

DAVID

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This work is dedicated to Sheila Smith, my wife.

William S. Smith

- 1 Sam 8:1-5
1 Sam 8:20
- Before starting a study of David, we need to take a quick look at Saul, the first king of Israel. Samuel's sons were not as worthy as Samuel, and so the people of Israel asked for a king, like all the lands around them.
- 1 Sam 9:1-2
1 Sam 13:1
- Saul was an impressive young man – without peers.
Saul ruled over Israel for 42 years. He was 30 years old at the time.
- 1 Sam 10:8
1 Sam 13:7-14
1 Sam 15:3
1 Sam 15:17-23
- Saul did not obey God's instructions. First, he offered a sacrifice, not waiting for Samuel, and then he didn't totally destroy the Amalekites and everything that belonged to them.
- 1 Sam 16:1
1 Sam 16:6-7
1 Sam 16:10-12
- God chose David to become King of Israel. David didn't have the outstanding physical appearance that Saul did, but God was looking at David's inner self.
- 1 Sam 16:14-23
- David was born about 10 years after Saul started his rule, making him about 40 years younger than Saul. David was about 15 years old when he was anointed by Samuel; served Saul as musician, and became one of his armor bearers. It would be about another 15 years before David reigns.
- 1 Sam 17:1-16
- About this same time, the Philistines gathered for war, and brought their champion – a giant named Goliath, who was over 9 feet tall. Goliath challenged the Israelites to send a champion from amongst them to fight Goliath one-on-one. This went on for 40 days while David traveled back and forth between home and the camp where his 3 older brothers were.
- 1 Sam 17:17-25
- On one of his trips, David hears both the giant's challenge and also hears of the rewards offered to the man who slays Goliath – wealth, the king's daughter in marriage, and exemption from taxes for his father's family.
- 1 Sam 17: 26-57
- David slays Goliath.
- 1 Sam 17:58
- Saul doesn't seem to recognize David as the harpist and armor-bearer.
- 1 Sam 18: 1-4
- David becomes friends with Jonathan, the king's son.
- 1 Sam 18: 5-16
- David gains a favorable reputation as a military leader. Saul begins to become jealous and tries to kill David with a spear.
- 1 Sam 18: 17-30
- Saul offers his older daughter to David in marriage. David declines. Later, Saul's younger daughter Michal falls in love with David, and Saul offers her hand in marriage. In both cases, Saul's hope was that David would be slain by the Philistines.

- 1 Sam 19: 1-7 Saul orders Jonathan and Saul's attendants to kill David. Jonathan intervenes on David's behalf, and David is reconciled to Saul.
- 1 Sam 19: 8-24 David distinguishes himself in war with the Philistines. Saul tries to kill David with a spear a 2nd time. Saul sends men to kill David, but Michal warns David and David escapes. Saul sends three groups after David, but God causes them all to prophesy. Saul goes and God causes him to prophesize as well. (Note his stripping off his robes and 1 Sam 31: 8-9).
- 1 Sam 20: 1-4 David appeals to Jonathan, who finds it hard to believe that his father Saul is trying to kill David. Nevertheless, Jonathan agrees to do what David asks.
- 1 Sam 20: 5-9 David suggests a way to show Jonathan that Saul is indeed trying to kill him. David is expected to join Saul for dinner at the New Moon Festival. If David isn't there, and has Jonathan's blessing for not being there, then Saul should have no objections. If Saul becomes angry, it is because Saul had plans to kill David when David appeared. David will hide, and Jonathan will tell David what Saul's reaction was.
- 1 Sam 20: 10-17 Jonathan agrees to David's plan, and asks David to never "cut off kindness from my family". See 2 Sam 9 where David fulfills this promise.
- 1 Sam 20: 18-42 How will Jonathan let David know the results. He will shoot an arrow into the field where David is hiding. If he tells his helper the arrows are closer to Jonathan, then David will know that all is well. If he tells his helper that the arrows are further out, then David will know that his life is in danger. The dinner progresses, Saul becomes angry, the arrow is beyond, and David knows that he must flee. David and Jonathan part.
- 1 Sam 21: 1-9 Ahimelech the priest gives David consecrated bread along with Goliath's sword. Saul's head shepherd, Doeg the Edomite is on hand to see David there. So, how many years has it been since David killed Goliath? And, did David have any men with him at this time or was it another lie? How do you feel about David's lies? What about the priest giving David consecrated bread in direct violation of Lev 24: 5-9?
- 1 Sam 21: 10-15 From Nob, David goes into enemy territory to Achish, king of Gath. The king was willing to give him asylum, but the king's advisors were afraid of David. David pretended to be crazy, which made him appear harmless.
- 1 Sam 22: 1-5 David becomes the leader of 400 malcontents. He takes his father and mother to Moab for safety. Moab...Moab...where was Ruth born?
- 1 Sam 22: 6-23 Saul learns of David and his men. He orders the death of Ahimelech and 84 related priests. His officials refuse to kill the priests. Doeg the Edomite fulfills Saul's orders. Doeg also puts to the sword the entire town of Nob. One of Ahimelech's sons (Abiathar) escapes and joins David.

