

Israel's Greatest Hero

# KING DAVID



BIBLE STUDY COURSE BY  
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# The Life of King David

## *Israel's Greatest Hero: David of Bethlehem, King from 1010 – 970 BC*

Here is the declaration by David, son of Jesse – the declaration by the man whom God raised up, whom the God of Jacob anointed, the singer of Israel's psalms. The Spirit of the Lord spoke through me. His words were on my tongue. The God of Israel spoke to them.

The Rock of Israel told me: The one who rules humans with justice rules with the fear of God. Truly, God considers my house to be that way because he has made a lasting Covenant to me with ever detail arranged and assured. He promised everything that helps me, everything that pleases me. Truly, he makes these things happen. **2 Samuel 23:13,5-7**

Written and Taught By

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## Author's Preface



The life of King David is one of the most interesting stories in the Bible. Although David of Bethlehem is Israel's finest hero because he shows his love for God more than any other person in the 73 psalms he has written, he is a flawed individual punished by God for his misdeeds. The Biblical authors of 1 Samuel and 2 Samuel, most probably the prophets Samuel, Nathan, and Gad, do not hide David's flaws.

David is a true human being attempting to follow God's plan for his life most of the time. David is so popular that a portion of his story is also told in 1 Chronicles although there are differences. As the years passed his legend increased and Goliath grew taller and taller. David wrote 73 of the psalms in the Book of Psalms. Some of the psalms have superscriptions that tell us when David wrote a particular psalm.

God made a Covenant with David that his descendants would rule Israel forever. This idea was reiterated by many of the Hebrew prophets especially Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Micah, and Zechariah. This Davidic descendant was known as the Messiah that means the anointed one *mashiyach*.

There are more verses in the Bible about David than any other person except Jesus of Nazareth, David's descendant, the Messiah the people of Israel were looking for. Jesus came 1,000 years after King David and fulfilled many of the prophesies written about him.

God planned for the Messiah to come to redeem human beings from their separation from him by their sin. Before God created Creation, the three members of the Holy Triune God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit cut a Covenant called the Covenant of Redemption. In this agreement, God the Father promised to send God the Son to earth with a human nature, to reveal God in a short ministry, to suffer as a human suffers, and to give up his life in death as

an atonement for human sin thus reconciling sinful humans to God. God would raise Jesus three days later to teach humans that in the End Times, God would also raise all humans from death to life to live eternally with him in the New Jerusalem or to be separated eternally from him.

The individual books in the Bible tell this story. David's story in the Books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles is only a part of this story but it is a very important part. The three prophets told this story to show how God was using his Chosen People as witnesses to the world of his goodness and mercy as their Savior. David's heart was knit with God almost constantly as shown by his psalms witnessing God's love and mercy but he was a flawed human. Yet when David sinned, he repented and was forgiven by God as we all are.

I believe the following psalm best reveals David's heart toward God:

Turn your ear toward me, O **YHWH**. Answer me because I am oppressed and needy. Protect me because I am faithful to you. Save your servant who trusts you. You are my God. Have pity on me, O **YHWH** because I call out to you all day long. Give me joy, O **YHWH** because I lift my soul to you.

You, O **YHWH** are good and forgiving, full of mercy toward everyone who call out to you. Open your ears to my prayer, O **YHWH**. Pay attention when I plead for mercy. When I am in trouble, I call out to you because you answer me.

No God is like you, O **YHWH**. No one can do what you do. All the nations you have made will bow in your presence, O **YHWH**. They will honor you. Indeed you are great, a worker of miracles. You alone are God. Teach me your way, O **YHWH**, so that I may live in your truth. Focus my heart on fearing you. I will give thanks to you with all my heart, O **YHWH** my God. I will honor you forever because your mercy toward me is great. You have rescued me from the depths of Sheol.

O God, arrogant people attack me and a mob of ruthless people seeks my life. They think nothing of you. But you, O **YHWH**, are a compassionate and merciful God. You are patient, always faithful and ready to forgive. Turn toward me and have pity on me. Give me your strength because I am your servant. Save me because I am the son of your female servant. Grant

me some proof of your goodness so that those who hate me may see it and be put to shame. You, O YHWH, have helped me and comforted me.

**Psalm 86:1-17**

This is the only psalm in which David mentions his mother. This leads me to consider a great mystery. David had unusual success in defeating the Philistines. Although the Philistines were superior to the Israelites as they were descendants of Greek warriors and had iron swords and chariots while the Israelites only had copper swords and bows and arrows, David consistently beat the Philistines in their battles. He seemed to be the only person in Israel that did this except Samuel when he called on God.

It may be that David's mother was a Philistine, a second wife for Jesse. David was younger than any of his six brothers and Jesse was very old. David was also apparently disliked or disfavored as Jesse never invited David to Samuel's sacrifice at Bethlehem. David's older brother Eliab disliked him.

David killed the Philistine giant Goliath who was from Gath, a nearby Philistine city-state. Yet when David escaped from Saul's court when the King attempted to kill him, David went to Gath, the nearby Philistine city-state where his mother may have had relatives. And he took with him Goliath's sword, a huge weapon. Although David escaped quickly when he was recognized by the Philistine warriors, later after being pursued by King Saul as an enemy for many years, David took his men to Gath to become vassals of King Achish who allowed him to live for a year in the Philistine city of Ziklag.

This relationship with the Philistines was most unusual. Why did God allow these capable warriors to live closely with God's Chosen People?

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### **Notes on this Bible Translation and My Editorial Insertions**

The translation used in this study is ***GOD'S WORD*** © 1995 by God's Word to the Nations Mission Society (GWT). The GWT translation is an attempt to make the English text of the Bible developed in the 1500's more readable to modern Americans. It is not a paraphrase, but it has retranslated the oldest manuscripts into modern American English at about newspaper level using "closest natural equivalence". The Bible is meant by God to be understood. Therefore, using modern language is essential.

I have used this translation in my teaching since 1996 and have found it very accurate. I love the King James Version and so when there are variances in the GWT, I may insert within the Bible text the original transliterated Hebrew or Greek word in **10-point bold-face type** followed by an

English word to help better understand the meaning of the passage. English words added to aid in understanding are also in 10-point type but are not in bold. Lastly, if the original Hebrew or Greek word appears in the Bible 10 times or less, I may also indicate how often it appears (e.g., 10x or 2x, etc.). Here's an example from John 11:33 and the raising of Lazarus involving three Greek words:

<sup>33</sup>When Jesus saw her crying and the Jews who were crying with her were deeply moved *embrimaomai*-groaned 5x *pneuma*-spirit and troubled *tarasso*-agitated.

This has shown me that the GWT translation is remarkable for finding the right meanings to phrases that are often difficult to translate.

### Notes on Font Usage

All text is in the Big Caslon font. Scripture text is in regular 14-point. If I have inserted parallel Scripture quotations, they are also in regular 14-point, but are slightly further indented (.08) than the main Scripture text and are enclosed by brackets [ ]. All Scripture citations are in **12-point bold face**. All my comments and questions to think about are all in regular 12-point.

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## Introduction

The story really begins with the patriarch Abraham around 2,000 BC. God called Abraham to go to a land I will show you. **Genesis 12:3**. Abraham left his father and relatives, took his wife, his nephew and his servants and traveled south from Haran in Mesopotamia to Shechem in Canaan where he built an altar to **YHWH**. God made a Covenant with Abraham that his descendants would inherit this land called Canaan and bless all the families of the earth as God's Chosen People.

After Abraham and his son Isaac died, Abraham's grandson Jacob, later called by God Israel, took his family to Egypt. There they lived for 400 years becoming enslaved by the Egyptians because they were foreigners. About the year 1,300 BC, God called Moses, one of the Israelites or Hebrews, to leave Egypt and return to Canaan. The Israelites met with YHWH at Mount Sinai south of Canaan where he gave them his Ten Commandments and his *towrah* or teachings about how to live the best life in God's Creation.

Here they built a Wilderness Tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant, a wooden box covered with gold where stone tablets containing the Ten Commandment were placed. A solid gold cover was placed on top containing two angels or cherubim facing each other. God promised to meet with the Israelites above this Ark.

After 40 years of wandering the wilderness, Moses died and Joshua led them across the Jordan River into the Promised Land of Canaan. Here they defeated most of the enemies and set about building a life. The Philistines were living along the seacoast and arrived shortly before them. Joshua died and the Israelites were ruled by 12 tribal leaders.

When the Israelites abandoned the worship of **YHWH**, God sent enemies against them. The Israelites cried out and God sent them charismatic leaders called *judges*. The last of these judges was Samuel. This is where the Story of David begins with the birth of the prophet Samuel. The time is 1100 BC.



## Session One

### The Ministry of the Prophet Samuel

#### Samuel's Father and Mother

<sup>1</sup>There was a man named Elkanah from Ramathaim Zophim in the mountains of Ephraim. He was the son of Jeroham, grandson of Elihu, great-grandson of Tohu, whose father was Zuph from the tribe of Ephraim.

A fuller genealogy of Elkanah is found in **1 Chronicles 6:23**. Elkanah is a Levite.

<sup>2</sup>Elkanah had two wives, one named Hannah, the other Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah had none. <sup>3</sup>Every year this man would go from his own city to worship and sacrifice to **YHWH** of Armies at Shiloh.

This is the first time the title **YHWH** of Armies is used in the Bible. Elkanah took Peninnah as his second wife as Hannah was barren.

Eli, the High Priest had two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, who served there as priests of **YHWH**.

<sup>4</sup>Whenever Elkanah offered a sacrifice, he would give portions of it to his wife Peninnah and all her sons and daughters. <sup>5</sup>He would also give one portion to Hannah because he loved her even though **YHWH** had kept her from having children.

<sup>6</sup>Because **YHWH** had made her unable to have children, her rival **Peninnah** tormented her endlessly in order to make her miserable. <sup>7</sup>This happened year after year. Whenever Hannah went to **YHWH's** House, Peninnah would make her miserable and Hannah would cry and not eat. <sup>8</sup>Her husband Elkanah would ask her: Hannah, why are you crying? Why haven't you eaten? Why are you so downhearted? Don't I mean more to you than ten sons?

## Hannah Vows Her Son Would Be Dedicated to God All His Life

<sup>9</sup>One day after Hannah had something to eat and drink in Shiloh, she got up. The priest Eli was sitting on a chair by the door of **YHWH's** House.

<sup>10</sup>Though she was resentful, she prayed to **YHWH** while she cried. <sup>11</sup>She made this vow: **YHWH** of Armies, if you will look at my misery, remember me and give me a boy. Then I will give him to you for as long as he lives. A razor will never be used on his head.

Hannah vows that if **YHWH** gives her a son, he will be a Nazorite from birth and dedicated to **YHWH**. A Nazarite lived a holy life. **Numbers 6:2-21**

<sup>12</sup>While Hannah was praying a long time in front of **YHWH**, Eli the High Priest was watching her mouth. <sup>13</sup>She was praying silently. Her voice couldn't be heard for only her lips were moving. Eli thought she was drunk. <sup>14</sup>How long are you going to stay drunk? Eli asked her. Get rid of your wine.

<sup>15</sup>Hannah responded: No sir. I'm not drunk. I'm depressed. I'm pouring out my heart to **YHWH**. <sup>16</sup>Don't take me to be a good-for-nothing woman. I was praying like this because I've been troubled and tormented. <sup>17</sup>Eli replied: Go in peace and may the God of Israel grant your request. <sup>18</sup>May you continue to be kind to me, she said. Then the woman went her way and ate. She was no longer sad. <sup>19</sup>Early in the morning Elkanah and his family got up and worshiped in front of **YHWH**. Then they returned home to Ramah.

Elkanah made love to his wife Hannah and **YHWH** remembered her. <sup>20</sup>Hannah became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel [meaning God Hears] because she said: I asked **YHWH** for him.

<sup>21</sup>To keep his vow, Elkanah and his entire household again went to offer the annual sacrifice to **YHWH**. **Leviticus 27:1-8**. <sup>22</sup>But Hannah didn't go. She told her husband: I'll wait until the boy is weaned at about 4 years old. Then I'll bring him and present him to **YHWH** and he'll stay there permanently.

<sup>23</sup> Do what you think is best, her husband Elkanah told her. Wait until you've weaned him. May **YHWH** keep his Word. The woman stayed and nursed her son until she had weaned him.

### **Samuel Is Given to the High Priest Eli to Serve God**

<sup>24</sup> As soon as she had weaned Samuel, she took him with her. She also brought a three-year-old bull, half a bushel of flour, and a full wineskin. She brought him to **YHWH's** House at Shiloh while the boy was **still** a child.

<sup>25</sup> Then the parents butchered the bull and brought the child to Eli. <sup>26</sup> Sir Hannah said, as sure as you live, I'm the woman who stood here next to you and prayed to **YHWH**. <sup>27</sup> I prayed for this child and **YHWH** granted my request. <sup>28</sup> In return I am giving him to **YHWH**. He will be dedicated to **YHWH** for his whole life. And they worshiped **YHWH** there.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Hannah's Prayer**

<sup>1</sup> Hannah prayed out loud:

My heart finds joy in **YHWH**. My head is lifted to **YHWH**. My mouth mocks my enemies. I rejoice because you saved **me**. <sup>2</sup> There is no one holy like **YHWH**. There is no one but you, **O YHWH**. There is no Rock like our God. <sup>3</sup> Do not boast **or** let arrogance come out of your mouth because **YHWH** is a God of knowledge, and he weighs **our** actions.

<sup>4</sup> The bows of the warriors are broken but those who stumble are armed with strength. <sup>5</sup> Those who were well-fed hire themselves out for a piece of bread, but those who were hungry hunger no more. Even the woman who was childless gives birth to seven children but the mother of many children grieves all alone.

<sup>6</sup> **YHWH** kills, and he gives life. He makes **people** go down to the grave and he raises them up **again**. <sup>7</sup> **YHWH** causes poverty and grants wealth. He humbles **people** and he also promotes them.

<sup>8</sup> He raises the poor from the dust. He lifts the needy from the trash heap in order to make them sit with nobles and even to make them inherit a glorious throne. The pillars of the earth are **YHWH**'s. He has set the world on them.

<sup>9</sup> He safeguards the steps of his faithful ones, but wicked people are silenced in darkness because humans cannot succeed by their own strength.

<sup>10</sup> Those who oppose **YHWH** are broken into pieces. He thunders at them from the Heavens. **YHWH** judges the ends of the earth. He gives strength to his King and lifts the head of his Messiah *mashiyach*.

This song of Hannah's focuses entirely on what God does. This song should be compared with David's song in **2 Samuel 22:1-51**. There are many parallels. God is a Rock, he gives deliverances, and the King and Messiah are related.

<sup>11</sup> Then Elkanah went home to Ramah. But the boy <Samuel> served **YHWH** under the priest Eli.

### The Sins of Eli's Sons

<sup>12</sup> Eli's sons, **L** Hophni and Phinehas, **┘** were good-for-nothing priests. They had no faith in **YHWH**. <sup>13</sup> Now this was how the priests dealt with the people who were offering sacrifices: While the meat was boiling, the priest's servant would come with a three-pronged fork in his hand. <sup>14</sup> Then he would stick it into the pot, kettle, cauldron, or pan. Whatever the fork brought up **L** from the pot **┘** belonged to the priest. This is what the priests did in Shiloh to all the people of Israel who came there **L** to sacrifice **┘**.

<sup>15</sup> But **L** in the case of Eli's sons, **┘** even before the people burned the fat, their servants would come and say to the man who was sacrificing: Give the meat to the priest to roast. He doesn't want boiled meat from you. He wants it raw.

<sup>16</sup> If the man said to the servant: First let the fat be burned, then take as much as you want, the servant would say to him: Give it to me now or I'll take it by

force. <sup>17</sup>The sin of Eli's sons was a serious matter to **YHWH** because these men were treating the offerings made to **YHWH** with contempt.

Eli, who is at least 70 years old at this time, was a horrible father. His sons were cursing **YHWH** by their actions. In comparison, Samuel's family was honoring God. Hannah's song talks about raising up the humble and putting down the arrogant.

### **The Faithfulness of Samuel's Family**

<sup>18</sup> Meanwhile Samuel continued to serve in front of **YHWH**. As a boy he was <sub>L</sub> already <sub>J</sub> wearing a linen ephod. <sup>19</sup> His mother would make him a robe and bring it to him every year when she went with her husband to offer the annual sacrifice.

An ephod can refer to the priestly linen garment or to the breastplate that holds the Urim and Thummim –stones that have YES on one side and NO on the other side used for asking God questions. **Exodus 28:30**

<sup>20</sup> Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife and say: May **YHWH** give you children from this woman in place of the one which she has given to **YHWH**. Then they would go home.

<sup>21</sup> **YHWH** came to Hannah. She became pregnant <sub>L</sub> five times <sub>J</sub> and had three sons and two daughters. Meanwhile the boy Samuel grew up in front of **YHWH**.

### **Eli's Family Condemned**

<sup>22</sup> Now Eli was very old and he had heard everything that his sons were doing to all Israel and that they were sleeping with the women who served at the gate of the Tent of Meeting. <sup>23</sup> So he asked them: Why are you doing such things? I hear about your wicked ways from all these people. <sup>24</sup> Sons, the report that I hear the people of **YHWH** spreading isn't good.

<sup>25</sup> If one person sins against another, God will take care of him. However when a person sins against **YHWH**, who will pray for him? But they wouldn't listen to their father's warning — **YHWH** wanted to kill them.

<sup>26</sup>The boy Samuel continued to grow and gained the favor of **YHWH** and the people.

### **A Prophet Comes to the High Priest Eli and Warns Him**

<sup>27</sup>Then a man of God came to Eli and said to him:

This is what **YHWH** says: I revealed myself to your ancestors when they were under Pharaoh's control in Egypt. <sup>28</sup>I chose **⌋** one of your ancestors **⌋** out of all the tribes of Israel to serve as my priest, to sacrifice burnt offerings on my altar, to burn incense, and to wear the ephod in my presence. And I gave your ancestors the right to keep portions of the sacrifices that the people of Israel burned on the altar.

<sup>29</sup>Why do you show no respect for my sacrifices and grain offerings that I have commanded people to make in my dwelling place? Why do you honor your sons more than me by making yourselves fat on the best of all the sacrifices offered by my people Israel?

<sup>30</sup>Therefore **YHWH** God of Israel declares:

I certainly thought that your family and your father's family would always live in my presence.

But now **YHWH** declares:

I promise that I will honor those who honor me and those who despise me will be considered insignificant. <sup>31</sup>The time is coming when I will break your strength and the strength of your father's house so that no one will grow old in your family. <sup>32</sup>You will see distress in my dwelling place. In spite of the good that I do for Israel, no one in your family will live to an old age.

