.'

We have here the basis of understanding this promise God made David. On the basis of this, we have to realize the throne of David has to exist as a literal throne somewhere on the earth today and be occupied by descendants of David ruling over modern descendants of ancient Israel. That throne has to exist. It did not cease at the time King Zedekiah was taken, had his eyes put out, was led away in chains to Babylon, and the city of Jerusalem and the temple were burned. That was not the end of the dynasty of King David because God had made a promise, and God's word stood sure.

God punished the descendants of David at various times through history, but that dynasty has continued down until today. And, of course, that dynasty does exist and is currently occupied by Queen Elizabeth II, sitting on the throne of David. She is a direct descendant of King David.

That dynasty was preserved as Jeremiah the prophet took of Zedekiah's daughters and went from the Middle East to Ireland. One of the daughters, prior to the destruction of Jerusalem, had married a son of the high king of Ireland. She married him; the two of them and a child

that they had went with Jeremiah the prophet and others traveling from Jerusalem to Ireland in the aftermath of the destruction of Jerusalem. That royal house was the royal house that ruled as the high kings of ancient Ireland from Tara for many centuries until the throne was overturned in 841 A.D. by Kenneth MacAlpin who was the king of Scotland and a descendant of that royal house.

The insignia or the symbol of that stone was Jacob's pillar stone, that physical rock of the covenant. This physical symbol of the covenant was removed from Tara and taken to Scone in Scotland. Subsequently for several centuries, the kings of Scotland were crowned on it, and then at a later date, King Edward I of England who was a descendant of that royal house, moved the stone from Scone to London. When Jesus Christ returns it will finally be taken back to Jerusalem as the sign of the throne of David.

As we go through the book of Kings, we will notice that the kings in Jerusalem were crowned on the pillar, on that same stone. We will notice some insight into that a little later in this series of Bible studies. I think it is important to focus in on this set of scriptures because it is a key to understanding Bible prophecy—and it's rooted right here.

One of the greatest lessons that can be learned, just in terms of personal lessons and examples, comes from the aftermath of David's sin with Bathsheba. It is clearly shown that sin hurts; sin has physical consequences. You can repent, be sorry, have regret and genuine repentance, but there are physical consequences that inevitably follow. The more serious the sin is the more serious the physical consequences. When God removes our sin and forgives us, He does not erase all of the physical consequences that are the result.

We find here examples of what happened in the aftermath in David's family. David's conduct and example during the years his children were growing up left much to be desired, and he reaped headaches by the ton even though he afterward repented of his earlier conduct. There were problems that he had during the formative years of his children that had an impact, and he reaped those consequences during those latter years. God records that. He does not gloss over all of the mistakes that some of His servants made. God tells us that David was a man after His own heart. There was a certain attitude, there were certain things that were a part of David's character that God placed great value on, but David had certain problems. God does not hide

those or gloss over them; He records them so that we might see and learn.

Now as we go through this section in II Samuel, one of the things that we notice is David's reaction to the death of Saul. His reaction was one of grief.

II Samuel 1:17-18, "Then David lamented with this lamentation over Saul and Jonathan his son, and he told them to teach the children of Judah the Song of the Bow; indeed it is written in the book of Jasher." The book of Jasher was a historical book. It was simply a secular record that was available that gave details that are not preserved in the biblical account. At the time that the biblical account was written, you will find a number of references in these historical books referring you to secular sources that people of that day were familiar with. In other words, it's as though we might write a summary account of something today and then in that summary account, refer you to various secular sources where you could go for more details if you wanted them.

David honored and respected Saul, right up to the end. He respected and honored Saul's office. Saul is an individual who certainly didn't conduct himself as worthy of a lot of honor or respect. David's honor and respect was not grounded on the basis that Saul was such a wonderful, deserving fellow. It was based on the premise that Saul was God's anointed. God had set Saul in a high office, and that office was to be respected.

We run into an apparent discrepancy in the account of Saul's death as it is given in II Samuel 1 by comparison to I Samuel 31. We might note that and understand.