- 1 Sam 23: 1-6 David, (not Saul) saves the town of Keilah from the Philistines after he has asked the Lord's direction. He was able to do this because Ahimelech had brought the ephod (high priest's vest) with him. The Urim and Thummin (used to determine God's will) were kept in a pouch inside the ephod. The use of the Urim and Thummin resulted in a YES-NO-MAYBE answer. Does God want us to look for answers this way today?
- 1Sam 23: 7-13 Saul learns David is in Keilah, and heads there. Before he arrives, David has inquired of God and leaves with his now 600 men. God revealed that Saul was coming and that the people in Keilah would turn David over to Saul. Why would the town turn over the man who saved them?
- 1 Sam 23: 14-29 While in the Desert of Ziph, two things happen. Jonathan visits David (last recorded time) and Saul hunts David and his men. Saul almost captures David, but is called away to deal with the Philistines who are raiding the land. See Psalm 54's title and decide if it fits here. Notice Saul's reliance on men vs David's reliance on God.
- 1 Sam 24: 1-22 Saul and his 3,000 men pursue David and his 600 men. Along the way, Saul stops at a cave to relieve himself. David and his men are hiding there. Unnoticed by Saul, David approaches and cuts a corner from his robe. When Saul leaves, David calls out to him, and tells how he could have killed him. Saul and David are reconciled. Saul recognizes that David will be king and that the kingdom of Israel will be established in David's hands.
- Why didn't Saul abdicate?
- Take a look at Psalm 57 and Psalm 142, especially 57:1 and 142:1-5. What do you think?
- 1 Sam 25: 1-44 While in the desert, David and his men had protected the property of a rich man named Nabal. David sends his servants to ask Nabal to share what he could with David's men. Nabal refuses. David goes to kill him, but is met by Nabal's wife Abigail who has heard from her servants what happened. Abigail is bringing gifts to David, and pleads for her husband. David spares Nabal's life. God causes Nabal to die within 10 days. David marries Abigail. We learn that Saul has given David's wife Mical to another, and we learn that David has another wife named Ahinoam.
- Nabal is described as surly and mean, and this seems to fit his behavior. Abigail is described as intelligent and beautiful. Abigail's actions certainly show her to be smart. First, when she hears what happened, she immediately takes steps which prove to save her husband's life. Second, rather than tell her husband what happened while he was drunk, she waited until morning to tell him. This avoided any misunderstanding or drunken responses.
- Side note to story: Verse 1 tells us that Samuel has died.