<sup>33</sup>Any man in your family whom I do not remove from my altar will have his eyes fail and he will be heartbroken. And all your descendants will die in the prime of life. <sup>34</sup>What is going to happen to your two sons, Hophni

and Phinehas, will be a sign to you. Both of them will die on the same day.

<sup>35</sup>Then I will appoint a faithful priest to serve me. He will do everything I want him to do. I will give him faithful descendants, and he will always live as my anointed *mashiyach* one. <sup>36</sup>Then anyone who is left from your household will bow down in front of him to get a coin or a loaf of bread and say: Please appoint me to one of the priestly classes so that I may eat a piece of bread.

This is a severe curse on Eli's family that will be fulfilled later on in the Book of Samuel. David appoints two High Priests but Abiathar from the line from Eli's family will be exiled to Anathoth while Zadok will be Solomon's only High Priest. **1 Kings 2:26-27**

## Chapter 3

### YHWH Calls Samuel

The boy Samuel was serving **YHWH** under Eli. In those days a prophecy from **YHWH** was rare; visions were infrequent. <sup>2</sup>One night Eli was lying down in his room. His eyesight had begun to fail so that he couldn't see well. <sup>3</sup>The lamp in God's Temple hadn't gone out yet and Samuel was asleep in the temple of **YHWH** where the Ark of God was kept.

<sup>4</sup>Then **YHWH** called Samuel. Here I am, Samuel responded. <sup>5</sup>He ran to Eli and said: Here I am. You called me. I didn't call you, Eli replied. Go back to bed. So Samuel went back and lay down.

<sup>6</sup>**YHWH** called Samuel again. Samuel got up, went to Eli, and said: Here I am. You called me. I didn't call you, son, he responded. Go back to bed. <sup>7</sup>Samuel had no experience with **YHWH** because **YHWH's** Word had not yet been revealed to him.

<sup>8</sup>**YHWH** called Samuel a third time. Samuel got up, went to Eli and said: Here I am. You called me. Then Eli realized that **YHWH** was calling the boy. <sup>9</sup>Go, lie down, Eli told Samuel. When he calls you, say: Speak **YHWH**. I'm listening. So Samuel went and lay down in his room.

<sup>10</sup>YHWH came and stood there. He called as he had called the other times: Samuel. Samuel. And Samuel replied: Speak. I'm listening. <sup>11</sup>Then YHWH said to Samuel:

I am going to do something in Israel that will make the ears of everyone who hears it ring. <sup>12</sup>On that day I am going to do to Eli and his family everything I said from beginning to end. <sup>13</sup>I told him that I would hand down a permanent judgment against his household because he knew about his sons' sin—that they were cursing God—but he didn't try to stop them.

<sup>14</sup>That is why I have taken an oath concerning Eli's family line. No offering or sacrifice will ever be able to make peace for the sins that Eli's family committed.

<sup>15</sup>Samuel remained in bed until morning. Then he opened the doors of YHWH's House. But Samuel was afraid to tell Eli about the vision.

<sup>16</sup>Then Eli called Samuel. Samuel my son, he said. Here I am, he responded. <sup>17</sup>What did YHWH tell you? he asked. Please don't hide anything from me. May God strike you dead if you hide anything he told you from me. <sup>18</sup>So Samuel told Eli everything.

Eli replied: He is YHWH. May he do what he thinks is right.

We don't know how old Samuel is when this occurred. Most scholars think he was twelve years old, the age a Hebrew boy was considered an adult.

## Samuel Grew Up and Became God's Prophet in Israel

<sup>19</sup>Samuel grew up. YHWH was with him and didn't let any of his words go unfulfilled.

<sup>20</sup>All Israel from Dan in the north to Beersheba in the south knew Samuel was YHWH's appointed prophet. <sup>21</sup>YHWH continued to appear in Shiloh since YHWH revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh through YHWH's Word. And Samuel spoke to all Israel.



In the Bible, many men who were sons of priests and destined to become priests were called by God to be prophets. Ezekiel was the son of a priest whom God called to be his watchman or prophet.

## WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

The opening chapter presents us with a transition in Israel. Eli was a judge/High Priest. Beginning with Samuel, God judges his people using prophets. While Abraham and Moses were prophets they were also judges and priests and political leaders as they conveyed the Word of God to God's people. Now there is going to be a new separation. Only prophets will relay God's word to people. Samuel will be the first of these prophets. And a new office of King will provide political leadership. Priests will perform religious functions. Yet King David is unique in that he bridges all three offices.

We are presented with a severe contrast between godly people doing God's will and two sons of Eli cursing God. And we see the actions of God in their lives. The disobedient actions of Eli's sons and Eli's failure to discipline them will result in the priestly line of Eli being terminated.

Although we see the actions of people being described, it is God who is working out his plan for his Chosen People. Samuel will be used by God to help develop God's People through their transition from judges to a monarchy.

## THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. We have a new title for God: *YHWH tsaba'* or Lord of Armies or Lord of Hosts. What does this title mean?
2. In Hanna's prayer she sings: *The Lord kills and he gives life. He makes people go down yarad to the grave and he raises them up 'alah <again>.* 1 Samuel 2:6. Is Hanna saying God raises people from the dead?
3. Hanna's song seems to confirm what Moses teaches in Deuteronomy that God blesses the righteous and curses the wicked. Why then do some wicked prosper?
4. Why has God decided to split the office of prophet and priest?
5. In the Song of Hanna and in the Song of David, the word *mashiyach* meaning *anointed* or *Messiah* appears. This word appears 39x in the Bible including 11x in 1 Samuel, 10x in Psalms, and 4x in Leviticus. In the Book of Samuel, who uses this term the most and why.

6. God says: *Then I will appoint a faithful priest to serve me. He will do everything I want him to do. I will give him faithful descendants and he will always live as my anointed one.* **1 Samuel 2:35.** Who does God mean?

7. How did all Israel know that Samuel was God's anointed prophet?

## Session Two

### The Ark of the Covenant Is Captured by the Philistines

#### Chapter 4

#### The Army Sends for the Ark to Be Carried into Battle

<sup>1</sup> Israel went to fight against the Philistines and camped near Ebenezer while the Philistines camped at Aphek. <sup>2</sup> The Philistines organized their troops to meet Israel in battle. As the battle spread, the Philistines defeated Israel and killed about 4,000 soldiers in the field.

<sup>3</sup> When the troops came back to the camp, the leaders of Israel asked: Why has **YHWH** used the Philistines to defeat us today? Let's get the Ark of **YHWH**'s Covenant from Shiloh so that he may be with us and save us from our enemies.

<sup>4</sup> The troops sent some men who brought back the Ark of the Covenant of **YHWH** of Armies — who is enthroned over the angels. Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phinehas came along with God's Ark. <sup>5</sup> When **YHWH**'s Ark came into the camp, all Israel shouted so loudly that the earth rang with echoes.

<sup>6</sup> As the Philistines heard the noise, they asked: What's **L** all **L** this shouting in the Hebrew camp? The Philistines found out that **YHWH**'s Ark had come into the camp. <sup>7</sup> Then they were frightened and said: A god has come into **L** their **L** camp. They also said: Oh no. Nothing like this has ever happened before.

<sup>8</sup> We're in trouble now. Who can save us from the power of these mighty gods? These are the gods who struck the Egyptians with every kind of plague in the desert. <sup>9</sup> Be strong Philistines and act like men or else you will serve the Hebrews as they served you. Act like men and fight.

The Philistines remembered what God had done for Israel in Egypt as Rahab had related to the spies. **Joshua 2:9-11**

## The Ark Is Captured

<sup>10</sup>The Philistines fought and defeated Israel. Every <Israelite> soldier fled to his tent. It was a major defeat in which 30,000 Israelite foot soldiers died. <sup>11</sup>The Ark of God was captured. Both of Eli's sons, Hophni and Phinehas died.

<sup>12</sup>A man from the tribe of Benjamin ran from the front line of the battle. He went to Shiloh that day with his clothes torn and dirt on his head. <sup>13</sup>When he arrived, Eli was sitting on a chair beside the road, watching. He was worried about the Ark of God. The man went into the city to tell the news. The whole city cried out.

<sup>14</sup>Hearing the cry, Eli asked: What is this commotion? So the man went quickly to tell Eli the news. <sup>15</sup>Eli was 98 years old, and his eyesight had failed so that he couldn't see. <sup>16</sup>The man told Eli: I'm the one who came from the battle. I fled from the front line today. What happened, son? Eli asked. <sup>17</sup>Israel fled from the Philistines, the messenger answered. Our troops suffered heavy casualties. Your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas also are dead and the Ark of God has been captured.

<sup>18</sup>When the messenger mentioned the Ark of God, Eli fell from his chair backwards toward the gate. He broke his neck and he died. The man was old and heavy. He had judged Israel for 40 years.

<sup>19</sup>His daughter-in-law, Phinehas' wife, was pregnant. When she heard the news that the Ark of God had been captured and her father-in-law and her husband were dead, she went into labor prematurely and gave birth to a son. <sup>20</sup>As she was dying, the women helping her said: Don't be afraid. You've given birth to a son. But she didn't answer or pay attention.

<sup>21</sup>She called the boy Ichabod [meaning: No Glory] saying Israel's glory is gone because the Ark of God had been captured and because her father-in-law and

her husband <sup>1</sup> died <sup>1</sup>. <sup>22</sup> Israel's glory is gone because the Ark of God has been captured, she said.

## Chapter 5

### The Ark in Philistine Land

<sup>1</sup>After the Philistines had captured the Ark of God, they brought it from Ebenezer to Ashdod. <sup>2</sup>They brought it into the temple of Dagon and placed it beside Dagon.

Dagon was originally a grain god in Mesopotamia that the Philistines had converted into a fish god.

<sup>3</sup>Early the next day the people of Ashdod saw that Dagon had fallen forward on the ground in front of YHWH's Ark. So they took Dagon and put him back in his place.

<sup>4</sup>But the next morning they saw that Dagon had <sup>4</sup> again <sup>4</sup> fallen forward on the ground in front of YHWH's Ark. Dagon's head and his two hands were cut off <sup>4</sup> and were lying <sup>4</sup> on the temple's threshold. The rest of Dagon's body was intact. <sup>5</sup>This is why the priests of Dagon and everyone else who comes into Dagon's temple in Ashdod still don't step on the temple's threshold.

<sup>6</sup>YHWH dealt harshly with the people of Ashdod. He destroyed them by striking the people in the vicinity of Ashdod with tumors. <sup>7</sup>When the people of Ashdod realized what was happening, they said: The Ark of the God of Israel must not stay with us because their God is dealing harshly with us and our god Dagon.

<sup>8</sup>The people of Ashdod called together all the Philistine rulers. What should we do with the Ark of the God of Israel? they asked. The Ark of the God of Israel must be taken to Gath, the rulers said. So the people took the Ark of the God of Israel there.

<sup>9</sup>But after they had moved it, YHWH threw the city into a great panic. He struck all the important and unimportant people in the city and they were

covered with tumors. <sup>10</sup> So the people of Gath sent the ark of God to Ekron. But when the Ark of God came to Ekron, the people of Ekron cried out: They brought the Ark of the God of Israel here to kill us.

<sup>11</sup> They called together all the Philistine rulers: Send the Ark of the God of Israel away, they said. Let it go back to its own place so that it won't kill us or our people. There was a fear of death throughout the city where God dealt <sub>L</sub> with them <sub>┘</sub> very harshly. <sup>12</sup> The people who didn't die were struck with tumors. So the cry of the city went up to Heaven.

## Chapter 6

### The Ark Is Returned to Israel

<sup>1</sup> The Ark of **YHWH** had been in Philistine territory seven months <sup>2</sup> when the Philistines called for priests and people skilled in explaining omens. The Philistines asked: What should we do with the Ark of **YHWH**? Tell us how to return it to its <sub>L</sub> proper <sub>┘</sub> place.

<sup>3</sup> The priests answered: If you're returning the Ark of the God of Israel don't send it away empty but by all means return it to its <sub>L</sub> proper <sub>┘</sub> place with a guilt offering. Then you will be healed and you will know why he would not turn his anger away from you.

<sup>4</sup> The Philistines asked: What kind of guilt offering should we give him? The priests answered: Five gold tumors and five gold mice for the <sub>L</sub> five <sub>┘</sub> Philistine rulers because all of you and your rulers suffer from the same plague. <sup>5</sup> Make models of your tumors and your mice which are destroying the country and give glory to the God of Israel. Maybe he will no longer be so hard on you, your gods, and your country.

<sup>6</sup> Why should you be as stubborn as the Egyptians and their Pharaoh were? After he toyed with the Egyptians, didn't they send the Israelites on their way?

<sup>7</sup> Now get a new cart ready for two dairy cows that have never been yoked. Hitch the cows to the cart. Take their calves away and leave them in their

stall. <sup>8</sup>Take the Ark of **YHWH** and put it on the cart. Put the gold objects which you're giving him as a guilt offering in a box beside the ark.

Send the cart on its way <sup>9</sup>but then watch where it goes. If it goes up the road to its own country toward Beth Shemesh, then this disaster is **YHWH's** doing. But if not, we'll know it wasn't his hand that struck us but what happened to us was an accident.

<sup>10</sup>The people did this. They took two dairy cows, hitched them to a cart and shut the calves in the stall.

The cows selected were milch cows who were nursing their young calves. If the cows were separated from their calves, they would be upset. But these cows went away from the calves mowing. It was a miracle.

<sup>11</sup>They put the Ark of **YHWH** and the box containing the gold mice and the models of their hemorrhoids on the cart. <sup>12</sup>The cows went straight up the road to Beth Shemesh. Continually mooing, they stayed on the road and didn't turn right or left. The rulers of the Philistines followed them to the border of Beth Shemesh.

<sup>13</sup>The people of Beth Shemesh were harvesting wheat in the valley. When they looked up and saw the Ark, they were overjoyed. <sup>14</sup>The cart came into the field of Joshua of Beth Shemesh and stopped there by a large rock. The people chopped up the wood of the cart and sacrificed the cows as a burnt offering to **YHWH**.

<sup>15</sup>The Levites had already taken down  $\lfloor$  from the cart  $\rfloor$  the Ark of **YHWH** and the box which contained the gold objects and put them on the large rock. The people of Beth Shemesh presented burnt offerings and sacrifices to **YHWH** that day. <sup>16</sup>After the five rulers of the Philistines saw this, they went back to Ekron that same day.

<sup>17</sup>The gold hemorrhoids which the Philistines sent as a guilt offering to **YHWH** were for the cities of Ashdod, Gaza, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron. <sup>18</sup>And the number of gold mice was the same as the number of Philistine cities belonging to the five rulers including walled cities and farm

villages. The large rock on which they put the Ark of **YHWH** is a witness. It is still there today in the field of Joshua of Beth Shemesh.

<sup>19</sup>God struck down some of the people from Beth Shemesh because they looked inside the ark of **YHWH**. He struck down 70 people. The people mourned because **YHWH** struck them with such a great blow. <sup>20</sup>The people of Beth Shemesh asked: Who can stand before **YHWH**, this holy God? And to which people will he go when he leaves us?

<sup>21</sup>They sent messengers to the people living at Kiriath Jearim to say: The Philistines have brought back the Ark of **YHWH**. Come and take it back with you.

Why did the people send the Ark to Kiriath Jearim rather than return it to Shiloh where it was originally? It seems that the Philistines had already destroyed Shiloh. **Psalm 78:60; Jeremiah 7:12**

## Chapter 7

<sup>1</sup>The men of Kiriath Jearim came to take **YHWH**'s Ark and brought it into Abinadab's house on the hill. They gave Abinadab's son Eleazar the holy occupation of guarding **YHWH**'s Ark.

## The Philistines Defeated

<sup>7</sup>When the Philistines heard that the Israelites had gathered at Mizpah, the Philistine rulers came to attack Israel. The Israelites heard about the Philistine plan and were afraid of them. <sup>8</sup>The Israelites said to Samuel: Don't turn a deaf ear to us. Don't stop crying to **YHWH** our God for us. Ask him to save us from the Philistines.

<sup>9</sup>Then Samuel took a lamb, one still feeding on milk, and sacrificed it as a burnt offering to **YHWH**. Samuel cried to **YHWH** on behalf of Israel and **YHWH** answered him. <sup>10</sup>While Samuel was sacrificing the burnt offering, the Philistines came to fight against Israel. On that day **YHWH** thundered loudly at the Philistines and threw them into such confusion that they were



defeated by Israel. <sup>11</sup> Israel's soldiers left Mizpah, pursued the Philistines and killed them as far as Beth Car.

<sup>12</sup> Then Samuel took a rock and set it up between Mizpah and Shen. He named it Ebenezer [meaning: Rock of Help] and said: Until now **YHWH** has helped us.

<sup>13</sup> The power of the Philistines was crushed so they didn't come into Israel's territory again. **YHWH** restrained the Philistines as long as Samuel lived. <sup>14</sup> The cities between Ekron and Gath which the Philistines took from Israel were returned to Israel. And Israel recovered the territory controlled by these cities from the Philistines. There was also peace between Israel and the Amorites.

<sup>15</sup> Samuel judged Israel as long as he lived. <sup>16</sup> Every year he went around to Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpah in order to judge Israel in all those places. <sup>17</sup> Then he would return home to Ramah. There, too, he judged Israel. And in Ramah he built an altar to **YHWH**.

## Chapter 8

### Israel Demands a King to Lead Them Against the Philistines

<sup>1</sup> When Samuel was old, he made his sons judges over Israel. <sup>2</sup> The name of his firstborn son was Joel. The name of his second son was Abijah. They were judges in Beersheba. <sup>3</sup> The sons didn't follow their father's example but turned to dishonest ways of making money. They took bribes and denied people justice.

<sup>4</sup> Then all the leaders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah. <sup>5</sup> They told him: You're old and your sons aren't following your example. Now appoint a King to judge us so that we will be like all the other nations.

<sup>6</sup> But Samuel considered it wrong for them to request a King to judge them. So Samuel prayed to **YHWH**. <sup>7</sup> **YHWH** told Samuel:

Listen to everything the people are saying to you. They haven't rejected you; they've rejected me. <sup>8</sup>They're doing just what they've done since I took them out of Egypt — leaving me and serving other gods. <sup>9</sup>Listen to them now but be sure to warn them and tell them about the rights of a King.