In II Samuel 1:1-10, "Now it came to pass after the death of Saul, when David had returned from the slaughter of the Amalekites, and David had stayed two days in Ziklag, on the third day, behold, it happened that a man came from Saul's camp with his clothes torn and dust on his head. So it was, when he came to David, that he fell to the ground and prostrated himself. And David said to him, 'Where have you come from?' So he said to him, 'I have escaped from the camp of Israel.' Then David said to him, 'How did the matter go? Please tell me.' And he answered, 'The people have fled from the battle, many of the people are fallen and dead, and Saul and Jonathan his son are dead also.' So David said to the young man who told him, 'How do you know that Saul and Jonathan his son are dead?' And the young man who told him said, 'As I happened by chance to be on Mount Gilboa,

there was Saul, leaning on his spear; and indeed the chariots and horsemen followed hard after him. Now when he looked behind him, he saw me and called to me. And I answered, 'Here I am.' And he said to me, 'Who are you?' So I answered him, 'I am an Amalekite.' He said to me again, 'Please stand over me and kill me, for anguish has come upon me, but my life still remains in me. So I stood over him and killed him, because I was sure that he could not live after he had fallen. And I took the crown that was on his head and the bracelet that was on his arm, and have brought them here to my lord.'"

We find that Saul had told his armor bearer in I Samuel 31:4-5, "Then Saul said to his armor bearer, 'Draw your sword, and thrust me through with it, lest these uncircumcised men come and thrust me through and abuse me.' But his armor bearer would not, for he was greatly afraid. Therefore Saul took a sword and fell on it. And when his armor bearer saw that Saul was dead, he also fell on his sword, and died with him."

We get the idea from I Samuel 31 that Saul committed suicide and II Samuel 1 that the Amalekite killed him. There are two explanations. One is simply that the Amalekite lied that he came there and saw Saul lying there dead. He recognized the body because of the royal insignia that Saul had on, and he thought that this was a good chance for him to move "one up." He would grab these things off the body and bring them to David and say, 'I have killed your enemy. He's your enemy; he was after you and was trying to get you. I came on him; he was fallen out there, and I finished him off. I brought you these things to give them to you because I am saying by this that I recognize you as the next king.' He thought, 'Boy, I will probably be rewarded—he will probably think this is great.' But David didn't think so.

II Samuel 1:14-16, "And David said to him, 'How was it you were not afraid to put forth your hand to destroy the Lord's anointed?' Then David called one of the young men and said, 'Go near, and execute him!' And he struck him so that he died. So David said to him, 'Your blood is on your own head, for your own mouth has testified against you, saying, "I have killed the Lord's anointed.'"" David had this fellow executed.

This ought to answer the question, by the way, that some have asked in recent days about euthanasia, so called "mercy killings." It has been debated in the press of recent days if that is all right.

Either one of two things happened: Either the Amalekite lied or Saul had certainly fallen on his sword as it says in I Samuel 31, but perhaps he managed to botch that like he did everything else and did a halfway job of suicide. Seeing that Saul had fallen on the sword, the armor bearer committed suicide. Then when this Amalekite came walking along, Saul had maybe managed to miss a vital spot and was lying there wounded, not yet dead. The armor bearer had only thought that he was dead. He saw him fall on the sword, but maybe it didn't pierce all the way through. That's certainly a possibility. The Amalekite came along and saw Saul wounded himself, but not actually having finished himself off, and he went ahead and did it.

Whether that was the case or whether he simply exaggerated to get a reward, it is apparent here that God does not approve of so-called "mercy killings." And David, acting as God's representative, didn't approve of that. There is certainly a great deal of difference between actively taking a life and, on the other hand, withholding the type of extreme measures that much of the current medical technology has sought to foist off on people. You can't equate at all the matter of actively taking a life, whether it is by injection or some other sort of thing and of someone who is an innocent victim, who is lying there in pain as Saul was. Saul even asked the guy to finish him off, but that doesn't matter. Your life doesn't belong to you; it belongs to God. You don't have the right to take it, nor does anyone else.

God did give the charge to the civil government that whosoever sheds blood by man, shall his blood be shed. God gave that charge to Noah in the aftermath of the flood. It's repeated in Romans 13:1-4 that God has set the civil government to bear the sword and to execute vengeance against those who perpetuate crime and violence. But that is talking about constituted authority, not somebody who takes it upon himself to go out and do that.

