



The Life of David

A man after God's heart

Acts 13:22

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Forward

When we think of David, we think: shepherd, poet, giant-killer, king, ancestor of Jesus—in short, one of the greatest men in the Old Testament.

But alongside that list stands another: betrayer, liar, adulterer, and murderer. The first list gives qualities we all might like to have; the second, qualities that might be true of any one of us.

The Bible makes no effort to hide David's failures. Yet he is remembered and respected for his heart for God. Knowing how much more we share in David's failures than in his greatness, we should be curious to find out what made God refer to David as “a man after my own heart” (Acts 13:22).

David, more than anything else, had an unchangeable belief in the faithful and forgiving nature of God.

He was a man who lived with great zest. He sinned many times, but he was quick to confess his sins. His confessions were from the heart, and his repentance was genuine.

David never took God's forgiveness lightly or his blessing for granted. In return, God never held back from David either his forgiveness or the consequences of his actions. David experienced the joy of forgiveness even when he had to suffer the consequences of his sins.

Chapter 1



David anointed king.

1 Samuel 16:13

So as David stood there among his brothers, Samuel took the olive oil he had brought and poured it on David's head. And the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him from that day on. Then Samuel returned to Ramah.

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David joins Saul's palace staff.

1 Samuel 16:19-21

So Saul sent messengers to Jesse to say, "Send me your son David, the shepherd." Jesse responded by sending David to Saul, along with a young goat and a donkey loaded down with food and wine.

So David went to Saul and served him. Saul liked David very much, and David became one of Saul's armor bearers.

When Saul asked David to be in his service, he obviously did not know that David had been secretly anointed king (1 Samuel 16:12).

Saul's invitation presented an excellent opportunity for the young man and future king to gain firsthand information about leading a nation ("David went back and forth from Saul," 1 Samuel 17:15).

Sometimes our plans—even the ones we think God has approved—have to be put on hold indefinitely. Like David, we can use this waiting time profitably. We can choose to learn and grow in our present circumstances, whatever they may be.

Why David and Jonathan were such good friends.

1 Samuel 18:1-4

After David had finished talking with Saul, he met Jonathan, the king's son. There was an immediate bond of love between them, and they became the best of friends.

From that day on Saul kept David with him at the palace and wouldn't let him return home.

And Jonathan made a special vow to be David's friend, and he sealed the pact by giving him his robe, tunic, sword, bow, and belt.

When David and Jonathan met, they became close friends at once. Their friendship is one of the deepest and closest recorded in the Bible:

- (1) They based their friendship on commitment to God, not just each other;
- (2) They let nothing come between them, not even career or family problems;
- (3) They drew closer together when their friendship was tested;
- (4) They remained friends to the end.

Jonathan, the prince of Israel, later realized that David, and not he, would be the next king (1 Samuel 23:17).

But that did not weaken his love for David. Jonathan would much rather lose the throne of Israel than lose his closest friends.

How David reacted to Saul's jealousy.

1 Samuel 18:11-12

He suddenly hurled it at David, intending to pin him to the wall. But David jumped aside and escaped. This happened another time, too, [12] for Saul was afraid of him, and he was jealous because the Lord had left him and was now with David.

Saul tried to kill David because he was jealous of David's popularity, yet David continued to protect and comfort Saul.

Perhaps people have been jealous of you and have even attacked you in some way.

They may be intimidated by your strengths, which make them conscious of their own shortcomings. It would be natural to strike back or to avoid them.

A better response is to befriend them (Matthew 5:43-44) and to ask God for the strength to continue to love them, as David kept on loving Saul.

Chapter 2



Should David have lied to protect himself?

1 Samuel 21:2

"The king has sent me on a private matter," David said. "He told me not to tell anyone why I am here. I have told my men where to meet me later.

David lied to protect himself from Saul (1 Samuel 21:10).

Some excuse this lie because a war was going on, and it is the duty of a good soldier to deceive the enemy. But nowhere is David's lie condoned. In fact, the opposite is true because his lie led to the death of 85 priests (1 Samuel 22:9-19).

David's small lie seemed harmless enough, but it led to tragedy. The Bible makes it very clear that lying is wrong (Leviticus 19:11). Lying, like every other sin, is serious in God's sight and may lead to all sorts of harmful consequences.

Don't minimize or categorize sins. All sins must be avoided whether or not we can foresee their potential consequences.

Why did Philistines welcome David into their land?

1 Samuel 21:10-15

So David escaped from Saul and went to King Achish of Gath. But Achish's officers weren't happy about his being there. "Isn't this David, the king of the land?" they asked. "Isn't he the one the people honor with dances, singing, 'Saul has killed his thousands, and David his ten thousands'?"

David heard these comments and was afraid of what King Achish might do to him. So he pretended to be insane, scratching on doors and drooling down his beard. Finally, King Achish said to his men, "Must you bring me a madman?"

