

LESSON TEXT: 2 Samuel 1:1--3:39

Prepared by Paul T. Butler, Th.D.

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS:

Second Samuel was probably written by Nathan or one of the prophets of those days. It was written about 1025 B.C. and covers the 38 years of David's reign. It might well be called "The Acts of King David." The first 10 chapters tell of his glory and the last 14 of his shame. Not even Israel's greatest king is white-washed, thus sometimes even pardoned sin is seen to be punished (12:14). Over all, the book is a treatise on the need of patience and dependence upon God for the fulfillment of his promises (2:1; 6:1-3). It is also a message about sin: (1) sin is a perversion of the soul, a cancer at the core, and spreads outward and onward like the ripples from a stone tossed into a quiet brook; (2) sin is pardonable when the penitence is pure (Psa. 32 & 51); and (3) sin is nonetheless, often punished. Chickens come home to roost. David sowed the wind and reaped the whirlwind. He sowed his wild oats and reaped an awful harvest in the same conduct of his own children. David acknowledged this in Psalms 51:10.

Yet here we find a record proving that a man who has grievously sinned may be greatly restored. It is an encouragement to all of us that by true and full penitence, prayer, and praise, we can individually become a man after God's own heart. The grace by which David was forgiven is still open to us in covenant with Jesus Christ--the Son of David and the Lord of David (Mt. 22:41-46).

One of the most significant things about David was his **forgiving** and **compassionate** heart. Many people (especially Saul) acted wickedly toward David but David always spoke of the best in every man and forgave the worst. WE ARE GOING TO LEARN A LOT ABOUT OURSELVES IN THIS STUDY OF DAVID!

It's True: "Never does a man stand so tall as when he foregoes revenge,
and dares to forgive an injury." ---J. Harold Smith

QUESTIONS:

1. Was the Amalekite's report of Saul's death correct (1 Sam. Ch. 31)? Why do you suppose the Amalekite brought his report?
2. What was David's reaction to the news of Saul's death? 1:11-12. Why?
3. Why did David slay the Amalekite? 1:15
4. What was the "Song of the Bow"?--and what was David's purpose in it? 1:17ff
5. Where was Hebron and why did David go there? 2:2
6. Why did Abner proclaim Ishbosheth king? 2:8
7. In what sort of *playing* were the men of Abner and Joab engaging? 2:14
8. Why did Abner give his support to David? 3:8
9. How could David call Abner a prince and a great man? 3:38
10. What have you learned about David thus far that makes him a man after God's own heart?

"Compassion is a sign of a truly great and generous heart.

Compassion is understanding the troubles of others, coupled with an urgent desire to help. Man naturally is not compassionate. It is an attribute he must learn by living and by his own experiences. It is cultivating an ability to put himself in the other fellow's shoes, remembering that all facts and circumstances influencing the other fellow cannot be known to him."

---Megiddo Message

LESSON TEXT: 2 Samuel 4:1--6:23

Prepared by Paul T. Butler, Th.D.

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS:

Dr. Madison Sarratt, who taught mathematics at Vanderbilt University for many years would admonish his class before giving a test: "Today I am giving two examinations--one in trigonometry and the other in honesty. I hope you will pass them both. If you must fail one, fail trigonometry. There are many good people in the world who can't pass trig, but there are no good people in the world who cannot pass the examination of honesty."

David was an honest man! Of course, we will see *once* in his life, at least, when he was not honest (with Uriah). But even after that horrible incident he was honest-hearted enough to acknowledge his sin and humbly seek God's grace and forgiveness. But basically, David was sincerely transparent, humble, and spiritually-minded (just read his Psalms).

In this lesson we will find him honestly distraught that certain men sought to elevate themselves by murdering Ishbosheth, an opponent of his. David humbly sought the Lord's will and guidance at the peak of his power and fame. He honestly expressed his human ignorance of the Lord's dealing with Uzzah and it changed him as he learned from God. In the midst of indecorous behavior (as he "danced before the Lord") he was honest and humble toward his wife as she rebuked him for being so undignified.