<sup>10</sup>Then Samuel told the people who had asked him for a King everything **YHWH** had said. <sup>11</sup>Samuel said: These are the rights of a King:

He will draft your sons, make them serve on his chariots and horses, and make them run ahead of his chariots. <sup>12</sup>He will appoint them to be his officers over 1,000 or over 50 soldiers, to plow his ground and harvest his crops, and to make weapons and equipment for his chariots. <sup>13</sup>He will take your daughters and have them make perfumes, cook, and bake.

<sup>14</sup>He will take the best of your fields, vineyards, and olive orchards and give them to his officials. <sup>15</sup>He will take a tenth of your grain and wine and give it to his aids and officials. <sup>16</sup>He will take your male and female slaves, your best cattle and your donkeys for his own use. <sup>17</sup>He will take a tenth of your flocks. In addition, you will be his servants.

<sup>18</sup>“When that day comes, you will cry out because of the King whom you have chosen for yourselves. **YHWH** will not answer you when that day comes. <sup>19</sup>But the people refused to listen to Samuel. They said:

No, we want a King. <sup>20</sup>Then we, too, will be like all the other nations. Our King will judge us, lead us out to war, and fight our battles

<sup>21</sup>When Samuel heard everything the people had to say, he reported it privately to **YHWH**. <sup>22</sup>**YHWH** told him: Listen to them and give them a King. Then Samuel told the people of Israel: Go back to your own cities.

## WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

The Ark of the Covenant was a symbol of God's presence as was the pillar of smoke and the pillar of fire. **Exodus 40:36-38**. Above the Ark God promised to meet with Moses. **Exodus 25:22**. Having the Wilderness Tabernacle in their camp, the Israelites were assured that God

was with them. But when the Ark is used as a totem or good luck charm, it is desecration. God punished Israel for using in this way by allowing 30,000 Israelites to die instead of 4,000 as before.

The Philistines really didn't know what to do with the Ark so they placed it in the temple of their god Dagon. But Dagon's statue fell in front of the Ark. The second time its head and arms were broken. Then God started a plague that we can't describe exactly. But it was horrific. The Philistines realized that the God who had given the Egyptians plagues when the Pharaoh refused to let the Hebrews leave was now giving them the plagues. What is surprising is that the Philistines kept the Ark for seven months. They should have given it back right away.

This story tells how God operates with a pagan people to show his strength. The hand or power of **YHWH** appears nine times. The Philistines learned that **YHWH** is real. He is alive and he is sovereign. It is foolish to make him angry. He can really hurt you. So after seven months, the Philistines sent the Ark back to Beth Shemesh. The Israelites rejoiced. This was a Levitical city so the priests took the Ark to Kiriath Jearim. There it remained for 20 years forgotten.

In the meantime, the people demanded that Samuel ask God for a King who could lead them against the Philistines and establish a standing army. But Samuel resisted. Not only were the people rejecting his leadership, they were rejecting God's plan for them. But God told Samuel to give them a King although warning them of the abuses a King would cause them.

At this time, there would be a division of offices: The King would be the political office. The priest would be the religious office. And the prophet would speak God's Word independent of the King and priest.

## THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Examine the nine places the hand of **YHWH** appears: **I Samuel 4:8; 5:5, 7, 9, 11; 6:3, 5, 8; 7:13**. What does the hand of God do at each occurrence?
2. How did the Ark's presence in Philistine land affect the way the Philistines viewed the God of Israel?
3. Why did the Israelites ignore the Ark for 20 years?
4. As with Eli, Samuel's sons were evil. Why didn't Samuel discipline his sons like he disciplined Israel when they sinned?
5. Read **Deuteronomy 17:14-20**. God wasn't surprised when Israel asked for a King. But why was the asking for a King rejecting God?

6. Apparently the Philistines destroyed the worship site at Shiloh. Why didn't the Israelites build a new worship site and place the Ark there?
7. Why didn't the Levites at Beth Shemesh keep the Ark there? Why did they send it to Kiriath Jearim?

## Session Three

### The Rise of Saul: The First King of Israel

#### Saul ben Kish, King of Israel 1053-1011 BC

## Chapter 9

### Saul Searches for His Father's Donkeys

<sup>1</sup> There was a man from the tribe of Benjamin whose name was Kish. He was a son of Abiel, grandson of Zeror, and great-grandson of Becorath, whose father was Aphiah, a descendant of Benjamin. Kish was a powerful man.

When a person's genealogy was given in this much detail, he was a powerful and well respected man,

<sup>2</sup> He had a son named Saul, a handsome, young man. No man in Israel was more handsome than Saul. He stood a head taller than everyone else.

<sup>3</sup> When some donkeys belonging to Saul's father Kish were lost, Kish told Saul: Take one of the servants with you and go look for the donkeys.

<sup>4</sup> They went through the mountains of Ephraim and the region of Shalisha without finding the donkeys. Then Saul and his servant went through the region of Shaalim but the donkeys weren't there. The men went through the territory of Benjamin but still didn't find them <sup>5</sup> When they came to the territory of Zuph, Saul told his servant who was with him: Let's go back or my father will stop worrying about the donkeys and worry about us instead.

### Saul Seeks Samuel's Advice

<sup>6</sup> The servant responded: There's a man of God in this city, a highly respected man. Everything he says is sure to happen. Let's go there. Maybe he'll tell us which way we should go.

<sup>7</sup>If we go, Saul asked his servant, what could we bring the man since the food in our sacks is gone? There's no present we can bring the man of God. What do we have? <sup>8</sup>The servant again answered Saul: Look, here. I have one-tenth of an ounce of silver. I'll give it to the man of God. Then he'll tell us where to find the donkeys.

<sup>9</sup>Formerly in Israel, when a person went to ask God a question, he would say: Come let's go to the seer because a person we now call a prophet used to be called a seer.

<sup>10</sup>Saul told his servant: That's a good idea. Come on, let's go. They went to the city where the man of God was. <sup>11</sup>As they were going up the hill to the city, they met girls coming out to get water. They asked the girls: Is the seer here? <sup>12</sup>The girls answered: He's there ahead of you. Hurry. He just went into the city today since the people are offering a sacrifice on the worship site *bamah*—high place.

<sup>13</sup>As you go into the city you can find him before he goes to the worship site to eat. The people will not eat until he comes since he blesses the sacrifice. Then those who are invited may eat. Go. You should be able to find him now.

<sup>14</sup>So Saul and his servant went to the city. As they entered it, Samuel was coming toward them on his way to the worship site.

<sup>15</sup>Now **YHWH** had revealed the following message to Samuel one day before Saul came:

<sup>16</sup>About this time tomorrow I will send you a man from the territory of Benjamin. Anoint *mashach* him to be ruler *nagiyd*—captain of my people Israel. He will save my people from the Philistines because I've seen my people's <suffering>and their cry has come to me.

<sup>17</sup>When Samuel noticed Saul, **YHWH** told him: There's the man I told you about. This man will govern my people. <sup>18</sup>Saul approached Samuel inside the gateway and said: Please tell me where the seer's house is.

<sup>19</sup>Samuel replied: I'm the seer. Go ahead of me to the worship site. You will eat with me today. In the morning I'll let you go after I tell you all that's on your mind. <sup>20</sup>Don't trouble yourself about the donkeys that were lost three days ago because they've been found. Who will have all that is desirable in Israel? Won't it be you and your father's family?

<sup>21</sup>Saul replied: I am a man from the tribe of Benjamin, the smallest tribe of Israel. My family is the most insignificant of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin. So why are you saying such things to me?

<sup>22</sup>Samuel brought Saul and his servant to the banquet hall and had them sit at the head of the guests — about 30 people. <sup>23</sup>Samuel said to the cook: Bring me the portion of the sacrificial meat that I gave you and told you to put aside. <sup>24</sup>So the cook picked up the leg and thigh and laid it in front of Saul. Samuel said: This was kept in order to be laid in front of you. Eat it. When I invited people to the feast, I set it aside for you. Saul ate with Samuel that day.

<sup>25</sup>Then they left the worship site for the city. They spread blankets on the roof for Saul, and he slept there.

<sup>26</sup>At dawn Samuel called to Saul on the roof: Get up. <sup>27</sup>It's time for me to send you away. Saul got up and both he and Samuel went outside. <sup>27</sup>As they were going toward the city limits, Samuel told Saul: Have the servant go ahead of you. He went ahead. But you stay here and I will tell you God's Word.

## Chapter 10

### Saul Is Privately Anointed by Samuel

<sup>1</sup>Samuel took a flask of olive oil, poured it on Saul's head, kissed him, and said: **YHWH** has anointed *mashach* you to be ruler *nagiyd* of his people Israel. You will rule his people and save them from all their enemies.

This will be the sign that **YHWH** has anointed *mashach* you to be ruler of his people. <sup>2</sup>When you leave me today, two men will be at Rachel's grave on the

border of Benjamin at Zelzah. They'll tell you: We've found the donkeys you went looking for. Your father no longer cares about them. Instead, he's worried about you. He keeps asking: What can I do to find my son?

<sup>3</sup>Keep going until you come to the oak tree at Tabor. There you will find three men on their way to worship God at Bethel. One will be carrying three young goats, one will be carrying three loaves of bread, and one will be carrying a full wineskin. <sup>4</sup>They will greet you and give you two loaves of bread, which you should accept from them.

<sup>5</sup>After that, you will come to the hill of God, where the Philistines have a military post. When you arrive at the city, you will meet a group of prophets prophesying as they come from the worship site. They will be led by men playing a harp, a tambourine, a flute, and a lyre. <sup>6</sup>Then YHWH's Spirit *ruwach* will come over you. You will be a different *'acher*—another person *leb*-heart while you prophesy with them.

<sup>7</sup>When these signs *owth* happen to you, do what you must because God is with you. <sup>8</sup>Go ahead of me to Gilgal. Then I will come to sacrifice burnt offerings and make fellowship offerings. Wait seven days until I come to tell you what to do.

### Saul's Anointing Confirmed by Signs

<sup>9</sup>When Saul turned around to leave Samuel, God changed Saul's attitude *leb*. That day all these signs happened. <sup>10</sup>When Saul came to the hill a group of prophets came to meet him and God's Spirit *ruwach* came over him. He prophesied with them.

<sup>11</sup>When all who had known him before saw how he prophesied with the prophets, the people asked one another: What has happened to the son of Kish? Is Saul one of the prophets? <sup>12</sup>But a man from that place asked: But who's the chief prophet? So it became a proverb: Is Saul one of the prophets? <sup>13</sup>And when he had finished prophesying, he came to the worship site.



<sup>14</sup> Saul's uncle asked him and his servant: Where did you go?

Saul answered: To look for the donkeys, and when we couldn't find them, we went to Samuel. <sup>15</sup> Saul's uncle said: Please tell me what Samuel said to you. <sup>16</sup> He assured us the donkeys had been found, Saul answered his uncle. But Saul didn't tell him what Samuel said <sub>L</sub> about his becoming King <sub>L</sub>.

### **YHWH Chooses Saul Publicly on the Basis of Lots Thrown**

<sup>17</sup> Samuel called the people to <sub>L</sub> come into the presence of <sub>L</sub> **YHWH** at Mizpah. <sup>18</sup> He said to the Israelites: This is what **YHWH** God of Israel says: I brought Israel out of Egypt and rescued you from the power of the Egyptians and all the Kings who were oppressing you.

<sup>19</sup> But now you have rejected your God, who saves you from all your troubles and distresses. You said: No. Place a King over us. Now then stand in front of **YHWH** by your tribes and family groups.

<sup>20</sup> When Samuel had all the tribes of Israel come forward, the tribe of Benjamin was chosen. <sup>21</sup> When he had the tribe of Benjamin come forward by families, the family of Matri was chosen. Then Saul, the son of Kish, was chosen.

This choice was apparently made by throwing lots as the High Priest did by using the Urim and Thummim from his breastplate.

They looked for him but couldn't find him. <sup>22</sup> They asked **YHWH** again: Has he arrived here yet? **YHWH** answered: He's hiding among the baggage. <sup>23</sup> They ran and got him from there. As he stood among the people, he was a head taller than everyone else.

<sup>24</sup> Samuel asked the people: Do you see whom **YHWH** has chosen? There is no one like him among all the people. Then all the people shouted: Long live *chayah* the King *melek*.

<sup>25</sup> Samuel explained the laws concerning kingship to the people. He wrote the laws on a scroll which he placed in front of **YHWH**. Then Samuel sent the people back to their homes.

These were probably what Samuel had previously told the people in **1 Samuel 8:11-17** and also **Deuteronomy 17:14-20**.

<sup>26</sup>Saul also went home to Gibeah. With him went some soldiers whose hearts God had touched. <sup>27</sup>However some good-for-nothing people asked: How can this man save us? They despised him and wouldn't bring him presents but he didn't respond.

It is quite surprising the Saul did not know who Samuel was: Were Saul and his father unbelievers? If Kish was a great man in Benjamin and Benjamin was a small territory where Samuel usually ministered, how could Saul not know him? This is a great mystery.

## Chapter 11

### Saul Defeats Ammon

<sup>1</sup>King Nahash of Ammon was severely oppressing the tribes of Gad and Reuben. He would poke out everyone's right eye and allow no one to rescue Israel. There was no one among the Israelites east of the Jordan River whose right eye King Nahash of Ammon had not poked out. However, seven thousand men had escaped from the Ammonites and gone to Jabesh Gilead.

By poking out the right eye, it made it more difficult for a right-handed person to aim arrows to shoot or to look out over their shield. Therefore it weakened the warriors of conquered peoples.

About a month later Nahash the Ammonite blockaded Jabesh Gilead. All the men of Jabesh said to Nahash: Make a treaty with us and we'll serve you.

<sup>2</sup>Nahash the Ammonite responded: I'll make a treaty with you on this one condition. I'll poke out everyone's right eye and bring disgrace on all Israel.

<sup>3</sup>The leaders of Jabesh told him: Give us seven days so that we can send messengers throughout the territory of Israel. And if there's no one to save us, we'll surrender to you.

<sup>4</sup>The messengers came to Saul's town, Gibeah. When they told the people the news, the people cried loudly. <sup>5</sup>Just then Saul was coming from the field behind some oxen. Why are these people crying? Saul asked. So they told him the news about the men of Jabesh.

As the new King of Israel, why was Saul farming? Weren't there more important things to him to do?

<sup>6</sup>When he heard this news, God's Spirit *ruwach* came over him and he became very angry. <sup>7</sup>Saul took a pair of oxen, cut them in pieces, and sent them by messengers throughout the territory of Israel with the following message: This is what will be done to the oxen of anyone who doesn't follow Saul and Samuel  $\perp$  into battle  $\perp$ . So the people became terrified by **YHWH** and they came out united <behind Saul>. <sup>8</sup>When Saul counted them at Bezek, there were 300,000 troops from Israel and 30,000 troops from Judah.

Here is possibly an anachronism. The United Monarchy did not divide into the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah until 925 BC after King Solomon died. This appears many times throughout the Book of Samuel. This may indicate the final time the book was finally written. However it may also indicate that the tribe of Judah operated independently of the ten northern tribes. Saul linked himself with Samuel because Samuel was the spiritual leader of the nation.

<sup>9</sup>They told the messengers who had come: This is what you are to say to the men of Jabesh Gilead: Tomorrow by the time the sun gets hot, you will be rescued. When the men of Jabesh received the message, they were overjoyed. <sup>10</sup>They said  $\perp$  to Nahash:  $\perp$  Tomorrow we'll surrender to you and you may do to us whatever you think is right.

<sup>11</sup>The next day Saul arranged the army in three divisions. They came into the  $\perp$  Ammonite  $\perp$  camp during the morning hours and continued to defeat the Ammonites until it got hot that day. The survivors were so scattered that no two of them were left together. <sup>12</sup>Then the people asked Samuel: Who said that Saul shouldn't rule us? Let us have them and we'll kill them. <sup>13</sup>But Saul said: No one will be killed today because today **YHWH** saved Israel.

<sup>14</sup>Samuel told the troops: Come let's go to Gilgal and there acknowledge  $\perp$  Saul's  $\perp$  kingship. <sup>15</sup>Then all the troops went to Gilgal and there in **YHWH**'s presence, they confirmed Saul as their King. There they sacrificed fellowship offerings to **YHWH**. Saul and all of Israel's soldiers celebrated.

There are several Gilgals in Israel. The most famous is the first camp Israel made when Joshua first brought the Israelites into the Promised Land from across the Jordan River. **Joshua 5:9-10**. Perhaps Samuel conducted a Covenant Renewal ceremony here.

## Chapter 12

### Samuel's Spotless Leadership

<sup>1</sup>Then Samuel said to all Israel: I have listened to everything you have said to me and appointed a King over you. <sup>2</sup>And now here is the King who will lead you. I am old and gray but my sons are with you. I have led you from my youth until this day.

<sup>3</sup>Here I am. Testify against me in front of **YHWH** and in front of his anointed King. Did I take anyone's ox? Did I take anyone's donkey? Did I cheat or oppress anyone? Did I take a bribe from anyone to look the other way? **⌋** If so, **⌋**I will give it all back. <sup>4</sup>They answered: You didn't cheat us, oppress us, or take anything from anyone.

<sup>5</sup>Samuel told them: **YHWH** is a witness *ed* to what you've said, and his anointed *mashiyach* King is a witness *ed* today that you've found nothing in my hands. He is a witness, they answered.

<sup>6</sup>Samuel told the people: **YHWH** appointed Moses and Aaron and brought your ancestors out of Egypt. <sup>7</sup>Now, stand up while I put you on trial in front of **YHWH** and cite all the righteous things **YHWH** did for you and your ancestors.

<sup>8</sup>When your ancestors went with Jacob to Egypt **⌋** and were oppressed **⌋**, they cried out to **YHWH**, who sent Moses and Aaron to bring them out of Egypt. **YHWH** settled them in this place.

### Although You Rejected YHWH, YHWH Didn't Reject You

<sup>9</sup>But they forgot **YHWH** their God. So he handed them over to Sisera who was the commander of the army of Hazor, to the Philistines, and to the King of Moab. All of them fought against your ancestors. <sup>10</sup>Then they cried out to **YHWH** and said: We have sinned. We have abandoned **YHWH** and

served other gods and goddesses — the Baals and the Astartes. But rescue us from our enemies now and we will serve you.

<sup>11</sup>Then **YHWH** sent Jerubbaal Gideon, Bedan a judge who followed Gideon, Jephthah a captain who fought the Ammonites, and Samuel and rescued you from your enemies on every side so that you could live securely. <sup>12</sup>But when you saw King Nahash of Ammon coming to attack you, you told me: No, a King should rule over us though **YHWH** your God was your King.

