

# The Second Book of Samuel

Teaching Series Conducted At  
West Side Church of God in Christ  
Rockford, Illinois  
by  
Pastor Maurice A. West  
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*Blessings upon you, people of the most high God! As you prepare to read this study in the **Second Book of Samuel**, it is my prayer that it will be a blessing to you. This study was conducted at West Side Church of God in Christ in our Friday evening teaching services. I hope this study is a blessing to you and gives you the encouragement you need to dig deeper into the Word of God. I speak blessings into your lives in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.*

*Pastor Maurice A. West – July 10, 2009*



## THE LEGAL DISCLAIMERS

There will be various translations of the Scriptures used in our study. If we depart from the King James Version, which will be our standard, what follows are the typical translations used:

- **Amplified Bible** – The Amplified Bible. Copyright © 1965, Zondervan Publishing House.
- **Net Bible** – The Net Bible. Copyright © 1996-2003, Biblical Studies Press
- **NIV** – The New International Version. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society.
- **NKJV** – The New King James Version. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc.
- **NLT** – The New Living Translation. Copyright © 1996.

At various times in this study, you may also find the following designations referring to reference material used to assist in putting together this study. Direct quotations will be shown in italicized text.

- {Adam Clarke} Adam Clarke’s Commentary on the Whole Bible
- {David Guzik} Guzik, David. “Study Guide for 1 Samuel.” Enduring Word Ministries
- {JF&B} The Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary
- {Josephus} The Works of Flavius Josephus – Translated by William Whiston
- {Matthew Henry} Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible in One Volume
- {Dake} Dake’s Annotated Reference Bible
- {MacArthur} The MacArthur Study Bible
- {Thompson} The Thompson Chain-Reference Bible.
- {McGee} Thru the Bible Commentary Series by Dr. J. Vernon McGee

If other references, commentators, or Bible translations are used they will be identified in the text.

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## INTRODUCTION

**WRITER:** There is no clear answer as to who wrote the books of First and Second Samuel. The easy answer would be that Samuel wrote them but he dies in First Samuel chapter 25. Therefore, who wrote the rest of it?

- {David Guzik} *“We don’t know who wrote the books; certainly, Samuel was a major contributor, but much of the book takes place after his death in 1 Samuel 25. They are called the books of 1 and 2 Samuel, not because he wrote all of them, but because they describe his great ministry in Israel and the legacy of it.”*
- {David E. Malick from [www.Bible.org](http://www.Bible.org)} *“It must be admitted that with the current evidence one cannot affirm without reservation who wrote the book. It is possible that Samuel was compiled from the writings of the prophets Samuel, Gad, and Nathan whose works were preserved within the nation. It is also possible that Samuel wrote chapters 1-25 and then Gad and/or Nathan completed the remainder of the book.”*
- {Dake} *“Samuel, David, Nathan, and Gad no doubt kept the original records from which Isaiah compiled the book about 743-683 B.C.”*
- {McGee} *“Our title identifies the name of Samuel with these first two historical books. This is not because he is the writer, although we do believe that he is the writer of a good portion of it. It is because his story occurs first, and he figures prominently as the one who poured the anointing oil on both Saul*

*and David. Samuel, then, is considered the writer of 1 Samuel up to the twenty-fifth chapter, which records his death. Apparently, Nathan and Gad completed the writing of these books. We learn this from 1 Samuel 10:25 and 1 Chronicles 29:29.”*

**DATE:** David Malick places the writing of this book sometime during the divided monarchy and yet before the fall of the northern kingdom. (If this is true, Samuel could not be the only author, nor could Gad or Nathan.) He uses the following Scriptures from within First and Second Samuel to establish his point.

- Israel and Judah are distinguished (11:8; 17:52; 18:16)
- Ziklag, the city of Philistia where David is sent by Achish, is described as belonging “to the kings of Judah to this day” (27:6). This not only speaks of a time after the divided monarchy, but of a time when there had been “kings” in Judah.
- However, there does not seem to be any indication in the text that the northern kingdom had fallen.
- Therefore, it seems best to place the writing of Samuel sometime after the divided monarchy (931 B.C.) but before the fall of Samaria (722/21 B.C.).

**STATISTICS:** {Dake} *The Second Book of Samuel is the 10th book of the Bible. It contains 24 chapters and 695 verses.*

**BACKGROUND AND WHY THIS BOOK WAS WRITTEN:** In older Bibles, especially the King James Version, the title of this book is “The Second Book of Samuel otherwise called The Second Book of the Kings”. The reason for this is because there was an evolution of the structure of the books of First Samuel through Second Kings. At one time, they were all one book. Then they were divided into two books. The first two, now known as First and Second Samuel, were one book of Kings and dealt with the establishment of the monarchy in Israel. The second book, now known as First and Second Kings, dealt with the “glory days” of the kingdom under Solomon, to the division of the kingdom, and, finally, to the destruction of the kingdom. According to *The Layman’s Bible Commentary*, the Greek version of the Old Testament, known as the *Septuagint*, changed the division of these two books into four books under a single name of First to Fourth Kings. At some later point in history, the titles were changed to what we have now.

As we’ll see from the commentators below, you cannot separate First Samuel from Second Samuel. Therefore, everything that is said will address both books as one.

- {Matthew Henry} *This book, and that which follows it, bear the name of Samuel in the title, not because he was the penman of them (except of so much of them as fell within his own time, to the twenty-fifth chapter of the first book, in which we have an account of his death), but because the first book begins with a large account of him, his birth and childhood, his life and government; and the rest of these two volumes that are denominated from him contains the history of the reigns of Saul and David, who were both anointed by him. And, because the history of these two kings takes up the greatest part of these books, the Vulgar Latin calls them the First and Second Books of the Kings, and the two that follow the Third and Fourth, which the titles in our English Bibles take notice of with an alias: otherwise called the First Book of the Kings, etc.*
- {F.B. Meyer} *“Samuel the Prophet” bridges the gulf between Samson the Judge and David the King: and there is deep significance in the fact that his name is identified with the two Books of Scripture which describe this great transitional period, every event of which was affected by his influence.*

- {The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia} *In the Hebrew Canon, the two Books of Samuel were reckoned as one, and formed the third division of the Earlier Prophets. The one book bore the title “Samuel” (shemu’el), not because Samuel was believed to be the author, but because his life and acts formed the main theme of the book, or at least of its earlier part. Nor was the Book of Samuel separated by any real division in subject matter or continuity of style from the Book of Kings, which in the original formed a single book, not two as in the English and other modern versions. The history was carried forward without interruption; and the record of the life of David, begun in Samuel, was completed in Kings. The division into four books, but not the Greek title, was then adopted in the Latin translation, where, however, the influence of Jerome secured the restoration of the Hebrew names, 1 and 2 Samuel, and 1 and 2 Kings. Jerome’s example was universally followed, and the fourfold division with the Hebrew titles found a place in all subsequent versions of the Old Testament Scriptures.*

*The narrative of the two Books of Samuel covers a period of about a hundred years, from the close of the unsettled era of the Judges to the establishment and consolidation of the kingdom under David. It is therefore a record of the changes, national and constitutional, which accompanied this growth and development of the national life, at the close of which the Israelites found themselves a united people under the rule of a king to whom all owed allegiance, controlled and guided by more or less definitely established institutions and laws. This may be described as the general purpose and main theme of the books, to trace the advance of the people under divine guidance to a state of settled prosperity and union in the promised land, and to give prominence to theocratic rule which was the essential condition of Israel’s life as the people of God under all the changing forms of early government. The narrative therefore centers itself around the lives of the three men, Samuel, Saul and David, who were chiefly instrumental in the establishment of the monarchy, and to whom it was due more than to any others that Israel emerged from the depressed and disunited state in which the tribes had remained during the period of the rule of the Judges, and came into possession of a combined and effective national life. If the formal separation therefore into two books be disregarded, the history of Israel as it is narrated in “Samuel” is most naturally divided into three parts, which are followed by an appendix recording words and incidents which for some reason had not found a place in the general narrative:*

- *The life and rule of Samuel (1 Samuel 1-15) (death 1 Samuel 25:1).*
- *The life, reign and death of Saul (1 Samuel 16-2Sa 1).*
- *The reign and acts of David to the suppression of the two rebellions of Absalom and Sheba (2 Samuel 2-20).*
- *Appendix; other incidents in the reign of David, the names of his chief warriors and his So or Psalm of Praise (2 Samuel 21-24).*

**AUTHOR’S NOTE:** Throughout the text, I have added what I call “**Saints’ Principles**” and “**Leadership Principles**”. The intention of these principles is to point out truths, as I see them, based on something that has occurred in the Scripture.

## Chapter 1

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: Every Christian has a responsibility toward leadership. David taught this and lived this. Even if you don't understand your role, you are yet responsible for your actions.

### News Comes from the Battle with the Philistines

*1 Now it came to pass after the death of Saul, when David was returned from the slaughter of the Amalekites, and David had abode two days in Ziklag;* This passage, in brief, brings us up to date on what has transpired from the end of the previous book. (Remember, the division of the two books (First and Second Samuel) was done after they were written for the convenience of the translators and did not occur in the original text.) We'll see in coming verses that this chapter is an attempt to bridge the final two chapters of First Samuel with what is about to occur in the next chapter.

David and his men have returned to Ziklag, his current home city provided by the Philistines, after recovering all of their families and goods in the slaughter of the Amalekites. The city was obviously not so severely burned that they could not find some accommodations in it. They have now been back two days so this book begins two days after the end of First Samuel.

*2 It came even to pass on the third day, that, behold, a man came out of the camp from Saul with his clothes rent, and earth upon his head: and so it was, when he came to David, that he fell to the earth, and did obeisance.* The next day after the previous verse, a man shows up from the camp of Saul.

*3 And David said unto him, From whence comest thou? And he said unto him, Out of the camp of Israel am I escaped. 4 And David said unto him, How went the matter? I pray thee, tell me. And he answered, That the people are fled from the battle, and many of the people also are fallen and dead; and Saul and Jonathan his son are dead also.* {Matthew Henry} “He named only Saul and Jonathan, because he knew David would be most solicitous to know their fate; for Saul was the man whom he most feared and Jonathan the man whom he most loved.” This man was an opportunist looking to capitalize on the death of Saul and the emotions of David related to both deaths. However, he did not realize that the character of David was far different than the character of Saul.

*5 And David said unto the young man that told him, How knowest thou that Saul and Jonathan his son be dead?* **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** Get all of the facts (and make sure that they're facts) before reacting. David kept his emotions in check until he could verify the story of this unknown man.

*6 And the young man that told him said, As I happened by chance upon mount Gilboa, behold, Saul leaned upon his spear; and, lo, the chariots and horsemen followed hard after him. 7 And when he looked behind him, he saw me, and called unto me. And I answered, Here am I. 8 And he said unto me, Who art thou? And I answered him, I am an Amalekite. 9 He said unto me again, Stand, I pray thee, upon me, and slay me: for anguish is come upon me, because my life is yet whole in me. 10 So I stood upon him, and slew him, because I was sure that he could not live after that he was fallen: and I took the crown that was upon his head, and the bracelet that was on his arm, and have brought them hither unto my lord.* This verse seems to contradict the account in the final chapter of First Samuel, which says that Saul fell on his sword. However, noted scholars, like Dr. McGee, seem to think that both accounts are correct. Saul fell on his sword but did not complete the job. In verse 8, Saul was in anguish because “*my life is yet whole in me*”. To me, this says that he's in anguish because what he planned to do did not come to pass...he's still alive. It was then that the Amalekite slew him.



Here we have the actions of one of the stupidest men in Israel at that time. He obviously had never been exposed to the teaching of David so he had no respect for the Lord's anointed. He only viewed Saul as a fallen king about to die that he put out of his misery. He had enough sense, though, if you want to call it that, to take the news directly to David because he hoped to receive a reward for his actions. His actions remind me of the actions of those that don't know the Lord and don't get involved in the business of the church at all when they try to express what little knowledge they have. Because he doesn't understand the business of the Lord, he has put his life in jeopardy.

**11 Then David took hold on his clothes, and rent them; and likewise all the men that were with him: 12 And they mourned, and wept, and fasted until even, for Saul, and for Jonathan his son, and for the people of the LORD, and for the house of Israel; because they were fallen by the sword.** The men that mourned with David included those that had encouraged him on two separate occasions to kill Saul when the moment presented itself. David has successfully transmitted his spirit to them and they mourned for Saul, and for all of Israel, as David did.

**13 And David said unto the young man that told him, Whence art thou? And he answered, I am the son of a stranger, an Amalekite.** After the mourning related to the news had subsided, David returned to the matter of the young man who brought the news. JF&B says that he asks of his origin the second time in a judicial setting and the young man testifies in a way that says he knows the Jewish law ("**I am the son of a stranger**") for this is how the Jews termed Gentiles. He also testifies to being an Amalekite. He is of those that David and his men have just slaughtered in restoring their goods and of those that Saul was sent to destroy, which he failed miserably.

**14 And David said unto him, How wast thou not afraid to stretch forth thine hand to destroy the Lord's anointed? 15 And David called one of the young men, and said, Go near, and fall upon him. And he smote him that he died.** If the young man lied to gain David's favor, the penalty for his lie was death. If he did not lie, the penalty for his actions was death. In either case, the importance of the Lord's anointed was the key and the young man obviously didn't get it. **SAINTS' PRINCIPLE: Whether we understand Scriptural principles or not, we are responsible for our actions toward them.**

**16 And David said unto him, Thy blood be upon thy head; for thy mouth hath testified against thee, saying, I have slain the Lord's anointed.** In this saying, David excused any guilt on his part because his response was based on the testimony of the man.

### **David Mourns the Death of Saul and Jonathan**

**17 And David lamented with this lamentation over Saul and over Jonathan his son: 18 (Also he bade them teach the children of Judah the use of the bow: behold, it is written in the book of Jasher.)** David not only mourned Jonathan, his best friend, he also mourned the man that sought to kill him nearly twenty times and took away his wife from him. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE: Never speak against your past leader or do anything that would embarrass their service no matter how difficult a time you had under them.** Truly we see a man after God's own heart.

**19 The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places: how are the mighty fallen! 20 Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph. 21 Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, neither let there be rain, upon you, nor fields of offerings: for there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away, the shield of Saul, as**

*though he had not been anointed with oil. 22 From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan turned not back, and the sword of Saul returned not empty.*

*23 Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided: they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions.* You can find a reason for sorrow even in the loss of your enemy if you'll get past the desire for revenge. Saul was a strong leader and led the country in strength.

*24 Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who clothed you in scarlet, with other delights, who put on ornaments of gold upon your apparel.* Saul was David's adversary but Saul was important to the country. Early in his reign, they fought the Philistines with no weaponry. Because of Saul's leadership, the country was led into unprecedented prosperity. This is another reason for sorrow.

*25 How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle! O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thine high places. 26 I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women.* In studying this chapter, I stumbled across a web site (one of the dangers of the Internet) run by a homosexual member of a Pentecostal Holiness church who felt unfairly treated because of our stance against the homosexual lifestyle. He used this verse to justify himself. You can use this verse if you will but this was not the intention of David when he spoke these words. Look how Matthew Henry brings out this verse: "*He had reason to say that Jonathan's love to him was wonderful; surely never was the like, for a man to love one who he knew was to take the crown over his head, and to be so faithful to his rival: this far surpassed the highest degree of conjugal affection and constancy.*" Dr. McGee went further to state that with all of the trouble that David had in his life time with women, beginning with Jonathan's sister, Michel, it is easy to see how their great friendship, with no strings attached, surpassed the love of a woman.

*27 How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished!*

## Chapter 2

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: Leaders have a responsibility in life that extends far beyond their personal issues or crises. Everything a leader does can impact someone else. In this chapter, Abner will make a decision that will cost a lot of men their lives – a decision that violated his own conscience.

### **David Anointed King Over Judah**

*1 And it came to pass after this, that David enquired of the LORD, saying, Shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah? And the LORD said unto him, Go up. And David said, Whither shall I go up? And he said, Unto Hebron.* Since David's return to Ziklag from the battle with the Philistines, he has demonstrated a consistency in seeking the Lord's guidance in his decision making. The Lord led him to Hebron where he will become the king over his tribe.

JF&B “[David] knew his destination, but he knew also that the providence of God would pave the way. Therefore he would take no step in such a crisis of his own and the nation's history, without asking and obtaining the divine direction. He was told to go into Judah, and fix his headquarters in Hebron, whither he accordingly repaired with his now considerable force. There his interests were very powerful; for he was not only within his own tribe, and near chiefs with whom he had been long in friendly relations, but Hebron was the capital and center of Judah, and one of the Levitical cities; the inhabitants of which were strongly attached to him, both from sympathy with his cause ever since the massacre at Nob, and from the prospect of realizing in [him] their promised pre-eminence among the tribes. The princes of Judah, therefore, offered him the crown over their tribe, and it was accepted.”

*2 So David went up thither, and his two wives also, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail Nabal's wife the Carmelite. 3 And his men that were with him did David bring up, every man with his household: and they dwelt in the cities of Hebron.* David and his militia moved their base of operations from Ziklag of the Philistines to Hebron in Judah.

*4 And the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah. And they told David, saying, That the men of Jabeshgilead were they that buried Saul.* David makes his first step toward the destiny promised by Samuel and becomes king over Judah.

*5 And David sent messengers unto the men of Jabeshgilead, and said unto them, Blessed be ye of the LORD, that ye have showed this kindness unto your lord, even unto Saul, and have buried him. 6 And now the LORD show kindness and truth unto you: and I also will requite you this kindness, because ye have done this thing. 7 Therefore now let your hands be strengthened, and be ye valiant: for your master Saul is dead, and also the house of Judah have anointed me king over them.* One of the problems with leadership transition (which really doesn't sound like a problem but it can be) is greater than required humility from the new leader. David accepted his position and he cannot be any more king at that time than he'll be 40 years later. Therefore, he tells the men of Jabesh-Gilead of his new position for their allegiance and because they are vulnerable to attack because of their remote location in the kingdom.

### **Abner Anoints Ishbosheth as King**

*8 But Abner the son of Ner, captain of Saul's host, took Ishbosheth the son of Saul, and brought him over to Mahanaim; 9 And made him king over Gilead, and over the Ashurites, and over Jezreel, and over Ephraim, and over Benjamin, and over all Israel. 10 Ishbosheth Saul's son was forty years old when he*

*began to reign over Israel, and reigned two years. But the house of Judah followed David. 11 And the time that David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months.*

**Side Road:** I underlined in the text some key points that we Bible students need to take note of for the future. In studying this book, you have to understand the history also.

{JF&B} “Here was the establishment of a rival kingdom, which, however, would probably have had no existence but for Abner.” Abner was a member of Saul’s family and his general of the army. These actions will eventually cost him his life. He KNOWS that David is the rightful heir to the throne because of the Word of the Lord through Samuel. However, he takes the approach of the world and installs Saul’s son as king.

**SAINTS’ PRINCIPLE:** **We are not of the world and cannot use the actions of the world without suffering the consequences of those actions.** By the way, Ishbosheth, the youngest son of Saul had changed his name from Esh-baal. Per JF&B, “The Hebrews usually changed names ending with Baal into Bosheth (“shame”) (compare Judges 9:53 with 2Samuel 11:21). This prince was so called from his imbecility.”

### **Civil War in Israel**

*12 And Abner the son of Ner, and the servants of Ishbosheth the son of Saul, went out from Mahanaim to Gibeon. 13 And Joab the son of Zeruiah, and the servants of David, went out, and met together by the pool of Gibeon: and they sat down, the one on the one side of the pool, and the other on the other side of the pool. 14 And Abner said to Joab, Let the young men now arise, and play before us. And Joab said, Let them arise. 15 Then there arose and went over by number twelve of Benjamin, which pertained to Ishbosheth the son of Saul, and twelve of the servants of David. 16 And they caught every one his fellow by the head, and thrust his sword in his fellow’s side; so they fell down together: wherefore that place was called Helkathhazzurim, which is in Gibeon. {Matthew Henry} “Heldath-hazzurim—the field of rocky men, men that were not only strong in body, but of firm and unshaken constancy, that stirred not at the sight of death.”*

*17 And there was a very sore battle that day; and Abner was beaten, and the men of Israel, before the servants of David. 18 And there were three sons of Zeruiah there, Joab, and Abishai, and Asahel: and Asahel was as light of foot as a wild roe.* Reminder: Zeruiah was the older sister of David. It’s interesting that these men are always mentioned by their mother and never by their father, which was unusual in Bible times. (Hint: verse 32 gives the answer.) Of the three, Asahel was the youngest and known for his stamina and speed in running. He was swift as a runner but not wise as a soldier...an example of zeal without knowledge.

*19 And Asahel pursued after Abner; and in going he turned not to the right hand nor to the left from following Abner. 20 Then Abner looked behind him, and said, Art thou Asahel? And he answered, I am.* The sad thing about this war, as with all civil wars, was that these men had fought side-by-side not much before this and they knew each other. How similarly sad when we have civil wars among the saints!

*21 And Abner said to him, Turn thee aside to thy right hand or to thy left, and lay thee hold on one of the young men, and take thee his armor. But Asahel would not turn aside from following of him.* Abner knew he had more physical prowess than Asahel and gave him the opportunity to “pick on someone his own size.”

*22 And Abner said again to Asahel, Turn thee aside from following me: wherefore should I smite thee to the ground? how then should I hold up my face to Joab thy brother? {Matthew Henry} “Abner, it seems,*

*either loved Joab or feared him; for he was very loath to incur his displeasure, which he would certainly do if he slew Asahel. Abner's care how he should lift up his face to Joab gives cause to suspect that he really believed David would have the kingdom at last, according to the divine designation, and then, in opposing him, he acted against his conscience."* In other words, all of these lives lost could be laid right at the feet of Abner because he knew better. **SAINTS' QUESTION:** **Whose lives are you effecting with your actions and is it for good...or for bad?**

*23 Howbeit he refused to turn aside: wherefore Abner with the hinder end of the spear smote him under the fifth rib, that the spear came out behind him; and he fell down there, and died in the same place: and it came to pass, that as many as came to the place where Asahel fell down and died stood still.* Asahel was obviously greatly loved among David's men. When they came to his body, they immediately stopped pursuing their enemies because of this great tragedy.

*24 Joab also and Abishai pursued after Abner: and the sun went down when they were come to the hill of Ammah, that lieth before Giah by the way of the wilderness of Gibeon. 25 And the children of Benjamin gathered themselves together after Abner, and became one troop, and stood on the top of an hill.* Abner ran until he was able to rally troops from his tribe, Benjamin, to come against the pursuit of Joab and Abishai.

*26 Then Abner called to Joab, and said, Shall the sword devour for ever? knowest thou not that it will be bitterness in the latter end? how long shall it be then, ere thou bid the people return from following their brethren?* **NIV** Abner called out to Joab, "Must the sword devour forever? Don't you realize that this will end in bitterness? How long before you order your men to stop pursuing their brothers?"

*27 And Joab said, As God liveth, unless thou hadst spoken, surely then in the morning the people had gone up every one from following his brother.* **NLT** Then Joab said, "God only knows what would have happened if you hadn't spoken, for we would have chased you all night if necessary."

*28 So Joab blew a trumpet, and all the people stood still, and pursued after Israel no more, neither fought they any more. 29 And Abner and his men walked all that night through the plain, and passed over Jordan, and went through all Bithron, and they came to Mahanaim. 30 And Joab returned from following Abner: and when he had gathered all the people together, there lacked of David's servants nineteen men and Asahel. 31 But the servants of David had smitten of Benjamin, and of Abner's men, so that three hundred and threescore men died. 32 And they took up Asahel, and buried him in the sepulcher of his father, which was in Bethlehem. And Joab and his men went all night, and they came to Hebron at break of day.*

## Chapter 3

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: Many things were done by many parties in this chapter that will set the stage for the rest of this book. Leaders must understand that their actions have significant future consequences for many.

### **The House of David Grows Stronger**

*1 Now there was long war between the house of Saul and the house of David: but David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker.* This verse points to the blessing of the Lord upon the house of David. However, throughout this chapter, David focused on making political moves to strengthen his kingdom. **SAINTS' PRINCIPLE:** When God gives you a Word, you don't have to "pull strings" to make it come to pass. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** As a spiritual leader, you cannot use the methods of the world and be an effective leader.

**Side Road:** We have a list here of David's first six sons. In an effort to show the "strength" of David's family, the writer actually shows us (over time) the weakness of David as a father. Per our standards, he was a dysfunctional father probably because his father was a dysfunctional father. (Remember when Samuel came to Jesse's house to anoint one of his sons that Jesse forgot to even call David home for this.) Two of these sons will figure prominently in the latter part of this book.

*2 And unto David were sons born in Hebron: and his firstborn was Amnon, of Ahinoam the Jezreelitess;* We have here a brief listing of the children of David that were born when he was in Hebron. Ahinoam had been David's wife for a while but, probably due to his continual running from Saul, she didn't have children until they finally settled down in Hebron. Remember Amnon's name. He was David's first born and the heir to the throne. However, we'll see later in this book that he had some serious personal issues that eventually cost him his life.

*3 And his second, Chileab, of Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite; and the third, Absalom the son of Maacah the daughter of Talmai king of Geshur;* Tradition says that Chileab was originally named "Daniel" and is so called in Chronicles. {Matthew Henry} "*Bishop Patrick mentions...that his first name was Daniel —'God has judged me' (namely, against Nabal), but David's enemies reproached him, and said, 'It is Nabal's son, and not David's'. As he grew up, he became, in his countenance and features, extremely like David, and resembled him more than any of his children, upon which he gave him the name of Chileab, which signifies, like his father, or the father's picture.*" Chileab was the only one of the first six sons (Solomon was not yet born) mentioned in a positive light.

{Matthew Henry} "*Absalom's mother is said to be the daughter of Talmai king of Geshur, a heathen prince. Perhaps David thereby hoped to strengthen his interest, but the [result] of the marriage [Absalom] was one that proved his grief and shame.*" Whenever the name Absalom is mentioned, most students of the Bible first think of rebellion. He was said to have been a handsome man and a son that David greatly loved.

*4 And the fourth, Adonijah the son of Haggith; and the fifth, Shephatiah the son of Abital; 5 And the sixth, Ithream, by Eglah David's wife. These were born to David in Hebron.* Adonijah later rebelled against the wishes of his father and made himself king when David was old. He was executed for his treason by his brother, Solomon.



**Ishbosheth Insults Abner**

**6** *And it came to pass, while there was war between the house of Saul and the house of David, that Abner made himself strong for the house of Saul.* Abner committed himself fully to making sure the house of Saul remained in power in Israel. He knew better but he worked diligently to this end. Remember, Abner was the only reason that Ishbosheth was king so his reign was very weak and he was NOT the real leader. This is something that Ishbosheth didn't really appreciate or understand.

**Side Road:** We will have some tragic verses ahead in this chapter but don't forget verse 6. Abner has committed himself to the house of Saul. Many will die because of his commitment. Many will lose their life savings because of his commitment. He is making a leadership decision without understanding the full weight and consequences of that decision.

**7** *And Saul had a concubine, whose name was Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah: and Ishbosheth said to Abner, Wherefore hast thou gone in unto my father's concubine?* {Matthew Henry} *"Whether it was so or no does not appear, nor what ground he had for the suspicion: but, however it was, it would have been Ishbosheth's prudence to be silent, considering how much it was his interest not to disoblige Abner. If the thing was false, and his jealousy groundless, it was very disingenuous and ungrateful to entertain unjust surmises of one who had ventured his all for him, and was certainly the best friend he had in the world."*

**8** *Then was Abner very wroth for the words of Ishbosheth, and said, Am I a dog's head, which against Judah do shew kindness this day unto the house of Saul thy father, to his brethren, and to his friends, and have not delivered thee into the hand of David, that thou chargest me to day with a fault concerning this woman?* **NIV** *Abner was very angry because of what Ish-Bosheth said and he answered, "Am I a dog's head—on Judah's side? This very day I am loyal to the house of your father Saul and to his family and friends. I haven't handed you over to David. Yet now you accuse me of an offense involving this woman!"* Abner was upset because he was caught. Notice that he never said that this was a lie. He got "full of himself" because he knows that he's the true leader and Ishbosheth got "full of himself" because he THINKS that he's a leader. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** Leadership goes beyond position or title.

**9** *So do God to Abner, and more also, except, as the LORD hath sworn to David, even so I do to him; NIV* *May God deal with Abner, be it ever so severely, if I do not do for David what the LORD promised him on oath.* I've been waiting to get to this verse since we began this book. Do you see what Abner said, which is clearer in the NIV? He's going to do for David **WHAT THE LORD PROMISED HIM**. That means that Abner **KNEW FROM THE BEGINNING** that his actions were not in line with the will of God! However, he's enjoyed the benefits of being the "behind-the-scenes" leader to Ishbosheth but it's not "fun" any longer. The reality is that it was never "fun"; it was rebellion against the Word of the Lord. **SAINTS' PRINCIPLE:** **When you knowingly disobey God, it's not just disobedience, which is bad enough, it's also rebellion.** Rebellion carries a death sentence with it because it is as the sin of witchcraft. That sentence will be carried out later in this chapter.