Of course, we as Christians are ambassadors and are not part of that constituted civil authority. We are not involved in that from a standpoint of actively taking part, but you certainly gain from this some insight that this is not God's way. That is not to say that if somebody gets sick, you can't equate the refusal to be hooked up on all kinds of artificial support systems, things that never were a part of anything God designed or established, but simply represent man's technology. You can't equate that with an active taking of life, whether by a doctor or by someone else. Again,

there's certain insight into God's perspective into some of these things that we can see.

Saul ends up as a very tragic figure. Saul was a man who sought to solve his problems his own way. Even at the end, what did Saul do? He turned to a witch and then tried to commit suicide when it didn't work out his way. Nowhere did Saul ever truly repent and turn to God.

You might make the contrast, Samson had to go through some tragic things and learn some tragic lessons, but at the end, what did he do? He prayed to God. He went to God and said, 'Oh God, please be merciful, give me a chance to at least make up for my lack of what I've done in carrying out the job You gave me to do.' He came to see himself and asked God for His mercy and forgiveness. God extended that. Saul never did repent. He just continued to bumble along and try to solve his own problems his own way and ended up in a tragic way.

II Samuel 2:1, "It happened after this that David inquired of the Lord, saying, 'Shall I go up to any of the cities of Judah?' And the Lord said to him, 'Go up.' David said, 'Where shall I go up?' And He said, 'To Hebron.'"

Verse 4, "Then the men of Judah came and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah...."

Verse 11, "And the time that David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months."

Verses 8-10, "But Abner the son of Ner, commander of Saul's army, took Ishosheth the son of Saul and brought him over to Mahanaim; and he made him king over Gilead, over the Ashurites, over Jezreel, over Ephraim, over Benjamin, and over all Israel. Ishbosheth, Saul's son, was forty years old when he began to reign over Israel, and he reigned two years. Only the house of Judah followed David."

In the meantime there was a descendant of Saul who was crowned king over the northern tribes of Israel. His name was Ishbosheth, the son of Saul.

II Samuel 2:8, Abner, the son of Ner—his name is kind of an unusual name. "Ab" in Hebrew means "father," so his name literally translated meant "father of Ner, son of Ner." Abner was the captain of Saul's host, the commanding general. He took this son of Saul who had survived and made him king over the areas of Northern Israel. This man was set in place and reigned over Israel two years.

The House of Judah followed David, and David was king in Hebron seven years and six months.

Then we see the account of the battle that takes place; there was fighting back and forth, and Joab was the commander of King David's troops. Abner was the commander of the other troops (vv. 12-16).

Verse 17, "So there was a very fierce battle that day, and Abner and the men of Israel were beaten before the servants of David."

One young man who was a brother of Joab was a very fast man. It describes him as light of foot as a wild roe (v. 18). In other words, he could run like a deer. He really would have been an Olympic star. And he pursued after Abner (v. 19). Seeing he was on his heels, Abner finally turned and killed him (vv. 20-23).

II Samuel 3:1, "Now 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." Then it gives an account of some of David's sons (vv. 2-5). There came to be a falling out between Abner and Ishbosheth (vv. 6-8).

Verses 9-10, "'May God do so to Abner, and more also, if I do not do for David as the Lord has sworn to him—to transfer the kingdom from the house of Saul, and set up the throne of David over Israel and over Judah, from Dan to Beersheba.'"

Verse 20, "So Abner and twenty men with him came to David at Hebron. And David made a feast for Abner and the men who were with him." They had a meal, sat and ate and discussed the matter. When the time came for them to leave, Joab came out from David and told Abner he had a message. So when Abner returned to Hebron, Joab took him aside.

Verse 27, "Now when Abner had returned to Hebron, Joab took him aside in the gate to speak with him privately, and there stabbed him in the stomach, so that he died for the blood of Asahel his brother."

Verse 28, "And afterward, when David heard it, he said, 'My kingdom and I are guiltless before the Lord forever of the blood of Abner the son of Ner.'" Joab very treacherously killed Abner to get revenge because of the slaughter of his brother. When David heard it, he was really upset and disgusted at this. There was a difference in something that took place in battle and a treacherous assassination. It gives a little insight into Joab's character.