- 1 Sam 26: 1-25 Again the Ziphites betray David to Saul (1 Sam 23:19) and Saul takes 3,000 men to search for David. God causes Saul and his men to fall into a deep sleep (see v 13) and David is able, along with his nephew Abishai (1 Chron 2:16), to enter Saul's camp. They take Saul's spear and water jug and leave. David goes a safe distance from Saul's camp and then calls out. He accuses Abner (Saul's commander) and his men of failing to protect the king. Again Saul calls David his son and calls off the hunt. Notice that here David calls Saul "my lord the king". In Chapter 24 he also called him "my father". What has changed that might cause this? David returns the spear (but not the water jug) to Saul. What might the significance of the spear and the water jug be? This is the last recorded meeting between David and Saul.
- 1 Sam 27: 1-7 David decides that it is time to remove himself from harm's (Saul's) way. He moves his wives, his men, and their families to Gath. He gains Achish's permission to take up residence in Ziklag. In light of David's earlier exploits against the Philistines, and David's earlier act of insanity, why would Achish welcome David?
- 1 Sam 27: 8-12 David and his men raid nearby settlements: those belonging to the Geshrites, the Girzites, and the Amalekites. In each raid, they would kill all of the men and woman, and take the garments and the animals. The Philistines were raiders, and so it was expected that David and his men (as allies) would also be raiders. Whenever Achish asked where David and his men had gone raiding, David would reply that they had been raiding in Judah, Jerahmeel, or against the Kenites. Why would David lie about this? Why wasn't David afraid of any witnesses reporting to the king about where he had really been raiding? What do you think the Israelites felt about David's raids?
- 1 Sam 28: 1-2 Achish informs David that David and his men will be joining his army to fight against the Israelites. David says that Achish will see "what your servant can do". Why wasn't Achish concerned about having a fifth column inside his army? What did David actually promise?
- 1 Sam 28: 3-25 Faced with the might of the Philistine army, Saul seeks God's direction. But God does not answer him. Saul then decides to seek direction from Samuel; and so Saul searches for a medium to help him contact the spirit of Samuel. He talks to the medium (witch) in Endor. She contacts Samuel. She seems surprised when Samuel appears. Possibly she usually deals with fakery and evil spirits, and recognizes that this is not of her normal doing. Samuel asks why Saul has disturbed him, and Saul explains that God will not answer him. Samuel gives a final prophecy – Saul and his sons will be joining Samuel the very next day.
- Does God want us to consult mediums? Why didn't God answer Saul's prayers? What about our prayers? Isn't it interesting that Samuel does not appear in 2 Samuel?

- 1 Sam 29: 1-11 The armies are mustering. The Philistines in their area, and Saul and the Israelites in their's. David and his men are part of the Philistine army, serving under Achish. The Philistine commanders are unhappy when they learn that Achish has brought along David and his men. They are concerned about "these Hebrews". Achish vouches for David, who has ably served him for over a year. The Philistine commanders however are concerned that David might turn against them – and thus win back favor with Saul and the Israelites. They demand that Achish send David and his men back home. How do you think David and his men felt when they were sent home? Do you think they would have fought against their fellow Israelites? Why was Achish convinced of David's loyalties?
- 1 Sam 30: 1-8 David and his men return home to find that their town had been burnt, and that everyone had been taken captive. They are devastated by this. The men talk about stoning David. David turns to the Lord and inquires whether they should pursue the enemy. Isn't it interesting that David's men's first thought was to assign blame, rather than look for a solution. Why might this have been the case?
- 1 Sam 30: 9-20 David and his 600 men start off. But 200 of them are too exhausted to cross the Besor Ravine, and so they are left there. The remaining 400 go on, and they find an Egyptian in a field and bring him to David. The Egyptian reveals that he is a slave of an Amalekite, and had been abandoned when he became ill. He tells how "we" had raided different areas and had burned Ziklag. He leads David and his 400 men to the Amalekites. Following a 24 hour fight, David and his men are victorious, about 400 of the enemy escape on camels, and the wives and children have been recovered, along with all of the plunder the Amalekites had taken.
- 1 Sam 30: 21-31 The 400 men do not want to share the plunder with the 200 men who had remained behind. David insists that the plunder be shared, and goes on to send gifts to the Elders in Judah.
- 1 Sam 31: 1-6 Meanwhile, back at the battle between the Philistines and the Israelites, the battle is not going well for Saul. Many Israelites have fled, and many have been killed. The Philistines have killed three of Saul's sons (including Jonathan) and Saul himself has been critically wounded. Not wanting to be taken alive, Saul takes his own sword and falls on it.
- 1 Sam 31: 7-13 The Israelites abandoned their towns and flee. The Philistines come and occupy the towns. As the Philistines are stripping the dead they come across Saul's body. They cut off his head and take his armor. The armor is put in the temple of the Ashtoreths, and Saul's body is fastened to the wall of Beth Shan. (1 Chron 10:10 tells us that Saul's head was placed in the temple of Dagon.) The people of Jabesh Gilead heard of what the Philistines have done, and they travel through the night to recover Saul's body, along with the bodies of his sons. They take them back to Jabesh where they burn the bodies and bury the bones.