**10** *To translate the kingdom from the house of Saul, and to set up the throne of David over Israel and over Judah, from Dan even to Beersheba. NIV* *And transfer the kingdom from the house of Saul and establish David's throne over Israel and Judah from Dan to Beersheba.* Abner's entire history could have been completely different if he had made this decision in chapter 1. **SAINTS' PRINCIPLE:** Rebellion, like obedience, changes your destiny.

**11 And he could not answer Abner a word again, because he feared him.** {JF&B} “In the East, the wives and concubines of a king are the property of his successor to this extent, that for a private person to aspire to marry one of them would be considered a virtual advance of pretensions to the crown. It is not clear whether the accusation against Abner was well or ill founded. But he resented the charge as an indignity, and, impelled by revenge, determined to transfer all the weight of his influence to the opposite party. He evidently set a full value on his services, and seems to have lorded it over his weak nephew in a haughty, overbearing manner.” Ishbosheth has had a “wake up call” and realizes that he doesn’t have the power to stop what’s about to happen. It reminds me of what the late Bishop G.E. Patterson shared with ministers when he visited Rockford some years ago prior to his elevation to Presiding Bishop. He had been instructed by a senior bishop that for his future decisions, he needed to understand this leadership proverb: “**Lead or be led.**” Ishbosheth chose to be led (even though he had the title) and will suffer the consequences.

### **Abner Makes a League With David**

**12 And Abner sent messengers to David on his behalf, saying, Whose is the land? saying also, Make thy league with me, and, behold, my hand shall be with thee, to bring about all Israel unto thee. 13 And he said, Well; I will make a league with thee: but one thing I require of thee, that is, Thou shalt not see my face, except thou first bring Michal Saul’s daughter, when thou comest to see my face.** {JF&B} “The demand for the restoration of his wife Michal was perfectly fair; but David’s insisting on it at that particular moment, as an indispensable condition of his entering into any treaty with Abner, seems to have proceeded not so much from a lingering attachment as from an expectation that his possession of her would incline some adherents of the house of Saul to be favorable to his cause.” In other words, David wanted his first wife back for political advantage. Now he can make a rightful claim to being king over all of Israel as the son-in-law of Saul. But do I have to resort to such worldly tactics to bring the Word of the Lord to pass? NO!

**14 And David sent messengers to Ishbosheth Saul’s son, saying, Deliver me my wife Michal, which I espoused to me for an hundred foreskins of the Philistines.** Here’s the other reason he wanted his wife back, he paid a great price for her. We have a glimpse into the heart of David toward his family – no mention was made of his love for her. He only mentions the price he paid. However, he does have a “right” to her since they were never divorced.

**15 And Ishbosheth sent, and took her from her husband, even from Phaltiel the son of Laish.** It appears that Ishbosheth has resigned himself to coming under the reign of David because he is the one that is actively working to join with David. His “experiment” is over but when you “experiment” in rebellion, you can’t just walk away – it’s going to effect you.

**16 And her husband went with her along weeping behind her to Bahurim. Then said Abner unto him, Go, return. And he returned.** This is a sad situation but, forgetting about who loved who and who didn’t love who, Michel was the legitimate wife of David.

**17 And Abner had communication with the elders of Israel, saying, Ye sought for David in times past to be king over you: 18 Now then do it: for the LORD hath spoken of David, saying, By the hand of my servant David I will save my people Israel out of the hand of the Philistines, and out of the hand of all their enemies.** Matthew Henry says that Abner’s entire appeal was hypocritical for it covered up the real reason of his speech – he’s angry with his nephew, the king. He goes so far as to use the name of the Lord to support his mission but he’s obeying God too late.



*19 And Abner also spake in the ears of Benjamin: and Abner went also to speak in the ears of David in Hebron all that seemed good to Israel, and that seemed good to the whole house of Benjamin.* The main tribe the Abner had to win over was the tribe of Benjamin. These were his people and the people of the late king. The first king had come out of this tribe and, no doubt, they felt that it should continue that way. Abner probably met with them while he was escorting Michel to David. This helped him to persuade the Benjamites to give up their claim. However, God had spoken hundreds of years before through Jacob that Shiloh was coming through Judah so their time has come to an end whether they agreed to it or not.

*20 So Abner came to David to Hebron, and twenty men with him. And David made Abner and the men that were with him a feast.* David was always a very hospitable man. As we go through this book and see more of the character of the “man after God’s own heart”, let us embrace the positive aspects of his character as those aspects that would most be like God.

*21 And Abner said unto David, I will arise and go, and will gather all Israel unto my lord the king, that they may make a league with thee, and that thou mayest reign over all that thine heart desireth. And David sent Abner away; and he went in peace.* Remember, David sent Abner away in peace. All past transgressions were forgiven – they were at peace.

### **Abner Killed by Joab**

*22 And, behold, the servants of David and Joab came from pursuing a troop, and brought in a great spoil with them: but Abner was not with David in Hebron; for he had sent him away, and he was gone in peace.*

*23 When Joab and all the host that was with him were come, they told Joab, saying, Abner the son of Ner came to the king, and he hath sent him away, and he is gone in peace.* **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** There’s always going to be someone in your midst that’s not with you and that will LOVE to stir up strife. **Don’t be surprised or disappointed when this happens.** Unfortunately, some people just like to stir up and watch “mess”. In fact, a LOT of people like this. It is no wonder that traffic is so backed up when there’s an automobile accident. If they don’t see one, people like this will cause one.

*24 Then Joab came to the king, and said, What hast thou done? behold, Abner came unto thee; why is it that thou hast sent him away, and he is quite gone? 25 Thou knowest Abner the son of Ner, that he came to deceive thee, and to know thy going out and thy coming in, and to know all that thou doest.* **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** Good leaders can expect to be challenged especially by friends and family members. **SAINTS’ PRINCIPLE:** No matter your relationship to the leader, God expects you to behave toward them in a certain way. Joab is David’s nephew and the general of his army. However, he has NO RIGHT to publicly rebuke the king. Peter got beside himself with the Lord in this fashion. Joab WILL be judged for the actions he is about to undertake.

*26 And when Joab was come out from David, he sent messengers after Abner, which brought him again from the well of Sirah: but David knew it not. 27 And when Abner was returned to Hebron, Joab took him aside in the gate to speak with him quietly, and smote him there under the fifth rib, that he died, for the blood of Asahel his brother.* Joab was an evil man but not a fool. He made sure he killed Abner outside of the gates of Hebron because it was a city of refuge (see Numbers 35). The Scripture says he killed him in retaliation for his brother’s death. A secondary reason was that Abner was a more experienced officer than Joab and would have certainly been a threat to his position. In fact, because he was personally responsible for bringing Israel together (just as he was personally responsible for breaking it apart), he had more influence

than Joab. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** Whatever position you hold is not yours forever so don't get attached to it. Finally, before you say that these actions were justified, remember that Asahel died in battle after repeated warnings from Abner.

### **Abner Mourned by David**

*28 And afterward when David heard it, he said, I and my kingdom are guiltless before the LORD for ever from the blood of Abner the son of Ner:* **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** {Matthew Henry} "It is a comfort to be able to say, when any bad thing is done, that we had no hand in it. However we may be censured or suspected, our hearts shall not reproach us." Part of the crisis of leadership we have in this country is that we have very few leaders that can actually say their hands are completely clean. David could say it and it was good he could because of the great influence of Abner.

*29 Let it rest on the head of Joab, and on all his father's house; and let there not fail from the house of Joab one that hath an issue, or that is a leper, or that leaneth on a staff, or that falleth on the sword, or that lacketh bread.* David cursed the family of his sister and late brother-in-law because of this action. {Matthew Henry} "Let the blood cry against him, and let divine vengeance follow him. Let the iniquity be visited upon his children and children's children, in some hereditary disease or other. Let his posterity be stigmatized, blemished with an issue or a leprosy, which will shut them out from society; let them be beggars, or cripples, or come to some untimely end, that it may be said, He is one of Joab's race."

*30 So Joab, and Abishai his brother slew Abner, because he had slain their brother Asahel at Gibeon in the battle.* Abishai is now mentioned as a co-conspirator probably because he worked with Joab to bring this crime to pass so he is as much to blame.

*31 And David said to Joab, and to all the people that were with him, Rend your clothes, and gird you with sackcloth, and mourn before Abner. And king David himself followed the bier.* David shows that he was not afraid of Joab. He publicly commanded Joab and all of those that were "with him" to show expressions of grief at the death of Abner. He went so far as to follow the funeral procession.

*32 And they buried Abner in Hebron: and the king lifted up his voice, and wept at the grave of Abner; and all the people wept.* **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** Your actions as a leader will be what the people follow no matter how public or private those actions are. David demonstrated his great remorse at the death of Abner and the people likewise had no hesitation in following his lead. Abner had served Israel for many years and fought many battles for the people. For his service, he was due this.

*33 And the king lamented over Abner, and said, Died Abner as a fool dieth? 34 Thy hands were not bound, nor thy feet put into fetters: as a man falleth before wicked men, so fellest thou. And all the people wept again over him. 35 And when all the people came to cause David to eat meat while it was yet day, David sware, saying, So do God to me, and more also, if I taste bread, or ought else, till the sun be down. 36 And all the people took notice of it, and it pleased them: as whatsoever the king did pleased all the people.* One of the most difficult things in leadership is being able to capture that illusive but necessary trait called, "influence". Abner had it and now David has it. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** Influence must be handled carefully or it can turn your head to the ruination of your soul. If Abner had used his influence correctly, perhaps this chapter would not have existed.

*37 For all the people and all Israel understood that day that it was not of the king to slay Abner the son of Ner. NIV So on that day all the people and all Israel knew that the king had no part in the murder of Abner son of Ner.* How did they understand this? They watched the king. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** People will read your actions and come to a conclusion about what's in your heart. Give them the right things to read.

*38 And the king said unto his servants, Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel? 39 And I am this day weak, though anointed king; and these men the sons of Zeruiah be too hard for me: the LORD shall reward the doer of evil according to his wickedness. NIV And today, though I am the anointed king, I am weak, and these sons of Zeruiah are too strong for me. May the LORD repay the evildoer according to his evil deeds!* David will repeat this lament regarding his nephews two more times in this book (16:10 and 19:22). There was obviously no great love between David and his nephews and he probably put up with them for the sake of his sister. This will work to his favor at times and other times it will work against him. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** You can't choose someone for a position based on family ties or personal familiarity without it coming back to haunt you in the future.

## Chapter 4

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: God made a promise to David when he was a teenager and He is about to bring it to pass. No matter how long it takes, God will bring His Word to pass!

### **The Murder of Ishbosheth**

*1 And when Saul's son heard that Abner was dead in Hebron, his hands were feeble, and all the Israelites were troubled. NIV When Ish-Bosheth son of Saul heard that Abner had died in Hebron, he lost courage, and all Israel became alarmed.* As we understood from the previous chapter, Abner was the real power behind the throne. Ishbosheth was a weak king who relied on the actions of Abner to keep his kingdom together. Now the word has slowly worked its way out from Hebron of the death and burial of Abner and it impacts the whole kingdom. Everyone else knew what Ishbosheth wouldn't admit – Abner was the real leader of their country.

*2 And Saul's son had two men that were captains of bands: the name of the one was Baanah, and the name of the other Rechab, the sons of Rimmon a Beerothite, of the children of Benjamin: (for Beeroth also was reckoned to Benjamin. 3 And the Beerothites fled to Gittaim, and were sojourners there until this day.)* {Adam Clarke} *"Ishbosheth kept bands of marauders, whose business it was to make sudden incursions into the country places, and carry off grain, provisions, and cattle."* Men employed in this type of work were not men of honor. They were bandits hired by the king to steal supplies for the kingdom. **LEADERSHIP**

**PRINCIPLE:** When you choose key people based on their ability to prosper you, make you look better, or in some way help you without regard for their integrity or character, you can expect a negative consequence.

*4 And Jonathan, Saul's son, had a son that was lame of his feet. He was five years old when the tidings came of Saul and Jonathan out of Jezreel, and his nurse took him up, and fled: and it came to pass, as she made haste to flee, that he fell, and became lame. And his name was Mephibosheth. NLT (Saul's son Jonathan had a son named Mephibosheth, who was crippled as a child. He was five years old when the report came from Jezreel that Saul and Jonathan had been killed in battle. When the child's nurse heard the news, she picked him up and fled. But as she hurried away, she dropped him, and he became crippled.)* According to Adam Clarke, Mephibosheth dislocated some portion of the lower part of his body (his knee, ankle, or thigh) while the nurse was running for safety and this was never corrected. JF&B adds that this verse appears here to show that there was no one left of the house of Saul qualified for the throne. (Remember, we're dealing with a different time and different standards.)

*5 And the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, Rechab and Baanah, went, and came about the heat of the day to the house of Ishbosheth, who lay on a bed at noon. 6 And they came thither into the midst of the house, as though they would have fetched wheat; and they smote him under the fifth rib: and Rechab and Baanah his brother escaped.* (JF&B) *"It is still a custom in the East to allow their soldiers a certain quantity of corn, together with some pay; and these two captains very naturally went to the palace the day before to fetch wheat, in order to distribute it to the soldiers, that it might be sent to the mill at the accustomed hour in the morning."* These two captains had no problem with deception or the murder of the king. This is the kind of negative result you can expect when you choose people with insincere motives.

*7 For when they came into the house, he lay on his bed in his bedchamber, and they smote him, and slew him, and beheaded him, and took his head, and gat them away through the plain all night.* {JF&B} *"Such*

*bloody trophies of rebels and conspirators have always been acceptable to princes in the East, and the carriers have been liberally rewarded.”* The real problem with Ishbosheth was that he allowed Abner to manipulate him into a position that he really wasn’t prepared for. However, he’s an adult and, just as Abner did, he had to pay the consequence for his actions.

**8** *And they brought the head of Ishbosheth unto David to Hebron, and said to the king, Behold the head of Ishbosheth the son of Saul thine enemy, which sought thy life; and the LORD hath avenged my lord the king this day of Saul, and of his seed.* At this point, I can imagine an uncomfortable and awkward silence as these men eagerly looked to receive a reward from David for their deed.

**9** *And David answered Rechab and Baanah his brother, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, and said unto them, As the LORD liveth, who hath redeemed my soul out of all adversity, 10 When one told me, saying, Behold, Saul is dead, thinking to have brought good tidings, I took hold of him, and slew him in Ziklag, who thought that I would have given him a reward for his tidings: 11 How much more, when wicked men have slain a righteous person in his own house upon his bed? shall I not therefore now require his blood of your hand, and take you away from the earth?* {Adam Clarke} “Here are several things which aggravated the guilt of those wicked men. 1. Ishbosheth was an innocent man, and therefore none could have any ground of quarrel against him. 2. He was in his own house, which was his sanctuary, and none but the worst of men would disturb him there. 3. He was upon his bed, resting in the heat of the day, and so free from suspicion that he was not even attended by his guards, nor had he his doors secured. To take away the life of such a man, in such circumstances, whom also they professed to hold as their sovereign, was the [worst kind of] treachery.”

**12** *And David commanded his young men, and they slew them, and cut off their hands and their feet, and hanged them up over the pool in Hebron. But they took the head of Ishbosheth, and buried it in the sepulchre of Abner in Hebron.* {Adam Clarke} “None ever more richly deserved death; and by this act of justice, David showed to all Israel that he was a decided enemy to the destruction of Saul’s family; and that none could lift up their hands against any of them without meeting with condign punishment. In all these cases I know not that it was possible for David to show more sincerity, or a stricter regard for justice.” Abner was expected to be a great advocate for David but the Lord showed David, through the death of Ishbosheth, that he didn’t need man’s help to accomplish what God promised. **SAINTS’ PRINCIPLE:** When you violate the Word of God, knowingly or unawares, you WILL be punished for your actions (Luke 12:48).

## Chapter 5

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: We'll see King David settle in to his position as king over all of Israel and he will teach us important lessons on how to operate in leadership. We'll also find that everyone is not going to be excited about your success while others will totally embrace it. Don't be moved one way or the other by either situation.

### David Becomes King Over All of Israel

*1 Then came all the tribes of Israel to David unto Hebron, and spake, saying, Behold, we are thy bone and thy flesh. 2 Also in time past, when Saul was king over us, thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel: and the LORD said to thee, Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be a captain over Israel.* Israel saw that Abner and Ishbosheth were dead and Saul's only remaining offspring was a disabled boy. Therefore, they came to David with three reasons why he should reign over them: (1) He is of the children of Israel ("we are thy bone and thy flesh"); (2) He was a significant captain under Saul ("thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel"); (3) The Word of the Lord had stated that he would be king. It's interesting that they made the most important point the last one. Since they knew this, why did they allow the kingdom to be in dispute over those seven years? **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** {David Guzik} "These three characteristics should mark anyone who leads God's people: A leader must belong to God's people in heritage and heart; a leader must demonstrate capability to lead; a leader must have an evident call from God."

*3 So all the elders of Israel came to the king to Hebron; and king David made a league with them in Hebron before the LORD: and they anointed David king over Israel.* {Adam Clarke} "This was the third time that David was anointed, having now taken possession of the whole kingdom." The first time was by Samuel, the second time by the men of Judah, and this is now the third time.

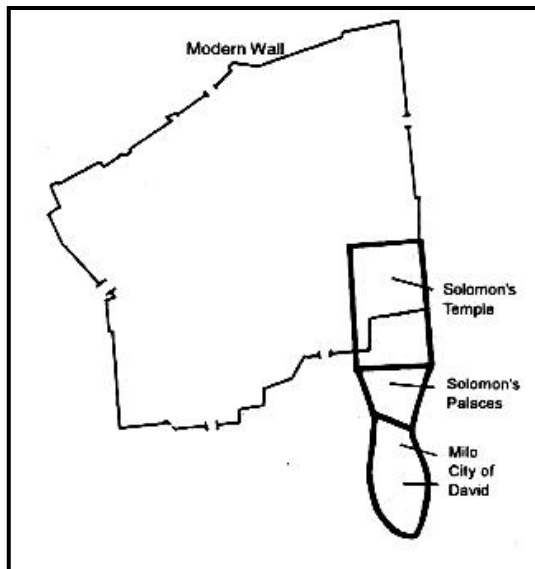
*4 David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years. 5 In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months: and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years over all Israel and Judah.* David was anointed as king as a teenager (15-17 years old per most commentators) but did not become a king until age 30. The full kingdom came to him when he was 37. {David Guzik} "God uses great preparation when the task is great." **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** To be a good leader, expect to spend a lot of time in preparation for the task.

### David Invades Jerusalem

*6 And the king and his men went to Jerusalem unto the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land: which spake unto David, saying, Except thou take away the blind and the lame, thou shalt not come in hither: thinking, David cannot come in hither. NLT David then led his men to Jerusalem to fight against the Jebusites, the original inhabitants of the land who were living there. The Jebusites taunted David, saying, "You'll never get in here! Even the blind and lame could keep you out!" For the Jebusites thought they were safe.* There is a little confusion (to me) regarding this verse. Remember, from First Samuel, that David took the head of Goliath to Jerusalem. It was originally conquered after Joshua's death. What happened? The commentators believe that either the city was lost to the Jebusites during the seven-year period when the country was divided or there was an inner fortress that was never conquered. Most seem to believe the latter and this is what David is coming for.

*7 Nevertheless David took the strong hold of Zion: the same is the city of David.* In my study in Chronicles, I explain the confusion of the makeup of the earthly Jerusalem (confusing to those of us that have never been there). Rather than make you go there, I'll repeat them here.





One writer said that “Zion” could be used interchangeably with “Jerusalem.” That sounded good at first until you realize that Jerusalem was an open city to the Jewish people before David invaded the part held by the Jebusites. As a child, David came to the city bringing with him the head of Goliath. (**1 Samuel 17:54** *And David took the head of the Philistine, and brought it to Jerusalem; but he put his armor in his tent.*) The best explanation, in my opinion, comes from a writer named Ed Form. He brings out that Jerusalem was composed of the main city as well as a fortress called Zion within that city. (Apparently it was on one of the peaks of the mountain range that Jerusalem rests on with the same name. On another one of the peaks, Mount Moriah, is where Solomon built the temple.) The fortress was occupied by the Jebusites and was considered almost impregnable.

This part of the city was what the armies of David took when they took “the castle of Zion.” In fact, the Scripture is clear that the castle of Zion is the city of David (refer to 1 Chronicles 11:5 & 7). There’s another part mentioned called “Millo.” Ed Form goes on to say about Millo:

The word ‘Millo’ is not a place as such, since it means ‘the filling up’, and refers to filling the valley between Moriah to the north and Jebus to the south. The verse appears to say that David filled in the ground between the two hills, and built a wall round the filled site. The conventional idea that this entire area was “the city of David” is incorrect, since the passage tells us clearly that “*And David dwelt in the castle; therefore they called it (the castle) the city of David.*”

From this point on the use of the term “the city of David” is never descriptive of the whole of Jerusalem, and the proper conclusion is that the fort became the royal grounds, with palaces and offices of state, and, as particularly described, the tombs of the kings of David’s house.

Why is all of this important to us? We’ll see some Scriptures that *seem* to contradict the Bible or are in conflict with what is known about Jerusalem. This little nugget will help us to understand Jerusalem and the things said about it in later Scriptures.

**8** *And David said on that day, Whosoever getteth up to the gutter, and smiteth the Jebusites, and the lame and the blind that are hated of David’s soul, he shall be chief and captain. Wherefore they said, The blind and the lame shall not come into the house.* It’s interesting that the writer of Second Samuel does not mention who actually became chief and captain. 1 Chronicles 11:6 says that it was Joab. David, in spite of his disapproval of the sons of Zeruiah, was true to his word and had to live with the consequences throughout his reign. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** **Hasty promises made without prayer will come back to haunt you and you can’t get free until God intervenes or you’ll make matters worse.**

**9** *So David dwelt in the fort, and called it the city of David. And David built round about from Millo and inward.* 1 Chronicles 11:7 calls the “fort” a castle – this was the strong hold of Zion.

### **David's Kingdom Is Established**

**10 And David went on, and grew great, and the LORD God of hosts was with him.** The greatness of David was directly attributable to the fact that the Lord God of Host was with him. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE: You will NEVER attain a level of “true” greatness unless God is with you and God does not support sin or abuse of power upon His people.**

**11 And Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar trees, and carpenters, and masons: and they built David an house.** {Matthew Henry} “*The Jews were husbandmen and shepherds, and did not much addict themselves either to merchandise or manufactures; and therefore Hiram, king of Tyre, a wealthy prince, when he sent to congratulate David on his accession to the throne, offered him workmen to build him a house. David thankfully accepted the offer, and Hiram’s workmen built David a house to his mind. Many have excelled in arts and sciences who were strangers to the covenants of promise. Yet David’s house was never the worse, nor the less fit to be dedicated to God, for being built by the sons of the stranger. It is prophesied of the gospel church, The sons of the strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee, Isa. 60:10.*” Hiram was a great friend of David’s. He was the king of a region that is now part of Lebanon. He was also a man skillful in building and surrounded himself with men like himself. A wonderful attribute about Hiram is that we never see him waver in his support for David anywhere in Scripture. He reigned for 34 years over Tyre and made it the most important city-state among the Phoenicians. We see the promise that God made to Abraham coming to pass – “I will bless them that bless you.” **SAINTS’ PRINCIPLE: It’s wonderful to have friends that are not intimidated or envious of how the Lord blesses you.**

**12 And David perceived that the LORD had established him king over Israel, and that he had exalted his kingdom for his people Israel’s sake.** This is why God called David is “a man after His own heart”. What a wonderful way of looking at his prominence! He took no glory for himself, attributing it all to God, and recognizing that any greatness he attained was for the sake of God’s people. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE: Leaders must never forget that they are raised up, not for their talents or skills, but for God’s people.**

**13 And David took him more concubines and wives out of Jerusalem, after he was come from Hebron: and there were yet sons and daughters born to David. 14 And these be the names of those that were born unto him in Jerusalem; Shammuah, and Shobab, and Nathan, and Solomon, 15 Ibhar also, and Elishua, and Nepheg, and Japhia, 16 And Elishama, and Eliada, and Eliphalet.** As I prayed about David’s “issue” with women and the fact that he was a dysfunctional parent, the Lord reminded me that I’m trying to apply the standards of today to events that occurred over 3,000 years ago. We have changed so much on family issues just in the last 40 years. When you look at over 3,000 years, the change MUST be considerable and dramatic. In addition, the Lord calls David, “a man after His own heart” so who am I to dispute the Word of the Lord.

{Adam Clarke} “*Eleven children are here enumerated in the Hebrew text; but the Septuagint has no less than twenty-four. I shall insert their names, and the reader if he please may collate them with the text: Sammus, Sobab, Nathan, Solomon, Ebear, Elisue, Naphek, Jephies, Elisama, Elidae, Eliphalath, Samae, Jessibath, Nathan, Galimaan, Jebaar, Theesus, Eliphalat, Naged, Naphek, Jonathan, Leasamus, Baalimath, and Eliphaath. There is no doubt some corruption in these names; there are two of the name of Nathan, two of Eliphalath, and two of Naphek; and probably Sammus and Samae are the same.*” (Remember, the Septuagint is the oldest Greek version of the Hebrew Scriptures that dates from the 3rd century B.C., containing both a



translation of the Hebrew and additional variant material. It is regarded as the standard form of the Old Testament used in the early Christian Church.)

### **War With the Philistines**

*17 But when the Philistines heard that they had anointed David king over Israel, all the Philistines came up to seek David; and David heard of it, and went down to the hold.* {Adam Clarke} “Ever since the defeat of the Israelites and the fall of Saul and his sons, the Philistines seem to have been in undisturbed possession of the principal places in the land of Israel; now, finding that David was chosen king by the whole nation, they thought best to attack him before his army got too numerous, and the affairs of the kingdom were properly settled.” This is why I teach that the Philistines are always representative of the devil. The Lord Jesus taught us that once we are free from the devil, he wanders in “dry places” and then returns to (my paraphrase) try to reclaim his former lodging. The Philistines had become comfortable with the land they had won from Saul and wanted to make sure they were not expelled into “dry places”.

**LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** When the enemy showed up, David found himself a “secret place”, the place where he was comfortable when he was running from Saul, to determine what he should do. Since our leadership is for the sake of God’s people, we cannot determine our own course of action.

*18 The Philistines also came and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim. 19 And David enquired of the LORD, saying, Shall I go up to the Philistines? wilt thou deliver them into mine hand? And the LORD said unto David, Go up: for I will doubtless deliver the Philistines into thine hand.* {Adam Clarke} “He considered himself only the captain of the Lord’s host, and therefore would not strike a stroke without the command of his Superior.” **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** Christian “leaders” are only caretakers of the property of the real Leader and must seek His guidance for the sake of His people.

*20 And David came to Baalperazim, and David smote them there, and said, The LORD hath broken forth upon mine enemies before me, as the breach of waters. Therefore he called the name of that place Baalperazim. 21 And there they left their images, and David and his men burned them.* The “images” were the false gods that the Philistines carried with them. How useless they were against the true God!

*22 And the Philistines came up yet again, and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim.* **LEADERSHIP & SAINTS’ PRINCIPLE:** The enemy will not stop attacking until we see the Lord face-to-face. Don’t be surprised or moved by this.

*23 And when David enquired of the LORD, he said, Thou shalt not go up; but fetch a compass behind them, and come upon them over against the mulberry trees. 24 And let it be, when thou hearest the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees, that then thou shalt bestir thyself: for then shall the LORD go out before thee, to smite the host of the Philistines.* **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** If you ask God for direction, He WILL give you direction.

*25 And David did so, as the LORD had commanded him; and smote the Philistines from Geba until thou come to Gazer.* David had success because he followed the Lord’s commandment to the letter.

## Chapter 6

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: Loving God and having a zeal for God must still be tempered by coming to Him only in the manner that He prescribes. He is still the King.

### David Tries to Move the Ark to Jerusalem

*1 Again, David gathered together all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand. 2 And David arose, and went with all the people that were with him from Baale of Judah, to bring up from thence the ark of God, whose name is called by the name of the LORD of hosts that dwelleth between the cherubims.* David is excited about the blessing the Lord has bestowed upon him and he wants all of the people of Israel to embrace God again. At that time the symbol of the presence of the Lord was the Ark of the Covenant. If you recall, it has been sitting idle in a house since being returned from the Philistines back in First Samuel 7:1-3 (early in the time of Samuel). It has been there around 100 years. It remained there because the people did not have a hunger for God and the leadership did not encourage the people to develop that hunger. **LEADERSHIP**

**PRINCIPLE:** The leader must push the people towards a deeper relationship with God. Samuel couldn't do it because the people weren't ready – they were too lusting after a king to be like “the other nations”. Saul couldn't do it because he wasn't ready – he was too busy running after his son-in-law in envy and jealousy.