### Now You and Your King Must Serve YHWH

<sup>13</sup>“Now here is the King you have chosen, the one you asked for. See **YHWH** has put a King over you. <sup>14</sup>If you fear **YHWH**, serve him, obey him, and don't rebel against what he says, then you and your King will follow **YHWH** your God. <sup>15</sup>But if you don't obey **YHWH**, if you rebel against what he says, then **YHWH** will be against you as he was against your ancestors.

<sup>16</sup>Now then stand still and watch this great thing **YHWH** is going to do right before your eyes. <sup>17</sup>Isn't the wheat being harvested today? I will call on **YHWH** and he'll send thunder and rain. Then you will realize what a wicked thing you did in **YHWH**'s presence when you asked for a King.

Notice how many times Samuel uses God's personal name **YHWH**.

<sup>18</sup>Then Samuel called on **YHWH**. That day **YHWH** sent thunder and rain so that all the people feared **YHWH** and Samuel very much.

<sup>19</sup>All the people pleaded with Samuel: Pray to **YHWH** your God for us so that we will not die. We have added another evil thing to all our other sins by asking for a King.

<sup>20</sup> Don't be afraid, Samuel told the people. You did do all these evil things. But don't turn away from **YHWH**. Instead, serve **YHWH** wholeheartedly. <sup>21</sup>Don't turn away to follow other gods. They can't help or rescue you because they don't exist. <sup>22</sup>For the sake of his great

name, **YHWH** will not abandon his people because **YHWH** wants to make you his people.

### **Samuel Promises to Continue to Be Their Judge Despite Their Choice of a King to Replace Him**

<sup>23</sup>It would be unthinkable for me to sin against **YHWH** by failing to pray for you. I will go on teaching you the way that is good and right. <sup>24</sup>Fear **YHWH** and serve him sincerely. Consider the great things he did for you. <sup>25</sup>But if you go on doing what is evil, you and your King will be wiped out.

Samuel has laid down his office as judge but he continues his office as prophet. Saul is now the political judge of Israel as King.

## **Chapter 13**

### **Saul Fights the Philistines**

<sup>1</sup>Saul was  $\sqcup$  thirty  $\sqcup$  years old when he became King, and he was King of Israel  $\sqcup$  forty-two  $\sqcup$  years.

<sup>2</sup>Saul chose 3,000 men from Israel. 2,000 of them were stationed with Saul at Michmash and in the mountains of Bethel and 1,000 were stationed with Jonathan at Gibeah in Benjamin. But the rest of the people he sent home.

<sup>3</sup>Jonathan defeated the Philistine troops at Geba and the Philistines heard about it. With the sounding of the ram's horn throughout the land, Saul announced: Listen, Hebrews. <sup>4</sup>So all Israel listened. I, Saul, have defeated the Philistine troops and now Israel has become offensive to the Philistines. All the troops rallied behind Saul at Gilgal.

This is the first mention of Jonathan in the book. The defeat of the Philistines at Geba caused the Lords of the Philistines to bring a much larger force to attack the new King of the Israelites.

### **The Philistines Attack Saul's Army with Many More Warriors**

<sup>5</sup>The Philistines assembled to fight against Israel. They had 30,000 chariots, 6,000 horsemen and as many soldiers as the sand on the seashore. They camped at Michmash, east of Beth Aven. <sup>6</sup>When the Israelites saw they were

in trouble because the army was hard-pressed, they hid in caves, in thorny thickets, among rocks, in pits, and in cisterns. <sup>7</sup>Some Hebrews crossed <sup>east</sup> across the Jordan River into the territory of Gad and Gilead. But Saul remained in Gilgal, and all the people who followed him trembled <sup>in fear</sup> in fear.

### **Saul Decides Not to Wait for Samuel and Pray to God Himself**

<sup>8</sup>He waited seven days, the time set by Samuel. <sup>1 Samuel 10:8</sup>. But Samuel had not come to Gilgal and the troops began to scatter. <sup>9</sup>Then Saul said: Bring me the animals for the burnt offering and the fellowship offerings. So he sacrificed the burnt offering. <sup>10</sup>As he finished sacrificing the burnt offering, Samuel came, and Saul went to greet him.

<sup>11</sup>Samuel asked: What have you done? Saul replied: I saw the troops were scattering. You didn't come when you said you would, and the Philistines were assembling at Michmash. <sup>12</sup>So I thought: Now, the Philistines will come against me at Gilgal, but I haven't sought **YHWH's** favor. I felt pressured into sacrificing the burnt offering.

### **Samuel Tells Saul God Will Pick Another King Who Obeys Him**

<sup>13</sup>You did a foolish thing, Samuel told Saul. You didn't follow the command of **YHWH** your God. <sup>14</sup>If you had, <sup>15</sup>**YHWH** would have established your kingdom over Israel permanently. <sup>14</sup>But now your kingdom will not last. **YHWH** has searched for a man after his own heart. **YHWH** has appointed him as ruler of his people because you didn't follow the command of **YHWH**.

Samuel has now informed Saul that he will not have God helping him from now on. God has found another man to succeed him as King of Israel.

### **Saul's Army Is Now Down to 600 Soldiers**

<sup>15</sup>Samuel left Gilgal. The rest of the people followed Saul to meet the soldiers. They went from Gilgal to Gibeah in Benjamin where Saul counted the troops who were still with him — about 600 men. <sup>16</sup>Saul, his son Jonathan, and the troops who were with them stayed at Geba in Benjamin while the Philistines camped at Michmash.

<sup>17</sup>Raiding parties left the Philistine camp in three columns. One column turned onto the road to Ophrah to the region of Shual. <sup>18</sup>Another column turned onto the road to Beth Horon. And one turned onto the road toward the region that overlooks the valley of Zeboim and the desert.

### **The Philistine Weapons Were Superior – Iron vs. Copper**

<sup>19</sup>No blacksmith could be found in the entire land of Israel. In this way the Philistines kept the Hebrews from making swords and spears. <sup>20</sup>Everyone in Israel had to go to the Philistines to sharpen the blade of his plow, his mattock, ax, or sickle. <sup>21</sup>The price was a pim a measure of weight for plow blades and mattocks, and one-tenth of an ounce of silver to sharpen a mattock or set a metal point on a cattle-prod.

<sup>22</sup>So on the day of battle, not one sword or spear could be found among all the troops who were with Saul and Jonathan. But Saul and his son Jonathan had them. <sup>23</sup>Now Philistine troops had gone out to the pass at Michmash.

## **Chapter 14**

### **Jonathan Defeats the Philistines**

<sup>1</sup>One day Saul's son Jonathan said to his armorbearer: Let's go to the Philistine military post on the other side. But Jonathan didn't tell his father ↳ he was going ↵.

<sup>2</sup>Saul was staying on the outskirts of Gibeah under a pomegranate tree at Migron. He had with him about 600 men <sup>3</sup>in addition to Ahijah, the son of Ichabod's brother Ahitub, who was the son of Phinehas and the grandson of Eli, **YHWH's** priest at Shiloh. Ahijah was wearing the priestly ephod.

Apparently Ahijah was the only one left from the priestly line of Eli, the former High Priest at Shiloh.



The troops didn't know Jonathan had left. <sup>4</sup>There was a cliff on each side of the mountain pass where Jonathan searched for a way to cross over to attack the Philistine military post. The name of one cliff was Bozez, and the name of the other was Seneh. <sup>5</sup>One cliff stood like a pillar on the north facing Michmash, the other stood south facing Geba.

<sup>6</sup>Jonathan said to his armorbearer: Let's go to the military post of these uncircumcised people. Maybe YHWH will act on our behalf. YHWH can win a victory with a few men as well as with many.

Jonathan's faith in God should be compared with that of Gideon whose force God reduced from 22,000 men to 300. **Joshua 7:2-22**

<sup>7</sup>His armorbearer answered him: Do whatever you have in mind. Go ahead. I agree with you.

<sup>8</sup>Jonathan continued: Listen we'll cross over to the Philistines and show ourselves to them. <sup>9</sup>If they say to us: Stay where you are until we come to you, then we'll stay where we are and not go up to them. <sup>10</sup>But if they say to us: Come up here, then we'll go up because that will be our sign that YHWH has handed them over to us.

<sup>11</sup>So both of them showed themselves to the Philistine troops. The Philistines said: Look, some Hebrews are coming out of the holes they were hiding in. <sup>12</sup>Come up here, the men of the military post said to Jonathan and his armorbearer. We have something to show you. Jonathan told his armorbearer: Follow me up to the military post because YHWH has handed the troops over to Israel.

<sup>13</sup>Jonathan climbed up the cliff, and his armorbearer followed him. Jonathan struck down the Philistines. His armorbearer who was behind him finished killing them. <sup>14</sup>In their first slaughter Jonathan and his armorbearer killed about twenty men within about a hundred yards.

## God Sends a Panic Among the Philistines

<sup>15</sup>There was panic *charadah* among the army in the field and all the troops in the military post. The raiding party also trembled <sub>L</sub> in fear <sub>⌋</sub>. The earth shook and there was a panic *charad* sent from God. <sup>16</sup>Saul's watchmen at Gibeah in Benjamin could see the crowd <sub>L</sub> in the Philistine camp <sub>⌋</sub> dispersing in all directions.

<sup>17</sup>Look around, Saul told the troops who were with him, and see who has left <sub>L</sub> our camp <sub>⌋</sub>. They looked and found that Jonathan and his armorbearer were not there. <sup>18</sup>Then Saul said to Ahijah: Bring the priestly ephod, because Ahijah carried the ephod in front of Israel that day. <sup>19</sup>While Saul was talking to the priest, the confusion in the Philistine camp grew worse and worse. Then Saul said to the priest: Remove your hand <sub>L</sub> from the ephod <sub>⌋</sub>.

<sup>20</sup>Saul and all the troops with him assembled and went into battle. They found Philistine soldiers killing their fellow soldiers in wild confusion. <sup>21</sup>The Hebrews who had been with the Philistines before this and had been stationed in the camp now joined the Israelites who were with Saul and Jonathan. <sup>22</sup>When all the men of Israel who had been hiding in the mountains of Ephraim heard that the Philistines were fleeing, they also pursued the Philistines in battle. <sup>23</sup>So **YHWH** saved Israel that day.

## Saul Forces His Troops to Swear

Now the battle moved beyond Beth Aven. <sup>24</sup>Israel's soldiers were driven hard that day. Saul made the troops swear: Cursed is anyone who eats food before the evening comes and before I've gotten revenge on my enemies. So none of his troops tasted any food. <sup>25</sup>The entire land had honeycombs, and there was honey on the ground. <sup>26</sup>When the troops entered the woods, the honey was flowing. But no one put his hand to his mouth because the troops were afraid of violating their oath.

<sup>27</sup>Jonathan hadn't heard that his father forced the troops to take an oath. So he stretched out the tip of the staff he had in his hand and dipped it in the

honeycomb. When he put it to his mouth his eyes lit up. <sup>28</sup>Then one of the soldiers told him: Your father forced the troops to take a solemn oath: Cursed is anyone who eats food today.

Now, the army was exhausted. <sup>29</sup>Jonathan answered: My father has brought trouble to the country. See how my eyes lit up when I tasted a little of this honey? <sup>30</sup>If only the troops had eaten some of the enemies' food, which they found today. We would have killed more Philistines.

<sup>31</sup>That day they struck down the Philistines from Michmash to Aijalon but the troops were thoroughly exhausted. <sup>32</sup>So the troops seized the Philistines' belongings. They took sheep, cows, and calves and butchered them on the ground. The troops ate the meat with blood still in it. <sup>33</sup>Some soldiers told Saul: The troops are sinning against **YHWH** by eating meat with blood in it.

Saul replied: You have been unfaithful. Roll a large rock over to me now. <sup>34</sup>Then Saul said: Spread out through the troops and tell them: Each of you, bring me your ox or your sheep and butcher it here and eat. But don't sin against **YHWH** by eating meat with blood in it. **Deuteronomy 12:23**. So each of the soldiers brought his ox with him that night and butchered it there.

<sup>35</sup>Then Saul built an altar to **YHWH**. It was the first time he had built an altar to **YHWH**.

<sup>36</sup>Saul said to his men: Let's attack the Philistines tonight and take their possessions until the light of dawn. And let's not leave any of them alive. Do whatever you think is best, they responded. But the priest said: Let's consult God first. <sup>37</sup>Then Saul asked God: Should I attack the Philistines? Will you hand them over to Israel? But he received no answer that day.

Obviously, God has left Saul on his own.

## When God Does Not Answer Saul Is Determined to Find Out Why Not

<sup>38</sup> So Saul ordered all the leaders of the troops: Come here. Find out what sin was committed today. <sup>39</sup> I solemnly swear, as **YHWH** and Savior of Israel lives, even if it is my son Jonathan  $\perp$  who did it  $\perp$ , he must die. But not one of the soldiers replied.

<sup>40</sup> Saul told all Israel: You stand on one side and my son Jonathan and I will stand on the other side. Do whatever you think is best, the troops responded to Saul.

<sup>41</sup> Then Saul said to **YHWH**: O God of Israel why didn't you answer me today? If this sin is mine or my son Jonathan's, **YHWH** God of Israel,  $\perp$  let the priest  $\perp$  draw Urim. But if it is in your people Israel  $\perp$  let him  $\perp$  draw Thummim. Jonathan and Saul were chosen and the people were freed  $\perp$  from guilt  $\perp$ .

This is strange. Each of the two stones in the High Priest's breastplate were labeled YES on one side and NO on the other side. Both stones had to say the same thing in order to obtain an answer.

<sup>42</sup> Choose between me and my son Jonathan, Saul said. Then Jonathan was chosen. <sup>43</sup> Tell me, Saul asked Jonathan. What did you do? So Jonathan told him: I tasted a little honey on the tip of the staff I had in my hand. And for that I am to die? <sup>44</sup> Saul said: May God do worse things to me than are in this curse if you do not die, Jonathan.

<sup>45</sup> The troops asked Saul: Should Jonathan die after he has won this great victory in Israel? That would be unthinkable. We solemnly swear, as **YHWH** lives, not a single hair of his head will fall to the ground, because he has done this with God's help today.

So the troops rescued Jonathan from death. <sup>46</sup> Then Saul stopped pursuing the Philistines. So the Philistines returned to their own land.

## Summary of Saul's Reign

<sup>47</sup>When Saul had taken over the kingdom of Israel, he fought against his enemies on every side — against Moab, the Ammonites, Edom, the Kings of Zobah, and the Philistines. Wherever he turned, he was victorious. <sup>48</sup>He acted forcefully and defeated Amalek. He rescued Israel from the enemies who looted their possessions.

<sup>49</sup>Saul's sons were Jonathan, Ishvi, and Malchishua. The names of his two daughters were Merab, the firstborn daughter and Michal, the younger daughter. <sup>50</sup>The name of Saul's wife was Ahinoam, the daughter of Ahimaaz. The name of the commander of his army was Abner, the son of Saul's uncle Ner. <sup>51</sup>Kish, Saul's father and Ner, Abner's father were the sons of Abiel.

<sup>52</sup>There was intense warfare with the Philistines as long as Saul lived. Whenever any warrior or any skilled fighting man came to Saul's attention, Saul would enlist him in the army.

Saul established a standing army in Israel for the first time.

## WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

We have learned about God's selection of the first King of Israel through his prophet Samuel. He is Saul ben Kish of the tribe of Benjamin, a handsome and tall man in appearance, humble in outward appearance, but arrogant in his spirit. To ensure the people of Israel know that God has chosen Saul as King, Samuel anoints Saul first privately, then twice publicly. This will set a pattern for the anointing of Kings.

Samuel now retires from being the last judge of Israel. The King will now judge Israel although Samuel will remain as the first prophetic voice. Israel will now have a political leader and a spiritual leader.

Saul chose 5,000 warriors as his first standing army. Jonathan attacked the Philistines in small battles. This infuriated the Lords of the Philistines who sent 30,000 chariots and 6,000 horsemen. The text doesn't say how many foot soldiers there were. It was a battle the Israelites would certainly lose unless God was with them.

Samuel had told Saul to wait seven days for him. As the Philistines approached, Saul's men were deserting. So Saul believed it was necessary to offer sacrifices to God to keep the men in place. So he did so. Samuel arrives and berated Saul. He said: Your kingdom will not last. The Lord has searched for a man after his own heart and has appointed him as the King of Israel. You didn't follow the command of the Lord. Then Samuel left Gilgal.

Saul counted his troops and found only 600 were left. Jonathan and his armor bearer left the camp and they attacked a Philistine outpost killing 20 men. Then God sent a trembling which caused the Philistine troops to attack each other. The Hebrews attacked the Philistines and Saul made the soldiers swear not to eat anything until the battle was finished. But Jonathan didn't hear this order. So he ate some honey.

Later, Saul ordered the men to attack the Philistine that night. But the priest said: Let's ask God first. But God didn't answer from the Urim and Thummim. So Saul asked the priest to determine who sinned. Jonathan was selected. Saul wanted to kill Jonathan but the troops protested. Saul then stopped pursuing the Philistines.

## THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Saul doesn't seem very religious. Why do I say this?
2. After Samuel anoints Saul King privately, he tells him that God will give him three signs his anointing comes from God. Then Saul is to go to Gilgal and *wait seven days for Samuel*. **1 Samuel 10:8**. But then three chapters later **1 Samuel 13:8** repeats that *Saul waited seven days for Samuel*. In the meantime, between these two verses, Samuel conducts a public anointing of Saul as King, Saul leads an army against Ammon and Samuel makes a long speech of retirement from being Israel's judge. Something seems wrong here. What is happening?
3. Jonathan provokes the Philistines at Geba so they bring a large army of 30,000 chariots and 6,000 men to Michmash. Saul only has 6,000 men with copper swords and bows and arrows and he waits for Samuel at Gilgal for seven days. But as the Philistines approach many of these Israelite warriors desert. Saul is afraid as he only has 600 men. Why doesn't he want to wait for Samuel to arrive? **1 Samuel 13:8**
4. Was Samuel being fair to Saul by telling him God has rejected him as King because he didn't wait for Samuel? If Saul wasn't a man after God's own heart, why did God choose him as King?
5. How were the Hebrews able to keep the Philistines from conquering them completely? The Philistines had superior weapons.
6. Why did God place the Philistines in Israel? What was he attempting to teach Israel?

7. The Bible says Saul fought against enemies on every side: the Moabites, the Ammonites, Edom, the Kings of Zobah, the Philistines, and the Amalekites. **1 Samuel 14:47**. How could he do this with inferior weapons and his small standing army? Moreover, this text seems to be chronologically misplaced.