We already have enough of them around here! Why should I let someone like this be my guest?"

Gath was one of the five major Philistine cities. Why did the Philistines accept their archenemy, David, into their camp?

The Philistines may have been initially happy to accept a defector who was a high military leader. Any enemy of Saul would have been a friend of theirs.

They could not have known that David had been anointed Israel's next king (1 Samuel 16:13). Soon, however, the Philistines became nervous about David's presence. After all, he had slain thousands of their own people (1 Samuel 18:7).

David then protected himself by acting insane because it was the custom not to harm mentally unstable people

David's ability to lead and motivate others

1 Samuel 22:2

Then others began coming—men who were in trouble or in debt or who were just discontented—until David was the leader of about four hundred men.

Those in distress, in debt, or discontented joined David, who himself was an outlaw. These people were outcasts themselves and could only improve their lot by helping David become king.

David's control over this band of men again shows his resourcefulness and ability to lead and motivate others. It is difficult enough to build an army out of good men, but it takes even greater leadership to build one out of the kind of men that followed David.

This group eventually formed the core of his military leadership and produced several "mighty men" (2 Samuel 23:8ff).

David's great respect for Saul

1 Samuel 24:5-6

But then David's conscience began bothering him because he had cut Saul's robe. "The Lord knows I shouldn't have done it," he said to his men.

"It is a serious thing to attack the Lord's anointed one, for the Lord himself has chosen him."

David had great respect for Saul, in spite of the fact that Saul was trying to kill him. Although Saul was sinning and rebelling against God, David still respected the position he held as God's anointed king.

David knew he would one day be king, and he also knew it was not right to strike down the man God had placed on the throne. If he assassinated Saul, he would be setting a precedent for his own opponents to remove him some day.

Romans 13:1-7 teaches that God has placed the government and its leaders in power. We may not know why, but, like David, we are to respect the positions and roles of those to whom God has given authority.

There is one exception, however. Because God is our highest authority, we should not allow a leader to pressure us to violate God's law.

David did not rejoice at Saul's death.

2 Samuel 1:17-27

Then David composed a funeral song for Saul and Jonathan. Later he commanded that it be taught to all the people of Judah. It is known as the Song of the Bow, and it is recorded in The Book of Jashar.

Your pride and joy, O Israel, lies dead on the hills!
How the mighty heroes have fallen!

Don't announce the news in Gath,
or the Philistines will rejoice.
Don't proclaim it in the streets of Ashkelon,
or the pagans will laugh in triumph.

O mountains of Gilboa,
let there be no dew or rain upon you or your slopes.
For there the shield of the mighty was defiled;
the shield of Saul will no longer be anointed with oil.

Both Saul and Jonathan killed their strongest foes;
they did not return from battle empty-handed.

How beloved and gracious were Saul and Jonathan!
They were together in life and in death.
They were swifter than eagles;
they were stronger than lions.

O women of Israel, weep for Saul,
for he dressed you in fine clothing and gold ornaments.

How the mighty heroes have fallen in battle!
Jonathan lies dead upon the hills.

How I weep for you, my brother Jonathan!
Oh, how much I loved you!
And your love for me was deep,
deeper than the love of women!

How the mighty heroes have fallen!
Stripped of their weapons, they lie dead.

David was a talented musician. He played the harp (1 Samuel 16:23), he brought music into the worship services of the temple (1 Chron. 25), and he wrote many of the psalms.

Here we are told that he wrote a lament in memory of Saul and his son Jonathan, David's closest friend. Music played an important role in

Israel's history. (For other famous songs in the Bible, see the chart in Exodus 15:21.)

Saul had caused much trouble for David, but when he died, David composed a lament for the king and his son. David had every reason to hate Saul, but he chose not to. Instead, he chose to look at the good Saul had done and to ignore the times when Saul had attacked him.

It takes courage to lay aside hatred and hurt and to respect the positive side of another person, especially an enemy.

By saying that Jonathan's love was "more wonderful than that of women," David was not implying that he had a sexual relationship with Jonathan. Homosexual acts were absolutely forbidden in Israel.

Leviticus 18:22 calls homosexuality "detestable," and Leviticus 20:13 decrees the death penalty for those who practice homosexuality.

David was simply restating the deep brotherhood and faithful friendship he had with Jonathan

Chapter 3



Why David made Hebron his capital

2 Samuel 2:1

After this, David asked the Lord, "Should I move back to Judah?"

And the Lord replied, "Yes."

Then David asked, "Which town should I go to?"

And the Lord replied, "Hebron."

Although David knew he would become king (1 Samuel 16:13; 1 Samuel 23:17; 1 Samuel 24:20), and although the time seemed right now that Saul was dead, David still asked God if he should move back to Judah, the home territory of his tribe.

Before moving ahead with what seems obvious, first bring the matter to God, who alone knows the best timing.

God told David to return to Hebron, where he would soon be crowned king of Judah.