**SAINTS' PRINCIPLE:** You can't go higher in God being distracted.

*3 And they set the ark of God upon a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab that was in Gibeah: and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, drove the new cart.* WARNING! God has specific rules for how to approach Him. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** If you want Bible results, you have to do things the Bible way. A simple reading of **Numbers 4:15** would have shown them that what they were doing was wrong. (“*And when Aaron and his sons have made an end of covering the sanctuary, and all the vessels of the sanctuary, as the camp is to set forward; after that, the sons of Kohath shall come to BEAR IT: but they shall not touch any holy thing, lest they die. These things are the burden of the sons of Kohath in the tabernacle of the congregation.*”) What this is saying is that the sons of Kohath, also known as the Kohathites, one of the families of the Levites, were to CARRY the Ark. It was not to be driven around on a cart. 2 Samuel 6:3 says that the men driving the cart were the sons of Abinadab. Abinadab was sanctified only to be a caretaker of the Ark. He was not to touch it, look in it, or do anything else except provide it a place of safety after being recovered from the Philistines.

*4 And they brought it out of the house of Abinadab which was at Gibeah, accompanying the ark of God: and Ahio went before the ark. 5 And David and all the house of Israel played before the LORD on all manner of instruments made of fir wood, even on harps, and on psalteries, and on timbrels, and on cornets, and on cymbals.* This was a great time of celebration because they THOUGHT they were doing the right thing. However, God is not only good, He is abundantly fair and just. Therefore, every transgression must be dealt with.

*6 And when they came to Nachon's threshing floor, Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook it. 7 And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his error; and there he died by the ark of God.* The Lord had warned in Numbers 4:15 that even the Kohathites were not exempt from being severely punished (by death) for touching the Ark. Uzzah was a Levite but not the high priest. Therefore, he knew better and he was not in a position to be so familiar with the Ark. {Matthew Henry} “*Uzzah's long familiarity with the ark, and the constant attendance he had*

given to it, might occasion his presumption, but would not excuse it.” Matthew Henry brings out the core of Uzzah’s sin – he had a long familiarity with the Ark. There is a proverb (not Biblical) that says, “Familiarity breeds contempt.” One writer went on to say about this proverb, “The better we know people, the more likely we are to find fault with them.” In this case, Uzzah had lost his fear of God and lost his way with God.

**Proverbs 14:12 NKJV** *There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.*

**Side Road:** The Ark had been moved by the Philistines (**1 Samuel 6:10-11** *And the men did so; and took two milch kine, and tied them to the cart, and shut up their calves at home: 11 AND THEY LAID THE ARK OF THE LORD UPON THE CART, and the coffer with the mice of gold and the images of their emerods.*) and they were judged for what they did but not at this level. Once the Ark was returned to Israel, some of the Hebrews looked into the Ark and died. Why didn’t the Philistines have similar judgment? I believe the answer comes down to the fact the Philistines didn’t know better. There are things the world can “get away with” that God will not allow us to do because we know better. They did it ignorantly, in their sin.

**SAINTS’ PRINCIPLE:** Don’t pattern your life after the world. There are things that they do that you CANNOT and MUST NOT do. They are only “getting by” for a season.

**8** *And David was displeased, because the LORD had made a breach upon Uzzah: and he called the name of the place Perezuzzah to this day.* Another translation says that David was angry about this incident. {David Guzik} “David’s anger was based in confusion. He couldn’t understand why his good intentions weren’t enough. God is concerned with both our intentions and our actions.” **SAINTS’ PRINCIPLE:** Your “good intentions” don’t excuse you from fully obeying God.

**9** *And David was afraid of the LORD that day, and said, How shall the ark of the LORD come to me?* In trying to understand the fear of God, well meaning people often start with what the fear of God is NOT. (“It doesn’t mean to be afraid of God, etc.”) However, in this verse, we have an excellent representation of the fear of God. The Scripture says in **Psalms 111:10** “*The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever.*” David is about to move to a new level in his relationship with God because he now understands the fear of the Lord. Obviously, he did not have a good understanding before because he did not keep the Lord’s commandment. However, now he knows better. **SAINTS’ PRINCIPLE:** The fear of the Lord will keep you from sin. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** YOUR fear of the Lord will be a blessing to your people. If Uzzah could speak out now, he would blame David for his death. However, David could point his finger right back at him. Uzzah was a Levite and had a responsibility to know better.

### **The Ark Moved to Another Temporary Location**

**10** *So David would not remove the ark of the LORD unto him into the city of David: but David carried it aside into the house of Obededom the Gittite.* How would you like to be Obededom who is tasked with watching over the Ark, which has just killed a fellow Levite? But look at how Matthew Henry characterizes this move: “Obed-edom knew what slaughter the ark had made among the Philistines that imprisoned it and the Bethshemites that looked into it. He saw Uzzah struck dead for touching it, and perceived that David himself was afraid of meddling with it; yet he cheerfully invites it to his own house, and opens his doors to it without fear, knowing it was a savor of death unto death only to those that treated it ill.” A “healthy” fear of the Lord does not make us push God away but we invite Him in...but we do it on HIS terms and without

paralyzing, tormenting fear. **SAINTS' PRINCIPLE:** The lack of the fear of God comes from a lack of respect or appreciation for Him.

*11 And the ark of the LORD continued in the house of Obbededom the Gittite three months: and the LORD blessed Obbededom, and all his household.* Obbededom was happy to receive the Ark and the Lord was happy to be there because of Obbededom's obedience. Therefore God blessed him and his whole household. In the presence of the Lord, there are still blessings. Yes, we fear Him but we know Him to be a kind, loving God full of blessings and while we love Him, we reverence the "Awesome Wonder". **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** If we will obey God even in a difficult situation, everyone under our charge will be blessed.

**Side Road:** In between these two verses, a lot occurred which reveals the real problem with David's first attempt to move the Ark. **1 Chronicles 15:11-13** tells why these events happened: *11 And David called for Zadok and Abiathar the priests, and for the Levites, for Uriel, Asaiah, and Joel, Shemaiah, and Eliel, and Amminadab, 12 And said unto them, Ye are the chief of the fathers of the Levites: sanctify yourselves, both ye and your brethren, that ye may bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel unto the place that I have prepared for it. 13 For because ye did it not at the first, the LORD our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought him not after the due order.* Now we see the real reason for the death of Uzzah – disobedience among the leaders. David told the priests what to do and they refused to do it. They knew that what he was doing was wrong but they kept silence and their rebellion caused the tragic death of this man. In addition, David chose to go ahead with his plan anyway even though the priests had not given him instruction. David should have waited for clear instructions. God was not to be blamed for He made His way abundantly clear. The leaders under David AND DAVID were to be blamed because they did not follow leadership and did not follow the Lord's instructions. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** The lay people suffer for disobedience and rebellion among the leaders.

### **The Ark Successfully Moved to Its Special Place**

*12 And it was told king David, saying, The LORD hath blessed the house of Obbededom, and all that pertaineth unto him, because of the ark of God. So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obbededom into the city of David with gladness.* Remember Psalm 111:10 says that the fear of the Lord gives you good understanding. David now understands what he has to do and he no longer has the paralyzing fear of God.

*13 And it was so, that when they that bare the ark of the LORD had gone six paces, he sacrificed oxen and fatlings.* Chronicles tells us that they offered seven bullocks and seven rams. {JF&B} *"The Levites seem to have entered on this duty with fear and trembling; and finding that they might advance without any such indications of divine wrath as Uzzah had experienced (1 Ch 13:10), they offered an ox and a fatted sheep immediately after starting (2 Sam. 6:13), and seven bullocks and seven rams--a perfect sacrifice, at the close of the procession (1 Ch 16:1). It is probable that preparations had been made for the offering of similar sacrifices at regular intervals along the way."*

*14 And David danced before the LORD with all his might; and David was girded with a linen ephod.* David was truly excited about the fact that the Ark of the Covenant was about to return to be a significant part of the life of the Hebrews. He used this opportunity to give the Lord an "all his might" praise dance. (One of the commentators I often use remarked that he had no idea what kind of dance this was. I guess back in his days, he went to "quiet" churches.) David also pulled off his royal attire and took on the clothing of priests

and Levites – those tasked with service, not royalty. This was a step down but this occasion called for it.

**LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** Never let your position define your praise.

*15 So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet. LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE: When the leader is excited, the people will be excited.* The people have picked up David's excitement from the prior verse.

*16 And as the ark of the LORD came into the city of David, Michal Saul's daughter looked through a window, and saw king David leaping and dancing before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart.* The Holy Ghost told me once, when looking at this verse, that some people are so turned off by our style of worship that they despise us but it's the devil working in them. We must never be ashamed of our excitement for Jesus. This attitude will cost Michal dearly.

*17 And they brought in the ark of the LORD, and set it in his place, in the midst of the tabernacle that David had pitched for it: and David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD.* They were able to successfully bring the Ark to the place David prepared for it because they "sanctified the Lord". Moses did not do this by his disobedience and missed out on entering the Promised Land. David had the chance to correct it and fully obeyed God.

*18 And as soon as David had made an end of offering burnt offerings and peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts. 19 And he dealt among all the people, even among the whole multitude of Israel, as well to the women as men, to every one a cake of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine. So all the people departed every one to his house.* David was excited about what the Lord had enabled them to do and generously blessed the people.

### **Michal Rebuked and Judged for Her Attitude Toward Praise**

*20 Then David returned to bless his household. And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, How glorious was the king of Israel to day, who uncovered himself to day in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself!* Michal's problem was one that is often seen in those who obtain leadership positions – she forgot where she came from. If David had been as the heathen kings around them (or future kings in Israel), she and all of the members of her family would have been executed. At a minimum, she would have lived an obscure life with the husband that Saul chose for her but she has been blessed to be raised up to be the wife of the king. But she doesn't have his heart for God and she cares more about how things "look" than how things are. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** Never forget that where you are is because of the Lord, not because of you. **Psalms 75:6-7** *For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. 7 But God is the judge: HE puts down one, and sets up another.*

*21 And David said unto Michal, It was before the LORD, which chose me before thy father, and before all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the LORD, over Israel: therefore will I play before the LORD. NKJV So David said to Michal, It was before the LORD, who chose me instead of your father and all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the LORD, over Israel. Therefore I will play music before the LORD.*

*22 And I will yet be more vile than thus, and will be base in mine own sight: and of the maidservants which thou hast spoken of, of them shall I be had in honor. NKJV And I will be even more undignified than*

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*this, and will be humble in my own sight. But as for the maidservants of whom you have spoken, by them I will be held in honor.* **SAINTS' QUESTION:** What level of insult are you willing to endure regarding your praise? Does it make you back down? Have you forgotten how to really celebrate the Lord?

*23 Therefore Michal the daughter of Saul had no child unto the day of her death.* We don't know if this was because David no longer wanted any thing to do with her or if the Lord closed her womb. In either case, she lived her remaining days in disgrace – the disgrace Hebrew women experienced when they didn't bear children.



## Chapter 7

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: The goodness of God is overwhelming. In all things, He will bless us. What can we do, then, to repay Him for His blessings? These thoughts should always be in our minds.

### David Desires to Do More for God

*1 And it came to pass, when the king sat in his house, and the LORD had given him rest round about from all his enemies;* {David Guzik} “[The fact that the Lord had given David rest from his enemies] leads us to believe that the events of 2 Samuel 7 happened after the wars of conquest described in 2 Samuel 8. This section is placed before the war accounts in the text to show its greater importance.” {Matthew Henry} “When God, in his providence, gives us rest, and finds us little to do of worldly business, we must do so much the more for God and our souls.”

*2 That the king said unto Nathan the prophet, See now, I dwell in an house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains.* We open this chapter with a unique glimpse into the heart of David. He has come a long way from living in caves, running from Saul. He lives in a house of cedar. {David Guzik} “Cedar wood was especially valued. This means that David lived in an expensive, beautiful home.” It bothered David that he would be so blessed and the Ark of the Covenant, the symbol of the presence of the Lord among His people, should reside in a tent. **SAINTS’ QUESTION: Are you bothered when God’s business lags behind yours?** This bothered God later in the book of Haggai but He was not bothered by it at this time. God was consumed with blessing David because His goodness had consumed Him. {Matthew Henry} “Gracious grateful souls, (1.) Never think they can do enough for God, but, when they have done much, are still projecting to do more and devising liberal things. (2.) They cannot enjoy their own accommodations while they see the church of God in distress and under a cloud.”

*3 And Nathan said to the king, Go, do all that is in thine heart; for the LORD is with thee.* Nathan spoke from his heart but did not appreciate that, as the prophet to the nation, whatever he said had the weight of being from the heart of God. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE: The words of the spiritual leader carry great importance to the people. Therefore, leaders must guard their tongues even more carefully than others.** But naturally, this idea seemed like a wonderful thought to him. However, he didn’t realize that God had a different agenda at that time and was not going to let David out give Him. David certainly tried later in his life in 1 Chronicles 22:14 (from my notes on that study):

*14 Now, behold, in my trouble I have prepared for the house of the LORD an hundred thousand talents of gold, and a thousand thousand talents of silver; and of brass and iron without weight; for it is in abundance: timber also and stone have I prepared; and thou mayest add thereto. NIV “I have taken great pains to provide for the temple of the Lord a hundred thousand talents of gold, a million talents of silver, quantities of bronze and iron too great to be weighed, and wood and stone. And you may add to them.”* David made preparation for the building by setting aside his personal finances (“*I have prepared...*”). The footnote in the NIV says that the gold was equal to 3,750 tons and the silver was equal to 37,500 tons! Based on a talent of gold being equal to \$8,215 and a talent of silver being equal to \$515 (according to Thompson), the total given was **\$821,500,000** in gold and **\$515,000,000** in silver. For this reason, I heard one preacher state that David was the first ONE BILLION-dollar donor to the work of the Lord. Of course, who knows if there has been another?

**David Receives an Awesome Word from God**

*4 And it came to pass that night, that the word of the LORD came unto Nathan, saying, {JF&B} “The command was given to the prophet on the night immediately following; that is, before David could either take any measures or incur any expenses.”* Look at the goodness of God! He knew David was a man of urgency and fervor when it came to the things of God and would have begun immediately unless He stepped in.

*5 Go and tell my servant David, Thus saith the LORD, Shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in? 6 Whereas I have not dwelt in any house since the time that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle. 7 In all the places wherein I have walked with all the children of Israel spake I a word with any of the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people Israel, saying, Why build ye not me an house of cedar?* It’s now many years since Israel left Egypt (Dake estimates 540 years) and during that time, the Lord never spoke a word about a permanent dwelling. He gave Moses the blueprint for the tabernacle (a tent) and did not provide any new information.

**SAINTS’ PRINCIPLE:** Until the Lord gives you new direction, don’t move from His prior direction.

*8 Now therefore so shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I took thee from the sheepcote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel: 9 And I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies out of thy sight, and have made thee a great name, like unto the name of the great men that are in the earth. 10 Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime,* God had done what He promised to David and makes a new promise to Israel. Part of it has been fulfilled but their sin delayed the rest of it until during the Millennial reign of Christ.

*11 And as since the time that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel, and have caused thee to rest from all thine enemies. Also the LORD telleth thee that he will make thee an house.* The Lord absolutely made David a house. It was not a house, as we understand, but the Lord elevated the family (house) of David above ALL ON THE EARTH by sending Jesus Christ, the Messiah, through him.

*12 And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever.* God promised to bless David’s successor who, unlike with Saul’s house, will be one of his own children. David did not know Bathsheba at this time so Solomon was nowhere on the horizon but God knew him. This child would build a house for the Lord and his throne would be established forever. We know that this was only partially fulfilled through Solomon. This prophecy has a double meaning – one for Solomon and one for Christ, the son of David.

*14 I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: 15 But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee.* Solomon was to have a unique relationship with the Lord unlike that of Saul. Saul experienced God’s mercy but His mercy ran out. Solomon will also have His mercy but it will not depart from him. This was not because of Solomon’s doing but a promise passed on to him by the life of his father. Was God being unfair to Saul? God had already stated years before Saul was born in **Exodus 33:19** *And He said, I will make all My goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name*



*of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy.* **SAINTS' PRINCIPLE:** Mercy is based entirely on God's choice.

*16 And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.* {Adam Clarke} "The family of Saul became totally extinct; the family of David remained till the incarnation. Joseph and Mary were both of that family; Jesus was the only heir to the kingdom of Israel; he did not choose to sit on the secular throne, he ascended the spiritual throne, and now he is exalted to the right hand of God, a PRINCE and a Savior, to give repentance and remission of sins."

*17 According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David.*

### **David Worships God for His Word**

*18 Then went king David in, and sat before the LORD, and he said, Who am I, O Lord GOD? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?* {David Guzik} "David's attitude wasn't "I am so great that even God gives me gifts." His attitude was, "God is so great that He gives even me gifts." We should receive salvation and every blessing with the same attitude. God's giving reflects the greatness of the Giver, not the receiver." David had the proper attitude toward the blessing of the Lord. He was humbled by what God had done. This was not a time to go and tell someone. It was a time to worship. **SAINTS' PRINCIPLE:** Boasting over the blessing is the wrong attitude; worship is the correct attitude.

*19 And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O Lord GOD; but thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come. And is this the manner of man, O Lord GOD? 20 And what can David say more unto thee? for thou, Lord GOD, knowest thy servant. 21 For thy word's sake, and according to thine own heart, hast thou done all these great things, to make thy servant know them. 22 Wherefore thou art great, O LORD God: for there is none like thee, neither is there any God beside thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears. 23 And what one nation in the earth is like thy people, even like Israel, whom God went to redeem for a people to himself, and to make him a name, and to do for you great things and terrible, for thy land, before thy people, which thou redeemedst to thee from Egypt, from the nations and their gods? 24 For thou hast confirmed to thyself thy people Israel to be a people unto thee for ever: and thou, LORD, art become their God.*

*25 And now, O LORD God, the word that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant, and concerning his house, establish it for ever, and do as thou hast said.* {David Guzik} "David's prayer boldly asks God to do what He promised. This isn't passive prayer that says, 'Well God, do whatever You want to do - I don't really care one way or another.' This isn't arrogant prayer that says, 'Well God, let me tell You what to do.' This is bold prayer that says, 'God, here is Your promise – now I trust You to fulfill it grandly and to be faithful to Your Word.'"

*26 And let thy name be magnified for ever, saying, The LORD of hosts is the God over Israel: and let the house of thy servant David be established before thee. 27 For thou, O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, hast revealed to thy servant, saying, I will build thee an house: therefore hath thy servant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee. 28 And now, O Lord GOD, thou art that God, and thy words be true, and thou hast promised this goodness unto thy servant: 29 Therefore now let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it may continue for ever before thee: for thou, O Lord GOD, hast spoken it: and with thy blessing let the house of thy servant be blessed for ever.*

## Chapter 8

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: It took something on David's part to fulfill the Word that God had given him. It was not for David to just sit and wait but he cooperated with God to bring peace to Israel – peace that had been promised for centuries.

### David's Wars

*1 And after this it came to pass that David smote the Philistines, and subdued them: and David took Methegammah out of the hand of the Philistines.* {David Guzik} “This is another name for the famous Philistine city of Gath (compare 1 Chronicles 18:1). When David became king the Philistines were taking territory from God's people. Under his leadership, God's people began to take territory from the enemy.”

**SAINTS' QUESTION:** Is the enemy pushing you backward or are you pushing him backward? Notice that David not only “smote the Philistines”, he subdued them – he put them in check and put them under control so that they would not continually invade the land as they had done for centuries. This one verse speaks to a stunning victory for Israel over the Philistines.

*2 And he smote Moab, and measured them with a line, casting them down to the ground; even with two lines measured he to put to death, and with one full line to keep alive. And so the Moabites became David's servants, and brought gifts.* **NLT David also conquered the land of Moab. He made the people lie down on the ground in a row, and he measured them off in groups with a length of rope. He measured off two groups to be executed for every one group to be spared. The Moabites who were spared became David's subjects and paid him tribute money.** There was a lot of discussion about this verse from the commentators. They could not believe that a man so much in league with the Lord could do such a thing. However, don't forget that we're talking about a much different time than we live in now with different rules for behavior in war. One commentator added an interesting speculation: {David Guzik} “David's war against Moab, and his harsh treatment of their army seems out of place considering that David's great-grandmother was a Moabite (Ruth) and that he entrusted his mother and father into the care of the Moabites (1 Samuel 22:3-4). It may be that the Moabites killed or mistreated David's parents.”

*3 David smote also Hadadezer, the son of Rehob, king of Zobah, as he went to recover his border at the river Euphrates. 4 And David took from him a thousand chariots, and seven hundred horsemen, and twenty thousand footmen: and David houghed all the chariot horses, but reserved of them for an hundred chariots.* **NLT David captured 1,700 charioteers and 20,000 foot soldiers. He crippled all the chariot horses except enough for 100 chariots.** {David Guzik} “This was military necessity instead of mere animal cruelty. David could not care for so many horses while on military campaign and he could not give them back to the enemy.”

*5 And when the Syrians of Damascus came to succor Hadadezer king of Zobah, David slew of the Syrians two and twenty thousand men.* **Amplified Bible And when the Syrians of Damascus came to help Hadadezer king of Zobah, David slew 22,000 of them.** Sometimes we overlook these numbers in the Bible but this is an astounding figure. We don't know how long this took but we're talking about almost HALF of the fatalities of the Vietnam War!

*6 Then David put garrisons in Syria of Damascus: and the Syrians became servants to David, and brought gifts. And the LORD preserved David whithersoever he went.* God preserved him as He promised He would.

*7 And David took the shields of gold that were on the servants of Hadadezer, and brought them to Jerusalem. 8 And from Bethah, and from Berothai, cities of Hadadezer, king David took exceeding much brass.* David had a Word from God regarding the Temple to be built by his son (see the previous chapter notes) and he's stockpiling funds to make sure that it's done in a proper way and without regard for expense.

*9 When Toi king of Hamath heard that David had smitten all the host of Hadadezer, 10 Then Toi sent Joram his son unto king David, to salute him, and to bless him, because he had fought against Hadadezer, and smitten him: for Hadadezer had wars with Toi. And Joram brought with him vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and vessels of brass: 11 Which also king David did dedicate unto the LORD, with the silver and gold that he had dedicated of all nations which he subdued; 12 Of Syria, and of Moab, and of the children of Ammon, and of the Philistines, and of Amalek, and of the spoil of Hadadezer, son of Rehob, king of Zobah.* David was already living well so he took all that he received and dedicated to the Lord.

**SAINTS' QUESTION:** Are you hoarding your blessing or sharing it for the work of the Lord?

*13 And David gat him a name when he returned from smiting of the Syrians in the valley of salt, being eighteen thousand men. NLT So David became very famous. After his return he destroyed 18,000 Edomites in the Valley of Salt.* Sometimes, we don't appreciate the military conquests of David because we can't appreciate the size of these numbers.

*14 And he put garrisons in Edom; throughout all Edom put he garrisons, and all they of Edom became David's servants. And the LORD preserved David whithersoever he went.* Again, this is just as He promised.

*15 And David reigned over all Israel; and David executed judgment and justice unto all his people.* David's reign was characterized by justice (fairness) as compared to the reign of Saul who spent so much time on a mission to destroy David for no reason.

### **David's Cabinet**

*16 And Joab the son of Zeruiah was over the host; and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder; 17 And Zadok the son of Ahitub, and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar, were the priests; and Seraiah was the scribe; 18 And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over both the Cherethites and the Pelethites; and David's sons were chief rulers. Amplified Bible Benaiah son of Jehoiada was over both the Cherethites and Pelethites [the king's bodyguards]; and David's sons were chief [confidential] assistants to the king.* These were the key men of David's kingdom but they were not all trustworthy including his sons. We already know the problems that David had with Joab. Joab's brother, Abishai, eventually redeemed himself and is listed as part of the second three of David's mightiest mighty men but Joab is not on that list at all even though he is the commander of the army (see 2 Samuel 23). David's sons gave him many problems and did not have the heart of their father (we'll see some of this in later chapters). However, the last man mentioned Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada, was characterized by one preacher as "no ordinary soldier". He was part of the second group of the mightiest of the mighty men. He was in charge of the king's personal bodyguard and became Solomon's general of his army. He was a man of intense loyalty. Oh, if we could find people today who would remain loyal to leadership and not rebel at the first "opportunity" that presented itself.

## Chapter 9

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: Never forget where you came from and those that helped you along the way. However, find out from the Lord if and how you can show your appreciation.

### **David Shows His Love to the Family of Jonathan**

*1 And David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan's sake?* We saw earlier that Jonathan had a son who became lame and fatherless when he was a small child. His name is Mephibosheth.

*6 Now when Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, was come unto David, he fell on his face, and did reverence. And David said, Mephibosheth. And he answered, Behold thy servant! 7 And David said unto him, Fear not: for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father; and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually.* David gave Mephibosheth a great honor.

*10 Thou therefore, and thy sons, and thy servants, shall till the land for him, and thou shalt bring in the fruits, that thy master's son may have food to eat: but Mephibosheth thy master's son shall eat bread alway at my table. Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants. 11 Then said Ziba unto the king, According to all that my lord the king hath commanded his servant, so shall thy servant do. As for Mephibosheth, said the king, he shall eat at my table, as one of the king's sons.* {Adam Clarke} *"The promises of Ziba were fair and specious, but he was a traitor in his heart, as we shall see in the rebellion of Absalom, and David's indulgence to this man is a blot in his character; at this time however he suspected no evil; circumstances alone can develop the human character. The internal villain can be known only when circumstances occur which can call his propensities into action; till then he may be reputed an honest man."*

*13 So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem: for he did eat continually at the king's table; and was lame on both his feet.* Mephibosheth moved from Lo-debar to Jerusalem at the request of the king but his restored land was tilled by Ziba and his family with half the proceeds coming to him.

## Chapter 10

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: The heart of the Christian always seeks to do good and show compassion. However, even in this, we must be led by the Spirit for if we help those that hate God, we have aligned ourselves with the wrong side. Above all, though, appreciate that the devil is scheming while we're just trying to do good – don't trust in your own righteousness; let the Spirit lead you!

### David Seeks to Comfort a Neighboring King

*1 And it came to pass after this, that the king of the children of Ammon died, and Hanun his son reigned in his stead.* {JF&B} *“It is probable that this was the Nahash against whom Saul waged war at Jabesh-gilead (1 Samuel 11:11). David, on leaving Gath, where his life was exposed to danger, found an asylum with the king of Moab; and as Nahash, king of the Ammonites, was his nearest neighbor, it may be that during the feud between Saul and David, he, through enmity to the former, was kind and hospitable to David.”* There is no other reason why David would want to show respect to such a man. The Ammonites, the product of the incestuous relationship of Lot and one of his daughters, were long time enemies of the people of God.

**SAINTS' PRINCIPLE:** One “good” act does not qualify someone for the blessings of God.

**Side Road:** The Ammonites were people specifically identified by God to NOT be blessed.

**Deuteronomy 23:3-6 NKJV** *An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter the assembly of the LORD; even to the tenth generation none of his descendants shall enter the assembly of the LORD forever, 4 because they did not meet you with bread and water on the road when you came out of Egypt, and because they hired against you Balaam the son of Beor from Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse you. 5 Nevertheless the LORD your God would not listen to Balaam, but the LORD your God turned the curse into a blessing for you, because the LORD your God loves you. 6 YOU SHALL NOT SEEK THEIR PEACE NOR THEIR PROSPERITY ALL YOUR DAYS FOREVER.* I specifically emphasized that last verse because this is the key to this passage – the Ammonites and Moabites were singled out by God to NOT be blessed by His people. Therefore, no matter what has occurred in the past, to be a blessing to them (as a nation) would be to violate the Word of God. David is making a grave mistake – the devil is using his compassionate heart against him. In addition, the man that David seeks to honor has already shown his great hatred for God's people in spite of how he personally treated David.

*2 Then said David, I will shew kindness unto Hanun the son of Nahash, as his father shewed kindness unto me. And David sent to comfort him by the hand of his servants for his father. And David's servants came into the land of the children of Ammon.* If David had been a private citizen, this would have been appropriate but as the king over the Lord's people, his actions say that ISRAEL is showing kindness in violation of the Scripture above. Nahash may have been kind to David, for what motives we don't know, but he was NEVER kind to Israel. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** Every action of the leader that involves God's people to tasks needs to be evaluated through prayer. This one action, though it seems good and considerate, is going to lead Israel into a long war where many will die.