This is another reason David was a man after God's own heart! (1 Sam. 13:14). Humility and honesty, and his dependence upon God's grace was what made David so different from Saul. The difference between a sinner saved and a sinner lost is a saved sinner's humble dependence upon God's grace.

It's True: The first test of a truly great man is his humility. I do not mean by humility, doubt of his own power. But really great men have a curious feeling that the greatness is not in them, but through them. And they see something divine in every other man and are endlessly, foolishly, incredibly merciful.

QUESTIONS:

1. Who was Mephibosheth? Why mention him here? 4:4
2. Why call Ishbosheth a righteous man and kill his assassins? 4:11-12
3. Why did the men of Israel give David credit for leading them when Saul was king? 5:2
4. Did the Jebusites think they could keep David out of their city by telling him about the blind and the lame? 5:6-10
5. How can the only God of **peace** collaborate with David in **war**? 5:17-25
6. Uzzah tried to keep the precious Ark of The Covenant from falling to the ground--why did God strike him dead? 6:6-7
7. How could David dare to be angry with God over Uzzah's death? 6:8. Have you ever been angry with God? Be honest now! How does God react?
8. Does David's "dancing" give sanction to modern dancing so long as it is done in a church? 6:12-19. Should believers today dance before the Lord?
9. Why was David's wife upset with his dancing? 6:20
10. What did David mean by his answer to her? 6:22

There are **no** instances of dancing in the descriptions of worship in the New Testament

LESSON TEXT: 2 Samuel 7:1--9:13

Prepared by Paul T. Butler, Th.D.

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS:

It is well known that the first *recorded* American Thanksgiving Day was celebrated by the Pilgrims in **1621**. One of my ancestors was at this first Thanksgiving, having come to Plymouth on the *Fortune*, the next ship after the *Mayflower*. In **1789** George Washington issued a Thanksgiving Day Proclamation. But Thomas Jefferson discontinued it, calling Thanksgiving “a kingly practice.” After this, Thanksgiving was observed by some individual states, on whatever date suited their fancy. In 1828, Mrs. Hale, editor of *Godey’s Lady’s Book* and author of the poem, *Mary Had a Little Lamb*, began campaigning for the restoration of Thanksgiving as a national holiday. She wrote letters, sought appointments with national leaders from the President on down. Time after time she was politely rebuffed, sometimes being told it was impossible and impractical, and sometimes being dismissed with a this-is-none-of-your-business scolding. Finally in **1863** President Abraham Lincoln listened seriously to her plea that North and South lay aside enmities and strife on a Thanksgiving Day. He proclaimed the 4th Thursday of November to be the official National Thanksgiving Day. This day was **finally** ratified by the U.S. Congress in **1941!**

It took 300 years for our national legislators to officially acknowledge the need to give thanks. It didn’t take David that long! David was a man with a grateful heart. That is why he was a man after God’s own heart. David’s profound thankfulness is immortalized in his book of Psalms. But the little known prayer of David recorded in 2 Samuel ch. 7 epitomizes his gracious heart. And David not only prayed about his thankfulness, he demonstrated it by his desire to build God a house and his charity toward those in need (see 2 Sam. 7:1-2; 9:1-13). Thankfulness is the **essence** of sanctification and salvation. Ingratitude is the “mother of sins” (Rom. 1:21). **BE THANKFUL AND BE IN GOD’S HOUSE--BE IN BIBLE SCHOOL!**

“He who forgets the language of gratitude
can never be on speaking terms with happiness.
--C. Neil Strait

QUESTIONS:

1. Why did David want to build a “house” for the Lord? 7:1
2. Why did God refuse David’s desire? 7:1-12 (see 2 Chron. 28:2-3).
3. What is God’s point in promising David to build *David* a house?
4. 7:10-12.
5. Why did God choose to establish the throne of David **forever**?
7:13. Why didn’t God change his promise to David after David’s sin?
6. What do we learn about David from his prayer? 7:18-29
7. How can a man who prays so beautifully, cruelly slay and plunder thousands of Philistines and Edomites? 8:2,13
8. Why was David so intent on showing kindness to Saul’s family?
9:1
9. What do you think of David now?
10. Are you a person “after God’s own heart”?