David made Hebron his capital because

- (1) It was the largest city in Judah at that time;
- (2) It was secure against attack;
- (3) It was located near the center of Judah's territory, an ideal location for a capital city;
- (4) Many key trade routes converged at Hebron, making it difficult for supply lines to be cut off in wartime.

David suffered heartache because of his many wives.

2 Samuel 3:2-5

These were the sons who were born to David in Hebron:

The oldest was Amnon, whose mother was Ahinoam of Jezreel.

The second was Kileab, whose mother was Abigail, the widow of Nabal from Carmel.

The third was Absalom, whose mother was Maacah, the daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur.

The fourth was Adenoma, whose mother was Haggith.

The fifth was Shephatiah, whose mother was Abital.

The sixth was Ithream, whose mother was David's wife Eglah.

These sons were all born to David in Hebron.

Why David was upset over Abner's death.

2 Samuel 3:29

Joab and his family are the guilty ones. May his family in every generation be cursed with a man who has open sores or leprosy or who walks on crutches or who dies by the sword or who begs for food!"

Joab took revenge for the death of his brother instead of leaving justice to God. But that revenge backfired on him (1 Kings 2:31-34).

God will repay those who deserve it (Romans 12:19). Refuse to rejoice when your enemies suffer, and don't try to get revenge. Seeking revenge will ruin your own peace of mind and increase the chances of further retaliation.

Abner killed Joab's brother Asahel in self-defense. Joab then killed Abner to avenge his brother's death and also to save his position of military leadership.

People who killed in self-defense were supposed to be safe in cities of refuge (Numbers 35:22-25). Joab showed his disrespect for God's laws by killing Abner out of revenge in Hebron, a city of refuge (Joshua 20:7).

David was saying that Joab's descendants would be unclean, unhealthy, and in want.

Why did David say such harsh words about Joab?

David was upset over Abner's death for several reasons.

- (1) He was grieved over the loss of a skilled military officer.
- (2) He wanted to place the guilt of Abner's murder on Joab, not himself.
- (3) He was on the verge of becoming king over the entire nation, and utilizing Abner was the key to winning over the northern tribes. Abner's death could have revived the civil war.
- (4) Joab violated David's agreement to protect Abner. Joab's murderous act ruined David's plans, and David was especially angry that his own commander had committed the crime.

David showed patience in becoming king.

2 Samuel 5:4-5

David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years in all.

He had reigned over Judah from Hebron for seven years and six months, and from Jerusalem he reigned over all Israel and Judah for thirty-three years.

This was the third time David was anointed king.

First he was privately anointed by Samuel (1 Samuel 16:13).

Then he was made king over the tribe of Judah (2 Samuel 2:4).

Finally he was crowned king over all Israel. As an outlaw, life had looked bleak, but God's promise to make him king over all Israel was now being fulfilled.

Although the kingdom would be divided again in less than 75 years, David's dynasty would reign over Judah, the southern kingdom, for over 400 years.

David did not become king over all Israel until he was 37 years old, although he had been promised the kingdom many years earlier (1 Samuel 16:13).

During those years, David had to wait patiently for the fulfillment of God's promise.

If you feel pressured to achieve instant results and success, remember David's patience.

Just as his time of waiting prepared him for his important task, a waiting period may help prepare you by strengthening your character.

Chapter 4



Why God blessed David

1 Chron. 14:2

And David realized that the Lord had made him king over Israel and had made his kingdom very great for the sake of his people Israel.

God gave David honor and success (“his kingdom had been highly exalted”), but not simply for David’s personal gain.

David realized that God had prospered him for a special reason—for the sake of God’s people! Often we are tempted to use our position or possessions only for our own good.

Instead, we must remember that God has placed us where we are and given us all we have so that we may encourage others and give to those in need.

Decisive action against idols

1 Chron. 14:12

The Philistines had abandoned their idols there, so David gave orders to burn them up.

Before David went to battle, he inquired of God first, asking for his presence and guidance. Too often we wait until we are in trouble before turning to God.

By then the consequences of our actions are already unfolding. Do you ask for God's help only as a desperate last resort? Instead, go to him first! Like David, you may receive incredible help and avoid serious trouble.

David's quick and decisive action against idols helped unify his kingdom and focus the people on worshiping the one true God.

He was obeying the law that said, "This is what you are to do to them: Break down their altars, smash their sacred stones, cut down their Asherah poles and burn their idols in the fire" (Deut. 7:5).

Most of David's successors failed to destroy idols, and this led to unbelievable moral corruption in Israel.

Often the soldiers wanted to keep souvenirs from the battle (and 2 Samuel 5:21 states that some of the men kept some of these idols), but David ordered them to burn the idols.

The only proper response to sin is to get rid of it completely.

You cannot be a follower of God while continuing to hold on to parts of your past life that push God out of the center of your thoughts and actions.

Eliminate whatever takes God's rightful place in your life, and follow him with complete devotion.

