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***“Your house and
your kingdom will
endure forever
before me, your
throne will be
established
forever.”***

2 SAMUEL 7:16

Introduction to 2 Samuel

The books of 1 & 2 Samuel (originally one book) recount the pivotal period of transition in Israel's history from the rule of the Judges to a monarchy. The period of the Judges showed the serious problems Israel had, both in its leadership and among the people as a whole. The books of Samuel show God's continued care for his people, in raising up for them a king whose job was to be their champion, representative, and example. Saul, by his disobedience to God's messenger, proves to be an unsuitable king. David, on the other hand, in spite of his moral failures, is God's choice to be the beginning of an enduring dynasty, from which the ultimate Ruler, who will lead Israel in bringing blessing to all the nations, will arise.

The book recounts many dramatic events. Some are spectacular for their demonstration of God's mercy, whilst others are stunning for the depths of human depravity they reveal. The author of the book takes the approach of "show, don't tell", rarely making explicit comments and judgments about whether events and actions taken are good or evil. As such, we are left to reflect and come to our own conclusions. To guide us, it is helpful to read these 24 chapters in light of Hannah's prayer (1 Sam 2:1-10) which foreshadows much of what unfolds in Saul's and then David's lifetime. Similarly, the instructions to Israel's eventual king recorded in Deuteronomy 17:14-20 provide a helpful grid through which to evaluate the events of 2 Samuel.

Our hope and prayer is that studying 2 Samuel this term will help us anticipate and appreciate the glory of our king Jesus, great king David's greatest son. Given that we are covering large sections of scripture each week, we strongly encourage you to read the whole book over the course of the term.

Who's Who in 2 Samuel

Abiathar	A priest; he stays behind in Jerusalem with his brother, Zadok, when Absalom takes over to act as spies for David.
Abishai	One of David's mighty men; Joab's brother; murders Abner.
Abner	Commander of Saul's army; Saul's uncle; supports Ish-Bosheth as king but switches to David's side; is killed by Joab and Abishai because he killed their brother, Asahel.
Absalom	Son of David; brother of Tamar, kills Amnon, tries to take the kingdom from David, is killed by Joab.
Ahithophel	Advisor to David; he betrays David and sides with Absalom; commits suicide when his advice is not taken by Absalom.
Amasa	Leader of Absalom's army; after Joab kills Absalom, David replaces Joab as head of his army with Amasa; is killed by Joab.
Amnon	Firstborn son of David; rapes his half-sister, Tamar.
Asahel	Joab and Abishai's brother; killed by Abner.
Hushai	A servant of David; sent to Jerusalem as a spy for David against Absalom.
Ish-Bosheth	Son of Saul; he was installed as king of the north by Abner. He fought against David and was later murdered.
Joab	David's military commander; brother of Abishai; murders Abner.
Jonathan	Son of Saul; David's best friend; killed in battle at the end of 1 Samuel.
Mephibosheth	Crippled son of Jonathan taken in by David.
Michal	Young daughter of Saul, given to David in marriage.

Shimei	Former member of Saul's clan; opposes David after Absalom usurps David and is later forgiven by David.
Tamar	David's daughter, Absalom's sister; raped by her half-brother Amnon.
Zadok	A priest; stays behind in Jerusalem with his brother Abiathar when Absalom takes over to act as spies for David.

How to use or vary the studies

These studies are relatively short (7 or 8 questions) and have been designed to be completed before each sermon. Each leader has the freedom to add or remove questions or vary the study, so view them as a guide. Some groups may choose to ignore the questions and use one of the inductive Bible study methods below to construct their own.

Inductive methods for studying the Bible

1. Simple Gospel Exploration Method

Pray and then read the passage through twice and ask:

- a. What did I learn about who Jesus is?
- b. What did I learn about why Jesus came?
- c. How will knowing this affect how I live?

2. Swedish Method

- a. Read the passage aloud.
- b. Each person then spends 5-10 minutes reading back over the passage on their own, noting down three things:



- a. anything that shines out in the passage and sparks interest; it can be something important, or something that particularly strikes the reader.



- b. anything that is hard to understand; something that the reader would like to ask the author about.



- c. anything that applies personally to the reader's life.

3. C.O.M.A Method

C.O.M.A stands for: Context-Observation-Meaning-Application.

Step 1: Read the passage aloud.