## Session Four

### King Saul Disobeys God

#### Chapter 15

#### Saul Again Disobeys YHWH

<sup>1</sup> Samuel told Saul: **YHWH** sent me to anoint *mashach* you King of his people Israel. Now listen to **YHWH**'s words. <sup>2</sup>This is what **YHWH** of Armies says: I will punish Amalek for what they did to Israel. They blocked Israel's way after the Israelites came from Egypt.

[The Amalekites fought Israel at Rephidim. So Joshua defeated the Amalekite army in battle. The Lord said to Moses: Write this reminder on a scroll and make sure Joshua hears it too. I will completely erase any memory of the Amalekites from the earth. **Exodus 17:8, 13-14** ]

[ Remember what the Amalekites did to you on your trip from Egypt. They attacked you when you were tired and exhausted and killed all those who were lagging behind. They weren't afraid of God. So when **YHWH** your God gives you peace from all your enemies in the land that he is giving you as your own property, don't forget to erase every memory of the Amalekites from the earth. **Deuteronomy 25:17-19** ]

<sup>3</sup> Now go and attack Amalek. Claim everything they have for God *charam* by destroying it. Don't spare them but kill men and women, infants and children, cows and sheep, camels and donkeys.

<sup>4</sup> Saul organized the troops and he counted them at Telaim: 200,000 foot soldiers and 10,000 men from Judah. <sup>5</sup> Saul went to the city of Amalek and set an ambush in the valley. <sup>6</sup> Then Saul said to the Kenites: Get away from the Amalekites so that I won't destroy you with them. You were kind to all the Israelites when they came from Egypt. So the Kenites left the Amalekites.



<sup>7</sup>Saul attacked the Amalekites from Havilah to Shur, east of Egypt. <sup>8</sup>He captured King Agag of Amalek alive. But he claimed all the people for God *charam* by destroying them. <sup>9</sup>Saul and the army spared Agag and the best sheep and cows, the fattened animals, the lambs, and all the best <sub>L</sub> property <sub>L</sub>. The army refused to claim them for God *charam* by destroying them. But everything that was worthless and weak the army did claim for God and destroy *charam*.

## YHWH Rejects Saul

<sup>10</sup>Then YHWH spoke to Samuel: <sup>11</sup>I regret that I made Saul King. He turned away from me and did not carry out my instructions. Samuel was angry and he prayed to YHWH all night. <sup>12</sup>Early in the morning he got up to meet Saul. Samuel was told: Saul went to Carmel to set up a monument in his honor. Then he left there and went to Gilgal.

<sup>13</sup>Samuel came to Saul who said: YHWH bless you. I carried out YHWH's instructions. <sup>14</sup>However, Samuel asked: But what is this sound of sheep in my ears and this sound of cows that I hear? <sup>15</sup>Saul answered: The army brought them from the Amalekites. They spared the best sheep and cows to sacrifice to YHWH your God. But the rest they claimed for God *charam* and destroyed. <sup>16</sup>Be quiet, Samuel told Saul, and let me tell you what YHWH told me last night. Speak, Saul replied.

<sup>17</sup>Samuel said: Even though you don't consider yourself great, you were the head of Israel's tribes. YHWH anointed you King of Israel. <sup>18</sup>And YHWH sent you on a mission. He said: Claim those sinners, the Amalekites, for me *charam* by destroying them. Wage war against them until they're wiped out. <sup>19</sup>Why didn't you obey YHWH? Why have you taken their belongings and done what YHWH considers evil?

<sup>20</sup>But I did obey YHWH, Saul told Samuel. I went where YHWH sent me, brought <sub>L</sub> back <sub>L</sub> King Agag of Amalek and claimed the Amalekites for God *charam*. <sup>21</sup>The army took some of their belongings — the best sheep and cows were claimed for God — in order to sacrifice to YHWH your God in Gilgal.

## For a Second Time YHWH Rejects Saul as King

<sup>22</sup>Then Samuel said: Is YHWH as delighted with burnt offerings and sacrifices as he would be with your obedience? To follow instructions is better than to sacrifice. To obey is better than sacrificing the fat of rams. <sup>23</sup>The sin of black magic is rebellion. Wickedness and idolatry are arrogance. Because you rejected YHWH's word, he rejects you as King.

<sup>24</sup>Then Saul told Samuel: I have sinned by not following *'abar*-overlooking YHWH's command or your instructions. I was afraid of the people and listened to them. <sup>25</sup>Now please forgive my sin and come back with me so that I may worship YHWH. <sup>26</sup>Samuel told Saul: I will not go back with you because you rejected what YHWH told you. So YHWH rejects *ma'ac* you as King of Israel.

## For a Third Time Saul Is Told God Rejects Him as King

<sup>27</sup>When Samuel turned to leave, Saul grabbed the hem of his robe, and it tore. <sup>28</sup>Samuel told him: YHWH has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today. He has given it to your neighbor who is better than you. <sup>29</sup>In addition, the Glory of Israel does not lie or change his mind, because he is not a mortal who changes his mind.

<sup>30</sup>Saul replied: I have sinned. Now please honor me in front of the leaders of my people and in front of Israel. Come back with me and let me worship YHWH your God. <sup>31</sup>Then Samuel turned and followed Saul, and Saul worshiped YHWH.

<sup>32</sup>Bring me King Agag of Amalek, Samuel said. Agag came to him trembling. Surely, the bitterness of death is past, Agag said. <sup>33</sup>But Samuel said: As your sword made women childless, so your mother will be made childless among women. And Samuel cut Agag in pieces in the presence of YHWH at Gilgal.

<sup>34</sup>Then Samuel went to Ramah, and Saul went to his home at Gibeah. <sup>35</sup>Samuel didn't see Saul again before he died, though Samuel

mourned *abal* over Saul. And YHWH regretted *nacham* that he had made Saul King of Israel.

## Chapter 16

### David Chosen to Be King

<sup>1</sup>YHWH asked Samuel: How long are you going to mourn for Saul now that I have rejected him as King of Israel? Fill a flask with olive oil and go. I'm sending you to Jesse in Bethlehem because I've selected one of his sons to be King.

<sup>2</sup>How can I go? Samuel asked. When Saul hears about it, he'll kill me. YHWH said: Take a heifer with you and say: I've come to sacrifice to YHWH. <sup>3</sup>Invite Jesse to the sacrifice. I will reveal to you what you should do and you will anoint *mashach* for me the one I point out to you.

<sup>4</sup>Samuel did what YHWH told him. When he came to Bethlehem, the leaders of the city trembling with fear greeted him and said: May peace be with you. <sup>5</sup>Greetings, he replied: I have come to sacrifice to YHWH. Perform the ceremonies to make yourselves holy, and come with me to the sacrifice.

He performed the ceremonies for Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice. <sup>6</sup>When they came, he saw Eliab and thought: Certainly, here in YHWH's presence is his anointed *mashiyach* King.

<sup>7</sup>But YHWH told Samuel: Don't look at his appearance or how tall he is because I have rejected him. God does not see as humans see. Humans look at outward appearances, but YHWH looks into the heart.

<sup>8</sup>Then Jesse called Abinadab and brought him to Samuel. But Samuel said: YHWH has not chosen this one either. <sup>9</sup>Then Jesse had Shammah come to Samuel. YHWH has not chosen this one either, Samuel said. <sup>10</sup>So Jesse brought seven <sup>six</sup> [more] of his sons to Samuel **1 Chronicles 2:13-15**, but Samuel told Jesse: YHWH has not chosen <sub>L</sub> any of <sub>L</sub> these.

<sup>11</sup>Are these all the sons you have? There's still the youngest one, Jesse answered. He's tending the sheep. Samuel told Jesse: Send someone to get him. We won't continue until he gets here.

<sup>12</sup>So Jesse sent for him. He had a healthy complexion, attractive eyes, and a handsome appearance. YHWH said: Go ahead, anoint *mashach* him. He is the one. <sup>13</sup>Samuel took the flask of olive oil and anointed *mashach* David in the presence of his brothers. YHWH's Spirit *ruwach* came over David and stayed with him from that day on. Then Samuel left for Ramah.

### David Is Called to Saul's Court to Be His Musician

<sup>14</sup>Now, YHWH's Spirit *ruwach* had left Saul, and an evil *ra'*spirit *ruwach* from YHWH tormented him. <sup>15</sup>Saul's officials told him: An evil spirit from God is tormenting you. <sup>16</sup>Your Majesty why don't you command us to look for a man who can play the lyre well? When the evil spirit from God comes to you, he'll strum a tune and you'll feel better.

<sup>17</sup>Saul told his officials: Please find me a man who can play well and bring him to me. <sup>18</sup>One of the officials said: I know one of Jesse's sons from Bethlehem who can play *nagan* well *yada'*. He's a courageous *gibbowr*-mighty *chayil*-valiant man and a warrior *milchamah*. He has a way *biyn*-discerning with words *dabar*, he is handsome *to'ar*-goodly, and YHWH is with him. <sup>19</sup>Saul sent messengers to Jesse to say: Send me your son David, who is with the sheep.

<sup>20</sup>Jesse took six bushels of bread, a full wineskin, and a young goat and sent them with his son David to Saul. <sup>21</sup>David came to Saul and served him. Saul loved *ahab* him very much *me'od* and made David his armorbearer. <sup>22</sup>Saul sent  $\perp$  this message  $\perp$  to Jesse: Please let David stay with me because I have grown fond of him.

<sup>23</sup>Whenever God's spirit came to Saul, David took the lyre and strummed a tune. Saul got relief  $\perp$  from his terror  $\perp$  and felt better, and the evil spirit left him.

## Chapter 17

### David Kills the Philistine Giant Goliath

<sup>1</sup>The Philistines assembled their armies for war. They assembled at Socoh which is in Judah and camped between Socoh and Azekah at Ephes Dammim. <sup>2</sup>So Saul and the army of Israel assembled and camped in the Elah Valley. They formed a battle line to fight the Philistines. <sup>3</sup>The Philistines were stationed on a hill on one side and the Israelites were stationed on a hill on the other side. There was a ravine between the two of them.

<sup>4</sup>The Philistine army's champion came out of their camp. His name was Goliath from Gath. He was ten feet tall. <sup>5</sup>He had a bronze helmet on his head and he wore a bronze coat of armor scales weighing 125 pounds. <sup>6</sup>On his legs he had bronze shin guards and on his back a bronze javelin. <sup>7</sup>The shaft of his spear was like the beam used by weavers. The head of his spear was made of 15 pounds of iron. The man who carried his shield walked ahead of him.

<sup>8</sup>Goliath stood and called to the Israelites: Why do you form a battle line? Am I not a Philistine and aren't you Saul's servants? Choose a man and let him come down to fight me. <sup>9</sup>If he can fight me and kill me, then we will be your slaves. But if I overpower him and kill him, then you will be our slaves and serve us. <sup>10</sup>The Philistine added: I challenge the Israelite battle line today. Send out a man so that we can fight each other.

<sup>11</sup>When Saul and all the Israelites heard what this Philistine said, they were gripped with fear.

### David's Family

<sup>12</sup>David was a son of a man named Jesse from the region of Ephrath and the city of Bethlehem in Judah. Jesse had eight <sup>seven</sup> sons, and in Saul's day he was an old man. <sup>13</sup>Jesse's three oldest sons joined Saul's army for the battle. The firstborn was Eliab, the second was Abinadab, the third was

Shammah,<sup>14</sup> and David was the youngest. The three oldest joined Saul's army. <sup>15</sup> David went back and forth from Saul's camp to Bethlehem, where he tended his father's flock.

<sup>16</sup> Each morning and evening for 40 days the Philistine came forward and made his challenge.

<sup>17</sup> Jesse told his son David: Take this half-bushel of roasted grain and these ten loaves of bread to your brothers. Take them to your brothers in the camp right away. <sup>18</sup> And take these ten cheeses to the captain of the regiment. See how your brothers are doing and bring back some news about them. <sup>19</sup> They along with Saul and all the soldiers of Israel are in the Elah Valley fighting the Philistines.

<sup>20</sup> David got up early in the morning and had someone else watch the sheep. He took the food and went, as Jesse ordered him. He went to the camp as the army was going out to the battle line shouting their war cry. <sup>21</sup> Israel and the Philistines formed their battle lines facing each other. <sup>22</sup> David left the supplies behind in the hands of the quartermaster, ran to the battle line and greeted his brothers.

<sup>23</sup> While he was talking to them, the Philistine champion Goliath from Gath came from the battle lines of the Philistines. He repeated his words and David heard them. <sup>24</sup> When all the men of Israel saw Goliath, they fled from him because they were terrified. <sup>25</sup> The men of Israel said: Did you see that man coming from the Philistine lines? He keeps coming to challenge Israel. The King will make the man who kills this Philistine very rich. He will give his daughter to that man to marry and elevate the social status of his family

<sup>26</sup> David asked the men who were standing near him: What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and gets rid of Israel's disgrace? Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should challenge the army of the living God? <sup>27</sup> The soldiers repeated to David how the man who kills Goliath would be treated.

<sup>28</sup> Eliab, David's oldest brother, heard David talking to the men. Then Eliab became angry with David. Why did you come here, he asked him, and with whom did you leave those few sheep in the wilderness? I know how overconfident and headstrong you are. You came here just to see the battle.

<sup>29</sup> What have I done now? David snapped at him. "Didn't I merely ask a question?" <sup>30</sup> He turned to face another man and asked the same question and the other soldiers gave him the same answer.

<sup>31</sup> What David said was overheard and reported to Saul who then sent for him. <sup>32</sup> David told Saul: No one should be discouraged because of this. I will go and fight this Philistine. <sup>33</sup> Saul responded to David: You can't fight this Philistine. You're just a boy but he's been a warrior since he was your age.

<sup>34</sup> David replied to Saul: I am a shepherd for my father's sheep. Whenever a lion or a bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock, <sup>35</sup> I went after it, struck it and rescued the sheep from its mouth. If it attacked me, I took hold of its mane, struck it and killed it. <sup>36</sup> I have killed lions and bears and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them because he has challenged the army of the living God. <sup>37</sup> David added: **YHWH**, who saved me from the lion and the bear, will save me from this Philistine. Go, Saul told David: and may **YHWH** be with you.

<sup>38</sup> Saul put his battle tunic on David. He put a bronze helmet on David's head and dressed him in armor. <sup>39</sup> David fastened Saul's sword over his clothes and tried to walk but he had never practiced doing this. I can't walk in these things, David told Saul. I've never had any practice doing this. So David took all those things off.

<sup>40</sup> He took his stick with him, picked out five smooth stones from the riverbed and put them in his shepherd's bag. With a sling in his hand, he approached the Philistine. <sup>41</sup> The Philistine, preceded by the man carrying his shield, was coming closer and closer to David. <sup>42</sup> When the Philistine got a good look at

David, he despised him. After all David was a young man with a healthy complexion and good looks.

<sup>43</sup>The Philistine asked David: Am I a dog that you come to attack me with sticks? So the Philistine called on his gods to curse David. <sup>44</sup>Come on, the Philistine told David, and I'll give your body to the birds.

<sup>45</sup>David told the Philistine: You come to me with sword and spear and javelin but I come to you in the name of **YHWH** of Armies, the God of the army of Israel, whom you have insulted.

<sup>46</sup>Today **YHWH** will hand you over to me. I will strike you down and cut off your head. And this day I will give the dead bodies of the Philistine army to the birds and the wild animals. The whole world will know that Israel has a God. <sup>47</sup>Then everyone gathered here will know that **YHWH** can save without sword or spear because **YHWH** determines every battle's outcome. He will hand all of you over to us.

<sup>48</sup>When the Philistine moved closer in order to attack, David quickly ran toward the opposing battle line to attack the Philistine. <sup>49</sup>Then David reached into his bag, took out a stone, hurled it from his sling, and struck the Philistine in the forehead. The stone sank into Goliath's forehead, and he fell to the ground on his face. <sup>50</sup>So using only a sling and a stone, David proved to be stronger than the Philistine.

David struck down and killed the Philistine even though David didn't have a sword in his hand. <sup>51</sup>David ran and stood over the Philistine. He took Goliath's sword, pulled it out of its sheath and made certain the Philistine was dead by cutting off his head.

When the Philistines saw their hero had been killed, they fled. <sup>52</sup>Then the soldiers of Israel and Judah rose up, shouted a battle cry and pursued the Philistines as far as Gath and to the gates of Ekron. Wounded Philistines lay on the road to Shaaraim and all the way to Gath and Ekron. <sup>53</sup>When the Israelites came back from their pursuit of the Philistines, they looted all the goods in the Philistine camp.



<sup>54</sup> David took the Philistine's head and brought it to Jerusalem, but he kept Goliath's armor in his tent.

These details are very unlikely. Jerusalem was still called Jebus. David hadn't captured it yet from the Canaanites. And David didn't have a tent as he was only a visitor to the camp.

<sup>55</sup> As Saul watched David going out against the Philistine, he asked Abner, the commander of the army: Abner, whose son is this young man? Abner answered: I solemnly swear as you live Your Majesty, I don't know. <sup>56</sup> The King said: Find out whose son this young man is.

<sup>57</sup> When David returned from killing the Philistine, Abner brought him to Saul. David had the Philistine's head in his hand. <sup>58</sup> Saul asked him: Whose son are you, young man? "The son of your servant Jesse of Bethlehem, David answered.

## WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

Samuel commands Saul to kill all the Amalekites who have been troubling Israel since Moses led them out of Egypt to Mount Sinai. The Amalekites killed the stragglers and God said any memory of them should be wiped out. In saying this Samuel meant Saul should apply the ban or *charam* which meant everything and everyone should be destroyed or killed. This was to be Israel's practice in Canaan as first done to Jericho. Saul failed. He took the best of the animals and its King Agag and brought them back.

Saul greeted Samuel when he returned blessing him. But Samuel rebuked Saul and told him no matter his reasons for doing what he did, he was disobeying God. And for doing that, God would reject him as King of Israel. Samuel killed King Agag as God had commanded. Saul pleaded that Samuel worship with him before he left and Samuel reluctantly agreed to do so. But Samuel did not see him after that although Samuel grieved for Saul.

**YHWH** told Samuel to go to Bethlehem and anoint one of Jesse's sons as King. Samuel went and performed a sacrifice to the Lord. Jesse brought six of his sons to the sacrifice. Then Samuel looked over each of the six sons but the Lord said no. Have you any other sons? asked Samuel. Only the youngest one who is out with the sheep, answered Jesse. Bring him here, said Samuel.

Samuel anointed David's head with oil in the presence of the family. God's Holy Spirit came over David and stayed with him all his life. Then Samuel returned to Ramah.

Saul was tormented by an evil spirit from God. One of his court suggested a musician could help ease the torment. He suggested David from Bethlehem, a courageous man and a warrior, good with words, handsome, and God was with him. Saul called David to his court, heard his music, and employed him as his armor bearer.