***God does not dwell in “houses made with hands”
(i.e., buildings) 1 Kings 8:27; Isaiah 66:1-2; Acts 8:48-50
---however, God is pleased to dwell through his Holy Spirit
in the hearts (minds) of humble and contrite Christian believers 1
Corinthians 3:16-17; 6:19-20;
Ephesians 2:14-22; Colossians 1:27.***

***God dwells wherever there is a trusting, obedient
human heart---it’s called the “church” of Christ.
---ptb***

LESSON TEXT: 2 Samuel 10:1--12:31

Prepared by Paul T. Butler, Th.D.

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS:

A letter to "Dear Abby": "Since I am a pastor with 43 years experience, I'd like to offer this suggestion to the inexperienced young minister who didn't know how to handle a very bold woman in his congregation who had designs on him. Whenever I noticed a romantic twinkle in the eye of a woman in my congregation, I always checked to make sure it wasn't caused by a reflection from the gleam in my own. Signed, Rev. C _____."

Little Alex was trying to save all the pennies he could in order to buy a baseball bat. But he had a hard struggle. One night when he was saying his prayers, his mother heard him say fervently: "O Lord, please help me save my money for a baseball bat--and, God, don't let the ice cream man come down this street."

Temptation comes to every human being, young/old, preacher/parishioner. Yes, even **kings** and **presidents** and **ministers** are tempted. Bishop Fulton J. Sheen once said, "You are not tempted because you are evil; you are tempted because you are human." David's temptation (and subsequent sin) is classic. We can almost hear him saying, "It happened so suddenly, so unexpectedly. I don't know why I did it--I can't believe I did it!" The story goes like this: "It happened, late one afternoon, when David was walking upon the roof of the king's palace. He saw a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful..." And you know.....the rest of the story! David did not go up on the roof as a wicked voyeur. It wasn't his fault Bathsheba was exposing herself. He did not sin when he saw her. But he did when he sent to inquire about her and take her. And, oh, what a long and dreadful series of consequences resulted from that moment of rebellion against God's word! David repented, and the Lord forgave him, but the consequences could not be averted. BE IN BIBLE SCHOOL AND HEAR NATHAN SAY, "THOU ART THE MAN!"

It's True: "Temptation, if not resisted, soon becomes necessity."

QUESTIONS:

4. Why would David go to war simply because some of his men had their beards shaved by the Ammonites? 10:1-19
5. Why did David remain in Jerusalem? 11:1
6. Was it wrong for David to see Bathsheba bathing? 11:2
7. Why didn't Bathsheba refuse to come to David when he sent for her? 11:3-5
8. Why would such a spiritual, considerate, humble man as David, take another man's wife? 11:1-5. Did David need a psychiatrist--was he mentally ill?
9. Did David have to conspire to have Uriah slain? Couldn't he have remedied his problem some other way? How? 11:6-26
10. Why did Nathan confront David with a story about sheep? Why not just blurt out the wickedness? 12:1-7
11. Since David acknowledged his sin and repented, why did God take his illegitimate son in death? 12:14-19
12. Why were people surprised that David did not fast and mourn **after** the child died? 12:20-21
13. What do you think of David's answer? 12:22-23

"Joe E. Trull, co-author of the book *Ministerial Ethics*(1993), helped write the Clergy Sexual Abuse policy for the Texas Baptist General Convention. From his study of literature on clergy sexual abuse, he concludes that...from 30 to 35 percent of ministers of all denominations admit to having sexual relationships....outside of marriage. Mr. Trull estimates that at least half of that contact occurs in pastoral counseling. No current theological breakdown of offending pastors exists, but a 1984 Fuller Seminary survey of 1200 ministers showed one in five theologically conservative pastors admitting to some sexual contact outside of marriage with a church member, while over two-fifths of moderate and half of liberal pastors owned up to the same."
--*WORLD* magazine, March 30, 2002

LESSON TEXT: 2 Samuel 13:1--15:37

Prepared by Paul T. Butler, Th.D.