God's covenant with David

2 Samuel 7:1

When the Lord had brought peace to the land and King David was settled in his palace.

This chapter records the covenant God made with David, promising to carry on David's line forever.

This promise would be fully realized in the birth of Jesus Christ. Although the word *covenant* is not specifically stated here, it is used elsewhere to describe this occasion (2 Samuel 23:5; Psalm 89:3-4, 28, 34-37).

2 Samuel 7:8-16

"Now go and say to my servant David, 'This is what the Lord Almighty says: I chose you to lead my people Israel when you were just a shepherd boy, tending your sheep out in the pasture.

I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have destroyed all your enemies. Now I will make your name famous throughout the earth!

And I have provided a permanent homeland for my people Israel, a secure place where they will never be disturbed. It will be their own land where wicked nations won't oppress them as they did in the past, from the time I appointed judges to rule my people. And I will keep you safe from all your enemies.

" 'And now the Lord declares that he will build a house for you—a dynasty of kings! For when you die, I will raise up one of your

descendants, and I will make his kingdom strong.

He is the one who will build a house—a temple—for my name. And I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

I will be his father, and he will be my son. If he sins, I will use other nations to punish him. But my unfailing love will not be taken from him as I took it from Saul, whom I removed before you.

Your dynasty and your kingdom will continue for all time before me, and your throne will be secure forever.' "

David's request was good, but God said no. This does not mean that God rejected David. In fact, God was planning to do something even greater in David's life than allowing him the prestige of building the temple.

Although God turned down David's request, he promised to continue the house (or dynasty) of David forever. David's earthly dynasty ended four centuries later, but Jesus Christ, a direct descendant of David, was the ultimate fulfillment of this promise (Acts 2:22-36).

Christ will reign for eternity—now in his spiritual kingdom and in heaven, and later, on earth, in the new Jerusalem (Luke 1:30-33; Rev. 21).

Have you prayed with good intentions, only to have God say no? This is God's way of directing you to a greater purpose in your life. Accepting God's no requires as great a faith as carrying out his yes

Why God didn't want David to build the temple.

2 Samuel 7:5

"Go and tell my servant David, 'this is what the Lord says: Are

you the one to build me a temple to live in?

In this message from Nathan, God is saying that he doesn't want David to build a "house" for him. Why didn't God want David to build the temple?

God told David that his job was to unify and lead Israel and to destroy its enemies. This huge task would require David to shed a great deal of blood.

In 1 Chron. 28:3, we learn that God did not want his temple built by a warrior. Therefore, David made the plans and collected the materials so that his son Solomon could begin work on the temple as soon as he became king (1 Kings 5-7). David accepted his part in God's plan and did not try to go beyond it. Sometimes God says no to our plans. When he does, we should utilize the other opportunities he gives us.

How David responded to God's "no" answer.

1 Chron. 17:16-20

Then King David went in and sat before the Lord and prayed, "Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my family, that you have brought me this far?"

And now, O God, in addition to everything else, you speak of giving me a lasting dynasty! You speak as though I were someone very great, O Lord God!

What more can I say about the way you have honored me? You know what I am really like. For my sake, O Lord, and according to your will, you have done all these great things and have made them known.

"O Lord, there is no one like you—there is no other God. We have never

even heard of another god like you!

God told David that Solomon would be given the honor of building the temple. David responded with deep humility, not resentment. This king who had conquered his enemies and was loved by his people said, “Who am I. . . that you have brought me this far?”

David recognized that God was the *true* king. God has done just as much for us, and he plans to do even more! Like David, we should humble ourselves and give glory to God, saying, “There is no one like you, O LORD.”

When God chooses someone else to implement your ideas, will you respond with such humility?

1 Chron. 22:7-10

"I wanted to build a Temple to honor the name of the Lord my God,"
David told him.

"But the Lord said to me, 'you have killed many men in the great battles you have fought. And since you have shed so much blood before me, you will not be the one to build a Temple to honor my name.

But you will have a son who will experience peace and rest. I will give him peace with his enemies in all the surrounding lands. His name will be Solomon, and I will give peace and quiet to Israel during his reign.

He is the one who will build a Temple to honor my name. He will be my son, and I will be his father. And I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel forever.'

God told David he would not be the one to build the temple. Instead the task would be left to his son Solomon. David graciously accepted this “no” from God.

He was not jealous of the fact that his son would have the honor of building God's temple, but instead made preparations for Solomon to carry out his task.

Similarly, we should take steps now to prepare the way for our children to find and fulfill God's purpose.

Sooner or later our children will have to make their own decisions, but we can help by:

Supplying them with the proper tools:

Showing them how to pray and study God's Word,

The difference between right and wrong, and

The importance of church involvement

Chapter 5



David fell deeper and deeper into sin.

2 Samuel 11:1

About a month later, King Nahash of Ammon led his army against the Israelite city of Jabesh-gilead. But the citizens of Jabesh asked for peace. "Make a treaty with us, and we will be your servants," they pleaded.

