

Old Testament History

Lesson #14

1 Samuel 27:1-2 Samuel 12:31

Outline

I. ***David's Rise And Saul's Decline (1 Samuel 16:1-31:13)***

- A. David's exile and Saul's death (27:1-31:13).
 - 1. David flees to the Philistines (27:1-12).
 - 2. Saul consults a medium at Endor (28:1-25).
 - 3. David forbidden to fight with the Philistines (29:1-11).
 - 4. David overcomes the Amalekite raiders (30:1-31).
 - 5. The Philistines defeat Israel and Saul takes his own life (31:1-13).

II. ***David Becomes King Over Judah And Israel (2 Samuel 1:1-5:5)***

- A. David becomes king over Judah (1:1-2:7).
 - 1. David's grief over Saul and Jonathan (1:1-27).
 - 2. David anointed king over Judah (2:1-7).
- B. David becomes king over Israel (2:8-5:5).
 - 1. War between David and Ishbosheth (2:8-32).
 - 2. Abner defects and is murdered by Joab (3:1-39).
 - 3. Ishbosheth assassinated (4:1-12).
 - 4. David anointed king over all Israel (5:1-5).

III. ***David's Kingdom Is Established Forever (2 Samuel 5:6-10:19)***

- A. David makes Jerusalem His capital (5:6-6:23).
 - 1. David captures Jerusalem (5:6-16).
 - 2. David defeats the Philistines (5:17-25).
 - 3. David brings the ark to Jerusalem (6:1-23).
- B. God promises David an everlasting kingdom (7:1-29).
- C. The successes of David's reign (8:1-10:19).
 - 1. David's military conquests (8:1-18).
 - 2. David's kindness to Mephibosheth (9:1-13).
 - 3. David's war with Ammon (10:1-19).

IV. ***David's Sin And Its Consequences (2 Samuel 11:1-20:26)***

- A. David's sin with Bathsheba (11:1-12:31).
 - 1. David takes Uriah's wife and has him killed (11:1-27).
 - 2. Nathan confronts David and he repents (12:1-14).
 - 3. Despite David's pleas, Bathsheba's son dies (12:15-25).
 - 4. Conclusion of the war with Ammon (12:26-31).

Notes

1 Samuel 27:1-30:31

- The parting statement of David is especially solemn given the fact that this was the last meeting between Saul and David. Because he felt that he might fall into the hands of Saul, he went back to King Achish in Gath. His reception this time was very different from the first time. This time, David came to Achish as the leader of a several hundred man army, and he appears to have placed himself at the disposal of Achish.
- David was given the city of Ziklag, which lay close to the southern border of Israel. No other place could have suited David so well. Because of David's success in his incursions against the Canaanites, Achish wanted to make him his servant.
- Many years before, Gideon faced the Midianites with only 300 men. Now, as Saul looked at the army of the Philistines, he was very afraid and all his inquiries of the Lord had gone unanswered. Gideon had been the God-called hero, and Saul was the God-forsaken king, quickly headed for judgment and death.
- If the Philistines were victorious in Jezreel, they would cut the land in two, and give them control of both the north and the south. Saul, in his terrified state, had inquired of the Lord by all the well-known means, but had received no answer. If Saul had any spiritual discernment, he should have seen the "handwriting on the wall." However, Saul was looking to use the Lord to obtain his objective.
- Saul knew that he was condemned as far as being king was concerned. He had to know so badly what would happen the next day, that he was willing to go to the very man who had so sternly, and in his time of victory, told him of his downfall. He decided to talk to him by necromancy, even though he had cleansed the land of witches, sorcerers, and mediums earlier. He disguised himself to leave his camp without being seen to go to the witch at Endor.
- God allowed Samuel to appear to deliver the message to Saul. Samuel's appearance and identification was unmistakable. Because the witch was probably not used to really summoning people from the dead, she cried out when Samuel appeared. It is interesting to note that Saul wanted to know what to do from Samuel, and Samuel had been telling him all the time that he knew him, but Saul had resisted.
- When David went to Ziklag, he found it decimated by the Amalekites, generating a very tender response. It was bad enough to lose his family, but now David was in danger of his life because of a mutiny of his men. However, he "strengthened himself in the Lord," and asked if he should pursue the Amalekites. David pursued them with full assurance from God of victory.