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS:

As a veteran judge for some 25 years in the Municipal Courts of Chicago and the Circuit Court of Cook County, IL, Jacob M. Brande lays his finger on some 15 causes of juvenile delinquency. He believes that many of these things could be controlled if parents and officials knew the causes, and then did something about them. Here are Judge Brande's causes in condensed form: (1) destructive toys and games; (2) working mothers; (3) moonlighting fathers; (4) improper literature; (5) gambling; (6) automobiles; (7) drugs and narcotics; (8) movies, radio and television; (9) alcohol; (10) unsupervised group life; (11) idleness and unemployment; (12) lack of religious training; (13) lack of discipline in the home; (14) lack of discipline in the schools; (15) lack of love and affection in the home.

When Woodrow Wilson was president of Princeton University, he spoke these words to a parents' group: "I get many letters from you parents about your children. You want to know why we people up here in Princeton can't make more out of them and do more for them. Let me tell you the reason. It may shock you just a little, but I am not trying to be rude. The reason is that they are your sons, reared in your homes, blood of your blood, bone of your bone. They have absorbed the ideals of your homes. You have formed and fashioned them. They are your sons. In those malleable, moldable years of their lives you have forever left your imprint upon them."

David left his imprint upon his children--some good and some bad. We will be studying some of the bad in this lesson. Incest, rape, lying, murder, and civil rebellion were some of the evils done by some of the children of David. How much did David have to do with all this? BE IN BIBLE SCHOOL AND FIND OUT!

It's True: 1% of the child's time is spent under the influence of the Sunday School; 7% under the influence of the public school; 92% under the influence of the home!

QUESTIONS:

1. What four sins did Amnon commit? 13:1-14
2. Why did Amnon hate Tamar so vehemently after raping her? 13:15
3. How could sending her away be a *greater sin* than what he had already done? 13:15-16
4. What did David do about this situation? 13:21
5. How would you have handled the situation?
6. Was Absalom right in slaying Amnon? 13:20-39. Why?
7. How would you have dealt with Absalom had he been your son? 14:1-24
8. Is David to blame for Absalom's rebellion? Why? How much? 15:1
9. How did Absalom accomplish the revolt? 15:2-12
10. How did David deal with the revolt? 15:25,26,30,31
11. How would you handle rebellion in your son?

America's ambassador to Japan, General Douglas MacArthur, served as Counselor of the State Department under John Foster Dulles. Like Dulles, MacArthur was a hard worker. Once when Dulles telephoned the MacArthur home asking for Doug, Mrs.

MacArthur mistook him for an aide and snapped angrily "MacArthur is where MacArthur always is, weekdays, Saturdays, Sundays and nights--***in that office!***" Within minutes MacArthur got a telephoned order from Dulles: "Go home at once, boy.

Your home front is crumbling."
--*Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations*

LESSON TEXT: 2 Samuel 16:1---18:33

Prepared by Paul T. Butler, Th.D.

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS:

When William Gladstone was Chancellor of the Exchequer (Secretary of the Treasury), ca. 1875, in Great Britain, he sent down to the Treasury for certain statistics upon which to base his budget proposals. The statistician made a mistake. But Gladstone was so sure of this man's accuracy that he did not take time to verify his figures. He went before the House of Commons and made his speech, basing his appeal on the incorrect figures that had been given him. His speech was no sooner published than the newspaper exposed its glaring inaccuracies. Mr. Gladstone was naturally overwhelmed with embarrassment. He went to his office and sent at once for the statistician who was responsible for his humiliating situation. The man came full of fear and shame, certain that he was going to lose his position. But instead, Gladstone said: "I know how much you must be disturbed over what has happened, and I have sent for you to put you at your ease. For a long time you have been engaged in handling the intricacies of the national accounts, and this is the first mistake that you have made. I want to congratulate you, and express to you my keen appreciation." It took a big man to do that, big with the bigness of the truly merciful.