Joab was a valiant man; he was a fighter, a real go-getter in a lot of ways. Joab was a very self-willed individual. He was going to do whatever he wanted. If Joab agreed with what the boss said, he would do it; if he didn't, he would still

do what he wanted to do. He could be very treacherous and very sneaky. David proclaimed mourning for Abner and gave him a state funeral. He said, ‘this is terrible; this is no way to treat this man—we were not at war.’

Verse 36, “Now all the people took note of it, and it pleased them, since whatever the king did pleased all the people.” David became very popular. Whatever the king did, it pleased the people, and they understood that David had no part in the slaughter of Abner.

II Samuel 4:1-2, “And when Saul’s son heard that Abner had died in Hebron, he lost heart, and all Israel was troubled. Now Saul’s sons had two men who were captains of troops. The name of one was Baanah and the name of the other Rechab, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, of the children of Benjamin....”

Verse 4, “Jonathan, Saul’s son had a son who was lame in his feet. He was five years old when the news about Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel; and his nurse took him up and fled. And it happened, as she made haste to flee, that he fell and became lame. So his name was Mephibosheth.”

Jonathan had a son who was crippled. These individuals, who were trusted servants of Ishbosheth, came in while he was lying down for a nap at noon. They came in as though they were bringing something and smote him in the stomach (vv. 5-6).

Verse 7, “For when they came into the house, he was lying on his bed in his bedroom; then they struck him and killed him, beheaded him and took his head, and were all night escaping through the plains. And they brought the head of Ishbosheth to David at Hebron, and said to the king. ‘Here is the head of Ishbosheth the son of Saul your enemy, who sought your life; and the Lord has avenged my lord the king this day of Saul and his descendants.’” They actually beheaded him and brought this gory thing to David in Hebron, saying, ‘We have brought you the head of the son of your enemy Saul.’

Notice what David told them when they came to him.

Verses 9-10, “Then David answered Rechab and Baamah his brother, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, and said to them, ‘As the Lord lives, who has redeemed my life from all adversity, when someone told me, saying, “Look, Saul is dead,” thinking to have brought good news, I arrested him and had him executed in Ziklag—the one who thought I would give him a reward for his news.’” He said, ‘He thought he would have a reward for his good news. He was coming

to get a reward, telling this tale, bragging about having killed Saul and thinking I was going to reward him. I executed him because he committed murder. He slaughtered the Lord’s anointed.’

Verse 11, “‘How much more, when wicked men have killed a righteous person in his own house on his bed? Therefore, shall I not now require his blood at your hand and remove you from the earth?’” They thought they would be rewarded. They had treacherously slaughtered their master. They had assassinated him, brought his bloody head to David and said, ‘Hey, now you can be king over the whole nation. We have finished off your enemy and the son of your enemy.’

David said, ‘If I would execute a passerby who killed the king, how much more when wicked men have slain a righteous person in his own house upon his bed. You who he trusted, you did a thing like this. If I executed this Amalekite that finished off Saul, you think I am going to let you go free? You guys are nothing more than common murderers. You sneaked in and murdered a man while he was asleep in bed. And you come here thinking I am going to reward you?’

Verse 12, “So David commanded his young men, and they executed them, cut off their hands and feet, and hanged them by the pool in Hebron. But they took the head of Ishbosheth and buried it in the tomb of Abner in Hebron.”

II Samuel 5:1-3, “Then all the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and spoke, saying, ‘Indeed we are your bone and your flesh. Also, in time past, when Saul was king over us, 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.’” So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, and King David made a covenant with them at Hebron before the Lord. And they anointed David king over Israel.” He had already been anointed king over Judah (II Samuel 2:4).

Verse 4, “David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years.”

Verse 5, “In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months, and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty-three years over all Israel and Judah.” Now we come to the point where he became king over all the land.

Notice one thing—God tested him. God said David was a man after His own heart. What are some of the characteristics that we know? David was a man that valued loyalty. David did not

appreciate treachery. God values loyalty; He places great value on it.

The capital at Jerusalem is established.

Verses 6-7, “And the king and his men went to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, who spoke to David, saying, ‘You shall not come in here; but the blind and the lame will repel you,’ thinking, ‘David cannot come here.’ Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion (that is, the City of David).”