Winter is the rainy season in Israel, the time when crops are planted. Spring was a good time to go to war because the roads were dry, making travel easier for troop movements, supplies wagons, and chariots.

In Israel, wheat and barley were ready to be harvested in the spring. These crops were an important food source for traveling armies.

This successful siege (see 2 Samuel 12:26-27) put an end to the Ammonites' power. From this time on, the Ammonites were subject to Israel.

David could have chosen to stop and turn from evil at any stage along the way. But once sin gets started, it is difficult to stop (James 1:14-15).

The deeper the mess, the less we want to admit having caused it.

It's much easier to stop sliding down a hill when you are near the top than when you are halfway down. The best solution is to stop sin before it starts.

David entertained temptation.

2 Samuel 11:3-4

He sent someone to find out who she was, and he was told, "She is Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite."

Then David sent for her; and when she came to the palace, he slept with her. (She had just completed the purification rites after having her menstrual period.) Then she returned home.

David's insensitive to Uriah's death.

2 Samuel 11:25

"Well, tell Joab not to be discouraged," David said. "The sword kills one as well as another! Fight harder next time, and conquer the city!"

David's response to Uriah's death seems flippant and insensitive. While he grieved deeply for Saul and Abner, his rivals (2 Samuel 1; 2 Samuel 3:31-39), he showed no grief for Uriah, a good man with strong spiritual character.

Why? David had become callous to his own sin. The only way he could cover up his first sin (adultery) was to sin again, and soon he no longer felt guilty for what he had done.

Feelings are not reliable guides for determining right and wrong. Deliberate, repeated sinning had dulled David's sensitivity to God's laws and others' rights.

The more you try to cover up a sin, the more insensitive you become toward it. Don't become hardened to sin, as David did. Confess your wrong actions to God before you forget they are sins.

Consequences of David's sin with Bathsheba

2 Samuel 12:10-14

From this time on, the sword will be a constant threat to your family, because you have despised me by taking Uriah's wife to be your own.

" 'Because of what you have done, I, the Lord, will cause your own household to rebel against you. I will give your wives to another man, and he will go to bed with them in public view.

You did it secretly, but I will do this to you openly in the sight of all Israel.'

"

Then David confessed to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord."

Nathan replied, "Yes, but the Lord has forgiven you, and you won't die for this sin.

But you have given the enemies of the Lord great opportunity to despise and blaspheme him, so your child will die."

The predictions in these verses came true. Because David murdered Uriah and stole his wife:

- (1) Murder was a constant threat in his family (2 Samuel 13:26-30; 2 Samuel 18:14-15; 1 Kings 2:23-25);
- (2) His household rebelled against him (2 Samuel 15:13);
- (3) His wives were given to another in public view (2 Samuel 16:20-23);
- (4) His first child by Bathsheba died (2 Samuel 12:18). If David had known the painful consequences of his sin, he might not have pursued the pleasures of the moment.

During this incident, David wrote Psalm 51, giving valuable insight into his character and offering hope for us as well.

No matter how miserable guilt makes you feel or how terribly you have sinned, you can pour out your heart to God and seek his forgiveness as David did.

There is forgiveness for us when we sin. David also wrote Psalm 32 to express the joy he felt after he was forgiven.

David confessed and repented of his sin (2 Samuel 12:13), but God's judgment was that his child would die.

The consequences of David's sin were irreversible. Sometimes an apology isn't enough. When God forgives us and restores our relationship with him, he doesn't eliminate all the consequences of our wrongdoing.

We may be tempted to say, “If this is wrong, I can always apologize to God,” but we must remember that we may set into motion events with irreversible consequences.

Why did this child have to die? This was not a judgment on the child for being conceived out of wedlock, but a judgment on David for his sin.

David and Bathsheba deserved to die, but God spared their lives and took the child instead. God still had work for David to do in building the kingdom.

Perhaps the child’s death was a greater punishment for David than his own death would have been.

It is also possible that had the child lived, God’s name would have been dishonored among Israel’s pagan neighbors.

What would they have thought of a God who rewards murder and adultery by giving a king a new heir?

A baby’s death is tragic, but despising God brings death to entire nations. While God readily forgave David’s sin, he did not negate all its consequences.

David did not dwell on his sin.

2 Samuel 12:20-24

Then David got up from the ground, washed himself, put on lotions, and changed his clothes. Then he went to the Tabernacle and worshiped the Lord. After that, he returned to the palace and ate.

His advisers were amazed. "We don't understand you," they told him.

"While the baby was still living, you wept and refused to eat. But now that the baby is dead, you have stopped your mourning and are eating again."

David replied, "I fasted and wept while the child was alive, for I said, 'Perhaps the Lord will be gracious to me and let the child live.' But why should I fast when he is dead? Can I bring him back again? I will go to him one day, but he cannot return to me."