### David's Messengers Disgraced

*3 And the princes of the children of Ammon said unto Hanun their lord, Thinkest thou that David doth honour thy father, that he hath sent comforters unto thee? hath not David rather sent his servants unto thee, to search the city, and to spy it out, and to overthrow it? 4 Wherefore Hanun took David's servants, and shaved off the one half of their beards, and cut off their garments in the middle, even to their buttocks, and sent them away. 5 When they told it unto David, he sent to meet them, because the men were greatly ashamed: and the king said, Tarry at Jericho until your beards be grown, and then return.*



{Adam Clarke} *“The beard is held in high respect in the East: the possessor considers it his greatest ornament; often swears by it; and, in matters of great importance, pledges it. Nothing can be more secure than a pledge of this kind; its owner will redeem it at the hazard of his life. The beard was never cut off but in mourning, or as a sign of slavery. Cutting off half of the beard and the clothes rendered the men ridiculous, and made them look like slaves: what was done to these men was an accumulation of insult.”*

### **War With the Ammonites**

**6** *And when the children of Ammon saw that they stank before David, the children of Ammon sent and hired the Syrians of Bethrehab and the Syrians of Zoba, twenty thousand footmen, and of king Maacah a thousand men, and of Ishtob twelve thousand men.* Wouldn't you think that the average person would expect such a response? However, the enemy used Ammon to destroy the peace of Israel. I don't believe he could manipulate things to bring about the fall of David in the next chapter but this is just the starting point for future opportunities. **SAINTS' PRINCIPLE:** **When the enemy can remove our peace, it opens the door for more problems from him.**

**7** *And when David heard of it, he sent Joab, and all the host of the mighty men.* We have one of two things going on here. Either the Lord was seeking for an opportunity to punish the Ammonites (this is NOT brought out anywhere in Scripture) or David's presumptuous act at the beginning of the chapter has opened the door for war and loss of life.

VERSES 8-14. In the first battle, the Hebrews destroyed the armies of Ammon and the Syrians they had hired to come help them. Once it was complete, Joab and the army returned to Jerusalem because winter was upon them.

VERSES 15-18. In the second battle, the Syrians brought in more soldiers. They started this battle. It was such an important battle to David that he came with the army to fight. His presence motivated the army to a great victory. However, verse 18 tells that THOUSANDS of people died in this battle – a battle that started with something that seemed innocent.

**19** *And when all the kings that were servants to Hadarezer saw that they were smitten before Israel, they made peace with Israel, and served them. So the Syrians feared to help the children of Ammon any more.* This victory over the Syrians was HUGE. David had already defeated the Philistines (the western edge of the kingdom) and brought them under control. He had also defeated the Moabites (the eastern edge of the kingdom) and completely brought them under control. Now the outer edges of the northern part of the kingdom, formerly dominated the Syrians, was completely under control. The unfortunate side effect of victory, if you let it, is arrogance. David, unknown to him and possibly not on the surface, has developed some arrogance. It will rear its head completely in the next chapter.

{Adam Clarke} *“We have now done with the first part of this book, in which we find David great, glorious, and pious: we come to the second part, in which we shall have the pain to observe him fallen from God, and his horn defiled in the dust by crimes of the most [vicious] nature. Let him that most assuredly standeth take heed lest he fall.”*

## Chapter 11

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: This is one of the ugliest chapters of the Bible. It ranks with Numbers 20, the sin of Moses, as a chapter of deep reflection and carefulness. We have here recorded the fall of King David, a man of God. If a man of this stature, beloved by God, could sin in the manner that he did in this chapter, how much more carefulness must exist in us! *“In the whole of the Old Testament literature there is no chapter more tragic or full of solemn and searching warning than this.”* (G. Campbell Morgan)

### David Commits Adultery

*1 And it came to pass, after the year was expired, at the time when kings go forth to battle, that David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried still at Jerusalem.* Now that David has most of his enemies under control, he desires to complete the mission with the Ammonites and also bring them under subjection. In the process, though, he does something that he doesn't normally do – he stayed behind in Jerusalem. **SAINTS' PRINCIPLE:** **It's our “no harm, but no prayer” actions that the enemy uses to destroy us.** Why did David stay behind? Were there affairs of state to handle? Perhaps he had come to the place where he felt like he had “arrived” and didn't need to demean himself with going out with the army. If so, this is that arrogance that may have started to set up in him. However, the verse says that this was the time when **KINGS** go forth to battle. This is step 1 in David's fall. {David Guzik} *“David should have been out at the battle but he remained behind. In 2 Samuel 10 Joab and the army of the mighty men were preserved against the Syrians and the Ammonites but they did not win a decisive victory. The decisive victory came when David led the battle at the end of 2 Samuel 10. Both through custom and experience God told David, ‘You need to be at the battle.’ But David remained at Jerusalem.”* **SAINTS' PRINCIPLE: Most sin can be traced back to some decision that the devil used.**

*2 And it came to pass in an eveningtide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon.* Step 2 in David's fall was when the enemy took his sleep. The commentators say that it was not unusual for people of that time to go on their roofs late at night when it was cooler. {David Guzik} *“The Hebrew verb form of walked suggests that David paced back and forth on the roof. He couldn't sleep and was uneasy - uneasy because he wasn't where God wanted him to be.”* Step 3 came when David saw a woman washing herself and looked upon her (gazed at her). By now, David has **PLENTY** of wives but, as we've seen in the past, he's a man that has many problems in the flesh when it comes to women.

*3 And David sent and enquired after the woman. And one said, Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?* Now that the devil has had his chance, God works in this single sentence to try to save David. He offers three things (to counter the devil's three steps) that should have shaken David to not do what he's about to do:

- First, Bathsheba, who was said to be a woman of celebrated beauty, was the daughter of Eliam. When you look at the list of David's Mighty Men (special, trusted soldiers) in 2 Samuel 23:34, you see the name Eliam. Eliam was one of the Mighty Men. He's a man that loved David and, no doubt, David loved him.
- Second, Bathsheba was the wife of Uriah the Hittite. In that same chapter in Second Samuel in verse 39, you see his name. He is even more special because his name suggests that he was a Gentile who converted to Judaism probably because of David. He's also a man that loved David and, no doubt, David loved him.

- Third, Bathsheba's grandfather was Ahithophel – one of David's chief counselors who ultimately conspired against David in the rebellion of Absalom...perhaps because of his bitterness about David's adultery with his granddaughter.

Knowing WHO she was and WHOSE she was should have stopped him but it didn't. **SAINTS' PRINCIPLE: The flesh wants what it wants when it wants it so we must be ever so careful to bring it under subjection.**

**Side Road:** Let's not get into Bathsheba and any of her reasons for or our objections to her bathing outside because the times were different and we don't understand the times. However, sin is timeless and David, as the leader, had a responsibility to stay right with God...and keep God's people right.

*4 And David sent messengers, and took her; and she came in unto him, and he lay with her; for she was purified from her uncleanness: and she returned unto her house.* Bathsheba had just finished her menstrual cycle when she and David (BOTH OF THEM) committed this sin.

*5 And the woman conceived, and sent and told David, and said, I AM WITH CHILD.*

### **David Conspires to Conceal His Sin**

**PROVERBS 28:13 NKJV** *He who covers his sins WILL NOT PROSPER, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy.*

*6 And David sent to Joab, saying, Send me Uriah the Hittite. And Joab sent Uriah to David. 7 And when Uriah was come unto him, David demanded of him how Joab did, and how the people did, and how the war prospered. 8 And David said to Uriah, Go down to thy house, and wash thy feet. And Uriah departed out of the king's house, and there followed him a mess of meat from the king. 9 But Uriah slept at the door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and went not down to his house.* David had no remorse for what he had done. No, he was sorry for the EVIDENCE of what he had done. Now he needed to "clean it up" by making this child Uriah's child but he didn't expect this level of integrity from Uriah.

*10 And when they had told David, saying, Uriah went not down unto his house, David said unto Uriah, Camest thou not from thy journey? why then didst thou not go down unto thine house? 11 And Uriah said unto David, The ark, and Israel, and Judah, abide in tents; and my lord Joab, and the servants of my lord, are encamped in the open fields; shall I then go into mine house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? as thou livest, and as thy soul liveth, I will not do this thing.* This man is a converted Hittite! Look how he loves his new country, the Ark of the Lord, and his king! He would not take advantage of this situation even though the king wanted him to. **Step 1 in David's conspiracy fails.**

*12 And David said to Uriah, Tarry here to day also, and to morrow I will let thee depart. So Uriah abode in Jerusalem that day, and the morrow. 13 And when David had called him, he did eat and drink before him; and he made him drunk: and at even he went out to lie on his bed with the servants of his lord, but went not down to his house.* When something is in your heart, alcohol will bring it out. However, it cannot make you do what's not in your heart. The heart of Uriah was stronger than that which he drunk. **Step 2 in David's conspiracy fails.** Now David is getting desperate because if Bathsheba begins to show and everyone knows that Uriah did not go home from the battle, the Law of Moses says that BOTH OF THEM were to be put to death. **Leviticus 20:10 NLT** *If a man commits adultery with his neighbor's wife, BOTH the man and the woman who has committed adultery must be put to death.*



*14 And it came to pass in the morning, that David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah. 15 And he wrote in the letter, saying, Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten, and die.* How did David come to this point? We have seen how the Lord was with him wherever he went and in all battles. We saw his desire to build God a house. And now we see the same man sending a man to his death carrying his own death sentence because he will not confess his sin. Look at the EVIL in the letter! He instructs his nephew to put Uriah in the front of the hottest part of the battle and then step away from him so he can die. **HE HAS SET UP URIAHS TO DIE!** He also made Joab and the soldiers co-conspirators but, thankfully, God laid this sin only on David.

*16 And it came to pass, when Joab observed the city, that he assigned Uriah unto a place where he knew that valiant men were. 17 And the men of the city went out, and fought with Joab: and there fell some of the people of the servants of David; and URIAHS THE HITTITE DIED ALSO. Step 3 in David's conspiracy succeeds.* {Adam Clarke} “[Uriah] was led to the attack of a place defended by valiant men; and in the heat of the assault, Joab and his men retired from this brave soldier, who cheerfully gave up his life for his king and his country.”

*18 Then Joab sent and told David all the things concerning the war; 19 And charged the messenger, saying, When thou hast made an end of telling the matters of the war unto the king, 20 And if so be that the king's wrath arise, and he say unto thee, Wherefore approached ye so nigh unto the city when ye did fight? knew ye not that they would shoot from the wall? 21 Who smote Abimelech the son of Jerubbesheth? did not a woman cast a piece of a millstone upon him from the wall, that he died in Thebez? why went ye nigh the wall? then say thou, Thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.*

*22 So the messenger went, and came and shewed David all that Joab had sent him for. 23 And the messenger said unto David, Surely the men prevailed against us, and came out unto us into the field, and we were upon them even unto the entering of the gate. 24 And the shooters shot from off the wall upon thy servants; and some of the king's servants be dead, and thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.* Not only was Uriah dead but others died to cover up David's sin. It is likely that Joab would have never had them so close except he was obeying the king's commandment. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE: Every negative act of the leader impacts those that follow.**

*25 Then David said unto the messenger, Thus shalt thou say unto Joab, Let not this thing displease thee, for the sword devoureth one as well as another: make thy battle more strong against the city, and overthrow it: and encourage thou him.* Now David adds hypocrisy to his lust, adultery, conspiracy, and murder.

*26 And when the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she mourned for her husband.* The commentators have nothing good to say about the actions of Bathsheba throughout this chapter. No protest is recorded of her being sent to the king's bedroom. Adam Clarke says her tears were reluctant for she “lost a captain and got a king for her spouse.” He goes on to say that her mourning period was probably only seven days. Remember, she's pregnant and can't mourn a long time before she'll begin to show.

*27 And when the mourning was past, David sent and fetched her to his house, and she became his wife, and bare him a son. BUT THE THING THAT DAVID HAD DONE DISPLEASED THE LORD.* Let us never get to the point that this simple sentence at the end of this verse does not bring us to tears!

**Postscript:** After studying this chapter, I was so grieved. If a great man of God like King David can so quickly be snared in sin, what hope is there for us? The sexual sin is the most devastating sin in the church. How strange that we can excuse such actions as murder quicker than we excuse any sexual sin. In the midst of my meditation, the Lord gave me the answer in **Second Peter 1:2-11 NIV**:

**2 Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.** Abundant grace (God's unmerited favor) and abundant peace (freedom from anxiety and worry) come about as a result of the knowledge of God and the knowledge of Jesus Christ our Lord – we have to really know the Lord.

**3 His divine power has given us EVERYTHING we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of Him who called us by his own glory and goodness.** We already have all that we need to succeed.

**4 Through these He has given us His very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.**

**5 For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith **GOODNESS**; and to goodness, **KNOWLEDGE**;** This is not automatic. We have something to do also.

**6 and to knowledge, **SELF-CONTROL**; and to self-control, **PERSEVERANCE**; and to perseverance, **GODLINESS**;** David practiced no self-control. We have to work on it.

**7 and to godliness, **BROTHERLY KINDNESS**; and to brotherly kindness, **LOVE**.** Did David show brotherly kindness to Uriah? Did he love Bathsheba enough to help her stay right? These qualities will keep us from sin.

**8 For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

**9 But if anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins.** Do the actions of David make it appear that he has forgotten those few sheep in the wilderness...where he came from?

**10 Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, **YOU WILL NEVER FALL**,** Here's the key to successful living in Christ. David missed MANY of these seven key attributes in our chapter. We have no excuse since the Apostle has made it abundantly clear for us.

**11 and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.**

## Chapter 12

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: There is a blessing in leadership but there is a double penalty for leaders that sin. Paul instructed Timothy to openly rebuke leaders that sin. David will be openly rebuked in this chapter but the punishment will continue the rest of his life.

### God Sends Nathan to Rebuke David

**Side Road:** It is now at least nine months after the previous chapter. The Lord has given David nearly a year to repent of his horrible sin but he has not done so. Therefore, He moves to bring him to repentance.

*1 And the LORD sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor.* Nathan was not only the prophet to the nation but David's friend. However, he realized that, first of all, he was God's prophet. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** **Never let personal relationships prevent you from doing what God has called you to do.**

*2 The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds: 3 But the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter.* The tenderness of this parable speaks to the relationship of Uriah with his wife Bathsheba. Uriah had nothing except Bathsheba and he loved her greatly. He also had no one to speak for him so God spoke on his behalf.

*4 And there came a traveler unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him.* Because of Bathsheba, Uriah's life was full but David, who could have had the pick of any single woman in the kingdom, took that from him.

*5 And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the LORD liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die:* This was a rash statement and not in line with the Law of Moses. David corrects himself in his next breath.

*6 And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.* This is in line with the Law of Moses. **EXODUS 22:1** *If a man steal an ox or a sheep ... he shall restore five oxen for an ox, and FOUR SHEEP for a sheep.* David cannot restore Uriah fourfold because he's dead. However, we'll see later that he WILL restore Uriah's family fourfold – with the death of four sons – the son born to him by Bathsheba (later in this chapter), Amnon, Absalom, and Adonijah!

*7 And Nathan said to David, THOU ART THE MAN.* How could David go approximately a year after committing adultery with the wife of one of his key men, having that man killed, and then marrying the man's wife without ANY remorse or second thought? The fact that "a man after God's own heart" could do this is a little scary. However, as I think of it, I speculate that there were at least two things missing from David's life in that period that every saint must have:

(1) David was missing quality time with the Lord in His Word. The Psalmist said in **PSALM 119:9** *Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to Thy Word.* He went further to say in **PSALM 119:11** *Thy Word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee.* The Word of God is right – there is NO WAY David could go this long without some level of remorse if he had quality time spent with God in His Word.

(2) David had no one close to him that was willing to rebuke him. In spite of all of his wives and soldiers that may have still been in the city, no one said, “You were wrong!” His wives probably viewed the new wife with envy and wanted no part of the whole thing. Remember that this was a different time also and women were less important than children so even if they tried, it might have fallen on deaf ears. The soldiers probably looked at the fate of Uriah, one of their own, and wanted no part of this. “If he did this to Uriah, one of the Mighty Men who lived right next door to him, wouldn’t he do it to us?” **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE: Always have someone that will be completely and brutally honest with you in your circle of close friends.** Accountability is such a wonderful thing for leaders but is so often missing today as we see leader after leader fall into sin and then refuse to submit to the judgment of the church. Our souls and the souls of those that follow us are at stake! We must never get to the position where we don’t have someone who will help us look at ourselves.

*Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul; 8 And I gave thee thy master’s house, and thy master’s wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things. 9 Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.* Disobedience to the commandment of the Lord expresses our contempt (hatred) for the Lord’s commandment. That is how the Lord views it. However, David’s sin was not only in how he viewed the commandment of the Lord but HOW he sinned. He not only killed Uriah but he killed him through the hated children of Ammon. We’ve seen in previous chapters how the Lord viewed these people because of how they treated His people during the Exodus from Egypt.

### **David’s Six Fold Judgment**

**Side Road:** Do you think that sin is just something that God will always forgive? Have you developed a casual attitude toward sin because of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ? Let us look carefully at the tremendous punishment on the life of the “man after God’s own heart” because of his sin.

*10 Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife.* ❶ Not only was David engaged in continual wars against neighboring countries and nomadic tribes throughout his life, he had problems within his own house. This last part was new because of his sin – his sin was done in his house and the judgment for his sin came out of his own house. Where it had been a place of peace and repose, now it will become a place of chaos and destruction because of his sin. {David Guzik} “*David demanded fourfold restitution for the man in Nathan’s parable. God exacted fourfold restitution for Uriah from four of David’s sons: Bathsheba’s child, Amnon, Absalom, and Adonijah.*”

*11 Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbor, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun.* ❷ Again, because this sin was done under his roof, evil will start under his roof. David had caused evil in Uriah’s house and now evil will spring up out of his house. If David had remotely speculated that his own children would be the cause of so much grief for him and that it would start with a sexual sin, I’m sure he would have turned away from looking at Bathsheba and gone back in his house. **SAINTS’ PRINCIPLE: Sin carries a horrible price!**

③ Just as David took his neighbor's wife, God will take his wives and give them to his "neighbor". Oh, if David had known that his "neighbor" would be his favorite son, Absalom, certainly he would have turned away from Bathsheba! **SAINTS' PRINCIPLE: Sin carries a horrible price!**

④ Not only will this "neighbor" take his wives, he will publicly defile them. David violated another man's wife and another man will violate his wives. Later in this same book, we will be exposed to the heinous crime of Absalom of laying with his father's wives on top of the roof of the palace (probably from the same point where David first gazed upon Bathsheba) in broad daylight to humiliate David. **SAINTS' PRINCIPLE: Sin carries a horrible price!**

**12 For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun.** ⑤ David carefully and craftily hid his sin. Very few could really put their finger on what had happened. The sin was secret but the punishment will be very public and very exposed to the scrutiny of the people. {Matthew Henry} *"The sin was secret, and industriously concealed, but the punishment should be open, and industriously proclaimed, to the shame of David, whose sin in the matter of Uriah, though committed many years before, would then be called to mind and commonly talked of upon that occasion."* We often use the principle of sowing and reaping to talk about blessing and prosperity. However, this principle applies to everything and especially applies to sin. **HOSEA 8:7a For they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind.**

**13 And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.** {Adam Clarke} *"Many have supposed that David's sin was now actually pardoned, but this is perfectly erroneous; David, as an adulterer, was condemned to death by the Law of God; and he had according to that law passed sentence of death upon himself. God alone, whose law that was could revoke that sentence, or dispense with its execution; therefore Nathan, who had charged the guilt home upon his conscience, is authorized to give him the assurance that he should not die a temporal death for it: The Lord hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. This is all that is contained in the assurance given by Nathan: Thou shalt not die that temporal death; thou shalt be preserved alive, that thou mayest have time to repent, turn to God, and find mercy. If the fifty-first Psalm, as is generally supposed, was written on this occasion, then it is evident (as the Psalm must have been written after this interview) that David had not received pardon for his sin from God at the time he composed it; for in it he confesses the crime in order to find mercy."* There is relief in this verse ("Thou shalt not die") but there is also a dark side to this verse. This sin was punishable, by the Law of God, by death. Therefore, since it was evident that it was to be punished, then the judgment must have been transferred. Let us read on.

**14 Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die.** ⑥ The infant child born to Bathsheba and David as a result of their adultery will bear the punishment for their sin and WILL SURELY DIE. This child is never mentioned by name but we do know that it was a boy. He is to be the object of divine judgment so we don't have the opportunity to become close to him. But let us pay attention to the last part of this verse so we can understand the mind of God in this judgment. {Matthew Henry} *"The wicked people of that generation, the infidels, idolaters, and profane, would triumph in David's fall, and speak ill of God and of his law, when they saw one guilty of such foul enormities that professed such an honor both for him and it. There is this great evil in the scandalous sins of those that profess religion, and relation to God, that they furnish the enemies of*



*God and religion with matter for reproach and blasphemy.*” **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** Every time a preacher falls due to sexual immorality, the Church and the cause of Christ suffer a tremendous setback.

**Side Road:** The judgment for David’s sin extended to the end of his life and beyond (the fourth son died after his death). His remaining days were filled with pain and he was never viewed the same way by many of his key men. All of this because he chose to “look and leap”. Do you think that sin is not a big thing?

*15 And Nathan departed unto his house. And the LORD struck the child that Uriah’s wife bare unto David, and it was very sick.* Notice the terminology that the Lord continues to use – Uriah’s wife – Bathsheba is not mentioned by name because the focus continues to be on the horrible sin against Uriah. After Nathan completed his mission, the child IMMEDIATELY fell deathly sick.

*16 David therefore besought God for the child; and David fasted, and went in, and lay all night upon the earth.* David is intent on changing the mind of God through prayer and fasting. However, there are some things that no amount of prayer and fasting will change. {David Guzik} “*Extraordinary prayer and fasting are not tools to get whatever we want from God. They are demonstrations of radical submission and surrender to God’s power and will.*” It makes me wonder why God let David continue to afflict himself if He had no intention of hearing. Wouldn’t God have been more just to quickly allow the child to die? This is all true but this time of fasting and prayer is really for David even though he thinks it is for the child. This time will completely restore him back to God. (It may have been during this time that David wrote Psalm 51.)

*17 And the elders of his house arose, and went to him, to raise him up from the earth: but he would not, neither did he eat bread with them. 18 And it came to pass on the seventh day, that the child died. And the servants of David feared to tell him that the child was dead: for they said, Behold, while the child was yet alive, we spake unto him, and he would not hearken unto our voice: how will he then vex himself, if we tell him that the child is dead?* In spite of his sin, the people still love David and are concerned about him. This is the danger in leadership sins. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** The problem with leadership sins is that the people will continue to follow and love the leader even if it is to their own detriment.

*19 But when David saw that his servants whispered, David perceived that the child was dead: therefore David said unto his servants, Is the child dead? And they said, He is dead. 20 Then David arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the LORD, and WORSHIPPED: then he came to his own house; and when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat.* This time of fasting and prayer has helped David. He fully submits to the will of God to the point where he is willing to worship the Lord in the midst of the death of his child. **SAINTS’ PRINCIPLE:** After we have fasted and prayed and things have not changed, we yet must submit to the will of God.

*21 Then said his servants unto him, What thing is this that thou hast done? thou didst fast and weep for the child, while it was alive; but when the child was dead, thou didst rise and eat bread.* This is the beauty of being a true servant – the servant has the opportunity to ask questions that others don’t and to know things that others don’t (refer to the servants at the Wedding Feast at Cana in John 2).

*22 And he said, While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, Who can tell whether GOD will be gracious to me, that the child may live?* Look at the heart of David! Perhaps at the beginning of the last chapter he would have rebuked these men. Now, after prayer, he patiently answers their question.



**23 But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.** When you think that the death of David's son was unfair, remember that this little child went to the presence of the Lord. He did not have to endure the pain of life and the Lord richly and eternally rewarded him for his brief existence. David, however, has many years ahead of judgment for his actions. Death would have been an easy way out.

### **The Birth of Solomon**

**24 And David comforted Bathsheba his wife, and went in unto her, and lay with her: and she bare a son, and he called his name Solomon: and the LORD loved him.** Back in chapter 7, the Lord made a promise to David regarding this child. Perhaps, if we had a choice, we would have had that child come through David's marriage to Abigail, a woman who had already demonstrated her wisdom and tact. Certainly, it would not have come through a woman that he committed adultery with! However, God's ways are beyond finding out and He chose to bless David AND Bathsheba with this child that He had a special heart toward.

**25 And he sent by the hand of Nathan the prophet; and he called his name Jedidiah, because of the LORD.** {JF&B} "*Nathan gave him the name of Jedediah, by command of God, or perhaps only as an expression of God's love. This love and the noble gifts with which he was endowed, considering the criminality of the marriage from which he sprang, is a remarkable instance of divine goodness and grace.*"

### **The War With Ammon Ends**

**26 And Joab fought against Rabbah of the children of Ammon, and took the royal city.** Remember that all of this long warfare started because David presumptuously sent messengers to help those that God had destined for judgment. During the time the army has been at war, David has sinned, married Bathsheba, had a child, and buried a child. This has been a LONG war because of David (see my notes on chapter 10). {David Guzik} "*Joab struggled for more than a year to conquer Rabbah, and the victory only came when David got things right with God. There was an unseen spiritual reason behind the lack of victory at Rabbah.*"

**27 And Joab sent messengers to David, and said, I have fought against Rabbah, and have taken the city of waters. 28 Now therefore gather the rest of the people together, and encamp against the city, and take it: lest I take the city, and it be called after my name.** {Adam Clarke} "*Rabbah was composed of a city and citadel; the former, in which was the king's residence, Joab had taken, and supposed he could soon render himself master of the latter, and therefore sends to David to come and take it, lest, he taking the whole, the city should be called after his name.*"

**29 And David gathered all the people together, and went to Rabbah, and fought against it, and took it. 30 And he took their king's crown from off his head, the weight whereof was a talent of gold with the precious stones: and it was set on David's head. And he brought forth the spoil of the city in great abundance.** {JF&B} "*While the treasures of the city were given as plunder to his soldiers, David reserved to himself the crown, which was of rarest value. Its great weight makes it probable that it was like many ancient crowns, not worn, but suspended over the head, or fixed on a canopy on the top of the throne.*"

**31 And he brought forth the people that were therein, and put them under saws, and under harrows of iron, and under axes of iron, and made them pass through the brick-kiln: and thus did he unto all the cities of the children of Ammon. So David and all the people returned unto Jerusalem.** {JF&B} "*This excessive severity and employment of tortures, which the Hebrews on no other occasion are recorded to have practiced, was an act of retributive justice on a people who were infamous for their cruelties.*"

## Chapter 13

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: The lives that we lead can encourage or discourage the favor of God for us. David has diminished it because of his actions toward Uriah the Hittite in the previous chapter. We'll see the results of those actions in this chapter. Let us learn from it and see the importance of a life pleasing to God.

### **Incest in David's House**

**1 And it came to pass after this, that Absalom the son of David had a fair sister, whose name was Tamar; and Amnon the son of David loved her.** Absalom and Tamar were the children of David by Maacah, the daughter of the king of Geshur. She was a foreign woman (not an Israelite) and this was probably an arranged marriage for political convenience. According to 1 Chronicles 3, Amnon was David's first born by Ahinoam the Jezreelitess and Absalom was his third son. They were both born in Hebron when David was in his early 30's. Using this information, Dake speculates that Amnon was about 22, Absalom about 20, and Tamar was about 15. We're dealing with very young people but we'll soon see that evil does not care what age you are. Amnon was infatuated with Tamar, a beautiful young woman but she was his half-sister.

**2 And Amnon was so vexed, that he fell sick for his sister Tamar; for she was a virgin; and Amnon thought it hard for him to do anything to her.** Amnon was so worked up about his sister that he made himself sick. This was not love but lust that was consuming his health! Look at his "love". He didn't want to do something "for" her but "to" her. It would not have been right for Amnon to do anything because the Law of Moses forbade it. (**Leviticus 18:11 NLT** *Do not have sexual relations with your stepsister, the daughter of any of your father's wives, for she is your sister.*)

**3 But Amnon had a friend, whose name was Jonadab, the son of Shimeah David's brother: and Jonadab was a very subtle man.** Amnon's friend was his cousin, the nephew of David. (Remember that he was also Tamar's cousin.) The Scripture calls him a "subtle" man – this is the term applied to the snake in the garden.

**4 And he said unto him, Why art thou, being the king's son, lean from day to day? wilt thou not tell me? And Amnon said unto him, I love Tamar, my brother Absalom's sister.** Jonadab must have been a good friend because the average man should have been ashamed to admit this to anyone. {JF&B} *"In Eastern countries, where polygamy prevails, the girls are considered to be under the special care and protection of their [blood] brother, who is the guardian of their interests and their honor, even more than their father himself."* {David Guzik} *"In his lust, Amnon cannot allow himself to call Tamar his sister – instead, she is Absalom's sister. The power of lust is strong enough to twist the way we see reality."*

**5 And Jonadab said unto him, Lay thee down on thy bed, and make thyself sick: and when thy father cometh to see thee, say unto him, I pray thee, let my sister Tamar come, and give me meat, and dress the meat in my sight, that I may see it, and eat it at her hand.** Jonadab was an evil man. He had no thought of the interests of his young cousin but only wanted to endear himself to the heir to the throne and eventually to David. Notice that Jonadab did not tell Amnon what to do when he was alone with Tamar. This way, his hands were "clean" but both of these evil men were thinking the same thing.

**6 So Amnon lay down, and made himself sick: and when the king was come to see him, Amnon said unto the king, I pray thee, let Tamar my sister come, and make me a couple of cakes in my sight, that I may eat at her hand.** I commend David for seeing about his son but he let his love for his children get in the way of good parenting. As a man that has experienced lust, he should have been able to spot the same sin in others, especially his son. However, he falls for this treachery – treachery that will soon almost cost him his throne.

