

# Monday - Week Twenty

## Lesson fifty-seven: David's vastly expanded kingdom

Read: 2 Samuel 5:17-9:13

**Summary:** God made David a great king ... one of the greatest kings who ever ruled. God also promised that the King of kings would come from David.

### Background and Comments

- The Philistines knew David's military genius so they assembled to fight against him as soon as he became king before he could solidify his power. Note that David knew where his military genius came from. In 2 Samuel 5:19 and 5:23 we see that David went to the Lord for advice about timing and even strategy! It's no wonder that the Bible calls David a man after God's own heart.
- All of a sudden it struck David that he was living in a wonderful palace while the Ark of the Covenant was in a tent! In the end God didn't allow David to build the temple - but God gave him something better:
  1. The promise that his son would build the temple.
  2. The promise that the Messiah would come from his family and would rule forever.

### Lessons for Today

- The story of Mephibosheth (chapter 9) is a touching one. David's kindness is breathtaking. David teaches us several lessons about kindness:
  - A. David didn't wait to be asked.
  - B. David showed love to Mephibosheth even though there was no way for Mephibosheth to pay him back.
- To whom are you showing kindness today? Do you go out of your way to be kind to people? What do you suppose made David so kind?
- David's prayer in 7:18-29 could be a model for our own prayers. Pick out three outstanding characteristics of this prayer and figure out how you can put them to use in your prayers.

**Read:** Psalm 96; Ephesians 2.

**Prayer:** Dear Heavenly Father, King David loved to be in the house of the Lord. Thank You for allowing me to go to church this weekend. Never let me forget that going to church is an honor ... never let me take it for granted. As all the members of my congregation start this new week remind them to study the Word of God every day. I ask this in the name of Jesus; Amen.

## Tuesday - Week Twenty

### Lesson fifty-eight: David's sin and repentance

Read: 2 Samuel 11 and 12

**Summary:** David committed a sin that had consequences for the rest of his life ... and in some ways for the entire history of the Israelites.

#### Background and Comments

- Psalms 32 and 51 are from this period of David's life. Read them after you have studied this account.
- Psalm 32:3-4 show us that David felt guilty even before Nathan confronted him with his sin. David's tender and loving heart must have been confused and guilt-stricken for this entire time.
- Nathan was a good preacher. Not only was he bold (confronting the king with his sin) but used a story to get his point across.

#### Lessons for Today

- In yesterday's lesson we read about several great things that David did. David's heart was definitely in the right place. What happened? How could such a godly person commit such horrible crimes? 1 Corinthians 10:12 tells us: *So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!* Several things contributed to David's fall:
  1. David's sinful nature.
  2. David did not go with the troops into battle. David was "taking it easy" perhaps.
  3. This was a time of prosperity. Someone once said that the easiest time to fall into temptation is during good times when our guard is down.
  4. David did not concentrate on God.

How can you learn from David's mistakes? Be specific.

- David was forgiven for his sin; yet there were consequences for his sin. God called David and Bathsheba's child home to heaven "early" so that they would realize what a serious sin they had committed. There are still consequences to our sins. God doesn't punish us for our sins (that happened on the cross of Christ) but out of love does allow these consequences to happen.

**Read:** Psalm 97; Ephesians 3.

**Prayer:** Dear Heavenly Father, forgive me as You forgave David. Guard me against temptation and remind me that I always need to depend on You ... especially when things are going well. Amen.

# Wednesday - Week Twenty

## Catechism Review

Read Questions 145-152

1. What will a person's life be like if they "live in the Gospel"?

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2. What keeps us from more consistently living in the freedom and the joy that the Gospel gives us?

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3. A creed is a statement of what a person believes. Write a five line creed on the lines below. Think carefully!

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4. What do the following characteristics of God mean for you?

Omniscient \_\_\_\_\_

Omnipresent \_\_\_\_\_

Loving \_\_\_\_\_

5. What does it mean that you "believe" in Jesus?

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**Read:** Psalm 98, Ephesians 4.

**Prayer:** Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for putting faith in my heart. Use the Word of God to keep my faith strong and active. In Jesus' name I pray; Amen.

# Thursday - Week Twenty

## Lesson fifty-nine: Absalom's rebellion

Read: 2 Samuel 14:25-19:39

**Summary:** David's family problems had repercussions for the nation. Absalom's pride led directly to his death.

### Background and Comments

- Absalom obviously was not a dutiful son. David had other children who had not been God-pleasing people. For example, read 2 Samuel 13 to find out about the horrible sin of Amnon. It seems that David failed to discipline his children adequately. He should have reacted swiftly to Amnon's sin of rape and Absalom's sin of murder. Instead he did nothing. Discipline is extremely important in any Christian home.
- Absalom was a very handsome man. He was also a very cunning person. Absalom would have fit in very well with quite a few people today! What characteristics do you most admire in people?
- Absalom managed to convince Ahithophel, David's chief counselor, to defect. It seemed that Absalom had everything going for him. Yet Absalom had forgotten one thing: God.

### Lessons for Today

- David's humility comes shining through in this account:
  1. He left Jerusalem instead of exposing the city to warfare and bloodshed.
  2. He ordered that the Ark of the Covenant remain in Jerusalem. He would not put Israel's public worship life in jeopardy by taking the Ark of the Covenant with him as he fled.
  3. He did not retaliate against Shimei when he taunted David and threw rocks at him.
- David allowed his emotions to so overwhelm him that his troops felt bad even though they had won a great victory. Emotions are gifts from God - yet like any gift they can be turned into something bad. How is it possible to rein in our emotions when we need to?

**Read:** Psalm 99; Ephesians 5.

**Prayer:** Dear Heavenly Father, when people plot against me or my loved ones please protect me just as You protected David. Keep our trust and confidence rooted in You alone. In Jesus' name I pray; Amen.

# Friday - Week twenty

## Life Questions

Topic/Question: Should I read the many “self-help” books that I find in the library and book stores?

### Bible References and Considerations

- In the Psalms we read: *My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth* (Psalm 121:2). In one sense the whole concept of “self-help” is a bad one; the only One who can truly help us is God. Obviously that is true of our spiritual needs ... but it’s also true of our earthly needs as well. How far would we get if God didn’t give us health or food? We depend on God for our next paycheck as much as we depend on Him for heaven.
- There is one “self-help” activity that we can do: pray. When we pray we are helping ourselves because we are putting things into God’s hands.

### Practically Speaking

- Some self-help books contain the biggest error of all: the idea that we are master’s of our own fate and that we have to earn everything by ourselves. It’s true that if we work harder we will probably get ahead in our business; yet many of these books encourage us to let this idea drift into every part of our lives. After a while we think that we are what we do (we measure ourselves by what we do instead of remembering what God had made us: children of God).
- Self-help books can be beneficial if we use them correctly. For example, a book on becoming a better salesperson might tell a person to work on listening skills or to approach sales’ calls as opportunities to help the customer. These skills will help a person to become a better salesperson. Yet the same book might tell us that becoming financially secure or a happy family person is the purpose in life. Obviously that is wrong.
- There are self-help books on being happy, building a strong marriage or being a good friend. They have good suggestions to be sure. Yet the Bible has the ultimate blueprint for happiness (true joy), marriage and friendship.

**Read:** Psalm 100, Ephesians 6.

**Prayer:** Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for giving us Your Word. The Bible has helped us in the most important way: it has told us about the love of Jesus and the work He did. The Bible has made heaven a reality for us. Amen.