- 2 Sam 1: 1-16
Saul's death occurred about the same time as David's victory over the Amalekites. The distance from Mount Gilboa to Ziklag is about 80 miles; easily a 3 day trip for the Amalekite escaping from the battle area where Saul died. Seeing his appearance, David asks where he has (just) come from. Learning the man has come from the battle area, David wants to learn what has happened. The man tells David that the Israelites either fled or died, and that Saul and Jonathan are dead. Naturally, David asks how the man can be sure. The man replies that he came across Saul, that Saul was wounded and asked the man to kill him, that he did finish Saul off, and has brought Saul's crown and armband to David. In light of 1 Sam 31, it is probable that the man stole Saul's crown and armband before the Philistines arrived. The man's plan to gain reward and favor backfire, as David orders him killed for having killed the Lord's anointed one.
- 2 Sam 1: 17-27
David writes a poem about Saul and Jonathan, and orders that it be taught to the men of Judah. The book of Jashar is mentioned here (v18) and in the book of Joshua (10:13), but is not included in our bible. Why do you think that is?
- 2 Sam 2: 1-7
The Lord directs David to leave Philistine Ziklag and go to Hebron in Judah. He takes his two wives, his men (army) and their families and goes to Hebron where he is publicly anointed king over Judah. While there he learns how the men of Jabesh Gilead (part of Israel) buried Saul's body. David sends a message commending them for their actions, and advising them that Judah has made him king. Why do you think David added this?
- 2 Sam 2: 8-11
Meanwhile Abner has taken Saul's son Ish-Bosheth to Mahanaim to make him king of Israel. This happened about 5 ½ years after David became king of Judah. Abner appears to be the power behind the throne in Israel, but we have to wonder why it took so long for him to accomplish this.
- 2 Sam 2: 12-32
A contest to determine who will rule over a combined Judah and Israel results in a tie, followed by a battle where Abner is forced to kill Joab's younger brother Asahel. Why do you think Asahel was so bent on killing Abner? Why was Abner reluctant to kill Asahel? David's losses: 20 men. Abner's losses: 360 men. What do you think this indicates?
- 2 Sam 3: 1-5
David now has 6 wives. While this was common practice amongst kings of that time, read Deuteronomy 17: 14-17 to learn God's directions.
- 2 Sam 3: 6-21
Abner defects to David. Was this a result of the battle above, the close to 2 year struggle, or a reaction against Ish-Bosheth's accusation? Was the accusation based on fact, or was it a reference to Abner's growing power? Note how David refers to Michal: as Saul's daughter to Abner, and as his wife to Ish-Bosheth. What do you see in these two references?
- 2 Sam 3: 22-39
Joab and his men return from a raid to discover that Abner has left in peace. Joab arranges for Abner's return and murders him. V30 indicates this was revenge – but it may also have been to remove a rival. David is unhappy when he learns what has happened, and honors Abner in death.

- 2 Sam 4: 1-12 Abner's death leaves a power vacuum in Israel. Without Abner, Ish-Bosheth (Saul's son) doesn't know what to do. He is murdered by two of his own tribesmen while laying on his bed in his home. They bring the head to David expecting a reward. David has them killed. The only other heir apparent to Saul's throne would be his grandson (Jonathan's son) Mephibosheth who is now 12 years old, but is a cripple.
- 2 Sam 5: 1-5 The elders of Israel come to David at Hebron and ask him to become king over Israel. What reasons do they give? What are the differences between the roles of shepherd and ruler? How do you "run" your household?
- 2 Sam 5: 6-10 David makes Jerusalem his capital. To do this, he must capture it from the Jebusites. What did the Jebusites mean by saying that even the "blind and lame" could ward off David? How did David conquer Jerusalem? Jerusalem was ideal because it was centrally located, tied to no tribe, and virtually impregnable (though David and the Romans both captured it).
- Jerusalem is also called Salem (see Psalm 76:2). Read about another king of Jerusalem (Salem) mentioned in Genesis 14:18-20.
- 2 Sam 5: 11-16 About 20 years have passed (based on approx. dates of when David became king of Israel and when Hiram became king of Tyre). Hiram enjoyed good relations with both David and Solomon (1 Kings 5). David takes more wives and now concubines as well and has more children.
- 2 Sam 5: 17-25 The Philistines were willing to leave David alone while he was king of Judah. But now that David has become king of Israel as well they decide to take action against him. God had other plans and David defeats the Philistines. These events may well have happened between 2 Sam 5: 10 and 2 Sam 5:11. First, the Philistines "searched" for David, and second, David went "down" to his stronghold. Jerusalem was always "up".
- 2 Sam 6: 1-11 David decides to have the ark moved to Jerusalem. Why do you think he did this? He has the ark placed on a new cart and escorted by two of the men of the house where the ark had been resting all these years. Uzzah (one of the two men) places his hand on the ark because he fears it is about to fall. God strikes him dead. Why did God punish his good intentions?
- 2 Sam 6: 12-15 1 Chron 15: 1-15 tells us more about David's second (and successful) effort to bring the ark to Jerusalem. See also Numbers 4: 1-6 & 15.
- David (and Solomon) offered sacrifices, but were not condemned by God for doing so. What was the difference between them and Saul's sacrifices? (Hint: Leviticus 1: 2-13 and 1 Sam 13: 8-10).
- 2 Sam 6: 16-23 David's dancing in the streets (in front of the ark), and Michal's reaction. Michal's earlier love for David has turned to scorn. This could have been due to many factors, including being taken from her second husband, David's many other wives and concubines, Saul's demise, David's relationship with God, etc. We are told that Michal remained childless.