**7 Then David sent home to Tamar, saying, Go now to thy brother Amnon's house, and dress him meat.** Amnon, being an evil man, can now implicate his father as an accomplice in his actions.

**8 So Tamar went to her brother Amnon's house; and he was laid down. And she took flour, and kneaded it, and made cakes in his sight, and did bake the cakes. 9 And she took a pan, and poured them out before him; but he refused to eat. And Amnon said, Have out all men from me. And they went out every man from him. 10 And Amnon said unto Tamar, Bring the meat into the chamber that I may eat of thine hand. And Tamar took the cakes, which she had made, and brought them into the chamber to Amnon her brother.** Amnon has meditated on this action with great care. He has set the stage for his lust to be fulfilled.

**11 And when she had brought them unto him to eat, he took hold of her, and said unto her, Come lie with me, my sister.** Look at the contradiction in his words, which condemn his action – lie with me, my sister!?

**12 And she answered him, Nay, my brother, do not force me; for no such thing ought to be done in Israel: do not thou this folly. 13 And I, whither shall I cause my shame to go? and as for thee, thou shalt be as one of the fools in Israel. Now therefore, I pray thee, speak unto the king; for he will not withhold me from thee.** Tamar, at 15, was wiser than her brother at 22. She tries to reason with him on her shame and how he will be viewed. She even requests for him to go to David for her hand in marriage. (Some believe this was a ploy to get away from Amnon because the Law strictly forbade this type of marriage.)

**14 Howbeit he would not hearken unto her voice: but, being stronger than she, forced her, and lay with her. NIV But he refused to listen to her, and since he was stronger than she, he raped her.** This action was part of David's penalty for his sin with Bathsheba. The protection and covering the Lord had given his family is no longer there and, as the Lord promised in 12:11, evil is being raised up against David from within his own house. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** You may be the leader but your actions can cause severe consequences among those that you love. Leaders MUST live right!

**15 Then Amnon hated her exceedingly; so that the hatred wherewith he hated her was greater than the love wherewith he had loved her. And Amnon said unto her, Arise, be gone.** {JF&B} “It is not unusual for persons instigated by violent and irregular passions to go from one extreme to another. In Amnon's case the sudden revulsion is easily accounted for; the atrocity of his conduct, with all the feelings of shame, remorse, and dread of exposure and punishment, now burst upon his mind, rendering the presence of Tamar intolerably painful to him.”

**16 And she said unto him, There is no cause: this evil in sending me away is greater than the other that thou didst unto me. But he would not hearken unto her.** {David Guzik} “What Amnon did to Tamar was wrong, but he could still somewhat redeem the situation by either marrying her or paying her bride-price in accordance with Exodus 22:16-17 and Deuteronomy 22:28-29. The payment was meant to compensate for the fact that Tamar was now less likely to be married, no longer being a virgin.” Pastor Guzik points to the horrific nature of Amnon's actions – he has condemned his sister to being unmarried (she's only 15!) to satisfy his lust and he cares nothing about it! This is not a man that is fit to be the heir to the throne.

**17 Then he called his servant that ministered unto him, and said, Put now this woman out from me, and bolt the door after her.** {David Guzik} “Tamar deserved better treatment as an **Israelite**. Tamar deserved better treatment as a **relative**. Tamar deserved better treatment as a **sister**. Tamar deserved better treatment as a **princess**. Despite all this, Amnon spitefully treats Tamar as **this woman**.”

*18 And she had a garment of divers colors upon her: for with such robes were the king's daughters that were virgins appareled. Then his servant brought her out, and bolted the door after her.* The garment she wore symbolized that she was one of the king's daughters. In spite of this, the servant put the princess out in obedience to Amnon's command.

*19 And Tamar put ashes on her head, and rent her garment of divers colors that was on her, and laid her hand on her head, and went on crying. 20 And Absalom her brother said unto her, Hath Amnon thy brother been with thee? but hold now thy peace, my sister: he is thy brother; regard not this thing. So Tamar remained desolate in her brother Absalom's house.* {Matthew Henry} *"We must now leave the criminal to the terrors of his own guilty conscience, and enquire what becomes of the poor victim. She bitterly lamented the injury she had received, as it was a stain to her honor, though no real blemish to her virtue. She tore her fine clothes in token of her grief, and put ashes upon her head, to deform herself, loathing her own beauty and ornaments, because they had occasioned Amnon's unlawful love; and she went on crying for another's sin. She retired to her brother Absalom's house, because he was her own brother, and there she lived in solitude and sorrow, in token of her modesty and detestation of uncleanness. Absalom spoke kindly to her, bade her pass by the injury for the present, designing himself to revenge it. It should seem by Absalom's question (Has Amnon been with thee?) that Amnon was notorious for such lewd practices, so that it was dangerous for a modest woman to be with him."*

*21 But when king David heard of all these things, he was very wroth.* {Adam Clarke} *"To this verse the Septuagint add the following words: 'But he would not grieve the soul of Amnon his son, for he loved him, because he was his first-born.' The same addition is found in the Vulgate and in Josephus, and it is possible that this once made a part of the Hebrew text."* David was "very wroth" but did nothing. The actions of Amnon (forcible incest) required a death sentence according to Leviticus. However, there are a number of things here that could have been going on in David's mind:

- (1) He has committed adultery with Bathsheba and she now lives in his house as his wife. His sons were old enough to figure this out because, according to Dake, it's only about two years since this incident. Therefore, how can he rebuke ANYONE for sexual sin? However, he is the leader of the country and his home and he must rebuke sin even if it means that he embarrasses himself in the process.
- (2) Amnon was his first-born son. David had probably let him get away with all kinds of actions all his life because he was his first-born. He's created a monster and he doesn't know how to get this monster back under control without facing personal embarrassment.
- (3) The requirements of the Law of Moses were severe. This action would have required the death of his son. He was not willing to endure such a thing for his first-born son. However, he was willing to allow his daughter to be shamed. **SAINTS' PRINCIPLE: Regardless of what you've gone through, sin must be dealt with – consider the future of your brother or your sister and consider yourself.** Because David did not deal with this at this time, as he would with others, it will have to be dealt with in a different manner. A death penalty crime has been committed and the sentence WILL be carried out.

### **A Murderous Plot Forms in David's Family**

*22 And Absalom spake unto his brother Amnon neither good nor bad: for Absalom hated Amnon, because he had forced his sister Tamar.* The hatred of Absalom for Amnon was deep and bitter. As Amnon did, he is biding his time and calculating the day when he can avenge his sister with the death of his brother.

{Matthew Henry} *“Absalom resolves to do the part of a judge in Israel; and, since his father will not punish Amnon, he will, from a principle, not of justice or zeal for virtue, but of revenge, because he reckons himself affronted in the abuse done to his sister. Their mother was daughter to a heathen prince, which perhaps they were upbraided with sometimes by their brethren, as children of a stranger. As such a one Absalom thought his sister was now treated; and, if Amnon thought her fit to be made his harlot, he would think him fit to be made his slave. This enraged him, and nothing less than the blood of Amnon will quench his rage.”*

### **The Plot Unfolds**

**23 And it came to pass after two full years, that Absalom had sheepshearers in Baalhazor, which is beside Ephraim: and Absalom invited all the king’s sons.** Two full years have passed since the events earlier in this chapter. Absalom has played it “cool” the whole time. No one, but God, knows what evil has been brewing in his heart. He has patiently waited for this time to come when everyone thinks that those events have passed and the outrage of those events is over. Now he has a reason to call his family together – sheep shearing. {Adam Clarke} *“These were times in which feasts were made, to which the neighbors and relatives of the family were invited.”* (Note: Baalhazor, according to [www.godonthenet.net](http://www.godonthenet.net) was a 3,333 foot high mountain 9 miles northwest of Bethel. This means it was not far from Jerusalem. This will be a fact to take note of later as the plot unfolds.)

**24 And Absalom came to the king, and said, Behold now, thy servant hath sheepshearers; let the king, I beseech thee, and his servants go with thy servant. 25 And the king said to Absalom, Nay, my son, let us not all now go, lest we be chargeable unto thee. And he pressed him: howbeit he would not go, but blessed him. NLT The king replied, “No, my son. If we all came, we would be too much of a burden on you.” Absalom pressed him, but the king would not come, though he gave Absalom his blessing.**

**26 Then said Absalom, If not, I pray thee, let my brother Amnon go with us. And the king said unto him, Why should he go with thee? 27 But Absalom pressed him, that he let Amnon and all the king’s sons go with him.** Adam Clarke says that Absalom may have disguised his intentions by reminding David that Amnon, his first-born, was the heir to throne and could go to represent the king. To hide any animosity toward Amnon and to cover the conspiracy, Absalom wants ALL of the king’s sons to attend this great feast.

**28 Now Absalom had commanded his servants, saying, Mark ye now when Amnon’s heart is merry with wine, and when I say unto you, Smite Amnon; then kill him, fear not: have not I commanded you? be courageous, and be valiant.** Absalom had disguised his true motives and the intentions of his heart from everyone except his servants. Again we see the benefit of being a servant – the servant knows what others don’t even if, as in this case, it’s for evil. {David Guzik} *“As David had committed adultery, made Uriah drunk, and then murdered him: so Amnon committed incest, is made drunk, and is then murdered.”*

**29 And the servants of Absalom did unto Amnon as Absalom had commanded. Then all the king’s sons arose, and every man gat him up upon his mule, and fled.** Judgment comes to Amnon for what he has done. Because of this, all of the king’s sons fled from the party on their mule.

### **Confusing News Comes to David**

**30 And it came to pass, while they were in the way, that tidings came to David, saying, Absalom hath slain all the king’s sons, and there is not one of them left.** While the sons of David were escaping on their mules, somehow the news of the incident beat them back to the palace and David. {Dake} *“Tidings traveled faster*



*that the sons of David. Usually lies and exaggerated reports travel faster than the truth.”* My speculation is that the news came by Jonadab and you’ll see why in a few verses.

**31 Then the king arose, and tare his garments, and lay on the earth; and all his servants stood by with their clothes rent.** Tearing of your garments was the method used in Bible times to express great grief. David also fell on the earth in a position of humility before God.

**32 And Jonadab, the son of Shimeah David’s brother, answered and said, Let not my lord suppose that they have slain all the young men the king’s sons; for Amnon only is dead: for by the appointment of Absalom this hath been determined from the day that he forced his sister Tamar. 33 Now therefore let not my lord the king take the thing to his heart, to think that all the king’s sons are dead: for Amnon only is dead.** If I were David, these few words would stop my grief and make me wonder how my nephew had all of this information including knowledge of the rape of Tamar. Jonadab was a slick, evil man and had probably endeared himself to Absalom so he was fully aware of the plot but, as he did earlier in this chapter, did nothing to stop it. He has other cares besides the lives of his cousins.

**34 But Absalom fled. And the young man that kept the watch lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, there came much people by the way of the hill side behind him.** The words of Jonadab are true as the king’s sons make their arrival.

**35 And Jonadab said unto the king, Behold, the king’s sons come: as thy servant said, so it is.** Whatever motive Jonadab had as the unseen force behind the destruction in David’s family is not known. However, his motives probably did not come to pass because this is the last time he will be mentioned in the Bible. **SAINTS’ PRINCIPLE:** Scheming and conniving will never move us to where we want to be.

**36 And it came to pass, as soon as he had made an end of speaking, that, behold, the king’s sons came, and lifted up their voice and wept: and the king also and all his servants wept very sore.**

### **Absalom Flees from His Father, David**

**37 But Absalom fled, and went to Talmai, the son of Ammihud, king of Geshur. And David mourned for his son every day.** According to 1 Chronicles 3:2, Absalom fled to Talmai, his grandfather. He would be safe there because, as a premeditated murder, he could not run to a city of refuge for his crime. In the meantime, David mourned daily for Amnon. He loved him so much but his love was misguided. He didn’t see the evil in his son or pay attention to the reports of his behavior. He certainly never rebuked him for what he did to his daughter, Tamar.

**38 So Absalom fled, and went to Geshur, and was there three years.** Absalom was in hiding here another three years. At the end of that time, it will be FIVE years since his sister was defiled. He had to resolve the issue himself instead of, like others, taking his petition to the king. No doubt these thoughts are filling his spirit with bitterness as he lives among those that don’t know God and thinks of the actions of his recent past.

**39 And the soul of king David longed to go forth unto Absalom: for he was comforted concerning Amnon, seeing he was dead.** How strange! In the midst of Absalom’s bitterness (we know it was brewing because of the actions we’ll soon see him take), David was not angry with him but longed to see him. However, David did NOTHING about it. He had a relationship with the king of Geshur because he was his father-in-law so that wasn’t stopping him. It was probably just pride. {Adam Clarke} “*We find that [David] had a very strong paternal affection for this young man, who appears to have had little to commend him but the beauty*



*of his person. David wished either to go to him, or to bring him back; for the hand of time had now wiped off his tears for the death of his son Amnon. It would have been well for all parties had Absalom ended his days at Geshur. His return brought increasing wretchedness to his unfortunate father. And it may be generally observed that those undue, unreasonable paternal attachments are thus rewarded.”*

## Chapter 14

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: Absalom will return to Israel but the sin against his sister and his sin against his brother by taking the law into his own hands have not been dealt with. We will see the beginning elements of the development of the spirit of rebellion in Absalom.

### **Joab Intercedes for Absalom**

*1 Now Joab the son of Zeruiah perceived that the king's heart was toward Absalom.* Joab is thinking as the head of the army of Israel because he can see how this could really end up bad for the country but he is also thinking as a member of David's family because Absalom is his cousin. Joab's plan is unveiled and works but no additional exposition is necessary.

### **David Sends for Absalom**

*21 And the king said unto Joab, Behold now, I have done this thing: go therefore, bring the young man Absalom again.* Joab's plan works but he has no idea how much worse things will become. {David Guzik} *"Joab got what he wanted and what he thought was best for the nation of Israel. He hoped that Absalom's reconciliation with David would prevent a rebellion."*

*22 And Joab fell to the ground on his face, and bowed himself, and thanked the king: and Joab said, To day thy servant knoweth that I have found grace in thy sight, my lord, O king, in that the king hath fulfilled the request of his servant.* This is an interesting verse because we see a different attitude and emotion out of Joab than what we've seen in the past. It appears that he has fallen out of favor with David (we already discussed how it appeared that David didn't care much for Joab and his brothers) and now he has been successful again in exercising some influence with the king.

*23 So Joab arose and went to Geshur, and brought Absalom to Jerusalem.* This verse is a turning point in the David's life. He has never dealt with the actions of his sons and will continue to refuse to deal with them.

*24 And the king said, Let him turn to his own house, and let him not see my face. So Absalom returned to his own house, and saw not the king's face.* {Josephus} *"However, the king sent a message to his son beforehand, as he was coming, and commanded him to retire to his own house, for he was not yet in such a disposition as to think fit at present to see him. Accordingly, upon the father's command, he avoided coming into his presence, and contented himself with the respects paid him by his own family only."* This was a foolish move by David. I believe he could not confront Absalom because of his own failures with Uriah and Bathsheba and how Absalom's very presence continually reminded him of that. He also loved Amnon and may yet be angry with Absalom over his death. He NEVER addressed the rape of his daughter.

### **Absalom's Beauty & Family**

*25 But in all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absalom for his beauty: from the sole of his foot even to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him.* {Dake} *"Absalom's popularity came from his extraordinary beauty, handsomeness, courtly manners, and winning ways of praising men and posing as the symbol of justice. One object of great admiration was his profusion of beautiful hair."* People have always gone after the outer appearance. Saul was much loved because of his LOOKS even though his policies almost ruined Israel. David did not have that type of similar beauty, though nothing says he was a homely man, so Absalom must have inherited his looks from his mother's side as did his sister, Tamar.

*26 And when he polled his head, (for it was at every year's end that he polled it: because the hair was heavy on him, therefore he polled it:) he weighed the hair of his head at two hundred shekels after the*

*king's weight.* {David Guzik} “Absalom had such a great head of hair that he cut five and one-half pounds of hair off his head every year.” Absalom was proud of his hair. He no doubt took great care of it to the point of weighing it when it was cut each year. However, his love for his looks and his hair is greater than his love for God. **SAINTS' PRINCIPLE:** **That which you put above the Lord is the very thing that will destroy you unless you put things back in order.**

*27 And unto Absalom there were born three sons, and one daughter, whose name was Tamar: she was a woman of a fair countenance.* This small verse has a lot in it. For reasons unknown, none of Absalom's sons survived him (see 2 Samuel 18:18) and, in fact, died before he did. He named his daughter, Tamar, in memory of his sister who was defiled by Amnon. {Josephus} “He dwelt in Jerusalem two years, and became the father of three sons, and one daughter; which daughter was of very great beauty, and which Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, took to wife afterward, and had by her a son named Abijah.” In the Scriptures (2 Chronicles 11:20), she is called Maachah, after Absalom's mother.

### **Absalom & David Reconciled...But Not Fully**

*28 So Absalom dwelt two full years in Jerusalem, and saw not the king's face.* Now we are 7 YEARS from the time that Tamar was raped by her brother. Time does NOT heal all wounds. Instead, when those wounds are not properly dealt with, time allows bitterness to creep in deeper and deeper. There is now a deep resentment in Absalom that cannot be quenched because of the actions of his father. **SAINTS' PRINCIPLE:** **The bitter person never considers their own actions that may have contributed to the situation.**

*29 Therefore Absalom sent for Joab, to have sent him to the king; but he would not come to him: and when he sent again the second time, he would not come.* Joab had done that which he wanted to do and could see that nothing was getting better so he wanted no part in getting any deeper into this.

*30 Therefore he said unto his servants, See, Joab's field is near mine, and he hath barley there; go and set it on fire. And Absalom's servants set the field on fire. 31 Then Joab arose, and came to Absalom unto his house, and said unto him, Wherefore have thy servants set my field on fire? 32 And Absalom answered Joab, Behold, I sent unto thee, saying, Come hither, that I may send thee to the king, to say, Wherefore am I come from Geshur? it had been good for me to have been there still: now therefore let me see the king's face; and if there be any iniquity in me, let him kill me.* {David Guzik} “Absalom was banished from Israel because he murdered his brother Amnon. Yet Absalom felt entirely justified in killing the man who raped his sister. His sense of justification made the bitterness against David more intense.” Absalom felt that he was clean. He would have never invited David to kill him if he felt that he was wrong at all.

In my study on The Spirit of Absalom, the **FIRST STEP** in developing this spirit is **THE PERCEPTION, REAL OR NOT, THAT YOU HAVE BEEN DONE AN INJUSTICE.** {The Spirit of Absalom} “*The seeds of rebellion often are sown when one feels that they have not been treated fairly. Even in business, if one feels that their supervisor is treating them unfairly or unjustly, they can either deal with it through the proper channels of the business (while keeping their spirit right) or they can begin to work to undermine the success of the business with the intent of destroying the success of that supervisor. With this reason for rebellion, let’s make something very clear. You may have actually been, or may still be, the victim of an injustice or many injustices. You may have been mistreated, insulted, lied on, etc. However, this gives you no right to undermine the authority of the one who has done this.*” The words of Absalom tell us that in his heart, he believes that he has done no wrong. **SAINTS’ PRINCIPLE: No matter how “holy” you are, there is always room for improvement – ALL have sinned and come short of the glory of God.**

*33 So Joab came to the king, and told him: and when he had called for Absalom, he came to the king, and bowed himself on his face to the ground before the king: and the king kissed Absalom.* {Dake} “*This kiss may have been a cold, indifferent, forced one which spoke to Absalom of no real hope for complete reconciliation.*” I believe that Dake is completely accurate. At a time where it appears that things should be getting better, they are about to get much, much worse.

## Chapter 15

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: We'll now see the second step in the development of the spirit of rebellion. All will seem lost at the end of this chapter but God's Word is much greater than ANY circumstance.

In my study on The Spirit of Absalom, the **SECOND STEP** in developing this spirit is **AN INFLATED IMAGE OF YOURSELF**. {The Spirit of Absalom} “After [Absalom] had been forgiven for his crime and allowed to live in the royal city once again, he began to feel that he could do better than David. He had not paid the price that David paid. He had not suffered through the attempts on his life by Saul. He had not fought the wars that David had fought. He had not secured Jerusalem from the Jebusites as David had done. Absalom had done nothing! His only claim to fame was that he was pretty (2 Samuel 14:25) and that he was of the royal family. He began to think more highly of himself than he should have.” Absalom has made up his mind to take the kingdom from his father because he truly feels the he can do a better job. **SAINTS’ PRINCIPLE:** No matter how gifted you are, the anointing of the office is more important than your abilities because God has put that person in charge. If you question whether God has put that person in charge, your best avenue is to leave rather than to come under the judgment that Korah saw when he questioned Moses’ authority (see Numbers 16).

### Absalom Works to Usurp David

*1 And it came to pass after this, that Absalom prepared him chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him.* Here are the key words – “after this”. After the cold kiss from his father, Absalom made up his mind that he didn’t need any more of this. He, no doubt, had all kinds of criticisms in his mind toward his father’s poor leadership and his three years in a heathen land has reinforced this. **SAINTS’ PRINCIPLE:** Bad leadership is not your problem, it is God’s problem, so the solution is not yours.

*2 And Absalom rose up early, and stood beside the way of the gate: and it was so, that when any man that had a controversy came to the king for judgment, then Absalom called unto him, and said, Of what city art thou? And he said, Thy servant is of one of the tribes of Israel.*

**LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** Isn’t it amazing how that people will rise up EARLY to work against your program but come LATE when it comes to supporting your program?

**LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** When you find someone who, after doing nothing for a long time, want to work here and there in the church and there is no evidence of being re-filled with the Spirit or repentance for their past actions, watch them and watch their motives because they will soon be revealed.

*3 And Absalom said unto him, See, thy matters are good and right; but there is no man deputed of the king to hear thee.* Absalom has been back for 2 years. He had ample opportunity to come to the king and request this type of position. No, he wouldn’t do it before because it didn’t serve his self interests. Now that he sees the throne in view, he begins to get serious about his “love” for God’s people. His motives are not pure.

*4 Absalom said moreover, Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice!* If Absalom wanted to be a judge, David would have made him a judge. No, because his motives are impure, he doesn’t want to be the judge, he wants to be king.

*5 And it was so, that when any man came nigh to him to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand, and took him, and kissed him.* **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** Everything done by the spirit of Absalom is calculated to achieve a specific, selfish goal and has NOTHING to do with the people.

**6 And on this manner did Absalom to all Israel that came to the king for judgment: so Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.** Here's the real motive of the spirit of Absalom, to usurp the influence of the leader so that the people listen to him instead. {David Guzik} "*Absalom's clever approach made him able to subvert and divide David's kingdom without saying any specific thing that could condemn him. If someone objected Absalom would simply say, 'Tell me one specific thing that I have said or done.'*" **LEADERSHIP**

**PRINCIPLE:** **The spirit of Absalom takes advantage of the fickleness of people.** Notice how the people have so easily moved to support a man who has done nothing but promise them better times. They are at peace because of David and their enemies fear them. How much better could things be? The only thing Absalom has is promises, charm, and his good looks.

David Guzik adds some tremendous points about the spirit of Absalom that we should also consider:

- He carefully cultivated an exciting, enticing image (*chariots, horses and fifty men to run before him*);
- He worked hard (*Absalom would rise early*);
- He knew where to position himself (*beside the way to the gate*);
- He looked for troubled people (*anyone who had a lawsuit*);
- He reached out to troubled people (*Absalom would call to him*);
- He took a personal interest in the troubled person (*What city are you from?*);
- He sympathized with the person (*your case is good and right*);
- He never attacked David directly (*no deputy of the king to hear you*);
- Without directly attacking David, Absalom promised to do better (*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*).

### **The Rebellion Unfolds – Absalom Makes Himself King**

**7 And it came to pass after forty years, that Absalom said unto the king, I pray thee, let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed unto the LORD, in Hebron.** {Josephus} "*When he had made himself so popular among the multitude, he thought he had already the good-will of the people secured to him; but when four years had passed since his father's reconciliation to him, he came to him, and besought him to give him leave to go to Hebron, and pay a sacrifice to God, because he vowed it to him when he fled out of the country.*" This verse has a translation error – “forty” should be “four”. Absalom's plot went on for four years building up his popularity among the people. It is now 11 years since this all started with the rape of Tamar.

**Side Note:** Absalom should be about 31 and David should be around 60. He's been the king for quite some time and has brought great peace and prosperity to the land.

**8 For thy servant vowed a vow while I abode at Geshur in Syria, saying, If the LORD shall bring me again indeed to Jerusalem, then I will serve the LORD.** {David Guzik} "*Absalom committed treason under the guise of worship. He knew that the appearance of spirituality could work in his favor.*" **LEADERSHIP**

**PRINCIPLE:** **The spirit of Absalom can manifest itself in those that appear to be the most spiritual.**

**9 And the king said unto him, Go in peace. So he arose, and went to Hebron.** Absalom went in the peace spoken upon him by his father with the intention of stealing the kingdom from him.

**10 But Absalom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, As soon as ye hear the sound of the trumpet, then ye shall say, ABSALOM REIGNETH IN HEBRON.** The plot totally unfolds.



*11 And with Absalom went two hundred men out of Jerusalem, that were called; and they went in their simplicity, and they knew not any thing.* These two hundred men were men of character and standing. They did not realize they were joining a rebellion but their very presence added credibility to the rebellion.

*12 And Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor, from his city, even from Giloh, while he offered sacrifices. And the conspiracy was strong; for the people increased continually with Absalom.* As I told you back in chapter 11, Ahithophel was the grandfather of Bathsheba. He was ready to embrace a new leader for the same reason that Absalom was rebelling against his father – a perception that he had been done an injustice.

### **David Flees From His Son**

*13 And there came a messenger to David, saying, The hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom. 14 And David said unto all his servants that were with him at Jerusalem, Arise, and let us flee; for we shall not else escape from Absalom: make speed to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly, and bring evil upon us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword. 15 And the king's servants said unto the king, Behold, thy servants are ready to do whatsoever my lord the king shall appoint. 16 And the king went forth, and all his household after him. And the king left ten women, which were concubines, to keep the house. 17 And the king went forth, and all the people after him, and tarried in a place that was far off.* As long as David was out of the city, he did not have to worry about Absalom attacking the city and innocent lives being lost.

**LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** Leaders have a heart for the people but the spirit of Absalom only has a heart for themselves.

*18 And all his servants passed on beside him; and all the Cherethites, and all the Pelethites, and all the Gittites, six hundred men which came after him from Gath, passed on before the king.* David was a man that was loyal to Saul when Saul was not loyal to him even beyond his death. David's key men that surround him include those 600 hundred men that came with him from the land of the Philistines. {David Guzik} *"It is remarkable that in this defining moment foreigners rallied around David; it is more remarkable, and tragic, that his own countrymen and his own family are nowhere to be found."* This strong influence is displayed in the dialogue that David had with Ittai the Gittite below.

*19 Then said the king to Ittai the Gittite, Wherefore goest thou also with us? return to thy place, and abide with the king: for thou art a stranger, and also an exile. 20 Whereas thou camest but yesterday, should I this day make thee go up and down with us? seeing I go whither I may, return thou, and take back thy brethren: mercy and truth be with thee. 21 And Ittai answered the king, and said, As the LORD liveth, and as my lord the king liveth, surely in what place my lord the king shall be, whether in death or life, even there also will thy servant be. 22 And David said to Ittai, Go and pass over. And Ittai the Gittite passed over, and all his men, and all the little ones that were with him.* {David Guzik} *"Ittai was loyal to David when it looked to cost him something. True loyalty isn't demonstrated until it is likely to cost us to be loyal."*

*23 And all the country wept with a loud voice, and all the people passed over: the king also himself passed over the brook Kidron, and all the people passed over, toward the way of the wilderness. 24 And lo Zadok also, and all the Levites were with him, bearing the ark of the covenant of God: and they set down the ark of God; and Abiathar went up, until all the people had done passing out of the city.* {Adam Clarke} *"The priests knew that God had given the kingdom to David; they had no evidence that He had deposed him: they therefore chose to accompany him, and take the Ark, the object of their charge, with them."*

*25 And the king said unto Zadok, Carry back the ark of God into the city: if I shall find favor in the eyes of the LORD, he will bring me again, and show me both it, and his habitation: 26 But if he thus say, I have no delight in thee; behold, here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him.* David puts his trust in God and sends the Ark back into the city. His short speech here reveals that he has never forgiven himself for his actions with Uriah and Bathsheba and needs another Word from God. This kept him from properly handling the rape of his daughter. Now he feels that these actions are the result of his actions.

### **David Establishes Defensive Actions as He Flees**

**Side Road:** Leader, you have to decide how important the work of God is to you. It's easy to give up and move on but if this is not what God wants, wherever you go will not be successful and you're usefulness to God diminishes day by day. Until you return to where God has placed you, you will not only be unsuccessful but your life may even slip away. **LEADERSHIP QUESTION:** What will you do to save the work that God has placed in your life from the influence of the spirit of Absalom?