The Philistines came up in battle array against Saul and his army. Their champion Goliath from Gath for 40 days challenged Israel to a man to man duel. But none of the Israelites were willing to confront this ten foot tall giant.

Jesse sent David to his three brothers who were in Saul's army with provisions. David saw the confrontation and greeted his brothers. He talked with the soldiers and was overheard saying: I will fight this Philistine and it was reported to Saul. After hearing David say: **YHWH** will save me from this Philistine, Saul allowed him to go out and fight the giant. David picked up five stones and slung one at the giant's head striking him in the forehead stunning him. Then David picked up Goliath's sword and cut off his head. The Philistines ran and the Israelites chased them.

General Abner brought David to King Saul. David had Goliath's head in his hand. Whose son are you, asked the King. The son of your servant Jesus from Bethlehem, David answered. Details in the story do not agree.

## **THINGS TO THINK ABOUT**

1. How does Saul demonstrate his refusal to follow a command of God?
2. Why would Saul want to keep King Agag alive?
3. Why would Saul allow his men's desire to prevent him from obeying God?
4. Why didn't Jesse invite David to Samuel sacrifice?
5. How could David be known by a member of Saul's court as a courageous warrior when David's father treated him so rudely?
6. What verse characterizes David's confidence in as he goes to meet Goliath?
7. Do you think Chapter 17 is a true life story or a legend? How can you tell?

## **EXTRA CREDIT**

What do the confusing details of this story of David's coming to the court of Saul seem to indicate?

## Session Five

### Saul Becomes Jealous of David and Drives Him Out of His Court

#### Chapter 18

##### David's Love for Jonathan

<sup>1</sup> David finished talking to Saul. After that, Jonathan became David's closest friend *nephesh*-soul *qashar*-knit. He loved *'ahab* David as much as <he <loved> himself. <sup>2</sup> From that day on Saul kept David  $\perp$  as his servant  $\perp$  and didn't let him go back to his family. <sup>3</sup> So Jonathan made a pledge of mutual loyalty *beriyth*-Covenant with David because he loved *'ahabah* him as much as  $\perp$  he loved  $\perp$  himself *nephesh*-soul. <sup>4</sup> Jonathan took off the coat he had on and gave it to David along with his battle tunic, his sword, his bow, and his belt.

<sup>5</sup> David was successful wherever Saul sent him. Saul put him in charge of the fighting men. This pleased all the people including Saul's officials.

##### David's Success Makes Saul Jealous

<sup>6</sup> As they arrived David was returning from a campaign against the Philistines. Women from all of Israel's cities came to meet King Saul. They sang and danced accompanied by tambourines, joyful music, and triangles. <sup>7</sup> The women who were celebrating sang: Saul has defeated thousands but David tens of thousands.

<sup>8</sup> Saul became very angry because he considered this saying to be insulting. To David they credit tens of thousands, he said, but to me they credit  $\perp$  only  $\perp$  a few thousand. The only thing left for David is my kingdom. <sup>9</sup> From that day on Saul kept an eye *'avan*-eye with jealousy *ix* on David.

##### Saul Attempts to Kill David with His Spear

<sup>10</sup> The next day an evil *ra*'spirit *ruwach* from God seized Saul. He began to prophesy *naba*' in his house while David strummed a tune on the lyre as he did

every day. Now, Saul had a spear in his hand. <sup>11</sup>He raised the spear and thought: I'll nail David to the wall. But David got away from him twice.

<sup>12</sup>Saul was afraid of David because **YHWH** was with David but had left Saul. <sup>13</sup>So he kept David away. He made David captain of a regiment. David led the troops out <sub>L</sub> to battle <sub>J</sub> and back again. <sup>14</sup>He was successful in everything he undertook because **YHWH** was with him.

<sup>15</sup>Saul noticed how very successful he was and became <sub>L</sub> even more <sub>J</sub> afraid *guwr* of him. <sup>16</sup>Everyone in Israel and Judah loved *ahab* David, because he led them in and out <sub>L</sub> of battle <sub>J</sub>.

### **Saul Offers His Oldest Daughter to David as His Wife**

<sup>17</sup>Finally Saul said to David: Here is my oldest daughter Merab. I will give her to you as your wife if you prove yourself to be a warrior for me and fight **YHWH**'s battles. Saul thought: I must not lay a hand on him. Let the Philistines do that. <sup>18</sup>Who am I? David asked Saul. And how important are my relatives or my father's family in Israel that I should be the King's son-in-law? <sup>19</sup>But when the time came to give Saul's daughter Merab to David, she was married to Adriel from Meholah.

### **Saul Now Plans to Marry His Daughter Michal to David**

<sup>20</sup>However, Saul's daughter Michal fell in love with David. When Saul was told about it, the news pleased him. <sup>21</sup>Saul thought: I'll give her to David. She will trap him and the Philistines will get him. So he said to David a second time: You will now be my son-in-law.

<sup>22</sup>Saul ordered his officers: Talk to David in private. Tell him: The King likes you and all his officers are fond of you. Become the King's son-in-law.

<sup>23</sup>When Saul's officers made it a point to say this, David asked: Do you think it's easy to become the King's son-in-law? I am a poor and unimportant person.

<sup>24</sup>When the officers told Saul what David had said, <sup>25</sup>Saul replied: Tell David the King doesn't want any payment for the bride except 100 Philistine

foreskins so that he can get revenge on his enemies. In this way Saul planned to have David fall into the hands of the Philistines. <sup>26</sup>When his officers told David this, David concluded that it was acceptable to become the King's son-in-law.

Before the time was up, <sup>27</sup>David and his men went out and struck down 200 Philistines. David brought the foreskins and they counted them out for the King so that David could become the King's son-in-law. Then Saul gave him his daughter Michal as his wife.

<sup>28</sup>Saul realized that **YHWH** was with David and that his daughter Michal loved David. <sup>29</sup>Then Saul was even more *yacaph* afraid *yare'* of David and so Saul became David's constant *yowm* enemy *'oyeb*.

<sup>30</sup>The Philistine generals still went out <sub>L</sub> to fight Israel <sub>L</sub>. But whenever they went out <sub>L</sub> to fight <sub>L</sub>, David was more successful than the rest of Saul's officers. So David gained a good reputation.

## Chapter 19

### Saul's Plan to Kill David

<sup>1</sup> Saul told his son Jonathan and all his officers to kill David. But Saul's son Jonathan was very fond of David, <sup>2</sup>so he reported to David: My father Saul is trying to kill you. Please be careful tomorrow morning. Go into hiding and stay out of sight. <sup>3</sup>I'll go out and stand beside my father in the field where you'll be. I'll speak with my father about you. If I find out anything, I'll tell you.

<sup>4</sup> So Jonathan spoke well of David to his father Saul. You should not commit a sin against your servant David, he said. He hasn't sinned against you. Instead, he has done some very fine things for you. <sup>5</sup>He risked his life and killed the Philistine Goliath and **YHWH** gave all Israel a great victory. When you saw it, you rejoiced. Why then should you sin by shedding David's innocent blood for no reason?

<sup>6</sup>Saul listened to Jonathan and he promised: I solemnly swear as **YHWH** lives he will not be killed.

Using the phrase, *As the Lord lives* to confirm a person is swearing in the name of God appears 27 times in the Bible.

<sup>7</sup>Jonathan told David all of this. Then Jonathan took David to Saul. So David was returned to his former status in Saul's court.

### **Saul Tries to Kill David Again**

<sup>8</sup>When war broke out again, David went to fight the Philistines. He defeated them so decisively that they fled from him. <sup>9</sup>Then an evil spirit from **YHWH** came over Saul while he was sitting in his house with his spear in his hand. David was strumming a tune. <sup>10</sup>Saul tried to nail David to the wall with his spear. But David dodged it and Saul's spear struck the wall. David fled escaping  $\perp$  from Saul  $\perp$  that night.

### **Michal Warns David of Saul's Plan and David Escapes Through a Window**

<sup>11</sup>Saul sent messengers to watch David's house and kill him in the morning. But Michal, David's wife, advised him: If you don't save yourself tonight, you'll be dead tomorrow. <sup>12</sup>So Michal lowered David through a window, and he ran away to escape. <sup>13</sup>Then Michal took some idols, laid them in the bed, put a goat-hair blanket at its head, and covered the idols with a garment.

<sup>14</sup>When Saul sent messengers to get David Michal said: He's sick. <sup>15</sup>Then Saul sent the messengers back to see David themselves. Saul told them: Bring him here to me in his bed so that I can kill him. <sup>16</sup>The messengers came and there in the bed were the idols with the goat-hair blanket at its head.

<sup>17</sup>Saul asked Michal: Why did you betray me by sending my enemy away so that he could escape? Michal answered: He told me: Let me go. Why should I kill you?

<sup>18</sup> David escaped and went to Samuel at Ramah. He told Samuel everything Saul had done to him. Then he and Samuel went to the pastures and lived there.

<sup>19</sup> When it was reported to Saul that David was in the pastures at Ramah, <sup>20</sup> Saul sent messengers to get David. But when they saw a group of prophets prophesying with Samuel serving as their leader, God's Spirit came over Saul's messengers so that they also prophesied. <sup>21</sup> When they told Saul about this, he sent other messengers, but they also prophesied. Saul even sent a third group of messengers, but they also prophesied.

<sup>22</sup> Then he went to Ramah himself. He went as far as the big cistern in Secu and asked the people: Where are Samuel and David? He was told: Over there in the pastures at Ramah.

<sup>23</sup> As he went toward the pastures at Ramah, God's Spirit came over him too. He continued his journey prophesying until he came to the pastures at Ramah. <sup>24</sup> He even took off his clothes as he prophesied in front of Samuel and lay there naked all day and all night. This is where the saying: Is Saul one of the prophets? came from.

## Chapter 20

### Saul Finally Drives David Away from His Court

<sup>1</sup> David fled from the pastures at Ramah, came to Jonathan and asked: What have I done? What crime am I guilty of? What sin have I committed against your father that he's trying to kill me? <sup>2</sup> Jonathan answered: That's unthinkable. You're not going to die. My father does nothing without telling me whether it's important or not. Why should my father hide this from me? It's just not that way.

<sup>3</sup> But David took an oath saying: Your father certainly knows that you support me, so he said to himself: Jonathan must not know about this. It will bring him distress. But I solemnly swear as **YHWH** and you live, I'm

only one step away from death. <sup>4</sup>Jonathan said to David: I'll do whatever you say.

<sup>5</sup>David replied: Tomorrow is the New Moon Festival when I should sit and eat at the King's table. But let me go and hide in the countryside for two more nights. <sup>6</sup>If your father really misses me, tell him: David repeatedly begged me to let him run to Bethlehem, his hometown, because his relatives are offering the annual sacrifice there. <sup>7</sup>If he says: Good, then I will be safe. But if he gets really angry, then you'll know for sure that he has decided to harm me.

<sup>8</sup>Now be kind to me. After all you forced me into an agreement with YHWH. If I have committed any crime, kill me yourself. Why bother taking me to your father? <sup>9</sup>Jonathan answered: That's unthinkable. If I knew for sure that my father had decided to harm you, I would have told you about it.

<sup>10</sup>Then David asked: Who will tell me whether or not your father gives you a harsh answer? <sup>11</sup>Jonathan said: Let's go out into the country. So they went out into the country.

<sup>12</sup>As YHWH God of Israel is my witness, Jonathan continued, I'll find out in the next two or three days how my father feels about you. If he does feel kindly toward you, then I will send someone to tell you. <sup>13</sup>If my father plans to harm you and I fail to tell you and send you away safely, may YHWH harm me even more. May YHWH be with you as he used to be with my father.

<sup>14</sup>But as long as I live, promise me that you will show me kindness because of YHWH. And even when I die, <sup>15</sup>never stop being kind to my family. YHWH will wipe each of David's enemies off the face of the earth. <sup>16</sup>At that time, if Jonathan's name is cut off from David's family, then may YHWH punish David's house.

Jonathan knows that one day David will be King of Israel. It was the practice in that day for a new King to kill any heirs to the throne of the former King.



<sup>17</sup>Once again Jonathan swore an oath to David because of his love for David. He loved David as much as he loved himself. <sup>18</sup>Tomorrow is the New Moon Festival, Jonathan told him and you will be missed when your seat is empty. <sup>19</sup>The day after tomorrow you will be missed even more. So go to the place where you hid on that other occasion and stay by the rock.

<sup>20</sup>I will shoot three arrows from beside it toward a target. <sup>21</sup>Then I will send out a boy and say: Go, find the arrows. Now if I tell the boy: Look the arrows are next to you. Get them, then come back with me, you will be safe and there will be no trouble. I swear it, as YHWH lives. <sup>22</sup>But if I tell the boy: The arrows are next to you, then go because YHWH has sent you away. <sup>23</sup>We have made a promise to each other and YHWH is a witness between you and me forever.

<sup>24</sup>So David hid in the countryside. When the New Moon Festival came, King Saul sat down to eat the festival meal. <sup>25</sup>He sat in his usual seat by the wall while Jonathan stood. Abner sat beside Saul but David's place was empty. <sup>26</sup>Saul didn't say anything that day thinking: Something has happened to him so that he's unclean. He must be unclean. <sup>27</sup>But on the second day of the month, David's place was still empty.

Saul asked his son Jonathan: Why hasn't Jesse's son come to the meal either yesterday or today?

From now on, Saul will address David only as *a son of Jesse* 6x as will Saul's officers when speaking to Saul.

<sup>28</sup>Jonathan answered Saul: David repeatedly begged me to let him go to Bethlehem. <sup>29</sup>David said to me: Please let me go. Our relatives will offer a sacrifice in the city and my brother ordered me to be there. If you will permit it, please let me go to see my brothers. This is why he hasn't come to your banquet.

<sup>30</sup>Then Saul got angry with Jonathan. Son of a crooked and rebellious woman, he called Jonathan. I know you've sided with Jesse's son. You have no shame. You act as if you are your mother's son but not mine. <sup>31</sup>As long

as Jesse's son lives on earth, neither you nor your right to be King is secure. Now send some men to bring him to me. He's a dead man.

<sup>32</sup> Jonathan asked his father: Why should he be killed? What has he done?

<sup>33</sup> Saul raised his spear to strike him. Then Jonathan knew his father was determined to kill David. <sup>34</sup> Jonathan got up from the table very angry and ate nothing that second day of the month. He was worried sick about David because Jonathan had been humiliated by his own father.

<sup>35</sup> In the morning Jonathan went out to the country to the place he and David had agreed on. Jonathan had a young boy with him. <sup>36</sup> Run, he told the boy, please find the arrows I shoot. The boy ran, and Jonathan shot the arrow over him. <sup>37</sup> When the boy reached the place where Jonathan's arrow had landed, Jonathan called after him: The arrows are next to you. <sup>38</sup> Jonathan added: Quick. Hurry up. Don't stand there.

Jonathan's young servant gathered the arrows and came to his master. <sup>39</sup> The boy had no idea what was going on but Jonathan and David understood. <sup>40</sup> Then Jonathan gave his weapons to the boy. He told the boy: Take them back into town.

<sup>41</sup> When the boy had left, David came out from the south side of the rock and quickly bowed down three times with his face touching the ground. Then they kissed each other and cried together but David cried the loudest.

<sup>42</sup> Go in peace, Jonathan told David. We have both taken an oath in YHWH's name saying: YHWH will be a witness between me and you and between my descendants and your descendants forever. So David left and Jonathan went into the city.

## WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

David came to Saul's court as his armor bearer and immediately he and Jonathan, Saul's older son, became fast friends. Jonathan recognized God's Spirit that was in David and they soon made a Covenant of loyalty. David became a soldier with Jonathan and he was successful wherever he sent. All of Saul's officials admired him.

However David's success made King Saul jealous especially the women's song that Saul has slain thousands but David has slain ten thousands. Saul placed an evil eye on David. One day while David was singing and playing on his harp to Saul, Saul raised his spear and flung it at David. But David got away.

Saul then thought of marrying his oldest daughter Merab to David but David said: Who am I? So Saul married her to another. But Saul's youngest daughter loved David. So Saul asked for bride price of 100 Philistine foreskins hoping David would be killed in the process of getting them. But David brought 200 foreskins and thus married Michal.

Jonathan told David that his father was trying to kill him. So he told David to go into hiding while he talked to his father. Jonathan tried convincing his father of David's kindness and gave an oath David would not be killed. But later while David was playing his lyre, Saul threw his spear at him again. David again dodged the spear.

But now Michal told David to flee and she let him out of the house through a window. When Saul sent messengers to get David, David had gone so Saul berated his daughter. Saul was told David was in the pastures at Ramah with Samuel. Saul sent messengers but God's Spirit came over them and they prophesied. Saul went himself and then he prophesied laying naked all day and night. But he didn't capture David.

Then Jonathan and David met. Jonathan proposed a test to see what Saul's real intentions were. David did not attend the New Moon Festival. When Saul did not see David at the table, he asked where he was. Jonathan told him he went to Bethlehem to celebrate the festival with his family. When David did not show up on the second David, Saul exploded with anger at Jonathan.

So Jonathan told David and David fled from the court.

## THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. David and Saul's son: Jonathan became good friends. The two friends made a Covenant. What did it mean when Jonathan gave David his battle tunic, sword, bow and belt?
2. Why did the woman sing praises about David exalting him over Saul?
3. Why did Saul throw his spear at David on several occasions? Was he really attempting to kill him?
4. Why did Saul first offer his oldest daughter to David and then marry her to someone else?
5. Why did David give Saul 200 Philistine foreskins – 100 more than Saul asked for?

6. How did Michal know that Saul was intending to capture David and murder him?
7. Saul told Jonathan that he knew David would succeed Saul as King, not Jonathan. What was Jonathan's reaction?

## **EXTRA CREDIT**

Describe Saul's state of mind during this time.

## Session Six

### David Escapes from Saul's Court and Becomes an Outlaw

#### Chapter 21

#### David at Nob

<sup>1</sup> David went to the High Priest Ahimelech at Nob. Ahimelech was trembling as he went to meet David. Why are you alone? he asked David. Why is no one with you?

<sup>2</sup> The King ordered me to do something, David answered the priest Ahimelech. And he told me: No one must know anything about this mission I'm sending you on and about the orders I've given you. I've stationed my young men at a certain place. <sup>3</sup> David added: Now what do you have to eat? Give me five loaves of bread or whatever you can find.

<sup>4</sup> I don't have any ordinary bread, the High Priest answered David. But there is holy bread for the young men if they haven't had sexual intercourse today. <sup>5</sup> David answered the priest: Of course women have been kept away from us as usual when we go on a mission. The young men's bodies are kept holy even on ordinary campaigns. How much more then will their bodies be holy today?