- 2 Sam 7: 1-17 David decides that he needs to build a “palace” for the ark. After all, he (David) is living in a plush rich palace and the ark is in a tent. Nathan the prophet agrees with David, but that night God reveals His plans to Nathan. The temple will be built by one of David’s sons. David’s role will be to conquer the surrounding areas, preparing the way. Notice four things here: First – God always provided a prophet to advise the kings (even if the advise was usually ignored). Second – while the Israelites “carried” the ark, it was God who “carried” the Israelites. This somehow reminds me of the poem “Footprints in the Sand”. Third – David’s lineage (kings) would last forever. This was fulfilled in Christ. Fourth – Can you spot the Messianic reference (see Hebrews 1:5).
- 2 Sam 7: 18-29 How many times in this passage does David call God “Sovereign Lord”? Does David the King accept his role as servant to the Lord? Does David argue with God about building a temple? Why does David seem to be so confident about God’s promises to him? Where do you think it was that David “went in and sat before the Lord”? Can this qualify as a prayer if David wasn’t kneeling? What aspects of prayer do you see here?
- 2 Sam 8: 1-18 David goes on to conquer many surrounding areas. For unknown reasons he only allows one third of the Moabites to live. This is interesting, Ruth was a Moabitess, and David’s parents had sheltered in Moab. Much of the plunder was placed or used in the temple: the gold shields (2 Kings 11:10), and the bronze (1 Ch 18:8). If you were president, would you like to be remembered like David was in verse 15?
- 2 Sam 9: 1-13 David shows kindness to Jonathan’s son Mephibosheth. How many years have gone by since 2 Sam 4:4? Enough that the 12 (5+7) year old now has a son of his own. This is a good example of how a few short chapters in the bible can actually be talking about 10+ years of time. Mephibosheth (Jonathan’s son) was probably worried that he might meet an unpleasant end, like his uncle Ish-Bosheth. Even though David did not kill Ish-Bosheth, David and Ish-Bosheth were rivals for rulership over Israel. David gave all of Saul’s lands (personal – not the kingdom) to Mephibosheth. David also promised that he would be able to eat at the king’s table for the rest of his life. While this could be construed as “house arrest” (especially in view of Ziba’s instructions to farm the land so that Mephibosheth could be provided for), it is more likely that this was an act of kindness because of David and Jonathan’s relationship. How did Mephibosheth return this favor? Take a quick peek ahead to 2 Samuel 16:1-4. What do you think? But wait...there’s more. Now read 2 Samuel 19: 11-30. David couldn’t be sure, but I’m certainly reminded of Solomon and the baby he ordered to be cut in half.
- 2 Sam 10: 1-19 What was the kindness shown to David by Nahash? We don’t know for sure – perhaps it was while David was a fugitive from Saul’s court. The Ammonites treat the envoys sent by David with great disrespect. This leads to David’s sending his armies against them. It was natural for the Ammonites to fear that David planned to conquer them – but none of David’s previous actions showed this kind of deceit.