Let’s notice a parallel account.

I Chronicles 11:4-8, “And David and all Israel went to Jerusalem, which is Jebus, where the Jebusites were, the inhabitants of the land. Then the inhabitants of Jebus said to David, ‘You shall not come in here.’ Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion (that is, the City of David). Now David said, ‘Whoever attacks the Jebusites first shall be chief and captain.’ And Joab the son of Zeruiah went up first, and became chief. Then David dwelt in the stronghold; therefore they called it the City of David. And he built the city around it, from the Millo to the surrounding area. Joab repaired the rest of the city.”

Jerusalem spread out from there, but that was the original portion of the city. Every city has its original settlement and then spreads out. Well, Jerusalem spread out from this castle, this fortification on Mount Zion.

The situation was that David put siege around the city, and Joab was the one that came up with a way to get in. Joab figured it out and was the first one into Jerusalem. He went up first and he was the chief. He did so by climbing through the shaft that connected Jerusalem with its only water supply at that time, which was known as the virgin’s pool (II Samuel 5:8). They diverted it and climbed up through this water shaft. They went in through the pool, climbed up through the shaft, got into the city, and were able to open the gates.

You read here of the exploits of these mighty men of David. This bunch of men that followed him was a tough bunch of hombres. They were outlaws and outcasts and everything else, but what they had in common was honor, respect and loyalty that they had for David. They had gathered themselves to him while he was hiding in the cave of Adulla.

In II Samuel 6:1, we find the bringing in of the ark. David gathered together Israel.

II Samuel 6:3, “So they set the ark of God on a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill, and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, drove the new cart.”

Verse 5, “Then David and all the house of Israel played music before the Lord on all kinds of instruments made of fir wood, on harps, on stringed instruments, on tambourines, on sistrum, and on cymbals.” They were playing instruments of music, and there was great celebration, a parade and a march—all of the “hoopla.”

Verses 6-7, “And when they came to Nachon’s threshing floor, Uzzah put out his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen stumbled. Then the anger of the Lord was aroused against Uzzah and God struck him there for his error [irreverence]; and he died there by the ark of God.” When they came to Nachon’s threshing floor, the ark kind of wobbled on the cart, and Uzzah put out his hand to steady it. When he did, he was struck dead.

There was a reason for that. To begin with, they weren’t doing what God had instructed. God had given instructions in the law how the ark was to be carried. There were poles it was to be carried with, and the Levites were to carry it on their shoulders. So they had completely disregarded the instructions. They had not gone back and followed the instruction. The instruction in the law was to not touch the ark or you died. The ark is holy and sacred; don’t treat it carelessly.

There was a lesson that needed to be made. The real problem got back to the fact that the leaders used human reason to determine the manner of bringing in the ark instead of doing things as God commanded. God allowed this to happen and this example to be recorded that we might have impressed upon us the absolute importance of doing what God says, the way He says to do it.

If God says carry it on poles, don’t stick it on a cart and figure that ought to do. If God says the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God, don’t figure the first day ought to do just as well. If God says do something, do it the way He says it. Don’t use human reasoning: ‘I don’t see what difference it makes; this should do just fine. God should be satisfied with this.’ That really is not wise thinking, and this example is recorded here. We read of this tragedy that occurred.

Then David began the construction of a palace there in Jerusalem.

I Chronicles 14:1, “Now Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar trees, with masons and carpenters, to build him a house.” He obtained the materials and the craftsmen from Hiram king of Tyre up in the area of modern day Lebanon.

A short time later, in II Samuel 7:1-3, “Now it came to pass when the king was dwelling in his

house, and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies all around, that the king said to Nathan the prophet, 'See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells inside tent curtains.' Then Nathan said to the king, 'Go, do all that is in your heart, for the Lord is with you.'" David told Nathan he was living here in this palace that he had and the ark of God was reposing in a temporary dwelling. 'I think we ought to build a temple.' Nathan thought that was a good idea, but God very quickly told him, "No."

Verses 4-5, "But it happened that night that the word of the Lord came to Nathan, saying, 'Go and tell My servant David, "Thus says the Lord: 'Would you build a house for Me to dwell in?'"'"