Stephen Grellet was a French-born Quaker who died in New Jersey in 1855. Grellet would be unknown to the world today except for a few lines which made him immortal. The familiar lines, which have served as an inspiration to so many people are these: "I shall pass through this world but once. Any good that I can do, or any kindness that I can show to any human being, let me do it now and not defer it. For I shall not pass this way again."

In our lesson text we will study the actions of a number of David's friends as they each had opportunity to help him when he was in need. Some bad, some good. They all had one opportunity--what did they do with it? **WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH YOUR OPPORTUNITIES? BE IN BIBLE SCHOOL AND LEARN WHAT TO DO!**

It's True: "So long as we love we serve. No man is useless while he is a friend." --Robert Louis Stevenson

QUESTIONS:

1. Was Ziba's purpose in befriending David honorable? 16:1-4. (See 2 Sam. 19:24-30).
2. Why did David command Abishai to leave Shimei alone when he was cursing the king? 16:5-14
3. What was the reputation of Ahithophel as a counselor? 16:15-23
4. How could David sanction planting a spy (Hushai) to deliberately deceive Absalom? 17:1-14. Should government leaders allow such deception?
5. How did Hushai's counsel help David? 17:15-22
6. Why did Ahithophel commit suicide? What about suicide? 17:23
7. What significant lessons do we learn from those who came to David's aid? 17:27-29
8. How could Joab have the audacity to disobey king David's order to kill Absalom? 18:5 and 18:14-15
9. Why didn't Ahimaaz tell David Absalom was dead? 18:19-29
10. Can you sympathize with David as he mourns the death of Absalom? 18:31-33. How may we profit from David's experience with Absalom?

"Friendship is one of the sweetest joys of life.
Many might have failed beneath the bitterness
of their trial had they not found a friend."
--Charles Suprgeon

There are not many things in life so
beautiful as true friendship, and
there are not many things
more uncommon.
---Megiddo Message

LESSON TEXT: 2 Samuel 19:1--21-22

Prepared by Paul T. Butler, Th.D.

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS:

The city council of Florence, Italy, one day asked Leonardo da Vinci who was at that time Italy's most famous artist, to submit sketches for the decorations of the grand hall of the city. One of the councilmen had heard of a young and little-known artist who had done good work, named Michelangelo, and asked him to submit sketches also. The sketches of Leonardo were superb, in keeping with his genius, but when the councilmen saw the sketches of Michelangelo there was a spontaneous expression of wonder and enthusiasm. News of this reached Leonardo. He also heard that one of the councilmen had said, "Leonardo is getting old." He was never able to get over the eclipse of his fame by that of Michelangelo, and the remaining years of his life were clouded with jealousy and gloom.

There is an ancient Greek fable which tells the story of a man who killed himself through envy. His fellow citizens had reared a statue to one of their number who was a celebrated victor in the public games. So strong was the feeling of envy which this incited in one of the hero's rivals that he went forth every night in order, if possible, to destroy that monument. After repeated efforts he moved it from its pedestal, and it fell, but in its fall it crushed him to death!

In the text for this lesson we will wade through many examples of jealousy, discontent, tragedy, war and bloodshed. Strife and confusion plagued David and God's people. And it was all because they kept their hearts hard against the revealed law of God. BE IN BIBLE SCHOOL. LET US ALL RECEIVE THE EXHORTATION AGAINST JEALOUSY AND DISCONTENT FROM THIS LESSON.