Step 2: Ask some context questions of the text:

- What sort of writing is this? (A letter, a narrative, a poem?)
- Are there any clues about the circumstances?
- What has happened so far?

Step 3: Ask some observation questions of the text:

- Are there any major sub-sections or breaks in the text?
- What is the main point or points?
- What surprises are there?
- What are the key words?
- What words or ideas are repeated?

Step 4: Ask some meaning questions of the text:

- How does this text relate to other parts of the book?
- How does the passage relate to Jesus?
- What does this teach us about God?
- How could we sum up this passage in our own words?

Step 5: Ask some application questions of the text:

- How does this passage challenge my understanding?
- Is there some attitude I need to change?
- How does this passage call on me to change the way I live?

Step 6: Pray together about what you have learned.

Home Group: 2 Samuel 1-6

Week 1

1 Samuel records the transition from a series of leaders and prophets to a monarchy. We then see the rise and fall of Saul, with his death recorded at the end of the book. As 2 Samuel commences, we see the rise of King David, but, initially, there is an inevitable struggle for the throne.

1. Think of a favourite movie hero or heroine. What is it that impresses you about them, and what are their weaknesses?

Read 2 Samuel 1:1-27

2. Is David's response to Saul's death just? How does it reveal his attitude to the kingship?

3. While David's response to the deaths of his rival, Ish-Bosheth, and his general, Abner, are godly, which of his other choices fail to abide by God's instructions for kings (see Deut. 17:14-20 and 2 Sam.3:1-5, 5:13-16)?

Read 2 Samuel 5:1-12

4. How did the Lord establish David as king over Israel and exalt his kingdom as verse 12 asserts? What does the description of the king as a "shepherd" (v2) imply about how a leader should think and behave (John 10:11, 14)?

Read 2 Samuel 6:1-23

5. After establishing Jerusalem as his capital, David goes to bring the ark of God into the city, but God strikes down Uzzah. Why does this happen (see Numbers 4:4-6, 17-20; 7:6-9)?
6. Celebrations and sacrificial offerings follow the ark of the Lord being set in the city, but they are soured by Michal's reaction. Why were David's actions appropriate?
7. David asks how the presence of a holy God (represented by the ark) can come to him (v9). What is our answer to that question under the new covenant (Heb. 9:11-15, 10:19-22)?

Pray

Give thanks for Jesus, the peacemaker and perfect shepherd of his people. Pray for those who lead at WBC – for pastors, elders, deacons, Home Group leaders, ministry team leaders – that they may lead in a godly manner.

Sermon: 2 Samuel 5-6

5th May

Reflect

What impacted you most in this week's passage? How can you apply this truth in your life?

Home Group: 2 Samuel 7

Week 2

1. Have you ever wanted to do some great thing for God? What was your plan, and what was your motivation?

Read 2 Samuel 7

2. What drives David to propose building a temple for God? Is his reasoning good or bad?

3. Why does God reject his plan (v5-7, 13)?

4. What is God's alternate plan and how will that play out in David's family line (v8-17)?

5. How does this plan ultimately have Jesus in view (v12-16; Lk. 1:30-33), and how does it relate to us?

6. How can the example of David's story so far help you to trust God?

Pray

Thank God that he has established Jesus, the greater Son of David, as his chosen King over all mankind.

Sermon: 2 Samuel 7

12th May

Reflect

What impacted you most in this week's passage? How can you apply this truth in your life?

Study 3: 2 Samuel 8-10

Week 3

1. Share a time when you opposed someone or something and lost?

Read 2 Samuel 8:1-14

2. The chapter is effectively summarised in verses 6 and 14. What point is being made?

3. How does David, as God's anointed King, point forward to Jesus and His rule?

Read 2 Samuel 9:1-13

4. What fears might Mephibosheth have in relation to the victorious king, and how did David allay them?

5. How do David's words and actions give us a picture of the gospel?

Read 2 Samuel 10:1-5, 15-19

6. The Ammonites respond badly to David's gracious actions. How does this chapter illustrate what becomes of those who scorn God's king (Psalm 2; 2 Thess. 1:6-10)?

7. What should our attitude be towards those who scorn King Jesus (Luke 19:10, 2 Pet. 3:9, 2 Tim. 2:1-5)?

Pray

Jesus offers us peace—and a place at his table. Thank God that through Jesus you are part of his kingdom and enjoy the privileges of being under the protection of the King. Pray for friends, and family who reject the King.