Verses 11-16, "'...Also the Lord tells you that He will make you a house. When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will 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. I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men. But My mercy shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I removed from before you. And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever.'"

David's desire to build a temple after his own palace was made plain in II Samuel 7:1-3, but God, in the aftermath of that, said, 'No, you're not going to build the temple. You're not going to build a house for Me, but I am going to build a house for you.' Then we went through the promise of the Davidic covenant, the promise that God made to David of establishing his family forever.

We are going to note in the next Bible study the reason why God didn't let David build the temple. It doesn't state it right here, but the reason was that David was a man of much blood. David had shed much blood. David was a man of war, and that was something that God was just not going to allow David to do. Solomon was a man of peace, and God allowed Solomon to be the one to build the temple. David prepared for it.

David continued to show his loyalty to the memory of Jonathan.

II Samuel 9:1, 3, 5, 7, 13, "Now David said, 'Is there still anyone who is left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for

Jonathan's sake'... 'There is still a son of Jonathan who is lame in his feet'... Then King David sent and brought him out of the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, from Lo Debar... So David said to him, 'Do not fear, for I will surely show you kindness for Jonathan your father's sake, and will restore to you all the land of Saul your grandfather; and you shall eat bread at my table continually.'... So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem, for he ate continually at the king's table. And he was lame in both his feet."

David wanted to find out if there was any of the family of Saul left. When he found out Mephibosheth, the little crippled son of Jonathan was still alive; he brought him to the palace and sought to reward him and to provide for him.

In II Samuel 10, we find the story where the king of Ammon died and David was going to send representatives to the funeral (vv. 1-2). This young upstart son decided maybe these guys were spies, and he was going to show them how tough he was and humiliate them. He held them up to public ridicule and made a mockery out of them; and in that sense, insulted not only them, but insulted the nation (vv. 3-4).

If the United States sends an ambassador somewhere and that ambassador is treated in a wrong way, that is not an insult to him as a person so much as it is an insult to the nation because he is there not representing himself, but the nation.

II Samuel 10:5, 7, "When they told David, he sent to meet them, because the men were greatly ashamed. And the king said, 'Wait at Jericho until your beards have grown, and then return.'... Now when David heard of it, he sent Joab and all the army of the might men." David dealt with it. He sent in the army and dealt with the Ammonites (vv. 8-19). This is the way he retaliated, dealing in a carnal world with carnal people. This was the thing these people understood.

There was a time when basically the U.S. government followed this example, and we didn't have many ambassadors mistreated. If something like this happens every time your ambassador gets mistreated, there are not very many countries that "pick on" your ambassador. This is the case.

In II Samuel 11, we focus in on one of the most serious things David got into—that was the sin with Bathsheba. You know the account and how he saw Bathsheba out on her rooftop bathing (v. 2). He decided to see if Bathsheba would come over to the palace (v. 4). He arranged this rendezvous and the adultery that took place. That

was compounded because Bathsheba turned up pregnant (v. 5). Because her husband Uriah was off in battle, it was going to be very apparent that it wasn't his child.

So David began to compound sin with another, thinking, 'Well, I can cover it up.' It was not just the original sin; it was the cover up, kind of like Watergate. This was kind of the Watergate of ancient Israel. He was going to have a cover up. 'I am going to get Uriah back here to spend the night at his home, and then when the child is born, nobody will know (v. 6). Well, the baby will be just a few weeks premature; nobody will be the wiser.' But as generally happens with cover ups, something goes awry.

Uriah was a soldier's soldier. He decided, no, he wasn't going to go back home and stay with his wife because all the rest of the men were out in battle (v. 9). Then David really became desperate and scared and compounded his sin even further when he gave Uriah a message to take back to Joab. The message said, 'Look, when you get in the fiercest battle, put Uriah in the front of the battle. Then you withdraw the rest of the men' (vv. 14-17). He thought, 'Put Uriah in a situation where he is going to get killed in battle to get rid of him. Let him get killed, and then as soon as it is appropriate, I will marry the widow. This will cover up the whole thing and nobody will be the wiser.' Well, of course, that's not the way it worked.

In II Samuel 12:1-7, Nathan confronts David with the seriousness of what he had done. As he went through and told the story, he ended up finally by pointing his finger and saying, 'You, Oh king, are that man' (v. 7).