It's True: "Few men have the strength to honor a friend's success without envy." --Aeschylus (524-456 B.C., Greek dramatist)

QUESTIONS:

1. Can you believe the impertinency of Joab? He wouldn't let David mourn one full day over his dead son, and sarcastically rebuked David for being disloyal to his friends! How would you have reacted to that? 19:1-8
2. Why was David's ancestral tribe, Judah, so late in seeing that David was enthroned again as king after Absalom's death? 19:8-10
3. Did David err in making Amasa command-in-chief over Joab? Why did he do it? 19:11-15
4. How could David forgive Shimei, the man who cursed him so vehemently (see 16:5-14)? Would you have forgiven him?
5. Does the little tiff between Judah and Israel sound familiar to you? 19:41-43. Could it have had repercussions later in Hebrew history?
6. What do you think of Joab now that he has killed another leader of David's administration? 20:1-13
7. Cutting off a man's head is wise? 20:14-22. How?
8. Kind and generous David instituted forced labor. 20:24. Was it continued? Did it work? Is there another name for that?
9. Was David justified in giving Saul's sons to the Gibeonites for execution? 21:1-9
10. Rizpah—tragic figure of a mother mourning her sons slain because of politics--is this fair? 21:10-22. Is it morally right? Who's to blame? Will war never cease? How then shall Christians live?

One of Dr. Seuss's children's book creatures is "Grinch" who is a creature who can't bear the sight of anyone enjoying himself without getting so envious it bites itself.

Someone has said Hollywood is not only a place where you must succeed but also a place where your friends must fail.

For one man who sincerely pities our misfortunes, there are a thousand who sincerely hate our successes.

LESSON TEXT: 2 Samuel 22:1--24:25

Prepared by Paul T. Butler, Th.D.

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS:

A very odd bit of sculpture adorns the wall on the grounds of Ribston Hall, Yorkshire, England. The statue is what is commonly called "The Two-Faced Butler." On one side there is a face that is all smiles and politeness; on the other side is one that depicts nothing but insolence and impoliteness. It is told that this represents just such a major-domo (chief-servant) who once served the household of Ribston Hall. One day after having received orders from the mistress of the household, all smiles and fawning, he was seen a moment later when he thought she was not looking, sticking out his tongue at her and making other impolite gestures. So this statue was ordered made and erected in a very prominent spot to both shame him and warn any other servants who might have a tendency to imitate the behavior of the "two-faced butler."

In our lesson on this text we are going to see David, one time humbly praising the Lord and worshiping him for his blessings, and another time David is kindling the anger of the Lord because he proudly and arrogantly "numbered Israel" (evidently making preparations to go to war to conquer new territory and reach beyond the limits God had assigned Israel).

Now what is David?---a godly man or an ungodly man? Is he a "two-faced-king"? How can he praise God one moment and lift himself up against God the next? Is he a hypocrite?

Have you ever had trouble with *spiritual-schizophrenia* in your own life? Do you find yourself sometimes, like David, praising the Lord, and then disobeying the Lord? Do you need help with this? YOU'LL FIND HELP IN BIBLE SCHOOL AS WE STUDY THIS LESSON! In the meantime, be sure to read Romans chapters 7 and 8!

It's True: "A fault which humbles a man is of more use to him than a good action which puffs him up." --Thomas Wilson

QUESTIONS:

1. From what enemies did the Lord save David? 22:1-7. Has the Lord saved you from any enemies? Which?
2. Did David actually see smoke going up from God's nostrils? 22:8-16. What is David communicating in these *anthropomorphic* statements about God?
3. What is David admitting in 22:17-18?
4. Was David really rewarded according to his righteousness? 22:21-25. What if you are rewarded according to your righteousness?
5. What is the claim David makes for his music (psalms)? 23:1-3. Could we profit spiritually by singing more of David's Psalms and less of our own music?
6. Why the list of names? 23:8ff
7. What does it mean by saying the Lord incited David to number Israel? 24:1. (Read also, Num. 1:26; 1 Sam. 11:8; 13:2; 1 Chron. 27:23-24)
8. What was wrong with numbering (taking a census of) Israel? 24:10
9. Why did David choose pestilence as the punishment for numbering Israel? 24:14
10. Why didn't David take the gift Raunah offered him? 24:18-25. Does what you give the Lord cost you anything?

Hypocrisy is the devil's
deadliest weapon;
it is sharpened on the
hard stone of self-deception.
---ptb