- 2 Sam 11: 1-5 David's men go off to war, but David stays home. Why was springtime a time for war? Because in Israel it marked the end of the rainy season. Roads became passable, fodder was available for horses and pack animals, and armies could raid fields for forage. But the real story here is David's travel from temptation to sin. Why do you think Bathsheba taking a bath outside? In any case, David sees her from his roof and lusts after her. He sends someone to find out who she is. Is there implied criticism in the answer "isn't this the daughter of (your advisor)... the wife of (a man in your service) ..."? David sends for her, and sleeps with her. She becomes pregnant and sends word to David. How do we know that the child is David's and not her husband (see Leviticus 15)?
- 2 Sam 11: 6-13 David then sends for the husband. Why do you think he did this? David's plans were frustrated because Uriah did not go home and sleep with his wife. What reasons does Uriah give for this? (Also read again 1 Sam 21:4-5. How does it relate to this situation?) David then tries to get Uriah drunk, hoping that Uriah will then go home to his wife. Uriah does not.
- 2 Sam 11: 14-27 David compounds his sin further. He arranges for Uriah to be killed in battle. When Bathsheba learns that Uriah is dead, she goes into a period of mourning. After the mourning period, David takes her for his wife. Why did David wait? What was God's reaction to all of this? Why do you think the messenger added extra details to Joab's message?
- 2 Sam 12: 1-14 God sends the prophet Nathan to rebuke David. What do you think of Nathan's parable? Do you think it helped bring home to David his actions? How did David respond? Psalm 51 refers to chapter 11 and 12.
- 2 Sam 12: 15-25 This is one of those passages that cause us great distress. Did God actually punish the child for the sins of the parents? Did God cause a baby to die? It's possible that the child would have died anyway (from some birth defect), and that God's action was to refuse to miraculously heal. Can you understand why David's servants were confused? Note: Solomon was either the 2nd child born to Bathsheba or the 4th – see 1 Chron 3:5.
- 2 Sam 12: 26-31 David's armies take the Ammonite city of Rabbah.
- 2 Sam 13: 1-19 David's turmoil continues. Amnon (one of David's sons) falls in love with his virgin half sister Tamar. He shares his desires with his cousin Jonadab (David's brother's son), who suggests a deceitful way that Amnon can trick Tamar into his bed. Tamar attempts to talk Amnon out of raping her, but she is unsuccessful. After raping her, Amnon has Tamar thrown out of his house. No longer a virgin, she cannot marry.
- 2 Sam 13: 20-39 Tamar's full brother Absalom takes Tamar into his house. Absalom waits two years and then has his servants murder Amnon. At first David thinks Absalom has killed all of his brothers, but Jonadab tells him this is not the case. Jonadab seems to be in the middle of everything – he is involved in Amnon's raping Tamar and seems to know of Absalom's plans to kill Amnon. How did Absalom trick David into sending Amnon to Absalom?

2 Sam 14: 1-33

Chapter 13 ends by telling us that Absalom went into exile for three years. We now learn how Joab helped Absalom to return to Jerusalem. Did Joab do this out of caring for David, hopes of reward, or because Absalom was a neighbor of his? We don't know. Joab has a "wise" woman go to David with a tale about her two sons – one of whom has killed his brother. The tale is just different enough that David does not immediately connect it with the tale of his two sons. As the woman talks to David, he comes to realize that Joab was behind her coming to him. In the end, David agrees to allow Absalom to return to Jerusalem, and sends Joab to bring Absalom back. But there is a catch - Absalom is not allowed to meet with David. Absalom. We're then told about Absalom's hair. Why? Well, glance ahead to chapter 18 to read more. We're also told that Absalom had two sons and a daughter named Tamar. Was she named after her aunt? The story now continues. It has been two years since David allowed Absalom to return to Jerusalem. Absalom sends for Joab, but Joab refuses to meet with him. Absalom has Joab's field set on fire, and Joab comes to ask why. Absalom asks Joab to intercede with David. Absalom does, and David agrees to meet with his son.

2 Sam 15: 1-12

Absalom begins to take steps to win the tribes over to him, so that he can replace his father as king. First we see him give himself "royal trappings", namely a chariot with horses and men to run ahead of him. Then, he takes up a position at the city gates to hear people's requests for justice. He tells everyone how valid their request is, and what a shame it is that he is not judge (read king). At the end of four years he is ready to make his move. He goes to Hebron, where he will become king.

2 Sam 15: 13-37

David is told of the plot, and how many of the people support Absalom. David decides to flee, along with many of his loyal officials. The story of Ittai the Gittite mercenary helps us understand the depth of loyalty many of David's officials held for him. Zadok brings the ark to accompany David, but David sends the Zadok and the ark back to Jerusalem. He asks Zadok and Abiathar to have their two sons act as messengers to keep David informed. David learns that one of his advisors Ahithophel is among the conspirators. He prays that Ahithophel's advice will turn to foolishness. Finally, David sends Hushai back to Jerusalem with instructions to pretend to support Absalom and offer him bad advice.