I'll bet you could have heard a pin drop in there. There is no doubt that everybody all around, all the servants and guards had been gossiping about what had been going on for weeks. When you think you are hiding something and nobody knows, believe me, everybody around there who worked in the palace knew—all the guards and the maids. You can imagine something like that would spread like wildfire. Everybody was gossiping. Nobody would say it in front of the king, but they all knew what was going on. They weren't totally dumb. Ever notice sometimes people think they are going to put something over on someone. It doesn't generally work. David had gone to all this stuff to try to hide and cover up his sin. He hadn't covered it up from anybody. And then his sin was exposed in front of everyone publicly.

But one of the major reasons David was a man after God's own heart is recorded in his reaction

to that. Time after time you read, particularly when someone was in a high office and they were confronted with the seriousness of what they did, they got mad at the one who confronted them. 'Boy, I'll fix you; I'll throw you in jail. I'll kill you.' That was Saul's reaction and the reaction of various kings. David didn't do that. David knew he was wrong and admitted it.

If you want to read David's reaction, go to Psalm 51. That's David's psalm of repentance, and you won't find one instance of self-justification there. David offered God no excuses. He didn't say, 'Yeah, I know I made a mistake, but she was at fault too. She shouldn't have been up there on that roof with her clothes off.' He offered no excuses. He didn't try to say other people have done the same thing and that Uriah was a clod or this or that—and Bathsheba tempted me. David offered no excuses.

In II Samuel 12:13 he said, "Then David said to Nathan, 'I have sinned against the Lord....'"

Psalm 51:4, "Against You and You only have I sinned and done this evil in Your sight...."

Go through Psalm 51 and read it. Contrast it with someone who was confronted with sin, going all the way back to Adam and Eve. What's the normal human reaction: blame somebody else, make excuses, try to justify yourself. 'Yeah, I know, but "so-and-so" did it, too. And they did worse than what I did. They made me do it, etc.' David offered no excuse. Go through and read Psalm 51. I think it is a very important key to understand the importance of that reaction. What was the penalty David suffered? The penalty was that the sword was never going to depart from his house (v. 10). He was going to pay a penalty for this physically. He was going to find himself ensnared in things that were just going to go on and on.

By the time of II Samuel 13, David's kids are just about grown. Since David had all these various women, he had a bunch of children who were only half brothers and sisters. There began to be a lot of problems. One of the problems was one of the daughters, Tamar. She was a very beautiful daughter, and one of her half brothers, Amnon, wanted her (vv. 1-2). He wanted to have her. Finally, he tricked her into a situation and raped her (vv. 3-14). She turned him down and said, 'No, I don't want to have anything to do with you' (v. 12). Her brother Absalom was so infuriated by what Amnon had done that he murdered his half brother and wound up fleeing (vv. 23-34).

Years went by. Joab entreated David to forgive Absalom and let him come back.

II Samuel 14:23-24, “Joab arose and went to Geshur, and brought Absalom to Jerusalem. And the king said, ‘Let him return to his own house, but do not let him see my face.’ So Absalom returned to his own house, but did not see the king’s face.” David wouldn’t have anything to do with him, but he let him come back. Absalom came back and was plotting vengeance.

II Samuel 15:2-6, “Now Absalom would rise early and stand beside the way to the gate. So it was, whenever anyone who had a lawsuit came to the king for a decision, that Absalom would call to him and say, ‘What city are you from?’ And he would say, ‘Your servant is from such and such a tribe of Israel.’ Then Absalom would say to him, ‘Look, your case is good and right; but there is no deputy of the king to hear you.’ Moreover Absalom would say, ‘Oh, that I were made judge in the land and everyone who has any suit or cause would come to me; then I would give him justice.’ And so it was, whenever anyone came near him to bow down to him, that he would put out his hand and take him and kiss him. In this manner Absalom acted toward all Israel who came to the king for judgment. So Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.”

Absalom began to set about trying to ingratiate himself to the people and to take over. He tried to win the hearts of the masses with political maneuvers; he had a conspiracy going to ultimately stage a coup and capture control of the government. He was going to overthrow his father.