*27 The king said also unto Zadok the priest, Art not thou a seer? return into the city in peace, and your two sons with you, Ahimaaz thy son, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar.* David pulls himself together and assigns Zadok the task of being his eyes and ears in the city. The source of the news will be Zadok's sons.

*28 See, I will tarry in the plain of the wilderness, until there come word from you to certify me. 29 Zadok therefore and Abiathar carried the ark of God again to Jerusalem: and they tarried there. 30 And David went up by the ascent of mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot: and all the people that was with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up.* David did not leave as the king but left in repentance toward God. He was not in haste as he went for his real goal was to make sure that he was in the will of God. If it was God's will for Absalom to be king, he had fully resigned himself to that choice. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** Never lose sight of the importance of being FULLY in the will of God.

*31 And one told David, saying, Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom. And David said, O LORD, I PRAY THEE, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness.* While David is leaving, he's still praying. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** You can't allow your circumstances to rob your prayer life.

*32 And it came to pass, that when David was come to the top of the mount, WHERE HE WORSHIPPED GOD, behold, Hushai the Archite came to meet him with his coat rent, and earth upon his head:* **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** You can't allow your circumstances to rob your worship. While David was praying and worshipping, God sent someone close to him to support him and encourage him.

*33 Unto whom David said, If thou passest on with me, then thou shalt be a burden unto me: 34 But if thou return to the city, and say unto Absalom, I will be thy servant, O king; as I have been thy father's servant hitherto, so will I now also be thy servant: then mayest thou for me defeat the counsel of Ahithophel. 35 And hast thou not there with thee Zadok and Abiathar the priests? therefore it shall be, that what thing soever thou shalt hear out of the king's house, thou shalt tell it to Zadok and Abiathar the priests. 36 Behold, they have there with them their two sons, Ahimaaz Zadok's son, and Jonathan Abiathar's son; and by them ye shall send unto me every thing that ye can hear.* {Adam Clarke} "It appears that Hushai was not a warrior, but was a wise, prudent, and discreet man, who could well serve David by gaining him intelligence of Absalom's conspiracy; and he directs him to form a strict confederacy with the priests Zadok and Abiathar, and to make use of their sons as couriers between Jerusalem and David's place of retreat."

*37 So Hushai David's friend came into the city, and Absalom came into Jerusalem.* We close this chapter with the meeting of two people with completely different agendas. Hushai has come to save the kingdom and Absalom has come to steal it. Hushai's intentions are more honorable and God will honor them.

## Chapter 16

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: David is running for his life and runs into two distractions. One he deals with, and shouldn't have, and the other he wisely does not. The real issue is Absalom who will disgrace himself by the end of this chapter and seal his fate.

### **Ziba Lies to Gain Mephibosheth's Land**

*1 And when David was a little past the top of the hill, behold, Ziba the servant of Mephibosheth met him, with a couple of asses saddled, and upon them two hundred loaves of bread, and an hundred bunches of raisins, and an hundred of summer fruits, and a bottle of wine.* There is an old saying that says, "Beware of Greeks bearing gifts." It was applied to those that received the Trojan horse into their city – a "gift" filled with soldiers that invaded their city. Leaders, the same applies to you! Ziba had an ulterior motive that had NOTHING to do with the welfare of David or his family. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE: Be cautious with those that always have gifts for you – their motive may not be correct.** (Now with this principle, don't be ridiculous and run off those that genuinely appreciate your ministry. The key is to "be cautious" and don't allow gifts to sway you.)

*2 And the king said unto Ziba, What meanest thou by these? And Ziba said, The asses be for the king's household to ride on; and the bread and summer fruit for the young men to eat; and the wine, that such as be faint in the wilderness may drink.* Notice David's natural caution toward the actions of Ziba. This is how every leader should react to gifts that come in "odd" times.

*3 And the king said, And where is thy master's son? And Ziba said unto the king, Behold, he abideth at Jerusalem: for he said, To day shall the house of Israel restore me the kingdom of my father. 4 Then said the king to Ziba, Behold, thine are all that pertained unto Mephibosheth. And Ziba said, I humbly beseech thee that I may find grace in thy sight, my lord, O king.* By this time, Mephibosheth has eaten at David's table for many years. David should have known better and not chosen to deal with this situation at this time. However, I believe David has had an ongoing dispute throughout his reign with the remnants of Saul's family so he is not surprised by the lie told by Ziba and acts on it. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE: Weigh all of the facts before making a decision or defer doing anything at all. Also, beware of what you say or do in times when you're under great stress.** {David Guzik} "Ziba is an example of someone who wickedly used a crisis for his own benefit."

### **Shimei Curses David**

*5 And when king David came to Bahurim, behold, thence came out a man of the family of the house of Saul, whose name was Shimei, the son of Gera: he came forth, and cursed still as he came. 6 And he cast stones at David, and at all the servants of king David: and all the people and all the mighty men were on his right hand and on his left. 7 And thus said Shimei when he cursed, Come out, come out, thou bloody man, and thou man of Belial: 8 The LORD hath returned upon thee all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose stead thou hast reigned; and the LORD hath delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom thy son: and, behold, thou art taken in thy mischief, because thou art a bloody man. 9 Then said Abishai the son of Zeruiah unto the king, Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head. 10 And the king said, What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah? so let him curse, because the LORD hath said unto him, Curse David. Who shall then say, Wherefore hast thou done so? {JF&B} "The misfortune of his family, and the occupation by David of what they considered their rightful possessions, afforded a natural, if not a justifiable cause for this [torrent] of rude insults and violence. He*

upbraided David as an ambitious usurper, and charged him, as one whose misdeeds had recoiled upon his own head, to surrender a throne to which he was not entitled. His language was that of a man incensed by the wrongs that he conceived had been done to his house. David was guiltless of the crime of which Shimei accused him; but his conscience reminded him of other flagrant iniquities; and he, therefore, regarded the cursing of this man as a chastisement from heaven.” David handled this situation better than the gifts of Ziba. Matthew Henry gives a marvelous principle for leaders, and everyone: **The world’s smiles are more dangerous than its frowns.**

*11 And David said to Abishai, and to all his servants, Behold, my son, which came forth of my bowels, seeketh my life: how much more now may this Benjamite do it? let him alone, and let him curse; for the LORD hath bidden him. 12 It may be that the LORD will look on mine affliction, and that the LORD will requite me good for his cursing this day.* {Matthew Henry} “We may depend upon God as our pay-master, not only for our services, but for our sufferings.” David did not allow himself to be swayed by the actions of Shimei. This was a distraction – the real issue was the fact that his own son was seeking his life. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** Leaders must stay focused on the real issue and not allow lesser things to sidetrack them.

*13 And as David and his men went by the way, Shimei went along on the hill’s side over against him, and cursed as he went, and threw stones at him, and cast dust. 14 And the king, and all the people that were with him, came weary, and refreshed themselves there.* Notice that after they understood the mind of David toward Shimei antics, they did NOT respond to those antics. David has now been king for over thirty years. If this man wants to still hold on to this issue that long, that’s too bad for him, however, the real issue was not Shimei but Absalom and David clearly understood that, as did his men.

### **Absalom’s First Council Meeting**

*15 And Absalom, and all the people the men of Israel, came to Jerusalem, and Ahithophel with him. 16 And it came to pass, when Hushai the Archite, David’s friend, was come unto Absalom, that Hushai said unto Absalom, God save the king, God save the king.* Before you get all worked up, Hushai is a spy. You can’t be an effective spy if you tell your enemy who you are and why you’re there.

**Side Road:** Take note of who is with Absalom – all the people the men of Israel. One of the hardest things for leaders to deal with is betrayal. These men knew the life and heroics of David. They knew their country was much better because of him than during the reign of Saul. They knew that they had peace, which translates to long life because of David but there they are promoting the rebellion of Absalom who’s done NOTHING for them.

*17 And Absalom said to Hushai, Is this thy kindness to thy friend? why wentest thou not with thy friend? 18 And Hushai said unto Absalom, Nay; but whom the LORD, and this people, and all the men of Israel, choose, his will I be, and with him will I abide. 19 And again, whom should I serve? should I not serve in the presence of his son? as I have served in thy father’s presence, so will I be in thy presence.* Hushai succeeds in gaining the confidence of Absalom and those around him with this appeal.

*20 Then said Absalom to Ahithophel, Give counsel among you what we shall do. 21 And Ahithophel said unto Absalom, Go in unto thy father’s concubines, which he hath left to keep the house; and all Israel shall hear that thou art abhorred of thy father: then shall the hands of all that are with thee be strong.* {JF&B} “This counselor saw that now the die was cast; half measures would be inexpedient. To cut off all possibility of reconciliation between the king and his rebellious son, he gave this atrocious advice regarding

*the treatment of the royal women who had been left in charge of the palace. Women, being held sacred, are generally left inviolate in the casualties of war. The history of the East affords only one parallel to this infamous outrage of Absalom.”* Did you see what the commentator said? The horrible actions of Absalom, the son of King David were only matched ONE other time in Eastern history? What a horrible testimony! The grandfather of Bathsheba encouraged these actions. His revenge raged on for how David had, in his mind, ravaged his granddaughter.

**22** *So they spread Absalom a tent upon the top of the house; and Absalom went in unto his father’s concubines in the sight of all Israel.* {David Guzik} *“This disgraceful act says a lot about Absalom, who actually did it. It also says a lot about Ahithophel, who must have had a strange sense satisfaction in seeing David’s women violated in a similar way to how his granddaughter Bathsheba was violated. This shows the power of bitterness. Ahithophel was willing to see these women abused, Absalom grievously sin, and the kingdom of Israel suffer greatly simply to satisfy his longing for bitter revenge.”*

**23** *And the counsel of Ahithophel, which he counseled in those days, was as if a man had enquired at the oracle of God: so was all the counsel of Ahithophel both with David and with Absalom.* Ahithophel was known for his counsel, which is why David sent Hushai to frustrate that counsel. However, his wisdom has been clouded by his bitterness. He has moved Absalom past the turning point. There will now be no negotiated peace for his actions. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** **Leaders must watch who they listen to. The counsel may come from someone else but, as the leader, you must bear the consequences.**



## Chapter 17

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: No leader walks alone but must rely on the counsel and guidance of those they trust. However, even after obtaining this counsel, the final word still rests with the Lord.

### Ahithophel's Counsel for Absalom

*1 Moreover Ahithophel said unto Absalom, Let me now choose out twelve thousand men, and I will arise and pursue after David this night: 2 And I will come upon him while he is weary and weak handed, and will make him afraid: and all the people that are with him shall flee; and I will smite the king only: 3 And I will bring back all the people unto thee: the man whom thou seekest is as if all returned: so all the people shall be in peace. 4 And the saying pleased Absalom well, and all the elders of Israel.* This wasn't a bad plan even though it was motivated by Ahithophel's bitterness. He wanted David dead THAT NIGHT. His quarrel is not with anyone but David. However, he has not considered the loyalty of his men even though he himself is listed among David's Mighty Men. None of these men are military strategists but they're willing to listen to the counsel of a bitter man who is also not a military strategist. **LEADERSHIP QUESTION:** Leader, what "baggage" is your advisor bringing with their advice? It's going to skew the quality of his or her counsel. You can't have people around you whose judgment is clouded by their issues.

*5 Then said Absalom, Call now Hushai the Archite also, and let us hear likewise what he saith.* This was not only a smart move by Absalom but it's also a move motivated by divine intervention.

### Hushai's Counsel for Absalom

*6 And when Hushai was come to Absalom, Absalom spake unto him, saying, Ahithophel hath spoken after this manner: shall we do after his saying? if not; speak thou. 7 And Hushai said unto Absalom, The counsel that Ahithophel hath given is not good at this time. 8 For, said Hushai, thou knowest thy father and his men, that they be mighty men, and they be chafed in their minds, as a bear robbed of her whelps in the field: and thy father is a man of war, and will not lodge with the people. 9 Behold, he is hid now in some pit, or in some other place: and it will come to pass, when some of them be overthrown at the first, that whosoever heareth it will say, There is a slaughter among the people that follow Absalom. 10 And he also that is valiant, whose heart is as the heart of a lion, shall utterly melt: for all Israel knoweth that thy father is a mighty man, and they which be with him are valiant men. 11 Therefore I counsel that all Israel be generally gathered unto thee, from Dan even to Beersheba, as the sand that is by the sea for multitude; and that thou go to battle in thine own person. 12 So shall we come upon him in some place where he shall be found, and we will light upon him as the dew falleth on the ground: and of him and of all the men that are with him there shall not be left so much as one. 13 Moreover, if he be gotten into a city, then shall all Israel bring ropes to that city, and we will draw it into the river, until there be not one small stone found there.* What wisdom God had given Hushai! The average person cannot see what he's trying to do – he's trying to buy time for David. What he says is true. David and his men are angry and will be holed up somewhere. If Absalom only sent a few and they were slaughtered, the heart of the people would melt (and the rebellion would be broken). So Hushai gives counsel that appeals to the flesh – bring overwhelming force upon them and do all that is necessary to kill all of them (instead of just David as Ahithophel wanted). Remember, this is the military strategy of the Philistines so this appeals greatly to the flesh of Absalom and his men. But it will take time to muster such an army and if they had used the immediate tactics of Ahithophel, they would have had a chance to succeed. Ahithophel understood the fickleness of the people

and knew that if they waited, they people would lose their excitement about Absalom and think about how good David had been to them. He understands that if they take the advice of Hushai, they're all doomed!

*14 And Absalom and all the men of Israel said, The counsel of Hushai the Archite is better than the counsel of Ahithophel. For the LORD had appointed to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, to the intent that the LORD might bring evil upon Absalom.* Though Nathan had prophesied Absalom's actions, this does not mean that God approved of those actions. Jesus prophesied at one point that it was impossible but that offenses should come. However, He also added the warning, "Woe unto them by whom they come."

### **Hushai's Counsel is Shared With David**

*15 Then said Hushai unto Zadok and to Abiathar the priests, Thus and thus did Ahithophel counsel Absalom and the elders of Israel; and thus and thus have I counseled. 16 Now therefore send quickly, and tell David, saying, Lodge not this night in the plains of the wilderness, but speedily pass over; lest the king be swallowed up, and all the people that are with him.* Remember, the key to Hushai's counsel was to buy David time and to track the actions of Absalom. One commentator felt that the urgency of Hushai's message was because he wanted David out of the region if Absalom changed his mind and did NOT follow his counsel. If Absalom followed Ahithophel advice, David must be moved quickly to save his life.

*17 Now Jonathan and Ahimaaz stayed by Enrogel; for they might not be seen to come into the city: and a wench went and told them; and they went and told king David. NLT Jonathan and Ahimaaz had been staying at En-rogel so as not to be seen entering and leaving the city. Arrangements had been made for a servant girl to bring them the message they were to take to King David. 18 Nevertheless a lad saw them, and told Absalom: but they went both of them away quickly, and came to a man's house in Bahurim, which had a well in his court; whither they went down.* **SAINTS' PRINCIPLE:** It's going to cost you something to work for the promotion of the work of God. Jonathan and Ahimaaz had no problem in paying that price. They were able to get the news to David and he quickly passed over Jordan the same night.

### **Ahithophel's Death & the Movement of David**

*23 And when Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled his ass, and arose, and gat him home to his house, to his city, and put his household in order, and hanged himself, and died, and was buried in the sepulcher of his father.* {JF&B} "His vanity was wounded, his pride mortified on finding that his ascendancy was gone; but that chagrin was aggravated by other feelings--a painful conviction that through the delay which had been resolved on, the cause of Absalom was lost. Hastening home, therefore, he arranged his private affairs, and knowing that the storm of retributive vengeance would fall chiefly upon him as the instigator and prop of the rebellion, he hanged himself. It may be remarked that the Israelites did not, at that time, refuse the rites of sepulture even to those who died by their own hands. He had an imitator in Judas, who resembled him in his treason, as well as in his infamous end." Not only was his pride wounded, he knew that they would soon come to a horrible end by this delay. When the perpetrators were rounded up, he would be the one pointed to that encouraged Absalom to defile the royal women. He preferred to die at his own hands than at the hands of David.

*24 Then David came to Mahanaim. And Absalom passed over Jordan, he and all the men of Israel with him.* Mahanaim was about 10 miles east of the Jordan River, the seat of Ishbosheth's government. It was about 30 miles from Jerusalem so David now had some distance from Absalom. It is mentioned many times in the Bible and was supposedly a fortified city.

*25 And Absalom made Amasa captain of the host instead of Joab: which Amasa was a man's son, whose name was Ithra an Israelite, that went in to Abigail the daughter of Nahash, sister to Zeruah Joab's mother. NLT Absalom had appointed Amasa as commander of his army, replacing Joab, who had been commander under David. (Amasa was Joab's cousin. His father was Jether, an Ishmaelite. His mother, Abigail daughter of Nahash, was the sister of Joab's mother, Zeruah.)* Absalom picked his key commander with the same pedigree as he had – a child born out of the disobedience of one of his parents to the Word of God. (Intermarriage between Jews and non-Jews was illegal according to the Law of Moses.)

**LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** Leadership is serious. Subordinate leadership (those that implement your vision) must be chosen through intense prayer to receive direction from God.

*26 So Israel and Absalom pitched in the land of Gilead. 27 And it came to pass, when David was come to Mahanaim, that Shobi the son of Nahash of Rabbah of the children of Ammon, and Machir the son of Ammiel of Lodebar, and Barzillai the Gileadite of Rogelim, 28 Brought beds, and basins, and earthen vessels, and wheat, and barley, and flour, and parched corn, and beans, and lentils, and parched pulse, 29 And honey, and butter, and sheep, and cheese of kine, for David, and for the people that were with him, to eat: for they said, The people is hungry, and weary, and thirsty, in the wilderness.* **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** Leader, there may be some against you BUT EVERYONE IS NOT AGAINST YOU! God always reserves a remnant to continue moving His program forward. According to JF&B, Shobi had been made governor of Ammon by David on the conquest of that country, Machir was a wealthy man who had formerly been faithful to the house of Saul but is now supporting David, and Barzillai was a wealthy old tribal chief, whose great age and infirmities made his loyal devotion to the distressed monarch peculiarly affecting.

## Chapter 18

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: David is about to go into battle against his son. He is also going to make many mistakes because this is his son. However, his son has caused many to die, has rebelled against the Lord, and seeks to kill his father. This is a very tough chapter for every father who loves his son.

### David Prepares for Battle with Absalom

*1 And David numbered the people that were with him, and set captains of thousands, and captains of hundreds over them.* According to Josephus, David had 4,000 soldiers with him. This was not a large number against those that were coming.

*2 And David sent forth a third part of the people under the hand of Joab, and a third part under the hand of Abishai the son of Zeruiah, Joab's brother, and a third part under the hand of Ittai the Gittite. And the king said unto the people, I will surely go forth with you myself also.* Once David established various lines of leadership, he then established three key leaders: Joab, Abishai, and Ittai. Joab and Abishai are not only David's nephews but men he could count on in military matters. Ittai was new to David but had proven his loyalty to David. He brought with him a number of men under his charge (see chapter 15) and he would lead them into battle. (Josephus also says that Ittai was David's companion and friend. Their friendship goes back to the time David was in Gath of the Philistines.) **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** **If God gives you favor with those of the world that love you, don't let the opinion of people keep you from accepting that which they want to give.** (Even though we deny it, we are quick to respond to the opinion of church people – people who are judgmental and critical. These are the same type of people who crucified the Lord Jesus.) Once David had finished dividing up the army, he was ready to go with them into battle – this was not a wise move.

*3 But the people answered, Thou shalt not go forth: for if we flee away, they will not care for us; neither if half of us die, will they care for us: but now thou art worth ten thousand of us: therefore now it is better that thou succor us out of the city.* The unfortunate reality is that some leaders are expendable (nonessential) while others are not. The expendable leaders have no vision, no care for the people, no influence with those that can help their people and, most of all, no favor with God. These can be replaced and are probably on the verge of being replaced by God. The leaders that are not expendable are just the opposite and the people under their care must appreciate the vision, the care, the influence, and the favor these leaders possess. **SAINTS' PRINCIPLE:** **To lose indispensable leaders will impact the destiny of the people under their charge.**

*4 And the king said unto them, What seemeth you best I will do. And the king stood by the gate side, and all the people came out by hundreds and by thousands.* David wisely submits to the advice of the people. He is a leader that is indispensable (not expendable or easily replaced) but he is not an infallible leader as we'll see later in this chapter. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** **You may be an indispensable leader but that does not mean that you're incapable of error. This unique position should run you closer to God.**

*5 And the king commanded Joab and Abishai and Ittai, saying, Deal gently for my sake with the young man, even with Absalom. And all the people heard when the king gave all the captains charge concerning Absalom.* David listened to the people when it came to the battle but he should have listened to God when it came to his son. In those three words, “for my sake”, he elevates himself above the Word of God because what he wants the people to do does not align with the Word of God. I've shared this principle before and I'll say it here again. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** **What you say is important – guard your speech!** Rebellion has a death sentence attached to it. I know this is his child but the Word of God goes beyond family ties. **SAINTS'**

**PRINCIPLE:** Obedience to the Word of God is the only way to secure favor with God – even if you have to make a choice between God and family. (However, if it were my son, would I not say the same thing? But the right choice is a very tough choice.) Finally, take note of the last part of that verse – he did not take care of this in a private setting but he basically tied the hands of the entire army. Remember, to them, he is like ten thousand and he has used his position with the people in the wrong manner.

### **The Battle with Absalom's Forces**

*6 So the people went out into the field against Israel: and the battle was in the wood of Ephraim; 7 Where the people of Israel were slain before the servants of David, and there was there a great slaughter that day of twenty thousand men.* This entire rebellion was based on foolishness as most rebellion is. Twenty thousand men have been slain by David's four thousand because David had the seasoned soldiers, the favor of God, and the Word of God on his side. We saw in First Samuel 15 the danger of rebellion. It is so important that I want to repeat that here based on 1 Samuel 15:23 (the words of Samuel to King Saul):

*23 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.* The King James Version has “*is as*” in both places italicized. This means it was not in the original text but added by the translators for clarity. When you remove the italicized words, the writer was saying, “**Rebellion = the sin of witchcraft**” and “**Stubbornness = iniquity and idolatry**”. This is an important distinction because it changes the verse from making a comparison to similar things to saying they are the same. When we understand how God views witchcraft, we understand how God views rebellion. **Exodus 22:18 Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.** {Dake} “*Witches claimed to reveal hidden secrets by contact with God and the invisible world. They were seducers of the people to turn them from God; thus they were to be killed.*” **THE REBEL HAS THE SAME NATURE OF A WITCH; THE NATURE THAT SAYS, “I KNOW WHAT TO DO BETTER THAN GOD SO WHY SHOULD I OBEY?”**

*8 For the battle was there scattered over the face of all the country: and the wood devoured more people that day than the sword devoured.* Those that David's men could not kill, God used nature to destroy. He did not allow the rebel to live. This is a key verse in how Absalom should have been handled – leave him to God.

*9 And Absalom met the servants of David. And Absalom rode upon a mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and his head caught hold of the oak, and he was taken up between the heaven and the earth; and the mule that was under him went away.* The same hair that was so important to Absalom that he weighed it each year was the same hair that put him in this awful position.

*10 And a certain man saw it, and told Joab, and said, Behold, I saw Absalom hanged in an oak. 11 And Joab said unto the man that told him, And, behold, thou sawest him, and why didst thou not smite him there to the ground? and I would have given thee ten shekels of silver, and a girdle. 12 And the man said unto Joab, Though I should receive a thousand shekels of silver in mine hand, yet would I not put forth mine hand against the king's son: for in our hearing the king charged thee and Abishai and Ittai, saying, **Beware that none touch the young man Absalom.** 13 Otherwise I should have wrought falsehood against mine own life: for there is no matter hid from the king, and thou thyself wouldest have set thyself against me.* As an indispensable leader, the words of David were significant even though unscriptural. When you



compare what he said versus how they were received, you see that he put a great burden upon the people. Absalom had caused people to lose their lives but the leader told them to leave him alone. That changed everything. **SAINTS' & LEADERSHIP QUESTION:** Leaders, have you put a burden on the people that they should not bear? Saints, how will you obey that leader?

### **The Death of Absalom & the End of the Rebellion**

*14 Then said Joab, I may not tarry thus with thee. And he took three darts in his hand, and thrust them through the heart of Absalom, while he was yet alive in the midst of the oak. NIV Joab said, "I'm not going to wait like this for you." So he took three javelins in his hand and plunged them into Absalom's heart while Absalom was still alive in the oak tree.* Joab violated the king's orders even though his actions were in the mind of God. (Note: God used Nebuchadnezzar also to judge His people but judged him for touching His people. Joab will be judged for violating the king's orders.)

*15 And ten young men that bare Joab's armor compassed about and smote Absalom, and slew him.* As I studied this lesson, I found a new spirit that leaders need to be aware of – **the Spirit of Joab**. We'll talk more of that in the next chapter but Joab has imparted his spirit into these ten young men (why did he need TEN men to bear his armor anyway?). Just as Joab, they have no regard for the king's orders even though they were in error. However, that was NOT their call. Just as Joab, they did not hesitate to do what they wanted to do with no second thought.

*16 And Joab blew the trumpet, and the people returned from pursuing after Israel: for Joab held back the people.* Joab knew that once the rebel was dead, there was no need for any more blood shed so he stopped his forces from continuing the slaughter.

*17 And they took Absalom, and cast him into a great pit in the wood, and laid a very great heap of stones upon him: and all Israel fled every one to his tent.* THE REBELLION IS OVER.

*18 Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and reared up for himself a pillar, which is in the king's dale: for he said, I have no son to keep my name in remembrance: and he called the pillar after his own name: and it is called unto this day, Absalom's place.* This is the last we'll see of Absalom...just a monument.

### **The News is Sent to David of the Death of His Son**

*19 Then said Ahimaaz the son of Zadok, Let me now run, and bear the king tidings, how that the LORD hath avenged him of his enemies.* Ahimaaz is a good man but he's not close enough to his leader to understand the damage his news will bring even though he and his brother had been hand picked by David to be his special couriers. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** Watch those that are too eager to bring bad news.

*20 And Joab said unto him, Thou shalt not bear tidings this day, but thou shalt bear tidings another day: but this day thou shalt bear no tidings, because the king's son is dead.* Joab was not as good a man as Ahimaaz but his redeeming characteristic was that he fully understood the heart of his leader, even though he didn't have it. However, that will bring you into judgment because our goal should be to understand and obtain the same heart. Paul told the people to follow him as he followed Christ. That's leadership!

*21 Then said Joab to Cush, Go tell the king what thou hast seen. And Cush bowed himself unto Joab, and ran.* Cush's job was just to tell the king what he had seen and no more. He simply did as he was told.

*22 Then said Ahimaaz the son of Zadok yet again to Joab, But howsoever, let me, I pray thee, also run after Cush. And Joab said, Wherefore wilt thou run, my son, seeing that thou hast no tidings ready? 23*



*But howsoever, said he, let me run. And he said unto him, Run. Then Ahimaaz ran by the way of the plain, and overran Cush.* Ahimaaz was so eager to be the first one to David that he took the “shortcut” to get there and outran Cush.

*24 And David sat between the two gates: and the watchman went up to the roof over the gate unto the wall, and lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold a man running alone. 25 And the watchman cried, and told the king. And the king said, If he be alone, there is tidings in his mouth. And he came apace, and drew near. 26 And the watchman saw another man running: and the watchman called unto the porter, and said, Behold another man running alone. And the king said, He also bringeth tidings. 27 And the watchman said, Me thinketh the running of the foremost is like the running of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok. And the king said, He is a good man, and cometh with good tidings.* David had convinced himself that everything would work out well with Absalom in spite of his great rebellion and the lives he had destroyed.

**LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** Be careful not to persuade yourself in an area where you are clearly out of the will of God.

*28 And Ahimaaz called, and said unto the king, All is well. And he fell down to the earth upon his face before the king, and said, Blessed be the LORD thy God, which hath delivered up the men that lifted up their hand against my lord the king. 29 And the king said, Is the young man Absalom safe? And Ahimaaz answered, When Joab sent the king's servant, and me thy servant, I saw a great tumult, but I knew not what it was. {Matthew Henry} “Ahimaaz soon discerned, what Joab intimated to him, that the death of the king's son would make the tidings of the day very unwelcome, and therefore in his report left that matter doubtful; and, though he gave occasion to suspect how it was, yet, that the thunderclap might not come too suddenly upon the poor perplexed king, he refers him to the next messenger, whom they saw coming, for a more particular account of it.”* The only thing that mattered to David was the state of Absalom, the rebel, but yet his son. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** Your responsibility is to those under your charge. If your children rebel from that authority, they MUST come under the same judgment you would expect from others.