Then David comforted Bathsheba, his wife, and slept with her. She became pregnant and gave birth to a son, and they named him Solomon. The Lord loved the child

David did not continue to dwell on his sin. He returned to God, and God forgave him, opening the way to begin life anew.

Even the name God gave Solomon (*Jedidiah*, "loved by the LORD"; 2 Samuel 12:25) was a reminder of God's grace.

When we return to God, accept his forgiveness, and change our ways, he gives us a fresh start. To feel forgiven as David did, admit your sins to God and turn to him. Then move ahead with a new and fresh approach to life.

Perhaps the most bitter experience in life is the death of one's child. For comfort in such difficult circumstances, see Psalm 16:9-11; Psalm 17:15; Psalm 139; Isaiah 40:11.

Solomon was the fourth son of David and Bathsheba (1 Chron. 3:5). Therefore several years passed between the death of their first child and Solomon's birth.

Bathsheba may still have been grieving over the child's death

Chapter 6



David failed to punish his son's wrongdoing.

2 Samuel 13:21-24

When King David heard what had happened, he was very angry. And though Absalom never spoke to Amnon about it, he hated Amnon deeply because of what he had done to his sister.

Two years later, when Absalom's sheep were being sheared at Baal-hazor near Ephraim, Absalom invited all the king's sons to come to a feast.

He went to the king and said, "My sheep-shearers are now at work. Would the king and his servants please come to celebrate the occasion with me?"

David was angry with Amnon for raping Tamar, but David did not punish him. David probably hesitated because:

He didn't want to cross Amnon, who was his firstborn son
1 Chron. 3:1) and therefore next in line to be king, and

David was guilty of a similar sin himself in his adultery with Bathsheba. While David was unsurpassed as a king and military leader, he lacked skill and sensitivity as a husband and father.

David halfhearted approach to parenting

2 Samuel 14:33

Then Joab went to Geshur and brought Absalom back to Jerusalem.

David only made halfhearted efforts to correct his children. He did not punish Amnon for his sin against Tamar, nor did he deal decisively with Absalom's murder of Amnon. Such indecisiveness became David's undoing. When we ignore sin, we experience greater pain than if we deal with it immediately.

David fled from Absalom rather than fight.

2 Samuel 15:14

"Then we must flee at once, or it will be too late!" David urged his men. "Hurry! If we get out of the city before he arrives, both we and the city of Jerusalem will be spared from disaster."

Why David couldn't crush Absalom's rebellion.

2 Samuel 15:14

"Then we must flee at once, or it will be too late!" David urged his men. "Hurry! If we get out of the city before he arrives, both we and the city of Jerusalem will be spared from disaster."

Had David not escaped from Jerusalem, the ensuing fight might have killed both him and many innocent inhabitants of the city.

Some fights that we think necessary can be costly and destructive to those around us. In such cases, it may be wise to back down and save the fight for another day—even if doing so hurts our pride.

It takes courage to stand and fight, but it also takes courage to back down for the sake of others.

Why couldn't David just crush this rebellion? There were several reasons he chose to flee:

The rebellion was widespread (2 Samuel 15:10-13) and would not have been easily suppressed;

David did not want the city of Jerusalem to be destroyed

David still cared for his son and did not want to hurt him.

We know that David expected to return to Jerusalem soon because he left ten of his concubines to take care of the palace (2 Samuel 15:16).

Why David was so upset over Absalom's death.

2 Samuel 18:33

The king was overcome with emotion. He went up to his room over the gateway and burst into tears. And as he went, he cried, "O my son Absalom! My son, my son Absalom! If only I could have died instead of you! O Absalom, my son, my son."

Why was David so upset over the death of his rebel son?

David realized that he, in part, was responsible for Absalom's death. Nathan, the prophet, had said that because David had killed Uriah, his own sons would rebel against him.

David was angry at Joab and his officers for killing Absalom against his wishes.

David truly loved his son, even though Absalom did nothing to deserve his love. It would have been kinder and more loving to deal with Absalom and his runaway ego when he was younger.

Chapter 7



David was a skilled musician.

2 Samuel 22:1

David sang this song to the Lord after the Lord had rescued him from all his enemies and from Saul.

David was a skilled musician who played his harp for Saul (1 Samuel 16:23), instituted the music programs in the temple (1 Chron. 25), and wrote more of the book of Psalms than anyone else.

Writing a song like this was not unusual for David. This royal hymn of thanksgiving is almost identical to Psalm 18

David prophesied about the Messiah.

2 Samuel 23:3

The God of Israel spoke.

The Rock of Israel said to me:

'The person who rules righteously,
who rules in the fear of God,

In the style of a prophet, David spoke of a just and righteous ruler. This will be fulfilled in Jesus Christ when he returns to rule in perfect justice and peace.

Why David poured out water the men brought him.

