

BIG WORD: 2 Samuel

Homework for Chapters 5—10

Discussion Dates: 10 October 2012 (in house)
and 11 October 2012 (online)

DAY ONE: Overview

PRAY for the Holy Spirit to clear your mind so that you may focus on God's Word without distractions or preconceptions. Ask Him to help you discern only what He wants for you in this reading and for this day.

READ: 2 Samuel 5—10.

If possible, read all five chapters in one sitting. Make notes of any details that stick out to you, questions that rise and/or personal insights God gives you while you read.

DAY TWO: David's Kingdom Established

READ 2 Samuel 5:1—5 and 1 Chronicles 11:1—3.

This is David's third coronation as God's chosen king of Israel (See 1 Sam. 16:13 and 2 Sam. 2:4). Why so many?

READ: 1 Chronicles 11:4—25.

Up to this point, Jerusalem was occupied by the Jebusites, not the Israelites. Why do you think David chose that city to be Israel's new capitol?

How did Joab become the chief commander of David's army?

The second part of this passage relates small, but powerful stories about David's mighty men and his relationship with them. What is your response to these interactions?

READ: 2 Samuel 5:17—25 and 1 Chronicles 14:8—17.

Why do you think the Philistines pursued David? If they wanted to attack the Israelites, wouldn't it have been better to do it while the nation was split by civil war?

David presents a consistent pattern in his decision making. What is that pattern?

DAY THREE: The Ark Travels Again

The Ark of the Covenant was a significant piece of Israel's history and religion. A solid box, covered in gold, it held the tablets of Moses, Aaron's budding staff, and a jar of manna. Intricately carved seraphim bowed their wings over it. A symbol of God's throne, it was meant to be kept in the Holy of Holies within the Tabernacle.

As the Israelites wandered, it was often hoisted before them, a sign of their dependence upon God and His guidance. Joshua was commanded to have the priests carry it in the nation's march around Jericho. After that, throughout the book of Judges, the Ark was taken into battle before the armies as a sort of good luck charm. Sometimes it worked, but most times it didn't.

A very prominent story of the Ark is told in Judges 5 and 6. There the LORD vividly showed Himself greater than all other gods. The Philistines, who had stolen the Ark after defeating the Israelites in battle, returned the Ark by way of divinely-driven livestock. From that time until David assumed the throne, approximately 75 years, the Ark had remained in Kiriath Jearim.

READ: 1 Chronicles 13:1—14 and 15:1—16:43.

The Ark seemed fine where it was. Why would David insist on moving it now?

The first attempt did not end well. What happened?

Why?

After three months David tried again. This time there was much rejoicing. What do you think about David's celebration?

The timelines seem to differ in 1 Chronicles versus 2 Samuel. What might explain this?

DAY FOUR: Michal's Story

Sitting where we sit, more than 3000 years after the events of 2 Samuel 6, we may find it easy to condemn Michal's behavior. There she is, haughtily condemning our hero. We look upon her with righteous disgust. Can she not see his heart? The passion of his worship?

Let us not forget what she has endured.

Michal was David's first wife. As the daughter of Saul, she had been raised a princess. She had grown up in the palace, with her father as king of Israel. You can read about the circumstances of her marriage to David in 1 Samuel 18:20—29.

What would you say was their level of affection at the start of their marriage?

Clearly there were challenges present. In the very next chapter, we get another part of their story. What do we learn from 1 Samuel 19:11—17?

Has anything changed in their relationship, for better or worse?

The events recorded in 2 Samuel 6 occurred at least nine years after those found in 1 Samuel 19. David and Michal had not been together during his exile in Philistine territory. They had been stripped of a decade (more or less) of marriage. If that were all, it would be bad enough. But there was more. Consider these other obstacles to their relationship.

- After she helped David flee her father's wrath, Michal was given to another man, Patiel (1 Sam. 25:44)
- Her second husband, Patiel, clearly loved her (2 Sam. 3:15-16).
- She now had to share David with at least five other wives (Abigail, Ahinoam, Maacah, Haggith, Abital and more – 2 Sam. 3:2—5, 5:13).
- She had lost everyone because of their opposition to David. Her family, her father, her husband who loved her ... Ishbosheth was her last brother, and he was murdered just two chapters before her outburst toward David.
- She never had children (2 Sam. 6:23), therefore could not be queen nor produce an heir to the throne.

How do you think she felt about all this?

How might each of these things affect her opinions of God? Of David?

What do you think she believed about God? About the monarchy?

David responded to Michal that he would become “even more undignified than this.” Have you ever praised God with such passion that you appeared undignified in the eyes of others?

What might prevent you from uninhibited worship of Him as seen here by David?

Can you think of any ways to remove those obstacles inhibitions?

DAY FIVE: The Davidic Covenant

READ: 2 Samuel 7 and 1 Chronicles 17.

This passage is referred to as the “Davidic Covenant.” The word “covenant” is not used here, but David himself calls it such in 2 Samuel 23:5. This is an important promise between God and His king, one with lasting implications.

What did the promise mean for David?

What did it mean for Israel?

What does it mean for us?

Before God made this promise, however, David declared something he wanted. What was it?

What does this desire indicate about David's character?

Do you think David ever lamented God's answer? Do you think he ever wished God had given him what He initially asked?

Sometimes we get tunnel vision. We get so busy imagining all the good things we want to do for God that we miss the great things He wants to do for us. Can you think of a time that you've mourned something good because you couldn't see what was greater?

How can we keep our eyes on God's plans without getting distracted by our own?

DAY SIX: David Expands Israel's Borders

READ: 2 Samuel 8, 10 and 1 Chronicles 18-19.

In these passages we read of God's continued blessing on David and His kingdom. Their borders continue to expand. In which direction?

Using a map of ancient Israel, denote where each of these regions exist in relation to Israel.

Philistia:

Edom:

Moab:

Ammon:

Syria (Aram and Phoenicia):

If you don't have a map, visit <http://bible.org/assets/netbible/ot5.jpg>. You could also visit www.Biblemap.org to select the passage and interact with the map online.

All of this comes shortly after David declares what He wants to do for God and God declares what He will do for David. What does this tell you about God and His promises?

DAY SEVEN: David Honors Jonathan

There is an interesting little interlude in chapter 9. To understand it, we need to back up a little further.

READ 2 Samuel 4:4.

Who is Mephibosheth?

Now, READ 2 Samuel 9.

Why do you think this story is here?

What does it tell us about David?

READ Ephesians 2: 4—10 and Titus 3:4—8.

What does this tell us about the heart of God?

Just as Mephibosheth, the grandson of David's enemy and rightful heir to the throne, was adopted into David's family, we who believe have been adopted into God's family. What does that mean for how you perceive your self-worth?

Does that impact how you live? In what ways?