*30 And the king said unto him, Turn aside, and stand here. And he turned aside, and stood still. 31 And, behold, Cush came; and Cush said, Tidings, my lord the king: for the LORD hath avenged thee this day of all them that rose up against thee. 32 And the king said unto Cush, Is the young man Absalom safe? And Cush answered, The enemies of my lord the king, and all that rise against thee to do thee hurt, be as that young man is. 33 And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son! {JF&B} “The death of Absalom was a heavy trial, and it is impossible not to sympathize with the outburst of feeling by which David showed that all thoughts of the victory he had won as a king were completely sunk in the painful loss he had sustained as a father. The extraordinary ardor and strength of his affection for this worthless son break out in the redundancy and vehemence of his mournful cries.”* David's actions represent the flesh at its worst because he has elevated family above the Word. Plus, he has ignored the sacrifice of those that were with him and regarded his dead, rebel son above them. How many that were wounded needed this outpouring of sympathy upon them? How many that lost loved ones by the hands of his rebel son needed to hear him cry for them? How poorly his actions will be received!

**LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** If you're going to be the leader, you have to sacrifice your personal pain for the sake of those that you lead. David will have another day to grieve when he can do it in private.

## Chapter 19

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: This is a chapter of reconciliation. The rebellion has been put down but some of the old issues that had been dormant during the crisis now resurface. More importantly though, many exhibit true repentance and David is restored.

### David Overdoes His Grief for Absalom

*1 And it was told Joab, Behold, the king weepeth and mourneth for Absalom. 2 And the victory that day was turned into mourning unto all the people: for the people heard say that day how the king was grieved for his son. 3 And the people gat them by stealth that day into the city, as people being ashamed steal away when they flee in battle.* What a horrible situation David has created in mourning for his rebel son! I don't say that he should not have been hurt but he should have regarded those that remained loyal to him and hazarded their lives for he and his family. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE: The price for leadership is very great to the point that we must know how to temper our emotions.** I don't say that David should not have grieved. Didn't Jesus weep at the grave of Lazarus even when He knew what He was about to do? However, the Lord's grief was to share with the grief of His dear friends while David's grief ignored his friends over his rebel son – who would have killed him. His grief was misplaced and may have been the result of looking back over the last few years and seeing all of the errors that he made that brought him to this point.

*4 But the king covered his face, and the king cried with a loud voice, O my son Absalom, O Absalom, my son, my son!* The people were ashamed and David was clueless to this because he focused on Absalom and not on those that were wounded or killed because of him. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE: Sometimes we spend too much time worrying about those that LEFT rather than rejoicing with those that STAYED.** Absalom would have NEVER had this heart toward his father if the situation had been reversed.

### Joab Rebukes David

*5 And Joab came into the house to the king, and said, Thou hast shamed this day the faces of all thy servants, which this day have saved thy life, and the lives of thy sons and of thy daughters, and the lives of thy wives, and the lives of thy concubines; 6 In that thou lovest thine enemies, and hatest thy friends. For thou hast declared this day, that thou regardest neither princes nor servants: for this day I perceive, that if Absalom had lived, and all we had died this day, then it had pleased thee well. 7 Now therefore arise, go forth, and speak comfortably unto thy servants: for I swear by the LORD, if thou go not forth, there will not tarry one with thee this night: and that will be worse unto thee than all the evil that befell thee from thy youth until now.* {Adam Clarke} “*Joab's speech to David on his immoderate grief for the death of his rebellious son is not only remarkable for the insolence of office, but also for good sense and firmness. Every man who candidly considers the state of the case, must allow that David acted imprudently at least; and that Joab's firm reproof was necessary to arouse him to a sense of his duty to his people. But still, in his manner, Joab had far exceeded the bonds of that reverence which a servant owes to his master, or a subject to his prince. Joab was a good soldier, but in every respect a bad man, and a dangerous subject.*” I often looked at this passage in a positive light because Joab had shaken David out of his grief. However, as I read it again and look at the words of Adam Clarke, I must agree with the commentator. There is a way to entreat a leader but Joab has gone way beyond that and has scolded him and belittled him – putting himself ABOVE his leader. The same message could have been delivered without the tone of insolence, arrogance, and lack of respect. It almost appears from the tone of the message that Joab and David are back in Bethlehem in a family setting but those days are long behind them and Joab has never appreciated the importance of David as his leader...except for his own personal gain. However, never again will we see recorded in Scripture the

name “Absalom” coming out of the mouth of David. This passage is so important in our study that I want to also add the words from this commentator: {Matthew Henry} “*A plain case may be fairly pleaded with those that are above us, and they may be reprov'd for what they do amiss, but it must not be done with rudeness and insolence.*”

The commentators swing all over the place on this passage. Some commend Joab for bringing David back to his senses and saving the kingdom. Others rebuke him for his rebuke of David. I believe that the answer is found in verse 13 where David appoints the head of the REBEL army to be the head of his army *in place of Joab*. If Joab was so valuable to David, would he have replaced him so quickly and especially with the head of the rebel forces? Also, Joab was one of the ones that David gave specific instructions to Solomon to punish on his deathbed. **1 Kings 2:5a-6 NKJV** *Moreover you know also what Joab the son of Zeruiah did to me, and what he did to the two commanders of the armies of Israel, to Abner the son of Ner and Amasa the son of Jether, whom he killed... 6 Therefore do according to your wisdom, and do not let his gray hair go down to the grave in peace.* Joab was David’s nephew but he was a continual problem to David and NEVER embraced David’s spirit. In the table below, I saw in our studies three key points about the spirit of Joab that leaders should watch for.

THE SPIRIT OF JOAB	
<p>1. <b>One operating in the Spirit of Joab has no regard for authority even though they have authority.</b> The unusual paradox is that the “spirit of Joab” is a problem to leadership even though those with this spirit are usually leaders, but not THE leader. We see this attribute in Joab’s rebuke of David in this chapter.</p>	<p><b>2 Samuel 3:24-25</b> <i>Then Joab came to the KING, and said, What hast thou done? behold, Abner came unto thee; why is it that thou hast sent him away, and he is quite gone? 25 Thou knowest Abner the son of Ner, that he came to deceive thee, and to know thy going out and thy coming in, and to know all that thou doest.</i> Joab rebuked David for making peace with Abner. <b>SAINTS’ PRINCIPLE:</b> <b>No matter your relationship to the leader, God expects you to behave toward them in a certain way.</b></p>
<p>2. <b>One operating in the Spirit of Joab will do ANYTHING to keep their position.</b></p>	<p>In 2 Samuel 3:27 and 2 Samuel 20:9-10, Joab killed two men who were a threat to his position. David had promised Amasa to be head of the army in place of Joab (v. 13 in this chapter). David had made peace with Abner. Abner would have been a threat because he was a seasoned, experienced general under Saul but Amasa had already been appointed.</p>
<p>3. <b>One operating in the Spirit of Joab has their own agenda and not the leader’s agenda.</b> In Joab’s case, it seemed that his family was more important than anything but Absalom was his cousin as was Amasa. The key is their agenda and that’s usually more difficult to figure out.</p>	<p><b>2 Samuel 3:27</b> <i>And when Abner was returned to Hebron, Joab took him aside in the gate to speak with him quietly, and smote him there under the fifth rib, that he died, for the blood of Asahel his brother.</i> Joab murdered Abner because Abner killed his brother IN BATTLE but the war was now over. Abner was a threat and he used the death of his brother as his motive.</p>

The sad and dangerous thing about the Spirit of Joab is the many moments when they seem to really be aligned with their leadership but they have no real spiritual sensitivity toward leadership so they WILL revert back to their old ways. They may be useful to the ministry (like Joab was to David) but David finally came to the realization that his nephew would never be 100% for him. Isn’t it odd that Abishai and Asahel, Joab’s

brothers, and Naharai the Beerothite, Joab's armor bearer, are among those heroes listed among the "mighty men" of David in chapter 23 but Joab, the head of his army, was not?

**8 Then the king arose, and sat in the gate. And they told unto all the people, saying, Behold, the king doth sit in the gate. And all the people came before the king: for Israel had fled every man to his tent.** In the Old Testament, "sitting in the gate" referred to sitting in the position of power and authority. This was the location where all the business was conducted and it meant that David was ready to receive his people – those that had hazarded their lives for him – but not the rest of Israel because they had rejected him and had not yet received him back.

### **The Country Is In Disarray**

**Side Road:** The country is in confusion, disarray, fear, and shame because of their involvement with the rebellion of Absalom. These attributes are expected outcomes when you touch sin, which is what rebellion is. They have nearly forfeited their destiny for the fleshly motivated excitement of being led by a "pretty" king. (Isn't it interesting that Absalom had no new ideas and no new plans but could only offer a listening ear and a pretty face?) **SAINTS' PRINCIPLE:** **Rebellion does not need a reason; it needs a receptive, evil heart.** Now what will they do? The king they need is in exile and they are too ashamed to come before him. This is what sin does to us – our king (Jesus) is in exile from our lives and our shame keeps us from Him. The beauty of the last part of this chapter is that David takes on the mind of Christ in initiating reconciliation even though he was the offended one. Thank God for Jesus!

**9 And all the people were at strife throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, The king saved us out of the hand of our enemies, and he delivered us out of the hand of the Philistines; and now he is fled out of the land for Absalom. 10 And Absalom, whom WE anointed over us, is dead in battle. Now therefore why speak ye not a word of bringing the king back?** {David Guzik} "They only [wanted] David back after the false king Absalom failed. We often only decide to bring back King Jesus when our false kings have failed."

**11 And king David sent to Zadok and to Abiathar the priests, saying, Speak unto the elders of Judah, saying, Why are ye the last to bring the king back to his house? seeing the speech of all Israel is come to the king, even to his house. 12 Ye are my brethren, ye are my bones and my flesh: wherefore then are ye the last to bring back the king?** This move by David is a strategic "behold I stand at the door and knock" type of move. Judah was his tribe and his family but they had embraced Absalom's rebellion over David's leadership. They needed the opportunity to repent and so David extended a hand toward them. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** **You can't hold grudges against the people if you expect to be a good leader.**

**13 And say ye to Amasa, Art thou not of my bone, and of my flesh? God do so to me, and more also, if thou be not captain of the host before me continually in the room of Joab.** Look at my comments on verses 5-7 in discussing the spirit of Joab. It appears that David feels the same way. Joab has gone too far (again!) and must be replaced. He can replace him and reconcile with the supporters of Absalom with this one move but he does not understand the depths of the spirit he's dealing with.

### **David Invited to Return as King**

**14 And he bowed the heart of all the men of Judah, even as the heart of one man; so that they sent this word unto the king, Return thou, and all thy servants. 15 So the king returned, and came to Jordan. And**

*Judah came to Gilgal, to go to meet the king, to conduct the king over Jordan.* David left his home running from his own people and he would not come back unless he was invited.

### **Shimei Repents of His Behavior**

*16 And Shimei the son of Gera, a Benjamite, which was of Bahurim, hasted and came down with the men of Judah to meet king David. 17 And there were a thousand men of Benjamin with him, and Ziba the servant of the house of Saul, and his fifteen sons and his twenty servants with him; and they went over Jordan before the king. 18 And there went over a ferry boat to carry over the king's household, and to do what he thought good. And Shimei the son of Gera fell down before the king, as he was come over Jordan; 19 And said unto the king, Let not my lord impute iniquity unto me, neither do thou remember that which thy servant did perversely the day that my lord the king went out of Jerusalem, that the king should take it to his heart. 20 For thy servant doth know that I have sinned: therefore, behold, I am come the first this day of all the house of Joseph to go down to meet my lord the king.* Remember that in chapter 16, Shimei had cursed David and his men and thrown stones and dust at them as they ran from Jerusalem. Now he is the first to meet David as he returns and brings 1,000 men with him to help bring back the king. Notice that Shimei also calls himself of “the house of Joseph” versus the reality of being a member of Saul’s family. Both terms were true but the term he used was intended to keep him from being executed. Is this true repentance or is it a move motivated by circumstances? David sees the content of his character and asks Solomon to deal with him a few years later when he assumes the throne in First Kings.

*21 But Abishai the son of Zeruiah answered and said, Shall not Shimei be put to death for this, because he cursed the LORD's anointed? 22 And David said, What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah, that ye should this day be adversaries unto me? shall there any man be put to death this day in Israel? for do not I know that I am this day king over Israel? 23 Therefore the king said unto Shimei, Thou shalt not die. And the king sware unto him.* David always seemed frustrated with Joab and Abishai but always kept them around him. One, Abishai, one of his Mighty Men, he was helping but the other, Joab, he always tried to replace. However, Abishai says something that says that he finally gets it in calling David “the Lord’s anointed”. This is a term David often used in referring to Saul but no one but Abishai used this term in referring to David.

### **Mephibosheth Meets the King**

*24 And Mephibosheth the son of Saul came down to meet the king, and had neither dressed his feet, nor trimmed his beard, nor washed his clothes, from the day the king departed until the day he came again in peace. 25 And it came to pass, when he was come to Jerusalem to meet the king, that the king said unto him, Wherefore wentest not thou with me, Mephibosheth? 26 And he answered, My lord, O king, my servant deceived me: for thy servant said, I will saddle me an ass, that I may ride thereon, and go to the king; because thy servant is lame. 27 And he hath slandered thy servant unto my lord the king; but my lord the king is as an angel of God: do therefore what is good in thine eyes. 28 For all of my father's house were but dead men before my lord the king: yet didst thou set thy servant among them that did eat at thine own table. What right therefore have I yet to cry any more unto the king? 29 And the king said unto him, Why speakest thou any more of thy matters? I have said, Thou and Ziba divide the land. 30 And Mephibosheth said unto the king, Yea, let him take all, forasmuch as my lord the king is come again in peace unto his own house.* {David Guzik} “When Ziba told David that Mephibosheth abandoned him, David granted Ziba all of Mephibosheth’s land and property (2 Samuel 16:4). Hearing the whole story, David won’t



go back on his promise to Ziba even though it was made under fraudulent circumstances. Yet he did lessen Ziba's reward by offering a split between Ziba and Mephibosheth of all the property from Saul's house."

### **David Rewards Barzillai**

*31 And Barzillai the Gileadite came down from Rogelim, and went over Jordan with the king, to conduct him over Jordan. 32 Now Barzillai was a very aged man, even fourscore years old: and he had provided the king of sustenance while he lay at Mahanaim; for he was a very great man. 33 And the king said unto Barzillai, Come thou over with me, and I will feed thee with me in Jerusalem. 34 And Barzillai said unto the king, How long have I to live, that I should go up with the king unto Jerusalem? 35 I am this day fourscore years old: and can I discern between good and evil? can thy servant taste what I eat or what I drink? can I hear any more the voice of singing men and singing women? wherefore then should thy servant be yet a burden unto my lord the king? 36 Thy servant will go a little way over Jordan with the king: and why should the king recompense it me with such a reward? 37 Let thy servant, I pray thee, turn back again, that I may die in mine own city, and be buried by the grave of my father and of my mother. But behold thy servant Chimham; let him go over with my lord the king; and do to him what shall seem good unto thee. 38 And the king answered, Chimham shall go over with me, and I will do to him that which shall seem good unto thee: and whatsoever thou shalt require of me, that will I do for thee. 39 And all the people went over Jordan. And when the king was come over, the king kissed Barzillai, and blessed him; and he returned unto his own place. 40 Then the king went on to Gilgal, and Chimham went on with him: and all the people of Judah conducted the king, and also half the people of Israel.* Barzillai was an old, but wealthy man who stood to lose everything including his life for supporting David but did it without a second thought. He will not accept reward for his actions but asks that any reward be passed on to his son. He is one of the unsung heroes of this episode whose loyalty regardless of the cost is something to never forget and is quite a contrast to the other characters we've seen in our study of this book thus far.

### **More Strife in Israel**

*41 And, behold, all the men of Israel came to the king, and said unto the king, Why have our brethren the men of Judah stolen thee away, and have brought the king, and his household, and all David's men with him, over Jordan? 42 And all the men of Judah answered the men of Israel, Because the king is near of kin to us: wherefore then be ye angry for this matter? have we eaten at all of the king's cost? or hath he given us any gift? 43 And the men of Israel answered the men of Judah, and said, We have ten parts in the king, and we have also more right in David than ye: why then did ye despise us, that our advice should not be first had in bringing back our king? And the words of the men of Judah were fiercer than the words of the men of Israel.* As we close this chapter and the saga of Absalom, Matthew Henry clearly articulates the great problem of leadership – people: “See how uncertain the multitude is. They were lately striving against the king, to drive him out; now they are striving about him, which shall honor him most.” However, people are also the reason why the task is so important – people are who the Lord died for – and people are who the leader must serve.



## Chapter 20

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: In this chapter, one rebellion has been put down and another rebellion begins. This is a result of David's sin with Bathsheba and had been prophesied by Nathan at that time ("the sword shall never depart from thine house"). We learn the ongoing consequences of sin.

**Introduction:** To understand the beginning of this chapter, we have to go back to the end of the prior chapter. At the end of chapter 19, the tribes were arguing with the tribe of Judah about who would honor the king more. It is in the midst of this argument that this chapter begins.

### More Rebellion in Israel

*1 And there happened to be there a man of Belial, whose name was Sheba, the son of Bichri, a Benjamite: and he blew a trumpet, and said, We have no part in David, neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: every man to his tents, O Israel.* Israel has just ended the Absalom affair and more rebellion starts. This time the rebel is a man named Sheba whom the Bible calls "a man of Belial". We learned in First Samuel chapter 1 from Dr. McGee that this term refers to "a son of the devil" or "a son of worthlessness." He was already one known to keep up confusion before this day but that won't stop people from following him.

There are a number of principles of rebellion to examine in this verse, which we'll gain from the commentary of Pastor David Guzik. I added some comments and leadership principles to his commentary.

*"Sheba took advantage of David's weakened position after Absalom's failed rebellion and the conflict between Judah and the other ten tribes (2 Samuel 19:40-43). He based his rebellion on three principles common to rebels:*

- (1) *We have no share in David:* **Sheba denied the king's sovereignty.** He claimed that David had no right to reign over him or the ten tribes of Israel. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** One of the initial claims of those that want no part of your leadership is that you don't have the RIGHT to be in charge. This is a silly charge for Sheba since David had been king over 30 years by this time but logic has nothing to do with rebellion. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** How long you've been the leader and any success you may have attained as the leader means nothing to the rebel spirit.
- (2) *The son of Jesse:* **Sheba devalued the king's identity.** Jesse was a humble farmer and Sheba wanted to emphasize David's humble beginning. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** Your roots or history have nothing to do with the anointing of your office.
- (3) *Every man to his tents:* **Sheba decided to go his own way and drew others with him.** He acted on his low opinion of David." **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** Every rebel has a following but don't let that distract you from what God has called you to do.

Leaders, we are now being introduced to another rebellious spirit, which we'll call (appropriately enough) "the spirit of Sheba". This spirit is very similar to the spirit of Joab in that (1) he obviously has authority because he's able to incite all of Israel to rebel and (2) he has his own agenda. However, unlike the spirit of Joab, he has no pedigree, reputation or position. This is significant because it will keep his followers from being "sold out" to his cause. By comparison, Absalom had pedigree as the king's son and Joab had reputation and position as the General of the Army.

*2 So every man of Israel went up from after David, and followed Sheba the son of Bichri: but the men of Judah clave unto their king, from Jordan even to Jerusalem.* These men had just finished arguing about

who would *honor* the king more and now they've all decided to *dishonor* him by following another rebel. Unfortunately, people DON'T learn from their mistakes. (Remember the 20,000 people that died in the rebellion of Absalom?)

One thing I love about these two verses is that David did not respond to Sheba at this time. He could have easily gotten emotional especially under the great stress of the events that just took place but he remained focused on what he needed to do, which was bring his family back to their home.

### **David Returns to Jerusalem**

*3 And David came to his house at Jerusalem; and the king took the ten women his concubines, whom he had left to keep the house, and put them in ward, and fed them, but went not in unto them. So they were shut up unto the day of their death, living in widowhood.* {JF&B} “Jewish writers say that the widowed queens of Hebrew monarchs were not allowed to marry again but [had] to pass the rest of their lives in strict seclusion. David treated his concubines in the same manner after the outrage committed on them by Absalom. They were not divorced, for they were guiltless; but they were no longer publicly recognized as his wives.”

*4 Then said the king to Amasa, Assemble me the men of Judah within three days, and be thou here present.* Now that David has taken care of the things (getting his family back home and dealing with his disgraced concubines), he's ready to address the rebellion. He can't just let it go because it's not going to go away and rebellion is more so to the detriment of the people and not just the one being rebelled against. To begin the process, David gave his new general a specific command – assemble an army from among the tribe of Judah in three days.

*5 So Amasa went to assemble the men of Judah: but he tarried longer than the set time, which he had appointed him.* **SAINTS' PRINCIPLE: Slow obedience can be disobedience.** {JF&B} “The appointment was a blunder, and the king soon perceived his error. The specified time passed, but Amasa could not muster the men.” Not only did Amasa fail to complete the task, he also failed to report back to David on any problems he was having in completing it. This forced David to do something else.

**Side Road:** Time was of the essence and David understood this. The rebellion had to be put down quickly before the people got used to a new leader and Sheba became entrenched. David understood this but his new general did not. **SAINTS' PRINCIPLE: If you're going to be a successful help to your leader, you must be close enough to understand their heart.**

*6 And David said to Abishai, Now shall Sheba the son of Bichri do us more harm than did Absalom: take thou thy lord's servants, and pursue after him, lest he get him fenced cities, and escape us.* David was frustrated with the slowness of Amasa and sent Abishai with his personal bodyguards to pursue after Sheba. He did not want him to gain credibility with the people by putting himself over some of the key cities.

*7 And there went out after him Joab's men, and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites, and all the mighty men: and they went out of Jerusalem, to pursue after Sheba the son of Bichri.* Abishai took the king's bodyguard, Joab's men, and the Mighty Men to pursue after Sheba. He received his orders from David so Joab was now responsible to report to him.

### **Joab Murders Amasa**

**8** *When they were at the great stone, which is in Gibeon, Amasa went before them. And Joab's garment that he had put on was girded unto him, and upon it a girdle with a sword fastened upon his loins in the sheath thereof; and as he went forth it fell out.* Amasa caught up to the troops and took charge as the one in command even though David had given this task to Abishai once Amasa failed. However, Amasa did not pay attention to the actions of Joab when he arrived. {JF&B} “According to Josephus, [Joab] let [his sword] drop on purpose as he was accosting Amasa, that stooping, as it were accidentally, to pick it up, he might salute the new general with the naked sword in his hand, without exciting any suspicion of his design.” Once again, the spirit of Joab is about to show. His focus is regaining his position even if Amasa is his cousin.

**9** *And Joab said to Amasa, Art thou in health, my brother? And Joab took Amasa by the beard with the right hand to kiss him.* The commentators say that the actions of Joab were symbolic of great affection in that day. {JF&B} “This act, common with two friends on meeting when one of them returns from a journey, indicates respect as well as kindness, and the performance of it [demonstrated] the deep hypocrisy of Joab, who thereby put Amasa off his guard.”

**10** *But Amasa took no heed to the sword that was in Joab's hand: so he smote him therewith in the fifth rib, and shed out his bowels to the ground, and struck him not again; and he died. So Joab and Abishai his brother pursued after Sheba the son of Bichri.* I find it amazing that Abishai, Joab's brother, who was present at the murder of Abner and the murder of Amasa, never said ANYTHING to his brother in an attempt to correct him. He may have been a Mighty Man but he fell short in helping his brother recover his soul. Perhaps this is why he will soon disappear from the pages of Scripture.

**11** *And one of Joab's men stood by him, and said, He that favoreth Joab, and he that is for David, let him go after Joab.* Look at this attribute of the spirit of Joab. Joab is a rebel but he's also a leader. This is demonstrated in this unnamed man who musters the troops to follow Joab even though Abishai is in charge.

**12** *And Amasa wallowed in blood in the midst of the highway. And when the man saw that all the people stood still, he removed Amasa out of the highway into the field, and cast a cloth upon him, when he saw that every one that came by him stood still.* This same unnamed man shows that he supports the actions of Joab by dragging Amasa out of the way rather than seeking medical attention for him. The words of the commentator make these actions even more troubling. {Adam Clarke} “It is very likely that Amasa did not immediately die; I have known instances of persons living several hours after their bowels had been shed out.”

**13** *When he was removed out of the highway, all the people went on after Joab, to pursue after Sheba the son of Bichri.* I just can't get over the fact that the people viewed the murder of Amasa as a kind of “ho-hum” event. It's like people do today when there's a car accident. Instead of calling for emergency assistance, they use their phones to take pictures. As long as Amasa was there wallowing in his blood, they watched him. Once he was moved out of the way, they went on to the business at hand. What also troubles me is that these are God's people! **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE: You MUST stay focused and not be moved by people.**

### **Israel Wars Against Sheba**

**14** *And he went through all the tribes of Israel unto Abel, and to Bethmaachah, and all the Berites: and they were gathered together, and went also after him.* {David Guzik} “Joab was able to find men loyal to

David in all the tribes of Israel. Though Sheba was able to assemble an army against David, there were still many people loyal to David.”

**15 And they came and besieged him in Abel of Bethmaachah, and they cast up a bank against the city, and it stood in the trench: and all the people that were with Joab battered the wall, to throw it down.** According to Adam Clarke, this city is in the northern part of the kingdom on the border of Syria. When they arrived, they set up a siege against the city. (As a reminder from past studies, a siege was designed to starve the city into subjection or, in this case, make it so terrible for the inhabitants that they released the rebel.) {Adam Clarke} “The word [translated as] ‘bank’, means, most probably, a battering engine of some kind, or a tower overlooking the walls, on which archers and slingers could stand and annoy the inhabitants, while others of the besiegers could proceed to sap the walls.” A siege was a terrible time especially for those that were not a part of the military. In that day, there were no innocent bystanders in war.

**16 Then cried a wise woman out of the city, Hear, hear; say, I pray you, unto Joab, Come near hither, that I may speak with thee.** Adam Clarke says this woman was probably the governess of the city. She had a heart for her people and cries out to Joab for an audience.

**17 And when he was come near unto her, the woman said, Art thou Joab? And he answered, I am he. Then she said unto him, Hear the words of thine handmaid. And he answered, I do hear. 18 Then she spake, saying, They were wont to speak in old time, saying, They shall surely ask counsel at Abel: and so they ended the matter.** {Adam Clarke} “Abel was probably famed for the wisdom of its inhabitants; and parties who had disputes appealed to their judgment, which appears to have been in such high reputation as to be final by consent of all parties. To this the wise woman refers, and intimates to Joab that he should have proceeded in this way before he began to storm the city, and destroy the peaceable inhabitants.”

**19 I am one of them that are peaceable and faithful in Israel: thou seekest to destroy a city and a mother in Israel: why wilt thou swallow up the inheritance of the LORD?** This woman offers a wise question in the spirit of the judge Deborah.

**20 And Joab answered and said, Far be it, far be it from me, that I should swallow up or destroy.** Her question breaks the heart of Joab and allows for an alternate ending besides the destruction of the city.

**21 The matter is not so: but a man of mount Ephraim, Sheba the son of Bichri by name, hath lifted up his hand against the king, even against David: deliver him only, and I will depart from the city. And the woman said unto Joab, Behold, his head shall be thrown to thee over the wall.** A troubling point about the spirit of Joab is that the one operating in this spirit is so very close to being the best follower of leadership. They just have to lose their agenda, which is what is stirring up everything else. Here we see Joab showing a glimpse of devotion to David (I warned you of that in the last chapter) but deep down he still has his own agenda.

**22 Then the woman went unto all the people in her wisdom. And they cut off the head of Sheba the son of Bichri, and cast it out to Joab. And he blew a trumpet, and they retired from the city, every man to his tent. And Joab returned to Jerusalem unto the king.** The rebellion ends by the wisdom of this woman. {David Guzik} “Sheba probably thought he was safe within the walls of that city, but no one is safe when they run against God’s will. There isn’t a wall high enough or strong enough to protect against God and His will.”

**David's Officers in the Restored Kingdom**

*23 Now Joab was over all the host of Israel: and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and over the Pelethites:* “Joab was over all the host of Israel” – David had to restore Joab in spite of his murder of Amasa. Joab had saved his kingdom and was a man of considerable influence.

Benaiah was a seasoned veteran of the service of David having been over his personal bodyguard since the beginning of his kingdom (see 2 Samuel 8:18). The Cherethites and Pelethites were either related to the Philistines or members of the tribes of Judah and Reuben. These men were sworn to the protection of the king.

*24 And Adoram was over the tribute: and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder: 25 And Sheva was scribe: and Zadok and Abiathar were the priests: NLT 24 Adoniram was in charge of the labor force. Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was the royal historian. 25 Sheva was the court secretary. Zadok and Abiathar were the priests.*

*26 And Ira also the Jairite was a chief ruler about David. NLT And Ira, a descendant of Jair, was David's personal priest.* The intent of this section was to show that the kingdom was fully restored and fully functioning. It's companion section is 2 Samuel 8:16-18. From that time to this time, the only significant change was that he changed the “chief rulers” from his sons to Ira the Jairite. However, it appears that the original word for “chief ministers” for David's sons meant they were his official confidants and assistants. In the word in this passage, the word refers to the fact that Ira was David's personal chaplain and priest.