2 Sam 16: 1-4

Ziba, Saul's steward meets David. He has brought supplies, and tells David how Saul's grandson is gloating over David's troubles. 2 Sam 9: 1-13 and 2 Sam 19: 11-30 tell us the whole story about Ziba. While at first glance reading this story, it seems that Mephibosheth has turned upon his benefactor, but 19:11-30 seem to tell us that Ziba was a liar and schemer.

2 Sam 16: 5-14

As David is approaching Bahrim, Shimei, a member of Saul's clan curses David. It is interesting that he blames David for the blood spilt, even though David never harmed Saul or any of Saul's sons. (Notes: Saul's family is summarized in 1 Sam 14: 49-51. The rest of Shimei's story is found in 2 Sam 19: 18-23 and 1 Kings 2: 8-9).

- 2 Sam 16: 15-23 Absalom and his men arrive at Jerusalem. Hushai meets with him. At first Absalom is suspicious of Hushai, but Hushai's cleverly worded answers convince Absalom. Ahithophel offers his first set of advice – Absalom should lay with the 10 concubines his father David had left. Why? Keep in mind that a king's harem was passed on to his successor.
- 2 Sam 17: 1-14 Ahithophel offers his 2nd set of advice – Absalom should take 12,000 men and immediately go after David while David is weak. Striking quickly, only David need die. Absalom asks Hushai for his opinion, and Hushai disagrees with Ahithophel's advice with some convincing arguments. Absalom decides to take Hushai's advice, and so David's prayer is answered as Ahithophel's good advice has been turned to foolishness.
- 2 Sam 17: 15-29 Hushai brings the two priests Zadok and Abiathar up to date and tells them to send a message to David to immediately leave the desert and cross over the Jordan. The priests send a servant girl to their two sons with the message for David. They are spotted and hide out in a well. After the search for them ends they go to David who crosses the Jordan. Ahithophel sees that his advice has not been followed. He goes home and hangs himself. Why? He knows that David will win and come for revenge.
- 2 Sam 18: 1-18 David organizes his men and sends them out with instructions for them to not harm his son Absalom. Absalom appoints Amasa to lead his men (Joab has remained with David). The battle between David's men and his son Absalom's men took place in the forest of Ephraim. What do you think it means "the forest claimed more lives that day than the sword"? Absalom, who was riding on a mule, got caught in a tree (remember his long hair?). Joab disregards David's request and kills Absalom.
- 2 Sam 18: 19-33 David waits for news. Runners come and David learns that his son is dead. He weeps.
- 2 Sam 19: 1-8 Joab confronts David and tells him that David needs to go out and encourage the men who have saved David's life, along with the lives of his wives, concubines, sons, and daughters. David follows his advice.
- 2 Sam 19: 8-43 An interesting thing happens. While David's tribe does nothing, the Israelites begin to ask themselves why they shouldn't bring David back to Jerusalem as their king again. David sends word to the elders of Judah asking why they (his own kin) should be the last to bring him back. He also sends word to Amasa that Amasa will be made his new commander in place of Joab. The men of Judah unite and ask David to return. David goes as far as the Jordan. Before crossing the Jordan, David is met by four men. Shimei (who cursed him) begs for forgiveness. His men want to kill Shimei, but David allows him to live. Ziba and Mephibosheth meet him. Mephibosheth (who has not washed or shaved since David fled) tells David that Ziba had deceived him. David orders them to share Saul's estate. Barzillai (who had brought David and his men food in the desert) comes and David wants to reward him. The men of Israel and the men of Judah accompany David, but they have words between them.