1 Samuel 31:1-2 Samuel 4:12

- The account of the battle of Gilboa is brief. The Philistines had won a big victory, and the Israelite dead littered the side of Mt. Gilboa. The three sons of Saul, including Jonathan, had fallen in the battle. The enemy's sharpshooters had found and wounded Saul, and he did not want to be killed by his enemy. After his armorbearer refused to kill him, Saul fell on his own sword. He had reigned 40 years (Acts 13:21).
- Beth Shan is just east of Mt. Gilboa, at the junction of the Jezreel and Jordan valleys. The University Museum of Pennsylvania uncovered, in an 11th-century B.C. stratum at Beth Shan, the ruins of twin temples, which may have been the very buildings in which Saul's armor and head were fastened; at least, it is proof that there were such temples in Beth Shan in Saul's day.
- Although Saul's kingship had degraded into insanity, there was still truth and courage in Israel. The brave men of Jabesh-gilead marched all night and removed the dead bodies from the wall. They burned the badly mangled bodies and buried them under a tamarisk tree, mourning for them seven days.
- After hearing of Saul's death from the Amalekite, David put the man to death for his claim of killing the Lord's anointed. Afterwards, David and his men mourned for Saul. David gave a eulogy for Saul and Jonathan in 2 Samuel 1:19-27, never mentioning the painful relationship he sustained with Saul during the last years of his life. With the exception of the men of Jabesh-gilead, the only real mourning for Saul was on the part of David.
- David consulted the Lord and then moved to Hebron where he was soon anointed king by his own tribe Judah. David's first act as king of Judah was to send an embassy to Jabesh-gilead to express his gratitude for their noble loyalty to Saul.
- Already, you are seeing a slight split between the south and the north with the reign of David. The loyalties are beginning to develop. He was king only over the south in Hebron for seven years. Ishbosheth was the king over the northern section.
- Ishbosheth became a puppet in the hands of Abner, Saul's uncle. The army of David, led by Joab, and the army of Ishbosheth, led by Abner, met at Gibeon. Abner proposed that twelve young men from both sides engage in personal combat. A fierce battle followed with 360 of Abner's force dead compared to 19 of David's forces.
- The battle of Gibeon was followed by a long war where the house of Saul was growing weaker, and the house of David stronger. Abner took Saul's concubine which was a very public claim to the succession to Saul's throne. Ishbosheth strongly protested and Abner defected to David. David negotiated with him on the condition that Michal was

returned to him. When Joab returned to hear of the negotiations between David and Abner, he was furious and murdered Abner. This marked a low point in Joab's life because the murder was probably provoked by jealousy and the fear that his position in David's army was threatened. David handled the matter with extreme integrity.

- Two of Ishbosheth's captains, perhaps motivated by the thought of reward, planned the murder of Ishbosheth. They entered the royal residence, stabbed him, and cut off his head to take to David as evidence of their terrible deed. David reacted by having the two men killed and their hands and feet cut off. David was now the undisputed claimant to the throne of Israel.

2 Samuel 5:1-6:23; 1 Chronicles 11:1-16:23

- Both 2 Samuel 1-6 and 1 Chronicles 11-13 cover the period from the death of Saul up to God's promise to David. But 2 Samuel 1-6 describes in detail the war between the house of Saul and the house of David and the schemes it involved, while 1 Chronicles 11-16 skips the war with the house of Saul and goes into detail about David's mighty men and warriors.
- Even during the times when his fortunes were at their lowest, David had several courageous men from all tribes. There were four important accessions that occurred during this time. The first was when David was at Ziklag and was joined by tribesmen of Saul and Judah. The second was when the Gadites from the army of Saul joined him. The third was when a contingent from Benjamin and Judah joined him, probably headed by a nephew of David. The fourth was when seven chieftains of Manasseh aided David in his fight against the Amalekites.
- While the elders of Israel made a covenant with David, and anointed him king over Israel, almost 400,000 of the men of war marched down to Hebron from all over the country (1 Chronicles 12:23-40). This kind of enthusiasm had never before been seen, and it demonstrated great national unity.
- Because of this great display of force and enthusiasm, David perhaps thought this to be the moment for the greatest undertaking in Jewish history since the conquest of the land under Joshua: the city of the Jebusites would become the capital of Israel. Jerusalem almost seemed destined to be the capital because of its strength in being situated in an impregnable position with valleys on three sides, and its central location between Benjamin and Judah. As long as Zion was in the possession of the Jebusites, as the original Canaanite "inhabitants of the land," the land itself could not be said to have been truly won.
- We learn from 1 Chronicles 11:6 that the leader who first scaled the walls of the Jebusite fortress was made David's general. This honor was