<sup>6</sup> So the priest gave him holy bread because he only had the Bread of the Presence which had been taken from YHWH's presence and replaced with warm bread that day.

[ Also take flour and bake twelve rings of bread. Each ring will contain four quarts of flour. Put them in two stacks of six each on the golden table in the Lord's Presence. Lay pure incense on top of each stack. The incense on the bread will be a reminder and offering by fire to the Lord. Every Day of Rest is a holy day when the priest must arrange the bread in YHWH's presence. It is a continual reminder of my Covenant to the

Israelites. The bread will belong to Aaron and his sons. They will eat it in a holy place. It is very holy, set apart from the Lord's offering by fire. This is a permanent law. **Leviticus 24:5-9.** ]

<sup>7</sup>That same day one of Saul's servants who was obligated to stay in YHWH's presence was there. His name was Doeg. A foreman for Saul's shepherds, he was from Edom.

<sup>8</sup>David asked Ahimelech: Don't you have a spear or a sword here? I didn't take either my spear or any other weapon because the King's business was urgent.

<sup>9</sup>The High Priest answered: The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom you killed in the Elah Valley is here. It is wrapped in a cloth behind the priestly ephod. If you want to take it, take it. There's no other weapon here. David said: There's none like it. Let me have the sword.

### **David Goes to the Philistines at Gath**

<sup>10</sup>That day David left. He was still fleeing from Saul when he came to King Achish of Gath. <sup>11</sup>Achish's officers asked: Isn't this David, the King of his country? He's the one they used to sing about in the dances: Saul has defeated thousands but David tens of thousands.

<sup>12</sup>When David realized what they had said, he was terrified of King Achish of Gath. <sup>13</sup>So he changed his behavior when he was in their presence and acted insane as long as he was under their authority. He scribbled on the doors of the city gate and let his spit run down his beard.

<sup>14</sup>Achish said to his officers: Look at him. Don't you see that he's insane? Why bring him to me? <sup>15</sup>Do I have such a shortage of lunatics that you bring this man so that he can show me he is insane? Does this man have to come into my house?

Why did David flee to Gath, a city of the Philistines? Is it possible his mother had relatives there?

## Chapter 22

### David Flees to the Cave at Adullam

<sup>1</sup> So David escaped from that place and fled to the cave at Adullam. When his brothers and all the rest of his family heard about it, they went to him. <sup>2</sup> Then everyone who was in trouble, in debt, or bitter about life joined him and he became their commander. There were about four hundred men with him.

<sup>3</sup> From there David went to Mizpah in Moab. He asked the King of Moab: Please let my father and mother stay with you until I know what God is going to do for me. <sup>4</sup> He brought them to the King of Moab and they stayed with him as long as David was living in his fortified camp.

David probably reminded the King of Moab that his grandmother was Ruth of Moab who had married Boaz of Judah. Boaz was the father of Obed, the father of Jesse. **Ruth 4:21-22**

<sup>5</sup> Don't live in your fortified camp, the prophet Gad told David. Go to the land of Judah. So David went to the forest of Hereth.

### Saul Learns the Priests at Nob Helped David

<sup>6</sup> Saul heard that David and his men had been found. Saul was staying in Gibeah under the tamarisk tree at the worship site with his spear in his hand and all his officials standing around him.

Saul never built a palace but lived in his home in his hometown of Gibeah. He would hold meetings with his offices at the high place *bamah* there.

<sup>7</sup> He said to his officials: Listen here men of Benjamin. Will Jesse's son give every one of you fields and vineyards? Will he make you all officers over a regiment or a battalion of soldiers? <sup>8</sup> All of you are plotting against me and no one informed me when my son entered into a loyalty pledge *karath*—cut a Covenant with Jesse's son. No one felt sorry for me and informed me that my son has encouraged my servant David to ambush me as he's doing now.

<sup>9</sup>Then Doeg from Edom, standing with Saul's officials, answered him: I saw Jesse's son when he came to Ahimelech, Ahitub's son, in Nob. <sup>10</sup>Ahimelech prayed to YHWH for David and gave him food and the sword of Goliath the Philistine.

<sup>11</sup>Then the King sent for the priest Ahimelech, who was Ahitub's son, and his entire family who were the priests in Nob. All of them came to the King. <sup>12</sup>Saul said: Listen here son of Ahitub. Yes, sir? he responded.

<sup>13</sup>Saul asked him: Why did you and Jesse's son plot against me? You gave him bread and a sword and prayed to God for him so that he can rise up against me and ambush me as he's doing now.

<sup>14</sup>Ahimelech asked the King: But whom among all your officials can you trust like David? Your Majesty, he's your son-in-law, the commander of your bodyguard. He's honored in your own household. <sup>15</sup>Is this the first time I have prayed to God for him? Not at all. You shouldn't blame me or anyone in my family for this. I knew nothing at all about this.

<sup>16</sup>Saul said: Ahimelech, you and your entire family are going to die.

<sup>17</sup>Turn and kill YHWH's priests because they support David, the King said to the runners standing around him. When they knew David was fleeing, they didn't inform me. But the King's men refused to attack YHWH's priests. <sup>18</sup>So the King said to Doeg: You turn and attack the priests.

### **Doeg From Edom Massacres the High Priest, the Priests and All in the City of Nob**

Doeg from Edom turned and attacked the priests and that day he killed 85 men wearing the linen priestly ephod. <sup>19</sup>He also killed the people of Nob, the city of the priests. Using his sword, he killed men and women, children and infants, cows, donkeys, and sheep.

<sup>20</sup>But Ahimelech, Ahitub's son, had one son who escaped. His name was Abiathar. He fled to David. <sup>21</sup>Abiathar told David that Saul had killed YHWH's priests.



<sup>22</sup> David told Abiathar: I knew that day when Doeg from Edom was there that he would be certain to tell Saul. I am the one responsible for all the lives of your family. <sup>23</sup> Stay with me. Don't be afraid. The one who is seeking my life is also seeking your life. However you will be under my protection.

## Chapter 23

### David Saves the City of Keilah

<sup>1</sup> David was asked: Did you know that the Philistines are fighting against Keilah? They are robbing the threshing floors. <sup>2</sup> David asked YHWH: Should I go and attack these Philistines? Go, YHWH told David, attack the Philistines and save Keilah.

<sup>3</sup> David's men told him: We're afraid of staying here in Judah. How much more afraid do you think we'll be if we go to Keilah against the Philistine army? <sup>4</sup> David asked YHWH again, and YHWH answered him. He said: Go to Keilah. I'm giving you the power to defeat the Philistines.

<sup>5</sup> David and his men went to Keilah, fought the Philistines, drove off their livestock, and decisively defeated them. So David rescued the people who lived in Keilah. <sup>6</sup> When Ahimelech's son Abiathar fled to David at Keilah, Abiathar brought a priestly ephod with him.

<sup>7</sup> When Saul was told that David went to Keilah, Saul said: God has delivered him into my hands. He has trapped himself by going into a city which has a gate with a double door held shut by a bar. <sup>8</sup> So Saul called together all the troops to go to war and blockade Keilah where David and his men were.

<sup>9</sup> When David learned that Saul was planning to harm him, he told the priest Abiathar: Bring the ephod. <sup>10</sup> Then David said: YHWH God of Israel, I have actually heard that Saul is going to come to Keilah and destroy the city on account of me. <sup>11</sup> Will the citizens of Keilah hand me over to him? Will Saul come here as I have heard? YHWH God of Israel, please tell me.

He will come, **YHWH** answered. <sup>12</sup> Will the citizens of Keilah hand me and my men over to Saul? David asked. They will hand you over, **YHWH** answered.

<sup>13</sup> So David and his men, about six hundred in all left Keilah. They went wherever they could go. Then Saul was told: David has escaped from Keilah. So he gave up the campaign. <sup>14</sup> David lived in fortified camps in the desert and he lived in fortified camps in the mountains of the desert of Ziph. Saul was always searching for him but God didn't let him capture David.

### **Jonathan Comes Out to Meet David**

<sup>15</sup> David was afraid because Saul had come to kill him at Horesh in the desert of Ziph. <sup>16</sup> Saul's son Jonathan came to David at Horesh. He strengthened David's faith in **YHWH**. <sup>17</sup> Don't be afraid, he told David. My father Saul won't find you. You will rule Israel and I will be your second-in-command. Even my father Saul knows this. <sup>18</sup> Both of them made a pledge *beriyth*-Covenant in **YHWH**'s presence. David stayed in Horesh and Jonathan went home.

### **The Men of Ziph Offer to Betray David to Saul**

<sup>19</sup> Then the men of Ziph went to Saul in Gibeah. They said: David is hiding with us in fortified camps at Horesh on the hills of Hachilah, south of Jeshimon. <sup>20</sup> Come Your Majesty whenever you want. We will hand him over to you.

<sup>21</sup> Saul responded: **YHWH** bless you for feeling sorry for me. <sup>22</sup> Please make more plans and watch where he goes. Who has seen him there? I'm told he's very clever. <sup>23</sup> Watch and learn about all the hiding places where he may be hiding and come back to me with the facts. Then I'll go with you and if he's in the country, I'll search for him among all the families of Judah. <sup>24</sup> They left for Ziph ahead of Saul.

## David in the Desert of Maon

David and his men were in the desert of Maon in the plains south of Jeshimon. <sup>25</sup>When Saul and his men came to look for him David was told the news. So he went to his mountain stronghold in the desert of Maon. Saul heard about it and pursued David into the desert of Maon. <sup>26</sup>Saul went on one side of the mountain and David and his men went on the other side of the mountain. David was hurrying to get away from Saul and Saul and his men were going around  $\perp$  the mountain  $\lrcorner$  toward David and his men, trying to capture them.

<sup>27</sup>Then a messenger came to Saul and said: Come quickly. The Philistines are raiding the country. <sup>28</sup>Saul gave up pursuing David and went to fight the Philistines. So that place was called Slippery Rock. <sup>29</sup>From there David went to stay in the fortified camps of En Gedi.

## Chapter 24

### David Spares Saul's Life

<sup>1</sup>When Saul came back from  $\perp$  fighting  $\lrcorner$  the Philistines, he was told: Now David is in the desert near En Gedi. <sup>2</sup>Then Saul took 3,000 of the best-trained men from all Israel and went to search for David and his men on the Rocks of the Wild Goats. <sup>3</sup>He came to some sheep pens along the road where there was a cave. Saul went into  $\perp$  it  $\lrcorner$  to relieve himself while David and his men were sitting further back in the cave.

<sup>4</sup>David's men told him: Today is the day **YHWH** referred to when he said: I'm going to hand your enemy over to you. You will do to him whatever you think is right.

David quietly got up and cut off the border of Saul's robe. <sup>5</sup>But afterward, David's conscience bothered him because he had cut off the border of Saul's robe. <sup>6</sup>He said to his men: It would be unthinkable for me to raise my hand against His Majesty, **YHWH's** anointed *mashiyach* King since he is **YHWH's**

anointed *mashiyach*. <sup>7</sup> So David stopped his men by saying this to them and didn't let them attack Saul.

Saul left the cave and went out onto the road. <sup>8</sup> Later, David got up, left the cave, and called to Saul: Your Majesty. When Saul looked back David knelt down with his face touching the ground. <sup>9</sup> David asked Saul: Why do you listen to rumors that I am trying to harm you?

<sup>10</sup> Today you saw how **YHWH** handed you over to me in the cave. Although I was told to kill you, I spared you saying: I will not raise my hand against Your Majesty because you are **YHWH**'s anointed *mashiyach*. <sup>11</sup> My master look at this. The border of your robe is in my hand. Since I cut off the border of your robe and didn't kill you, you should know and be able to see I mean no harm or rebellion.

I haven't sinned against you but you are trying to ambush me in order to take my life. <sup>12</sup> May **YHWH** decide between you and me. May **YHWH** take revenge on you for what you did to me. However, I will not lay a hand on you. <sup>13</sup> It's like people used to say long ago: Wickedness comes from wicked people. But I will not lay a hand on you.

<sup>14</sup> Against whom has the King of Israel come out? Whom are you pursuing? A dead dog? One flea? <sup>15</sup> So **YHWH** must be the judge. He will decide between you and me. He will watch and take my side in **└** this **┐** matter and set me free from you.

<sup>16</sup> When David finished saying this, Saul asked: Is that you speaking my servant David? and Saul cried loudly. <sup>17</sup> He told David: You are more righteous than I. You treated me well while I treated you badly. <sup>18</sup> Today you have proved how good you've been to me. When **YHWH** handed me over to you, you didn't kill me.

### **David Swears to Saul He Will Not Kill His Relatives When He Is King**

<sup>19</sup> When a person finds an enemy, does he send him away unharmed? **YHWH** will repay you completely for what you did for me today. <sup>20</sup> Now I

know that you certainly will rule as King and under your guidance the kingdom of Israel will prosper. <sup>21</sup>Swear an oath to **YHWH** for me that you will not wipe out my descendants or destroy my name in my father's family. <sup>22</sup>So David swore to Saul.

Then Saul went home, and David and his men went to their fortified camp.

## Chapter 25

### Samuel Dies

<sup>1</sup>Samuel died and all Israel gathered to mourn for him. They buried him at his home in Ramah. Then David went to the desert of Paran.

### David, Nabal, and Abigail

<sup>2</sup>Now there was a man in Maon whose business was in Carmel. He was a very rich man. He had 3,000 sheep and 1,000 goats. And he was shearing his sheep in Carmel. <sup>3</sup>This man's name was Nabal and his wife's name was Abigail. She was sensible and beautiful but he was harsh and mean. He was a descendant of Caleb.

<sup>4</sup>While David was in the desert, he heard that Nabal was shearing his sheep. <sup>5</sup>So David sent ten young men and told them: Go to Carmel, visit Nabal and greet him for me. <sup>6</sup>Say to him:

May you live <sub>L</sub> long <sub>┘</sub>. May you, your home, and all you have prosper. <sup>7</sup>I hear that your sheepshearers are with you. Your shepherds have been with us <sub>L</sub> and <sub>┘</sub>we have not mistreated them. Nothing of theirs has been missing as long as they've been in Carmel. <sup>8</sup>Ask your young men and let them tell you. Be kind to my young men since we have come on a special occasion. Please give us and your son David anything you can <sub>L</sub> spare <sub>┘</sub>.

<sup>9</sup>When David's young men came to Nabal they repeated all of this to him for David, and then they waited. <sup>10</sup>Who is David? Nabal answered David's servants. Who is Jesse's son? So many servants nowadays are leaving their

masters. <sup>11</sup>Should I take my bread, my water, and my meat that I butchered for my shearers and give them to men coming from who knows where?

<sup>12</sup>David's young men returned and told him all this. <sup>13</sup>Each of you put on your swords, David told his men. And everyone including David put on his sword. About four hundred men went with David while two hundred men stayed with the supplies.

<sup>14</sup>One of the young men told Abigail, Nabal's wife: David sent messengers from the desert to greet our master who yelled at them. <sup>15</sup>Those men were very good to us. They didn't mistreat us and we found that nothing was missing wherever we went with them when we were in the fields. <sup>16</sup>They were a wall protecting us day and night as long as we were watching the sheep near them. <sup>17</sup>Now consider what you should do because our master and his whole household are doomed. And he's such a worthless man that it's useless to talk to him.

<sup>18</sup>So Abigail quickly took 200 loaves of bread, 2 full wineskins, 5 butchered sheep, a bushel of roasted grain, 100 bunches of raisins, and 200 fig cakes and loaded them on donkeys. <sup>19</sup>Go on ahead, she told her young men and I'll follow you. But she didn't tell her husband Nabal about it.

<sup>20</sup>She was riding on her donkey down a hidden mountain path when she met David and his men coming toward her. <sup>21</sup>David had thought: I guarded this man's stuff in the desert for nothing. Not one of his possessions was missing. Yet he has paid me back with evil when I was good to him. <sup>22</sup>May God punish me if I leave even one of his men alive in the morning.

<sup>23</sup>When Abigail saw David, she quickly got down from her donkey. She immediately bowed down in front of David with her face touching the ground. <sup>24</sup>After she bowed at his feet, she said: Sir let me be held responsible for this wrong. Please let me speak with you. Please listen to my words. <sup>25</sup>You shouldn't take this worthless person Nabal seriously. He is like his name. His name is Nabal [meaning Godless Fool] and he's foolish. But I didn't see the young men you sent.

<sup>26</sup>**YHWH** has kept you from spilling innocent blood and from getting a victory by your own efforts. Now sir I solemnly swear as **YHWH** and you live, may your enemies and those who are trying to harm you end up like Nabal. <sup>27</sup>Here is a gift I am bringing to you. May it be given to the young men who are in your service.

<sup>28</sup>Please forgive my offense. **YHWH** will certainly give you sir a lasting dynasty because you are fighting **YHWH**'s battles. May evil never be found in you as long as you live. <sup>29</sup>Even though someone pursued you and sought your life, your life is wrapped in the bundle of life which comes from **YHWH** your God. But he will dispose of the lives of your enemies like stones thrown from a sling.

<sup>30</sup>When **YHWH** does all the good he promised and makes you ruler of Israel, <sup>31</sup>you shouldn't have a troubled conscience because you spilled blood for no good reason and claimed your own victory. When **YHWH** has given you success, remember me.

<sup>32</sup>David said to Abigail: Blessed be **YHWH** God of Israel who sent you today to meet me. <sup>33</sup>May your good judgment be blessed. Also may you be blessed for keeping me from slaughtering people today and from getting a victory by my own efforts. <sup>34</sup>But I solemnly swear — as **YHWH** God of Israel who has kept me from harming you lives — if you hadn't come to meet me quickly, Nabal certainly wouldn't have had one of his men left at dawn.

<sup>35</sup>Then David accepted what she brought him and told her: Go home in peace. I've listened to what you've said and granted your request.

<sup>36</sup>When Abigail came to Nabal, he was holding a banquet in his home. It was like a King's banquet. He was in a good mood and very drunk so she didn't tell him anything until dawn. <sup>37</sup>But in the morning when the effects of the wine had worn off, his wife told him what had happened. Nabal's heart failed and he could not move. <sup>38</sup>About ten days later **YHWH** made him even more sick and Nabal died.

<sup>39</sup>When David heard Nabal was dead he said: Blessed be **YHWH** who defended me against the insults of Nabal and kept me from doing wrong. **YHWH** has turned Nabal's own wickedness back on him. Then David sent men <sub>L</sub> on his behalf <sub>L</sub> to propose marriage to Abigail. <sup>40</sup>When David's servants came to Abigail at Carmel they told her: David has sent us to you so that we can take you to him to be his wife.