**LEADERSHIP & SAINTS' PRINCIPLE:** {David Guzik} *“If David – a man after God's heart and the sweet psalmist of Israel – needed devotional ‘help,’ we should not think ourselves above it.”*

## Chapter 21

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: David has to listen to Gentile servants to restore the blessing on the land and to his own soldiers to spare his life. Leadership is not only about leading it's about listening.

### **Famine in Israel**

*1 Then there was a famine in the days of David three years, year after year; and David enquired of the LORD. And the LORD answered, It is for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites.*

**SAINTS' PRINCIPLE:** We are spiritual people so we need to be sensitive to the conditions around us to discern what natural occurrences may have a spiritual origin. David was aware of the famine the first two years and was, no doubt, concerned about it but when it continued into a third year, he needed to know an answer. As a child of God, there will be a season of trials and temptations but they will not continue always. I love David's attitude in that he EXPECTED blessing and favor and when it did not occur, he needed to know where he or the nation might have fallen short.

God answered David's prayer by bringing up an occurrence that is not recorded in Scripture. {David Guzik} "This massacre isn't recorded in 1 Samuel, but David didn't question that it happened. Apparently at some time during his reign Saul attacked and killed many of the Gibeonites." Later in this chapter (verse 5), we'll see that Saul's intent was to exterminate the entire population of the Gibeonites.

*2 And the king called the Gibeonites, and said unto them; (now the Gibeonites were not of the children of Israel, but of the remnant of the Amorites; and the children of Israel had sworn unto them: and Saul sought to slay them in his zeal to the children of Israel and Judah.)* This verse shows us the following:

- (1) The Gibeonites were part of the original inhabitants of the land that Joshua did not drive out. They actually tricked Joshua into not destroying them – a scheme that would not have worked if he had prayed before making a decision.
  - (2) The Gibeonites, according to this verse, were remnants of the Amorites. However, Adam Clarke says the following to clarify their origin: "The Gibeonites were Hivites, not Amorites, as appears from Joshua 11:19: but Amorites is a name often given to the Canaanites in general, Genesis 15:16."
  - (3) The Gibeonites had received a promise from Joshua (Joshua 9:15) that they could live in peace in Israel. The elders of Israel had also agreed to that promise. This promise continued to stand 400 years later.
- SAINTS' PRINCIPLE:** Your word is important to the one you give it to and it stands in heaven.

- (4) Saul, in trying to impress his people, had gone on a campaign to wipe out the Gibeonites. As we've already seen in past studies, this was not unlike the nature of Saul when he was at his worst.

Personally, I believe Saul's actions toward the Gibeonites were even more despicable to God because I believe the Lord kept them in Israel as an ongoing reminder of what happens when decisions are entered into without prayer. Why the Lord chose to use this time to punish this sin is only in His sovereign knowledge.

**SAINTS' PRINCIPLE:** {David Guzik} "If God has such a high expectation that men keep their covenants; we can have great confidence that He will keep His covenant with us."

*3 Wherefore David said unto the Gibeonites, What shall I do for you? and wherewith shall I make the atonement, that ye may bless the inheritance of the LORD?* Notice how David humbled himself before the Gibeonites! According to Joshua 9:27, the Gibeonites had a permanent job of being "hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation." In other words, they were servants. However, these servants hold the



key to the restoration of Israel's favor so David humbles himself before them and asks how the country can make amends for what Saul has done. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE: Pride has no place in leadership. Your responsibility is to the people you serve.**

*4 And the Gibeonites said unto him, We will have no silver nor gold of Saul, nor of his house; neither for us shalt thou kill any man in Israel. And he said, What ye shall say, that will I do for you.* The Gibeonites did not want to be paid by the state or have people killed in their behalf. Their issue was not with Israel.

*5 And they answered the king, The man that consumed us, and that devised against us that we should be destroyed from remaining in any of the coasts of Israel, 6 Let seven men of his sons be delivered unto us, and we will hang them up unto the LORD in Gibeah of Saul, whom the LORD did choose. And the king said, I will give them.* The issue with the Gibeonites came back to the house of Saul and, wisely, they felt that only those of that house should be responsible for what they went through. Even the Lord said in verse 1 that the issue came back to "his bloody house".

*7 But the king spared Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan the son of Saul, because of the LORD's oath that was between them, between David and Jonathan the son of Saul.* David had made an oath with Mephibosheth and could not break this oath to satisfy another oath.

*8 But the king took the two sons of Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, whom she bare unto Saul, Armoni and Mephibosheth; and the five sons of Michal the daughter of Saul, whom she brought up for Adriel the son of Barzillai the Meholathite:* Rizpah was one of Saul's concubines so these two are the sons of Saul. There is a lot of dialogue about "the five sons of Michal" since she was, according to the Scripture, barren until her death. 1 Samuel 18:19 says that Adriel married Merab, the other daughter of Saul. Most agree that either this was a translation error or Michal raised the children as her own for her sister. These are Saul's grandsons.

*9 And he delivered them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they hanged them in the hill before the LORD: and they fell all seven together, and were put to death in the days of harvest, in the first days, in the beginning of barley harvest.* All seven men were executed for the actions of Saul. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE: As a leader, your actions will have implications to your family so don't become so consumed with your position that you forget your family or your leadership is in vain.** According to two different commentators, barley harvest began in late March or early April. This is when these men were hung for Saul's actions. {David Guzik} "*The method of death was also important because it fulfilled the promise of Deuteronomy 21:23: 'he who is hanged is accursed of God'. These descendants of Saul bore the curse Saul deserved and so delivered Israel from the guilt of their sin against the Gibeonites.*"

*10 And Rizpah the daughter of Aiah took sackcloth, and spread it for her upon the rock, from the beginning of harvest until water dropped upon them out of heaven, and suffered neither the birds of the air to rest on them by day, nor the beasts of the field by night.* This dear mother held a vigil over the bodies of her sons until the time of judgment was complete – when the rain came. Most say it was as long as five months because the rain did not appear until the next rain season in October.

**Side Road:** There are commentators who greatly disagree with the actions of David and try to second guess what God allowed here. However, let us not forget what I said earlier in our study – we're trying to understand the actions of people prior to the coming of Christ and in a period that is over 3,000 years in the past! Therefore, don't apply the same logic to their actions as we would to the actions of people today.

*11 And it was told David what Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, the concubine of Saul, had done. 12 And David went and took the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son from the men of Jabeshgilead, which had stolen them from the street of Bethshan, where the Philistines had hanged them, when the Philistines had slain Saul in Gilboa: 13 And he brought up from thence the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son; and they gathered the bones of them that were hanged. 14 And the bones of Saul and Jonathan his son buried they in the country of Benjamin in Zelah, in the sepulcher of Kish his father: and they performed all that the king commanded. And after that God was entreated for the land.* David learned from Rizpah's actions. She so impressed and convicted him that he took care of honoring Saul in a way that should have been handled years before. (David is reaching the end of his reign so the death of Saul is over 30 years in the past!) Who knows why David didn't take care of this before considering that the bones of his friend Jonathan were among those that never received a proper state burial. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE: Don't reject change no matter who is the source of the idea.**

### **War With the Philistines; David Retires from Warfare**

*15 Moreover the Philistines had yet war again with Israel; and David went down, and his servants with him, and fought against the Philistines: and David waxed faint.* **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE: Leaders need to know when it's time to turn over the "heavy lifting" to the younger people and provide only wisdom and guidance.** Unfortunately, many leaders don't know when that time has come and abuse their bodies, shorten their lives, and trouble those they serve in the process. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE: If you even remotely believe that you are in a position of "indispensible leadership" you MUST take care of yourself.**

*16 And Ishbibenob, which was of the sons of the giant, the weight of whose spear weighed three hundred shekels of brass in weight, he being girded with a new sword, thought to have slain David.* This is one of the sons of Goliath. It's now around 50 years since David slew Goliath but time does not make the Philistines or the sons of Goliath any less eager to obtain revenge for his actions. David is much older now and is weary in the battle and the son of Goliath uses this as an opportunity. **SAINTS' PRINCIPLE: Devils, habits, temptations, and sins that you have defeated in your past are not wiped out. They are only waiting for the opportunity to resurface at a time when you're vulnerable.**

*17 But Abishai the son of Zeruiah succored him, and smote the Philistine, and killed him. Then the men of David sware unto him, saying, Thou shalt go no more out with us to battle, that thou quench not the light of Israel.* A few chapters ago, I brought up the concept of "indispensible leadership". David is in this category and, therefore, has NO BUSINESS in the midst of this battle no matter how much he may personally enjoy it. His men understand this and let him know that they cannot risk his loss. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE: Leaders need to listen to the people when their personal welfare is at stake. Your premature demise or incapacitation could greatly impact the work of God.**

*18 And it came to pass after this, that there was again a battle with the Philistines at Gob: then Sibbechai the Hushathite slew Saph, which was of the sons of the giant. 19 And there was again a battle in Gob with the Philistines, where Elhanan the son of Jaareoregim, a Bethlehemite, slew the brother of Goliath the Gittite, the staff of whose spear was like a weaver's beam. 20 And there was yet a battle in Gath, where was a man of great stature, that had on every hand six fingers, and on every foot six toes, four and twenty in number; and he also was born to the giant. 21 And when he defied Israel, Jonathan the son of Shimeah the brother of David slew him. 22 These four were born to the giant in Gath, and fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his servants.* In 1 Samuel 17:40, the Scripture says, "And he [David] took his staff in his

*hand, and chose him FIVE smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had, even in a scrip; and his sling was in his hand: and he drew near to the Philistine."* I heard one preacher say that young David took these extra stones in case he missed. However, another said that he took the five to represent Goliath and the four that were killed in this chapter. They were destined for judgment almost 50 years before this time. God, in His goodness, gave them time to reconsider. Since they did not, judgment fell on them as it did on Goliath.

**LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** {David Guzik} "David's legacy lay not only in what he accomplished, but in what he left behind – a people prepared for victory. David's triumphs were meaningful not only for himself but for others who learned victory through his teaching and example." The best leader does not only live for now but for the future.

## Chapter 22

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: David, the leader of God's people, praises God directly for His lifetime of covering and deliverance as David prepares to close the chapter on his life. No matter what position God brings you to, never forget that He is owed all the gratitude and appreciation.

### **David Praises God for a Lifetime of Deliverance**

*1 And David spake unto the LORD the words of this song in the day that the LORD had delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul:* Josephus says that the occasion of the writing of this Psalm was after the Lord had delivered David out of the hands of all of his enemies – after the latest battle with the Philistines who were finally subdued. The text is wonderful in that it expresses the intimacy of this chapter for David spoke these words “unto the Lord”. {David Guzik} *“The psalm appears almost as David’s final words. Hence, it is a summary thanksgiving for God’s many deliverances of him through his long life of service.”*

**Introduction to the Psalm {JF&B}: “The song contained in this chapter is the same as the Eighteenth Psalm. It may be sufficient simply to remark that Jewish writers have noticed a great number of very minute variations in the language of the song recorded here, from that in the Book of Psalms--which may be accounted for by the fact that this, the first copy of the poem, was carefully revised and altered by David afterwards, when it was set to the music of the tabernacle. This inspired ode was manifestly the effusion of a mind glowing with the highest fervor of piety and gratitude, and it is full of the noblest imagery that is to be found within the range even of sacred poetry. It is David’s grand tribute of thanksgiving for deliverance from his numerous and powerful enemies, and establishing him in the power and glory of the kingdom.”**

*2 And he said, The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; 3 The God of my rock; in him will I trust: he is my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my refuge, my savior; thou savest me from violence. 4 I will call on the LORD, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies. 5 When the waves of death compassed me, the floods of ungodly men made me afraid; 6 The sorrows of hell compassed me about; the snares of death prevented me; 7 In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried to my God: and he did hear my voice out of his temple, and my cry did enter into his ears.*

I only shared a few verses from this lengthy praise. It is self-explanatory and speaks of the deep gratitude that David had for the Lord’s mighty hand upon his life. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** Leaders need to make sure that they never forget the goodness of God in allowing them to serve His people. Praise God directly for what He has done for you!

## Chapter 23

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: This chapter is a time of reflection for David on what the Lord had accomplished in his life and what He did through the Mighty Men he gave to David. Never forget where the Lord has brought you.

### The Final Words of David

*1 Now these be the last words of David. David the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said,* Notice how David addresses himself. He does not address himself as “the king” but he points back to his humble roots as the son of Jesse, a man who was RAISED UP to be the anointed of God and the sweet psalmist of Israel. Nothing is said of his military exploits but he focuses on the fact that God was good to him, the poor youngest son of Jesse who loved to worship God with his harp and his songs. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE: Do you want to be a good leader? Then you must never, ever forget where you came from and who brought you there. Without God, we are nothing.**

*2 The Spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word was in my tongue.* {JF&B} “Nothing can more clearly show that all that is excellent in spirit, beautiful in language, or grand in prophetic imagery, which the Psalms of David contain, were owing, not to his superiority in natural talents or acquired knowledge, but to the suggestion and dictates of God’s Spirit.”

*3 The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.* Oh, that Christian leaders today would look at this small verse and remember our mission. David was a tremendous example of leadership because God spoke to him and gave him the keys to leadership – the leader must be just and must rule remembering that those that he rules are God’s.

*5 Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow.* Everyone had their opinion as to the meaning of this verse and it worked up some of the commentators. Let’s use the Amplified Bible’s translation to gain more light on this verse: **Truly does not my house stand so with God? For He has made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure. For will He not cause to prosper all my help and my desire?**

*6 But the sons of Belial shall be all of them as thorns thrust away, because they cannot be taken with hands: 7 But the man that shall touch them must be fenced with iron and the staff of a spear; and they shall be utterly burned with fire in the same place.* Finally, David states that there are some that will not adhere to leadership (sons of Belial or worthlessness) that must be handled carefully. When the time comes to deal with them, the leader must cover him or herself with prayer and be armed with a Word from God.

### David Celebrates His Mighty Men

**Side Road:** David never forgot the key men, men of amazing talents and loyalty, who were instrumental in the success of his reign. At the time when this was written, some of these men were dead and some may have been too old to continue on as one of the Mighty Men but their past actions were not forgotten. Others on this list had exploits that went back to David’s time of running from Saul in his twenties. However, he never forgot them. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE: Never forget or fail to appreciate the sacrifices that people make for the success of the work of God.**

**8** *These be the names of the mighty men whom David had: The Tachmonite that sat in the seat, chief among the captains; the same was **ADINO** the Eznite: he lift up his spear against eight hundred, whom he slew at one time.* The NUMBER ONE Mighty Man was Adino the Eznite (in First Chronicles 11, the companion chapter to this chapter, this man is called Jashobeam, an Hachmonite, but he's the same man). Isn't it amazing that we know nothing of the man that David called "chief among the captains"? Actually, it shouldn't be viewed that way because one that truly serves, serves with no fanfare. He must have been a tremendous man because the Bible says he killed 800 men at one time... with a spear! (1 Chronicles 11 states that he killed 300 men versus 800 here. However, Dake believes that the higher number is correct because it makes him excel over Abishai who also killed 300 at one time.)

**9** *And after him was **ELEAZAR** the son of Dodo the Ahohite, one of the three mighty men with David, when they defied the Philistines that were there gathered together to battle, and the men of Israel were gone away: **10** He arose, and smote the Philistines until his hand was weary, and his hand clave unto the sword: and the LORD wrought a great victory that day; and the people returned after him only to spoil.* The second Mighty Man was a man of great loyalty as well as military might. When everyone forsook David, this man stood with him and fought until the muscles in his hand would no longer allow him to release his sword. The Lord used them to bring a great victory that day and those that ran only had to come back for the spoil. First Chronicles says that this incident happened in the midst of a barley field.

**11** *And after him was **SHAMMAH** the son of Agee the Hararite. And the Philistines were gathered together into a troop, where was a piece of ground full of lentils: and the people fled from the Philistines.*

**12** *But he stood in the midst of the ground, and defended it, and slew the Philistines: and the LORD wrought a great victory.* An unmentioned commentator (found on the Internet) said these words about Shammah, "This incident concerned an armed force of Israel's enemies who were out foraging, and who struck such terror into the hearts of the countryside that the peaceful locals fled. But there was one who refused to yield unto the marauders, determined to defend the food supply of his people, and under God, he completely routed them." Shammah was another who refused to run. **SAINT'S PRINCIPLE:** When we learn to **STAND OUR GROUND** in the face of the enemy, we can watch God bring a great victory!

**13** *And three of the thirty chief went down, and came to David in the harvest time unto the cave of Adullam: and the troop of the Philistines pitched in the valley of Rephaim. **14** And David was then in an hold, and the garrison of the Philistines was then in Bethlehem. **15** And David longed, and said, Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate! **16** And the three mighty men brake through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem, that was by the gate, and took it, and brought it to David: nevertheless he would not drink thereof, but poured it out unto the LORD. **17** And he said, Be it far from me, O LORD, that I should do this: is not this the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives? therefore he would not drink it. These things did these three mighty men.* The three of the thirty captains (or mighty men) mentioned here are Adino, Eleazar, and Shammah – the first three. The Philistines were camping in the valley of Rephaim, which Dake says was of the tribe of the giants (giants meaning those of the height of Goliath, his family, and the children of Anak mentioned in Moses' time). This statement by Dake adds to the account because the Philistines were fortified with these giant warriors. This occurred at a time when David was running for his life from Saul because he was still living in the cave of Adullam. David, parched with thirst from the heat of the day, made the mistake of making his deepest thoughts come from his lips. **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** The leader must be careful of



**their words especially at a time of high emotion.** The three chief of the mighty men, hearing the desire of their leader, needed no more encouragement. As one, they broke through the Philistines and the warrior giants, drew out the water, and brought it back to David. David gave the highest honor to these men by pouring out the water unto the Lord (giving it to the Lord in their name) as a drink offering.

**18 And ABISHAI, the brother of Joab, the son of Zeruiah, was chief among three. And he lifted up his spear against three hundred, and slew them, and had the name among three.** There was a second group of three of the mightiest men but only two of those men are specifically mentioned. Abishai, the brother of Joab and nephew of David, is the first of the second three. He killed 300 men at one time with his spear.

**19 Was he not most honorable of three? therefore he was their captain: howbeit he attained not unto the first three.** He was more honorable than the other two in his group but did not attain unto the first set of three. The first three demonstrated that they would be with David and do for him no matter the consequence or the sacrifice. The second three were right behind them.

**20 And BENAIAH the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man, of Kabzeel, who had done many acts, he slew two lion like men of Moab: he went down also and slew a lion in the midst of a pit in time of snow: 21 And he slew an Egyptian, a goodly man: and the Egyptian had a spear in his hand; but he went down to him with a staff, and plucked the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and slew him with his own spear. 22 These things did Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and had the name among three mighty men. 23 He was more honorable than the thirty, but he attained not to the first three. And David set him over his guard.** Benaiah's many exploits are listed here probably because he will become General of the Army under Solomon. He was the leader of the David's personal bodyguard so he was a man greatly trusted.

**24 ASAHHEL the brother of Joab was one of the thirty; ELHANAN the son of Dodo of Bethlehem, 25 SHAMMAH the Harodite, ELIKA the Harodite, 26 HELEZ the Paltite, IRA the son of Ikkes the Tekoite, 27 ABIEZER the Anethothite, MEBUNNAI the Hushathite, 28 ZALMON the Ahohite, MAHARAI the Netophathite, 29 HELEB the son of Baanah, a Netophathite, ITTAI the son of Ribai out of Gibeah of the children of Benjamin, 30 BENAIAH the Pirathonite, HIDDAI of the brooks of Gaash, 31 ABIALBON the Arbathite, AZMAVETH the Barhumite, 32 ELIAHBA the Shaalbonite, of the sons of Jashen, JONATHAN, 33 SHAMMAH the Hararite, AHIAM the son of Sharar the Hararite, 34 ELIPHELET the son of Ahasbai, the son of the Maachathite, ELIAM the son of Ahithophel the Gilonite, 35 HEZRAI the Carmelite, PAARAI the Arbite, 36 IGAL the son of Nathan of Zobah, BANI the Gadite, 37 ZELEK the Ammonite, NAHARI the Beerothite, armor bearer to Joab the son of Zeruiah, 38 IRA an Ithrite, GAREB an Ithrite, 39 URLAH the Hittite: thirty and seven in all.** From verses 24-39, we have the names of 31 Mighty Men. When you add them to the first two companies of three, you come to the total of thirty-seven.

I find it interesting that the two brothers of Joab are on this list as is his armor bearer but he is not named but we have spoken of this before. The commentator also noticed this. {Matthew Henry} "*Joab is not mentioned among all these, either, (1.) to be mentioned; the first, of the first three sat chief among the captains, but Joab was over them as general. Or, (2.) Because he was so bad that he did not deserve to be mentioned; for though he was confessedly a great soldier, and one that had so much religion in him as to dedicate of his spoils to the house of God (1 Chronicles 26:28), yet he lost as much honor by slaying two of David's friends as ever he got*

*by slaying his enemies.*” I also find it interesting that Eliam, the father of Bathsheba, and Uriah, the husband of Bathsheba, are among the 37. This serves as a constant reminder of the horror of sin.

## Chapter 24

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: In this final chapter in our study, we continue to learn the awful consequences of following unholy advice.

### David's Final Sin

*1 And again the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them to say, Go, number Israel and Judah.* To understand this verse, we call upon the companion chapter in First Chronicles 21:1 – *And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel.* When I put these two verses together, I see Satan as the motivator of this deed. The very fact that Satan was using HIS servant was enough to make God angry.

The Life Recovery Bible has this to say about this verse, “*As we read of David’s life, we would probably identify David’s greatest sins as adultery, betrayal, and murder. But God’s evaluation of David’s greatest sin seems somewhat different. Although God punished David for his acts of adultery and murder, the punishment David suffered for his census was far greater and more widespread. What was wrong with counting the people? David did so to assess their human strength. He put his trust in Israel’s numbers and the army it could muster. He had forgotten that with God’s help, they needed no army at all to achieve victory. We often make the same mistake. We seek to do things in our own strength, rather than depend on God’s. Seeking recovery through human strength alone will only end in disaster.*” This chapter appears after the chapter of the Mighty Men – men who did great exploits by the Spirit of God without worrying about the numbers.

*2 For the king said to Joab the captain of the host, which was with him, Go now through all the tribes of Israel, from Dan even to Beersheba, and number ye the people, that I may know the number of the people.*

*3 And Joab said unto the king, Now the LORD thy God add unto the people, how many soever they be, an hundredfold, and that the eyes of my lord the king may see it: but why doth my lord the king delight in this thing?* In the past, Joab was not the sharpest spiritual “tool in the shed” but this time he sees right through this action and tries to encourage David to not do it. He knew that it was motivated by wrong ambition.

**SAINT’S PRINCIPLE:** Submission to leadership is to be done but it is not to be done blindly. If you obey everything without question, you may find yourself brought under judgment. However, if you question everything, you will still be brought under judgment. There must be balance in our obedience and it only comes from the Holy Spirit of God.

*4 Notwithstanding the king’s word prevailed against Joab, and against the captains of the host. And Joab and the captains of the host went out from the presence of the king, to number the people of Israel. 5 And they passed over Jordan, and pitched in Aroer, on the right side of the city that lieth in the midst of the river of Gad, and toward Jazer: 6 Then they came to Gilead, and to the land of Tahtimhodshi; and they came to Danjaan, and about to Zidon, 7 And came to the strong hold of Tyre, and to all the cities of the Hivites, and of the Canaanites: and they went out to the south of Judah, even to Beersheba. 8 So when they had gone through all the land, they came to Jerusalem at the end of nine months and twenty days.* To complete the census took almost 10 months and even that seems fairly quick considering the size of the task.

*9 And Joab gave up the sum of the number of the people unto the king: and there were in Israel eight hundred thousand valiant men that drew the sword; and the men of Judah were five hundred thousand men.* 1 Chronicles 21:5 has a different number but not by much. In both cases, there were over 1 million fighting men in this small country! This was in fulfillment of **Genesis 15:5** *And he (God) brought him*

*(Abraham) forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.*

*10 And David's heart smote him AFTER that he had numbered the people. And David said unto the LORD, I have sinned greatly in that I have done: and now, I beseech thee, O LORD, take away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly.* Sin often doesn't show up until AFTER the deed is done. During all of the 10 months it took to take the census, David didn't come to this conclusion. Only after he had fully completed the sin did his eyes come open.

*11 For when David was up in the morning, the word of the LORD came unto the prophet Gad, David's seer, saying, 12 Go and say unto David, Thus saith the LORD, I offer thee three things; choose thee one of them, that I may do it unto thee.* God no doubt, forgave David but his sin had involved the whole nation and there was to be a consequence for this sin.

*13 So Gad came to David, and told him, and said unto him, Shall seven years of famine come unto thee in thy land? or wilt thou flee three months before thine enemies, while they pursue thee? or that there be three days' pestilence in thy land? now advise, and see what answer I shall return to him that sent me.* What an awful choice but when you are mature in God, there are some things that we just must not do. Moses' sin seemed small but the consequences were dire because he was mature in God.

What a decision David had to make based on the decision he made! **THREE YEARS OF FAMINE.** Famine represents slow death and agonizing suffering because of the lack of food. Often, when the famine ends, the deaths continue because of the damage done to the body by lack of food. Also, under such extreme conditions, people have a tendency to desperately reach out in the wrong direction. **THREE MONTHS TO BE DESTROYED BEFORE THE ENEMIES OF ISRAEL.** This would have long-term effects also because once the three months were completed, many enemies would be emboldened to return because they saw that they finally made military progress against Israel. **THREE DAYS OF DEADLY PESTILENCE (DISEASE) SENT BY THE HAND OF THE LORD.** In just looking at the punishment in the natural man's point of view, this seemed to be the best choice because the long-term effects would be less than in the other cases. David points out the real key, though, in the next verse.

*14 And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait: let us fall now into the hand of the LORD; for his mercies are great: and let me not fall into the hand of man. 15 So the LORD sent a pestilence upon Israel from the morning even to the time appointed: and there died of the people from Dan even to Beersheba seventy thousand men.* 70,000 people died because of David's sin. Now the numbers that he was so interested in are reduced.

*16 And when the angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it, the LORD repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed the people, It is enough: stay now thine hand. And the angel of the LORD was by the threshing place of Araunah the Jebusite.* {Dake} "...a special judgment seems to have been ready for Jerusalem – to destroy it."

*17 And David spake unto the LORD when he saw the angel that smote the people, and said, Lo, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly: but these sheep, what have they done? let thine hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my father's house.* The angel stopped but did not leave. According to 1 Chronicles 21:16, David saw the angel of the LORD stand between the earth and the heaven, having a drawn sword in his

hand stretched out over Jerusalem. The angel was prepared to go further if David did not obey what the Lord wanted from him to stop the plague. David went before God and interceded on behalf of the people. This is what a leader is expected to do – the focus must not be on themselves but on those that God has given within their charge.

*18 And Gad came that day to David, and said unto him, Go up, rear an altar unto the LORD in the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite. 19 And David, according to the saying of Gad, went up as the LORD commanded. 20 And Araunah looked, and saw the king and his servants coming on toward him: and Araunah went out, and bowed himself before the king on his face upon the ground. 21 And Araunah said, Wherefore is my lord the king come to his servant? And David said, To buy the threshing floor of thee, to build an altar unto the LORD, that the plague may be stayed from the people. 22 And Araunah said unto David, Let my lord the king take and offer up what seemeth good unto him: behold, here be oxen for burnt sacrifice, and threshing instruments and other instruments of the oxen for wood. 23 All these things did Araunah, as a king, give unto the king. And Araunah said unto the king, The LORD thy God accept thee.* {JF&B} “[Verse 23 indicates] that this man had been anciently a heathen king or chief, but was now a proselyte who still retained great property and influence in Jerusalem, and whose piety was evinced by the liberality of his offers. The words, ‘as a king,’ are taken by some to signify simply, ‘he gave with royal [generosity].” There are some that also believe that Araunah was the past king of the defeated Jebusites who humbled himself before his new leader with no animosity.

*24 And the king said unto Araunah, Nay; but I will surely buy it of thee at a price: neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the LORD my God of that which doth cost me nothing. So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver.* {Dake} “50 shekels [of silver] would be only \$32 at 64¢ a shekel. This was only the earnest money until he could pay the whole price, for 1 Chronicles 21:25 says he bought it for 600 shekels of gold, which at \$9.70 in our money would make the total purchase price \$5,820.” There’s a wonderful principle in this verse that today’s church so often misses – David said that he would not offer something to the Lord that cost him nothing. **SAINT’S PRINCIPLE:** Thank God for benefactors that help the work but we must individually be accountable for **SACRIFICING** for the work of the Lord.

*25 And David built there an altar unto the LORD, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. So the LORD was entreated for the land, and the plague was stayed from Israel.*

## Final Note

*It seems like an awkward ending but with this verse we have completed our study in Second Samuel focusing on the life of King David. We have seen the restoration and advancement of Israel under his reign but we have also learned of the awful consequences of sin. I pray our study has been as much a blessing to you as it has been to me. I speak blessings into your life in the name of the Lord Jesus and pray that His Word will grow and blossom in you richly!*

**Study Completed July 10, 2009**