won by Joab. When the fortress was taken, it was called "the city of David" because he made it his residence. At first, Jerusalem was not really designated to any tribe; it was like our District of Columbia. The building of the palace must have taken several years, and David was helped by Hiram, king of Tyre.

- The Philistines became nervous at the ascendancy of David, and came and camped at Rephaim. David inquired of the Lord and the Lord promised assurance and help. The victory of the Israelites was even more notable because the Philistines had brought their gods with them to battle.
- About 70 years had passed since the ark of God had stood in the tabernacle, and now that Israel was united and the new capital had been won, it was time to restore the worship which had been long neglected. There was no question where the ark should be located. However, its transport must strictly abide by the instructions of God. Uzzah's death demonstrated to the people that the ark was not merely a piece of sacred furniture, but the emblem of God's presence among His people. David understood the meaning of the judgment because when it was moved three months later, he carefully observed the Lord's commands.
- Bringing the ark from Kiriath-Jearim was a politically brilliant move. This was also a confession of faith saying that God is King and His presence needs to be in the city. David more reflects the desire of God that the king be a "vice regent" of God (cf. Deuteronomy 17).
- When the ark was placed in its new home, a feast of the dedication of the new sanctuary took place, complete with burnt offerings and peace offerings. For the first time, a service of praise was introduced in the public worship of Israel. In fact, the great hymn composed for this occasion was undoubtedly Psalm 24 (cf. Psalm 15, 68, 78, 101). There is also a beautiful hymn in 1 Chronicles 16:8-36 which expresses similar thoughts. After Michal publicly rebuked David in the incident of the ark, they are estranged, with David not having much contact with her after that point.

2 Samuel 7:1-29; 1 Chronicles 17:1-27

- The foundation of a firm kingdom in Israel, its concentration in the house of David, and the establishment of a central worship in the capital of the land as the place which God had chosen, must have taken them back to those promises which are now narrowing into special fulfillment.
- Settled in his royal house and victorious over his enemies, David's kingly status is now beyond question. Victorious and world famous, he inhabited his spectacular palace on Mt. Zion. The contrast between his palace and the place where the ark, and consequently God Himself, was

very great. David told his feelings to his trusted friend and adviser, the prophet Nathan.

- Instead of David building a house for God, God would build one for David. It was a tremendous promise for the future. This house would be an everlasting kingdom (1 Chronicles 22:6-10). Even though the promise included Solomon, it was not confined to him. It was on this promise that the hope of a Messianic kingdom in the line of David and the title of the Messiah as the Son of David were based (Luke 1:32-33; Acts 2:30-36). While some of the terms of the prophecy are only applicable to Solomon, the fulfillment of this promise was in Christ. His descendant would always sit on the throne in Israel. In fact, even during the exile, there was no king, but the line of David would continue until Christ.
- This glorious hope was opening wider and wider. Although David was weak, faltering, and sinful, the promise never failed. This promise was the source of joy in many of the psalms (2, 14, 72, 89, 110, and 132). It is significant to note that when David was told that he would not build the temple, he went into the presence of the Lord and uttered a prayer of confession and thanksgiving.
- David spent the rest of his life gathering riches to be used for the temple of the Lord. The promise grew brighter and brighter until the "sure mercies of David" was fully realized in the resurrection of Christ (Isaiah 55:3; Acts 13:32-34).
- Until recently, no mention of "David" had been found in any extrabiblical text dating to the Old Testament period. Now fragments of a carved stone victory stele have been found at Dan -- one of the northernmost towns in Israel. It contains a clear reference to the Davidic dynasty only about 150-200 years after David had died.