2 Samuel 23:16

So the Three broke through the Philistine lines, drew some water from the well, and brought it back to David. But he refused to drink it. Instead, he poured it out before the Lord.

David poured out the water as an offering to God because he was so moved by the sacrifice it represented.

When Hebrews offered sacrifices, they never consumed the blood. It represented life, and they poured it out before God. David would not drink this water that represented the lives of his soldiers. Instead, he offered it to God.

What was wrong with David taking a census?

2 Samuel 24:1-3

Once again the anger of the Lord burned against Israel, and he caused David to harm them by taking a census. "Go and count the people of Israel and Judah," the Lord told him.

So the king said to Joab, the commander of his army, "Take a census of all the people in the land—from Dan in the north to Beersheba in the south—so that I may know how many people there are."

But Joab replied to the king, "May the Lord your God let you live until there are a hundred times as many people in your kingdom as there are now! But why do you want to do this?"

Did God cause David to sin? God does not cause people to sin, but he does allow sinners to reveal the sinfulness of their hearts by their actions.

God presented the opportunity to David in order to deal with a disastrous national tendency, and he wanted this desire to show itself. 1 Chron. 21:1 says Satan incited David to do it.

Hebrew writers do not always distinguish between primary and secondary causes. So if God allowed Satan to tempt David, to them it is as if God did it.

What was wrong with taking a census? A census was commanded in Numbers to prepare an army for conquering the promised land (Numbers 1:2; Numbers 26:2).

A census amounted to a draft or conscription for the army. The land was now at peace, so there was no need to enlist troops. Israel had extended its borders and become a recognized power.

David's sin was pride and ambition in counting the people so that he could glory in the size of his nation and army, its power and defenses.

By doing this, he put his faith in the size of his army rather than in God's ability to protect them regardless of their number.

Even Joab knew a census was wrong, but David did not heed his advice. We sin in a similar way when we place our security in money, possessions, or the might of our nation.

Solomon builds the temple

2 Chron. 2:1

Solomon now decided that the time had come to build a Temple for the Lord and a royal palace for himself.

David had wanted to build a temple for God (2 Samuel 7). God denied his request because David had been a warrior, but God said that David's son Solomon would build the temple.

God allowed David to make the plans and preparations for the temple (1 Chron. 23-26; 1 Chron. 28:11-13). David bought the land (2 Samuel 24:18-25; 1 Chron. 22:1), gathered most of the construction materials (1 Chron. 22:14-16), and received the plans from God (1 Chron. 28:11-12).

It was Solomon's responsibility to make the plans a reality. His job was made easier by his father's exhaustive preparations. God's work can be moved forward when the older generation paves the way for the younger.

David gave his personal fortune for the temple.

1 Chron. 29:3-5

And now because of my devotion to the Temple of my God, I am giving all of my own private treasures of gold and silver to help in the construction.

This is in addition to the building materials I have already collected for his holy Temple.

I am donating more than 112 tons of gold from Ophir and over 262 tons of refined silver to be used for overlaying the walls of the buildings and for the other gold and silver work to be done by the craftsmen.

Now then, who will follow my example? Who is willing to give offerings to the Lord today?"

David gave from his personal fortune for the temple. He encouraged others to follow his example, and they willingly did. Both the tabernacle (Exodus 35:5-36:7) and the temple were built from the voluntary gifts of the people.

Like David, we can acknowledge that all we have comes from God (1 Chron. 29:14-16). We may not have David's wealth, but we can develop his willingness to give. It is not what we have that counts with God, but our willingness to give it.

Chapter 8



God's promises to David

1 Kings 2:3-4

Observe the requirements of the Lord your God and follow all his ways. Keep each of the laws, commands, regulations, and stipulations written in the Law of Moses so that you will be successful in all you do and wherever you go.

If you do this, then the Lord will keep the promise he made to me: 'If your descendants live as they should and follow me faithfully with all their heart and soul, one of them will always sit on the throne of Israel.'

David stressed to Solomon the need to make God and his laws the center of personal life and government in order to preserve the kingdom, as God had promised to do (2 Samuel 7).

This promise from God had two parts. One part was conditional and depended upon the kings' actions. The other part was unconditional.

God's conditional promise was that David and his descendants would remain in office as kings *only* when they honored and obeyed him.

When David's descendants failed to do this, they lost the throne (2 Kings 25).

God's unconditional promise was that David's line would go on forever. This was fulfilled in the birth of Jesus Christ, a descendant of David who was also the eternal Son of God (Romans 1:3-4).

David, whose life exemplified obedience, gave well-seasoned advice to his son, the next king. It would be up to Solomon to follow it.

The death of David

1 Kings 2:10

Then David died and was buried in the City of David.

David died at about age 70 (2 Samuel 5:4-5).

Did God break his covenant with David?

2 Chron. 21:7

But the Lord was not willing to destroy David's dynasty, for he had made a covenant with David and promised that his descendants would continue to rule forever.