Verses 12-14, “Then Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David’s counselor...and the conspiracy grew strong, for the people with Absalom continually increased in number. And a messenger came to David, saying, ‘The hearts of the men of Israel are with Absalom.’ So David said to all his servants who were with him at Jerusalem, ‘Arise, and let us flee; or else 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.’” Absalom finally launched a revolution.

Undoubtedly, one of the major things that affected David was he realized the consequences where his whole family was unraveling, and David lacked heart to fight against his son. He didn’t want to do that; he felt like he had brought all these things on himself. So he fled Jerusalem rather than have the city destroyed in some kind of battle. David was looking to God to somehow give him some kind of relief from this.

When we go through the battles and the situations related in chapters 16, 17, and finally in chapter 18, we find the circumstances of Absalom’s death. David had given instructions that he didn’t want Absalom killed, but what did old Joab do? He always did whatever Joab wanted to do. Absalom had long hair and only cut it once a year. He was racing through the woods trying to get away and got tangled up in an oak tree (KJV, 18:9). As the result, he couldn’t get out of the brush and was dangling up there. Someone went and told Joab, and Joab came up there and murdered him (vv. 10, 14-15). He just stabbed him through. Joab figured that was what needed to be done, and he did it.

One of the things you note here, Joab didn’t have any compunctions about doing what he wanted, whether that was the instructions or not. Joab figured David was wrong. He said, ‘This kid’s a punk; he ought to be executed. He’s a troublemaker; I never should have brought him back here.’ So we see this situation.

Let’s conclude here by noting some of the greatest strengths and weaknesses of David and contrasting them with some of the greatest strengths and weaknesses of Joab.

David evidenced many positive characteristics: faith, loyalty, zeal and wholeheartedness. I think these were certainly some of the most outstanding characteristics that David evidenced. He showed great faith, great loyalty, a tremendous amount of zeal and wholeheartedness in what he did. Perhaps his greatest failing was as a family man. He had a weakness in this area and a weakness for women. He did, frankly, a poor job of childrearing. Part of the problem was that he often allowed emotion to rule him. Rather than his head ruling the heart, his heart rules the head. You see, that is the problem.

God has given us both. God has given us a mind and He has given us emotions. We are a combination of mind and emotion, of head and heart, but when the heart rules the head, you have trouble. The head is intended to rule the heart. It’s not emotionless rule, but it is a matter that when we act on impulse and act emotionally to things rather than thinking it through, we are going to suffer the consequences.

The result of this impulsiveness and emotionalism that was often there led to a lack of consistency and got David into some problems. It caused him to get involved in things that had long-term consequences. He exemplified a tremendous amount of faith, loyalty, zeal and wholeheartedness; God greatly honored and

appreciated David for these qualities. But God does not gloss over the weaknesses of David. David had many family problems, and we will note some of those a little bit further. David learned many of those lessons, but by the time David really got the point, most of his kids were pretty well grown. He couldn't go back and undo what he had done. Many of these things David taught Solomon, and undoubtedly, a lot of it is reflected in what Solomon says in the book of Proverbs. Solomon was the son of David's old age. Solomon was young; he was just a teenager when he sat on the throne. The other children were much older and had gotten into trouble as a result of David being too busy to tend to things at home.

Joab also had great strengths and weaknesses. He had tremendous courage and personal bravery. You couldn't find anyone more courageous and brave, but he had a treacherous streak. Perhaps his greatest failing was his inability to carry out orders properly. He was stubborn and insisted on doing things his own way. He was self-willed. He was right and the world was wrong. If he thought he was right, he didn't care if the boss said otherwise—he was going to do it his way. That led him to an untimely end.

As we look at some of this, it is important that we realize that God has a reason for recording both positive and negative characteristics, the strengths and the weaknesses of these individuals. God wants us to learn from these examples. We gain insight and learn lessons if we are able to read and see ourselves in some of these things. We can see things that we have done, and to the extent that we look and learn from the examples of others, we don't have to make the same mistakes and reap the same consequences.

Here we set the stage with the expanding out of Israel and the firm establishment of the throne. We set the stage for Israel to reach its height, its pinnacle, under the time of King Solomon. We will go into some of that in the next Bible study as we see what advances as God has created a nation under the rulership of King David and his descendants. With that we will be concluded this evening.