Sermon: 2 Samuel 8-10

19th May

Reflect

What impacted you most in this week's passage? How can you apply this truth in your life?

Home Group: 2 Samuel 11

Week 4

1. Share a story you know where there was a cover-up. Why does deception usually make matters worse?

Read 2 Samuel 11

2. What mistakes did David make that led him to committing adultery (v1-3)?
3. How did David try to cover up his sin, and what did he do when this failed?
4. How does Uriah act with integrity in contrast to David?
5. Who has David sinned against? (see Psalm 51:1-5)?

6. How can similar failures lead you, or others, into a spiral of sin? How can we avoid this?

Pray

Pray for those who bear the consequences of the sins of others - betrayed spouses, neglected children. Pray that the Lord would draw close to them through his people to comfort them.

Sermon: 2 Samuel 11

26th May

Reflect

What impacted you most in this week's passage? How can you apply this truth in your life?

Home Group: 2 Samuel 12

Week 5

1. How can stories or parables help us process our actions and guilt?

Read 2 Samuel 12

2. How does Nathan's story help David confront his sin (v1-6)?
3. What charges are put before David by the Lord and what are the consequences (v7-12, 14)?
4. What steps need to be taken for David to be restored to God (v13, Psalm 51:1-2, 7-12, 16-17; 1 John 1:9)?
5. How can we help ourselves to experience the freedom and forgiveness we have in Christ when we sin or are caught in sin?

6. Many people are very private about their struggle with sin, yet the Bible calls us to carry each other's burdens and restore those who sin (Gal.6:1-2). How can we create accountability with fellow believers?

Pray

Pray for each other that we might continue to fight against temptation, and that God would grant us true repentance when we fail.

Sermon: 2 Samuel 12

2nd June

Reflect

What impacted you most in this week's passage? How can you apply this truth in your life?

Home Group: 2 Samuel 13-20

Week 6

Read 2 Samuel 13:20-39

1. The horrible rape of Tamar by her step-brother Amnon (13:1-19), leads to further sin and consequences. What happens to each character in the aftermath and what does this reveal about them?

Amnon (v26-29)	Tamar (v20)	Absalom (v22-29, 37)	David (v21, 30-32, 36-39)

Read 2 Samuel 15

2. What tactics does Absalom use to steal the hearts of the people of Israel (v1-6)?

3. What does David's reaction to the news of Absalom's rebellion reveal about his priorities (v14, 19-20, 25-26)?

4. When we experience a significant reversal in our fortunes, how do we react? How should we react as a believer?
5. God's judgment on David (2 Sam. 12:10-12) is fulfilled in Absalom's treatment of some of David's concubines (2 Sam. 15:20-22) and his own death (2 Sam. 18:14-15). If sin can be forgiven by God, why can there still be consequences?
6. Throughout this section we see God's plan to restore David being achieved through lying, deception and intrigue, but also through kindness, faithfulness and generosity. How does this help us see how God works in the world (Gen. 50:20), even in the death of his own Son to save us (Acts 2:23-24)?

Pray

Pray for yourself and for others to trust in God's sovereignty when you face opposition or suffering.

Sermon: 2 Samuel 15

9th June

Reflect

What impacted you most in this week's passage? How can you apply this truth in your life?

Home Group: 2 Samuel 21-24

Week 7

1. What people/events produce spontaneous praise in our society today?

Read 2 Samuel 22

2. How does David praise God for rescuing him from his enemies (v1-20)?

3. Given the track record of David in 2 Samuel, how can he describe himself as righteous, clean and blameless (v21-25, Rom. 3:23-26)? How are we to understand the Bible's assessment of David (1 Kings 11:6; 15:11)?

4. How are the different endings for the righteous and the wicked described (v26-28)?

5. How does this compare with the way Jesus spoke (Matt. 7:21-27; 25:31-46)?

6. How does the story of David help us hunger for a better King and a better kingdom (Acts 2:25-36)?

Pray

Praise God for his deliverance of you, and for the righteousness He has credited to you through faith in Jesus. Give thanks for his eternal kingdom.

Sermon: 2 Samuel 22

16th June

Reflect

What impacted you most in this week's passage? How can you apply this truth in your life?