God promised that a descendant of David would always sit on the throne (2 Samuel 7:8-16).

What happened to this promise when the nation was destroyed and carried away? There were two parts to God's promise.

In the physical sense, as long as there was an actual throne in Judah, a descendant of David would sit upon it.

But this part of the promise depended on the obedience of these kings. When they disobeyed, God was not bound to continue David's temporal line.

In the spiritual sense, this promise was completely fulfilled in the coming of Jesus the Messiah, a descendant of David, who would sit on the throne of David forever.

David's importance in Jesus' genealogy

Matthew 1:1

This is a record of the ancestors of Jesus the Messiah, a descendant of King David and of Abraham:

Presenting this genealogy was one of the most interesting ways that Matthew could begin a book for a Jewish audience.

Because a person's family line proved his or her standing as one of God's chosen people, Matthew began by showing that Jesus was a descendant of Abraham, the father of all Jews, and a direct descendant of David, fulfilling Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah's line.

The facts of this ancestry were carefully preserved. This is the first of many proofs recorded by Matthew to show that Jesus is the true Messiah.

God's promise to David fulfilled in Jesus.

Luke 1:32-33

He will be very great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David. And he will reign over Israel forever; his Kingdom will never end!"

Centuries earlier, God had promised David that David's kingdom would last forever (2 Samuel 7:16). This promise was fulfilled in the coming of Jesus, a direct descendant of David, whose reign will continue throughout eternity.

Chapter 9



Joseph and Mary descendants of David

Luke 2:4

And because Joseph was a descendant of King David, he had to go to Bethlehem in Judea, David's ancient home. He traveled there from the village of Nazareth in Galilee.

God controls all history. By the decree of Emperor Augustus, Jesus was born in the very town prophesied for his birth (Micah 5:2), even though his parents did not live there.

Joseph and Mary were both descendants of David. The Old Testament is filled with prophecies that the Messiah would be born in David's royal line (see, for example, Isaiah 11:1; Jeremiah 33:15; Ezekiel 37:24; Hosea 3:5).

Jesus as the Son of David

Matthew 9:27

After Jesus left the girl's home, two blind men followed along behind him, shouting, "Son of David, have mercy on us!"

“Son of David” was a popular way of addressing Jesus as the Messiah because it was known that the Messiah would be a descendant of David (Isaiah 9:7).

This is the first time the title is used in Matthew. Jesus’ ability to give sight to the blind was prophesied in Isaiah 29:18; Isaiah 35:5; Isaiah 42:7.

Matthew 20:30

Two blind men were sitting beside the road. When they heard that Jesus was coming that way, they began shouting, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!"

The blind men called Jesus “Son of David” because the Jews knew that the Messiah would be a descendant of David (see Isaiah 9:6-7; Isaiah 11:1; Jeremiah 23:5-6).

These blind beggars could *see* that Jesus was the long-awaited Messiah, while the religious leaders who witnessed Jesus’ miracles were blind to his identity, refusing to open their eyes to the truth. Seeing with your eyes doesn’t guarantee seeing with your heart.

Jesus used David to illustrate the law.

Matthew 12:4

He went into the house of God, and they ate the special bread reserved for the priests alone. That was breaking the law, too.

This story is recorded in 1 Samuel 21:1-6. The bread of the Presence was replaced every week, and the old loaves were eaten by the priests.

The loaves given to David were the old loaves that had just been replaced with fresh ones. Although the priests were the only ones allowed to eat this bread, God did not punish David because his need for food was more important than the priestly regulations.

Jesus was saying, "If you condemn me, you must also condemn David," something the religious leaders could never do without causing a great uproar among the people.

Jesus was not condoning disobedience to God's laws. Instead he was emphasizing discernment and compassion in enforcing the laws.

Jesus quotes David

Luke 20:41-44

Then Jesus presented them with a question. "Why is it," he asked, "that the Messiah is said to be the son of David? For David himself wrote in the book of Psalms:

'The Lord said to my Lord,
Sit in honor at my right hand

Until I humble your enemies,
Making them a footstool under your feet.'

Since David called him Lord, how can he be his son at the same time?"

The Pharisees and Sadducees had asked their questions. Then Jesus turned the tables and asked them a question that went right to the heart of the matter—what they thought about the Messiah’s identity.

The Pharisees knew that the Messiah would be a descendant of David, but they did not understand that he would be more than a human descendant—he was God in the flesh. Jesus quoted from Psalm 110:1 to show that David knew that the Messiah would be both human and divine.

The Pharisees expected only a human ruler to restore Israel’s greatness as in the days of David and Solomon.

The central issue of life is what we believe about Jesus. Other spiritual questions are irrelevant unless we first decide to believe that Jesus is who he said he is. The Pharisees and Sadducees could not do this. They remained confused over Jesus’ identity.

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Additional comments and charts are taken from: *Life Application Study Bible*. Illinois: Tyndale House 2007. Print