- 2 Sam 20:1-2 Absalom's rebellion has been dealt with, and now another trouble-maker arises. Sheba, a Benjamite sounds the trumpet and announces "We have no share in David, no part in Jesse's son! Every man to his tent, O Israel!" We're told that the men of Israel deserted David to follow Sheba, and that the men of Judah remained true to David.
- 2 Sam 20: 3 David returns to Jerusalem and places the 10 concubines that Absalom slept with into house arrest. They were provided for, but kept in confinement until they died, living as widows. It's unfortunate that they had to pay the price for Absalom's actions.
- 2 Sam 20: 4-26 David then places Amassa in charge of his troops. He orders him to gather the men of Israel together, and to return in 3 days. Amassa takes longer than that, and David orders his men to follow Sheba. Amassa rejoins them, but is killed by Joab. Joab then leads the men in following Sheba, who they catch up with in northern Israel at Abel Beth Maacab where Joab lays siege. The townspeople deliver Sheba's head to Joab and the rebellion is finished. It's interesting that while all the men of Israel deserted David to follow Sheba, apparently only a few stayed with him all the way to Abel Beth Maacab. My guess is that tribal infighting kept them from uniting behind Sheba. In addition, God's plan didn't call for a split kingdom yet.
- 2 Sam 21: 1-14 These last four chapters don't need to be taken chronologically. They are additional information that the writer wanted to share with us. When did these events take place? I'm not sure. A 3 year famine has taken place, and David asks God why. God answers that the famine is because Saul put the Gibeonites to death.(see Joshua 9: 16-20). David asks the Gibeonites what can be done to rectify the situation. They ask that 7 of Saul's male descendants be given to them to be killed. David agrees, and locates 7 descendants (Mephibosheth is spared because of David's oath to Jonathan.)
- 2 Sam 21: 15-22 Some battles with the Philistines are recorded. Again, I'm not sure when these battles occurred.
- 2 Sam 22: 1-51 David's song of praise.
- 2 Sam 23: 1 -7 David's last words. These don't need to be taken as the very last words that David uttered before his death, but probably should be taken as his last "official" words. There would be no more hymns, or writings by David.
- 2 Sam 23: 8-39 David's mighty men. The story of David would not be complete without a reference to his mighty men and a summary of their exploits. The story of the three warriors fighting their way through enemy lines to bring David back some water from the well near the gates of Bethlehem, and of David's refusing to drink the water that might have cost their lives is one of the classic stories of David's mighty men.

- 2 Sam 24: 1-9 Samuel's passage says that The Lord told David to take a census. 1 Chronicles 21:1 tells us that Satan was the one who incited David to do this. How do we reconcile this? We need to remember that the Israelites thought that God, as Sovereign Lord of the Universe was responsible for anything that happened. I believe that God allowed Satan to tempt David. In any case, David orders a census taken of the fighting men. Joab asks why David feels the need to do this. David overrules him (1 Chronicles 21:3 explains Joab's argument further).
- 2 Sam 24:10-14 No sooner is the census finished then David realizes he has sinned against God. What was the sin? It must have had to do with relying on self and men rather than having faith in God. God sends word (through Gad the prophet) that David must choose between three punishments: 3 years of famine, 3 months of fleeing, or 3 days of plague through the land. David chooses the 3 days of plague.
- 2 Sam 24:15-25 70,000 men (see 1 Chronicles 21:14) died as the plague spread. As the angel was about to strike Jerusalem, David prayed to God that the people would be spared and that David and his family would bear the punishment. This occurs just as the angel is at the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite. Gad comes to David and tells him to build an altar there where the angel stopped. (This threshing floor was located on Mount Moriah where Abraham was told to sacrifice Isaac. Some believe that it was the same spot where Abraham built his altar. It was also the location where Solomon built the temple). David tells Araunah that he wants to buy the land from him. Araunah offers it to David free, along with the oxen for the sacrifice. This is the well known verse where David replies "I will not sacrifice to the Lord my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing".
- 1 Kings 1:1 – 1:53 David's end is told us as part of the story of Solomon. We're told that David had grown old and weak. A nurse is found to care for him. Naturally, a virgin is chosen. Why? Because she would have the status of a concubine. David has already made it clear that Solomon is to become the next king. But David's oldest surviving son Adonijah takes David's weakness as a chance to usurp the throne. Some of David's old supporters side with Adonijah, while others stay with Solomon. Nathan the prophet tells Solomon's mother Bathsheba to go tell David what is happening. Nathan himself then enters and asks David if Adonijah's actions were sanctioned by David. David immediately takes steps to make Solomon king (co-regent with David). Adonijah's plans are thwarted and Solomon agrees to let him live provided that he show himself to be worthy. (To give up plans and claims on the throne).
- 1 Kings 2:1-11 David gives final instructions to Solomon, dies and is buried in the City of David.
- Read 1 Chronicles chapters 22 through 29 to read how David helped plan the temple that would be built by his son Solomon.