2 Samuel 8:1-10:19; 1 Chronicles 18:1-20:8

- The record of God's promise to establish the kingdom of David is followed by an account of all his wars, although the order in which they are narrated is not strictly chronological. The narratives contain a summary of the results, with the exception being in the case of the war with Ammon and the Syrians, which is described in detail in 2 Samuel 10-11 because it is connected with David's great sin.
- From the number of soldiers the Ammonites brought against Israel, this was by far the greatest danger which threatened David's kingdom. David brought this problem before the Lord in Psalm 44 and 60, and he celebrated the victory in Psalm 68.
- After Saul's death, David had been made king over Judah. Seven years later he was made king over all of Israel. He was 30 when he became

king. He reigned over Judah alone for 7 1/2 years, and over all of Israel for 33 years, a total of 40 years (2 Samuel 5:3-5). He died at age 70.

- David took an insignificant nation and in a few years built it into a strong kingdom. It was truly its "golden age" in size and prominence. He completely subdued the Philistines, Moabites, Syrians, Edomites, Ammonites, Amalekites, and all the neighboring nations. In the southwest, the Egyptian world empire had declined. In Mesopotamia, the Assyrian and Babylonian world empires had not yet arisen. And here, on the highway between Egypt and Mesopotamia, the kingdom of Israel under David became almost overnight, not a world empire, but perhaps the single most powerful kingdom on earth at the time. The Philistines are never a problem again to the Israelites after David subdued them. He never lost a campaign against the enemies of Israel, which shows that God was with him.
- The record of this period of David's reign would have been incomplete if the memory of his friendship with Jonathan had passed without leaving a trace behind. There is something very touching in his desire to show "the kindness of God" to Saul's descendants "for Jonathan's sake." The Oriental idea advocated a new king killing the descendants of his predecessor. However, while David was at the height of his power, he showed his true character with Mephibosheth, and proved that success had not yet changed his godly nature. Mephibosheth was treated as one of the royal princes. His home was to be at Jerusalem, enjoying the king's table. This incident in David's history forms a kind of appendix to the narrative of the first period of his reign. Sadly, it is the last bright spot in David's life.

2 Samuel 11:1-12:31

- As we follow the progress of these prominent Bible characters, they seem at times to be almost beyond our reach, as if their life of faith was so far removed from ours that they cannot serve as an example to us. These thoughts are curtailed by the narratives of their sins.
- In the spring, the war against the Ammonites could be resumed. The importance of this battle can be seen from the fact that the ark of God accompanied the army of Israel (2 Samuel 11:11). This essentially was the last stand of David's last enemy. He was on the cusp of absolute, unquestioned power, and perhaps this led to his fall (Proverbs 16:18). Uriah was one of David's mighty men (2 Samuel 23:39); he was certainly not worthy of being treated so dishonorably.
- About a year had passed since David's terrible sin, and the child had been born. All this time God had been silent, but His judgment was about to burst into a terrible storm because David displeased the Lord (2 Samuel 11:27). The man that God had exalted had now brought

reproach on Israel. Psalm 32 gives us a small hint of the agony he suffered while he covered up his sin. Along with his own guilt, he would also feel the dishonor which he had brought on God's name. Placing David's psalms in their chronological order of his experience, they would be 38, 6, 51, and 32.

- Nathan's story appealed to David's sense of right, and he was able to make a quick decision, but he had judged himself. When Nathan gave him those famous words, there was no place left to hide. He admitted his guilt and as the judgment was detailed, each blow came down harder and harder like a hammer.
- This was the darkest point in David's life. The climax of these great people's lives often also marks the beginning of their decline. David's remorse made him a broken man. He reaped exactly what he had sown, and even more; it was a long, hard, and bitter harvest. His wonderful reign was clouded by continuous troubles. Amnon, Absalom, and Adonijah were murdered (2 Samuel 13:29; 18:14; 1 Kings 2:24-25).
- David could not enjoy the fruit of his sin, so his child must die. He had given men the occasion to blaspheme against God. It was appropriate that David feel the sufferings of the helpless, innocent child, and that he continually fast and pray for it.
- After all of this had taken place, David and Bathsheba finally found peace. They had another child, whose name, symbolically and prophetically, was Solomon, "the peaceful." He was the pledge or promise of peace. God called him "Jedidiah," the Jehovah-loved.