<sup>41</sup>She bowed down with her face touching the ground. I am ready to serve, she said. I am ready to wash the feet of my master's servants. <sup>42</sup>Then Abigail quickly got up and rode on a donkey with five of her female servants following her. So she went with David's messengers and became his wife.

<sup>43</sup>David also married Ahinoam of Jezreel. Both she and Abigail were his wives. <sup>44</sup>Saul had given his daughter Michal, David's wife, to Palti, Laish's son, who was from Gallim.

## Chapter 26

### Saul's Final Pursuit of David

<sup>1</sup>The people of Ziph came to Saul at Gibeah. David is hiding at the hill of Hachilah near Jeshimon, they said.

<sup>2</sup>Saul went to the desert of Ziph taking with him 3,000 of Israel's best-trained men to search for David. <sup>3</sup>Saul camped by the road at the hill of Hachilah near Jeshimon but David stayed in the desert. When he realized Saul had come to the desert for him, <sup>4</sup>David sent spies to confirm that Saul had arrived.

<sup>5</sup>Then David went to the place where Saul had camped. David saw the place where Saul and Ner's son Abner, the commander of the army, were lying. Saul was lying in the camp and the troops were camped around him.

<sup>6</sup>David asked Ahimelech the Hittite and Abishai who was Zeruah's son and Joab's brother: Who will go with me to Saul in the camp? Abishai answered: I'll go with you. <sup>7</sup>So David and Abishai went among <sub>L</sub> Saul's <sub>L</sub> troops that



night. Saul was lying asleep inside the camp with his spear stuck in the ground near his head. Abner and the soldiers were lying around him.

<sup>8</sup>Abishai said to David: Today God has turned your enemy over to you. Please let me nail him to the ground with one stab of the spear. I won't have to do it twice. <sup>9</sup>Don't kill him, David told Abishai. No one has ever attacked YHWH's anointed *mashiyach* King and remained free of guilt.

<sup>10</sup>I solemnly swear as YHWH lives, David added, YHWH will strike him. Either his time will come when he'll die naturally, or he'll go into battle and be swept away. <sup>11</sup>It would be unthinkable for me to attack YHWH's anointed *mashiyach* King. But please take that spear near his head and that jar of water and let's go.

<sup>12</sup>David took the spear and the jar of water near Saul's head and they left. All of them were asleep. No one saw them, knew about it, or woke up. YHWH had made them fall into a deep sleep.

<sup>13</sup>David went over to the other side and stood on top of the hill some distance away. There was a wide space between them. <sup>14</sup>Then David called to the troops and to Ner's son Abner. Won't you answer, Abner? he asked. Who is calling the King? Abner asked.

<sup>15</sup>David asked Abner: Aren't you a man? Is there anyone like you in Israel? Then why didn't you guard your master the King? Someone came to kill His Royal Majesty. <sup>16</sup>What you've done isn't good. I solemnly swear as YHWH lives you are dead men. You didn't guard your master YHWH's anointed *mashiyach* King. Look at the King's spear and the jar of water that were near his head.

<sup>17</sup>Saul recognized David's voice. Is that your voice, my servant David? he asked. It is my voice Your Royal Majesty, David answered. <sup>18</sup>Why are you pursuing me? he added. What have I done? What crime have I committed?

<sup>19</sup>Your Majesty please listen to my words. If YHWH has turned you against me let him be satisfied with an offering. But if mere mortals have turned

you against me ─ let them be cursed by YHWH. They have prevented me from having a share of YHWH's inheritance. Go and serve other gods, they tell me. <sup>20</sup> Don't let my blood fall to the ground, away from YHWH's presence. The King of Israel has come to search for one flea like someone hunting a partridge in the hills.

### King Saul Apologizes to David

<sup>21</sup>“My servant David, Saul said: I have sinned. Come back. I will not harm you again because you valued my life today. I've acted like a fool and made a terrible mistake.

<sup>22</sup> David responded: Here's the King's spear. One of the young men should come over and get it. <sup>23</sup> YHWH will reward any person who is righteous and faithful. YHWH handed you over to me today but I refused to attack YHWH's anointed *mashiyach* King. <sup>24</sup> As I placed great value on your life today, may YHWH place great value on my life and rescue me from all trouble.

<sup>25</sup> Then Saul said: Blessed are you, my servant David. You will accomplish many things and certainly will succeed. So David went his way while Saul returned home.

### WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

When David left Jonathan, he went to Nob where the priests lived. Here David asked the High Priest Ahimelech for food and a weapon. Ahimelech gave David the holy bread and Goliath's sword. However, Doeg an Edomite and a servant of King Saul was there watching. David later wrote Psalm 52:

Why do you brag about the evil you've done, you hero? The mercy of God lasts all day long. Your tongue makes up threats. It's like a sharp razor, you master of deceit. You prefer evil to good. You prefer lying to speaking the truth. *Selah*

You love every destructive accusation, you deceitful tongue. But God will ruin you forever. He will grab you and drag you out of your tent. He will pull your roots out of this world of the living. *Selah*

Righteous people will see this and be struck with fear. They will laugh at you and say: Look at this person who refused to make God his fortress. Instead he trusted his great wealth and became strong through his greed.

But I am like a large olive tree in God's House. I trust the mercy of the Lord forever and ever. I will give thanks to you forever for what you have done. In the presence of your godly people, I will wait with hope in your good name.

**Psalm 52:1-9**

David probably felt justified in writing this as he thought about what Doeg later did. From Nob, David went to the city-state of Gath carrying Goliath's large sword. He was certainly to be recognized so why did David go there?

At any rate, he was soon recognized by King Achish's officers as the David who had often defeated the Philistines. Why didn't they attack him and kill him right then? For some reason, David was allowed to play the lunatic and escape. The subscriptions of **Psalm 34** and **Psalm 56** say these psalms were written by David at this time.

David then went to the cave at Adullam where he wrote **Psalm 142**. When his family and others joined him, David took his father Jesse and his mother to Mizpah in Moab where he asked the King of Moab to protect them. The prophet Gad joined David.

Saul went to Nob when he learned David had been there and been given protection from Doeg, the Edomite. Saul ordered his officers to kill the High Priest Abimelech and his entire family but his officers refused to kill the priests. So Saul ordered Doeg to kill them which he did. Then Doeg killed all the people in the city of Nob. But one man escaped. Abiathar, the son of the High Priest went to join David's band of outlaws.

David's men protected the city of Keilah from the marauding Philistines and Amalekites who were stealing grain from the threshing floors. They fought the Philistines and defeated them. But the men of Keilah turned on David and told King Saul. However before Saul could attack, David and his men left.

While David was in the desert of Ziph, Jonathan came to see him. It was the last time they would meet. Jonathan told David: You will rule Israel and my father Saul knows it. Again they made a Covenant of friendship. They men of Ziph went to Saul at his home town of Gibeah

and offered to lead them to David. Saul went this them but then left when he was told the Philistines were attacking.

David had moved to En Gedi. Saul followed him there with his 3,000 troops. Saul went into a cave, relieved himself and rested. David entered the cave and cut off a piece of his robe. Although David's men urged him to kill the King, David refused. Then they left the cave.

Later David called out to Saul. Why do you try to kill me when I don't kill you. Look, here's a piece of your robe I cut off. Saul then told David: You are more righteous than I am. Now I know that you will certainly rule as King. Swear an oath you will not wipe out my descendants or members of my family. David agreed.

Samuel now dies. David must continually obtain supplies for his men and their families. So he sends men to a wealthy landowner in Carmel near Hebron to ask for provisions as they protected his flocks and land from the Philistines. The man Nabal refuses. This infuriates David and he plans to kill not only Nabal but every male servant of his.

A servant tells Nabal's wife Abigail. She quickly gathers provisions and goes to David. Graciously, she greets David and offers the provisions with a great apology for her ungrateful husband. David thanks God this woman has prevented him from massacring Nabal and his men. Abigail later tells his husband of David's first intention and the man dies. David then sends messengers to ask Abigail to marry him. She does and becomes his second wife. Saul had given David's first wife Michal to another man.

The people of Ziph inform on David to Saul. David goes into Saul's camp where he picks up Saul's water jug and spear. Abishai urges David to kill Saul but David refuses. Then they sneak out. Later he calls to General Abner from the distance. Abner why didn't you protect your King?

Saul recognizes David's voice. *I have sinned, he says. Come back. I will not harm you again because you valued my life today. I've acted like a fool. Blessed are you my servant David. You will accomplish many things and will certainly succeed.* These are the last words Saul says to David.

## THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. When David goes the High Priest Abimelech at Nob, David lies. This is uncharacteristic of David. Why does he lie committing a sin?
2. What is Doeg the Edomite, Saul's servant, doing at the House of the High Priest of Israel?

3. David leaves Nob and goes to Gath carrying Goliath's huge sword. Why does he go to a Philistine city-state? What does he hope to accomplish?
4. While David is an outlaw running from Saul, he apparently composes **Psalms 18, 34, 52, 54, 56, 57, 63, 124, 138, and 142**. How do these psalms reflect David's emotions during this time?
5. Why does God allow David to be chased by Saul for seven years in the wilderness of Judah? What lessons does David learn there?
6. Saul admits he knows David will be King one day. Why doesn't Saul simply make peace with David and allow David to help him defeat the Philistines as he is so good at doing? He knows David won't try to kill him.
7. David marries Abigail and Ahinoam of Jezreel. Why would he marry two women while he is constantly on the move escaping from Saul? Did David ask God before marrying these women?

## Session Seven

### David Lives Outside the Land of Israel

#### Chapter 27

#### David at Ziklag

<sup>1</sup> David said to himself: One of these days Saul will sweep me away. The best thing for me to do is to make sure that I escape to Philistine territory. Then Saul will give up looking all over Israel for me and I'll escape from him. <sup>2</sup> So David went with his 600 men to King Achish of Gath, Moach's son.

<sup>3</sup> David and his men stayed with Achish in Gath. Each one had his family and David had his two wives, Ahinoam from Jezreel and Abigail who had been Nabal's wife from Carmel. <sup>4</sup> When Saul was told that David had fled to Gath, he didn't search for him anymore.

#### David Offers to Become a Vassal of a Lord of the Philistines

<sup>5</sup> David said to Achish: If you will permit me, let me have a place in one of the outlying towns so that I can live there. Why should I live in the royal city with you? <sup>6</sup> So Achish immediately gave him Ziklag. This is why Ziklag still belongs to the Kings of Judah today.

<sup>7</sup> David stayed in Philistine territory for one year and four months. <sup>8</sup> Then David and his men went to raid the Geshurites, the Girzites, and the Amalekites. They lived in the territory which extends from Telaim to Shur and Egypt. <sup>9</sup> Whenever David attacked the territory, he left no man or woman alive. He also took sheep, cattle, donkeys, camels, and clothing and returned to Achish.

<sup>10</sup> Achish would ask: Whom did you raid today? And David would answer: the Negev in Judah, or: the portion of the Negev where the descendants of Jerahmeel live, or: the portion of the Negev where the Kenites live. <sup>11</sup> He

did not bring a single man or woman back to Gath alive. He thought: They could tell Achish what I really did.

This was his practice as long as he lived in Philistine territory. <sup>12</sup> And Achish believed David. Achish thought: He has definitely made his own people in Israel despise him. He'll be my servant from now on.

## Chapter 28

<sup>1</sup>At that time the Philistines had gathered their army to fight against Israel. Then Achish said to David: You need to know that you and your men will be going with me into battle. <sup>2</sup>Very well, David responded to Achish. You will then know what I can do. Very well, Achish told David. I will make you my bodyguard for life.

### Saul's Sin—the Occult

<sup>3</sup>Meanwhile Samuel had died and all Israel had mourned for him and buried him in his hometown Ramah. Saul had rid the land of mediums and psychics.

<sup>4</sup>The Philistines assembled and camped in Shunem. Saul also assembled the whole Israelite army and they camped at Gilboa. <sup>5</sup>When Saul looked at the Philistine army, he was very afraid—terrified. <sup>6</sup>He prayed to **YHWH** but **YHWH** didn't answer him through dreams, the Urim, or prophets.

<sup>7</sup>Saul told his officers: Find me a woman who conjures up the dead. Then I'll go to her and ask for her services. His officers told him: There is a woman at Endor who conjures up the dead. <sup>8</sup>After disguising himself by putting on other clothes, Saul left with two men and came to the woman that night. He said to her: Please consult with a dead person for me. Conjure up the person I request.

<sup>9</sup>The woman told him: You know that Saul rid the land of mediums and psychics. Why are you trying to trap me and have me killed? <sup>10</sup> But Saul took an oath in **YHWH**'s name: I solemnly swear as **YHWH** lives you will not be

harm if you do this. <sup>11</sup>Whom should I conjure up for you? the woman asked. Conjure up Samuel for me, he answered.

<sup>12</sup>When the woman saw Samuel, she cried out loudly and asked: Why did you deceive me? You're Saul. <sup>13</sup>Don't be afraid, the King said to her. What do you see? I see a god rising from the ground, the woman answered. <sup>14</sup>In what form? he asked her.

She answered: An old man is coming up and he's wearing a robe. Then Saul knew it was Samuel. Saul knelt down with his face touching the ground. <sup>15</sup>Samuel asked Saul: Why did you disturb me by conjuring me up? Saul answered: I'm in serious trouble. The Philistines are at war with me and God has turned against me and doesn't answer me anymore — either by the prophets or in dreams. So I've called on you to tell me what to do.

<sup>16</sup>Samuel said: Why are you asking me when **YHWH** has turned against you and become your enemy? <sup>17</sup>**YHWH** has done to you exactly what he spoke through me. **YHWH** has torn the kingship out of your hands and given it to your fellow Israelite David.

<sup>18</sup>**YHWH** is doing this to you today because you didn't listen to him or unleash his burning anger on Amalek. <sup>19</sup>For the same reasons **YHWH** will hand you and Israel over to the Philistines. Tomorrow you and your sons will be with me. And then **YHWH** will hand Israel's army over to the Philistines.

<sup>20</sup>Immediately Saul fell flat on the ground. He was frightened by Samuel's words. He also had no strength left because he hadn't eaten anything all day or all night.

<sup>21</sup>The woman came over to Saul and saw that he was terrified. I listened to you, she told him, and I took my life in my hands when I did what you told me to do. <sup>22</sup>Now please listen to me. I will serve you something to eat. Eat it so that you will have strength when you leave.



<sup>23</sup> But he refused. I don't want to eat, he said. Nevertheless his officers and the woman kept urging him until he listened to them. So he got up from the ground and sat on the bed.

<sup>24</sup> The woman immediately butchered a fattened calf that she owned. She took flour, kneaded it, and baked some unleavened bread. <sup>25</sup> Then she served it to Saul and his officers. They ate and left that same night.

## Chapter 29

### The Philistines Reject David

<sup>1</sup> The Philistines assembled their whole army at Aphek and Israel camped at the spring in Jezreel. <sup>2</sup> The Philistine leaders were marching by with their companies and regiments. David and his men were marching in the rear with Achish.

<sup>3</sup> The Philistine officers asked: What are these Hebrews doing here? Achish asked the Philistine officers: Isn't this David, the servant of King Saul of Israel, who has been with me now for a year or two? I've found nothing wrong with him from the day he defected until now.

<sup>4</sup> But the Philistine officers were angry with Achish. Send the man back, the Philistine officers told him. Return him to the place you assigned him. He shouldn't go with us into battle. He shouldn't be allowed to become our enemy during the battle. Is this man going to try to regain his master's favor? He'll do it with the lives of our men. <sup>5</sup> Isn't this David of whom people sing in dances: Saul has defeated thousands but David tens of thousands?

<sup>6</sup> Then Achish called David and told him: I solemnly swear as YHWH lives you are a dependable man. I consider your campaigning with me a good thing because I've never found anything wrong with you from the day you came to me until now. But the rulers don't approve of you. <sup>7</sup> So leave peacefully without doing anything to displease the Philistine rulers.

<sup>8</sup> What have I done? David asked Achish. What have you learned about me from the time I came to you until now? Why shouldn't I fight your enemies

Your Majesty? <sup>9</sup>Achish answered David: I admit that in my judgment you're as good as God's Messenger. However, the Philistine officers said: He shouldn't go into battle with us.

<sup>10</sup>Get up early in the morning with Saul's servants who came with you and go to the place I have assigned to you. Don't worry about the unkind words because I still approve of you. Get up in the morning and leave when it's light. <sup>11</sup>Early the next morning David and his men returned to Philistine territory while the Philistines went to Jezreel.

Achish refers to David's men as Saul's servants because Saul is still King of Israel.

## Chapter 30

### David Defeats the Amalekites

<sup>1</sup>Two days later, when David and his men came to Ziklag, the Amalekites had raided the Negev including Ziklag. They had attacked Ziklag and burned it. <sup>2</sup>Although they captured the young and old women who were there, they killed no one. Instead, they had taken  $\perp$  the women and other prisoners  $\perp$  and gone away. <sup>3</sup>By the time David and his men came to the town, it had been burned down and their wives, sons, and daughters had been taken captive.

<sup>4</sup>Then David and his men cried loudly until they didn't have the strength to cry anymore. <sup>5</sup>The Amalekites also captured David's two wives, Ahinoam from Jezreel and Abigail who had been Nabal's wife from Carmel. <sup>6</sup>David was in great distress because the people in their bitterness said he should be stoned. They were thinking of their sons and daughters. But David found strength in **YHWH** his God.

<sup>7</sup>David told the priest Abiathar, Ahimelech's son: Please bring me the priestly ephod. So Abiathar brought David the ephod. <sup>8</sup>Then David asked **YHWH**: Should I pursue these troops? Will I catch up with them? Pursue them, **YHWH** told him. You will certainly catch up with them and rescue the captives

<sup>9</sup>So David and his 600 men went to the Besor Valley where some were left behind. <sup>10</sup>David and 400 men went in pursuit while 200 men who were too exhausted to cross the Besor Valley stayed behind.

<sup>11</sup>David's men found an Egyptian in the open country and took him to David. They gave him food to eat and water to drink. <sup>12</sup>They gave him a slice of fig cake and two bunches of raisins. After he had eaten, he revived. He hadn't eaten any food or drunk any water for three whole days. <sup>13</sup>David asked him: To whom do you belong? Where do you come from?

I'm an Egyptian, the slave of an Amalekite, the young man answered. My master left me behind because I got sick three days ago. <sup>14</sup>We raided the portion of the Negev where the Cherethites live, the territory of Judah, the portion of the Negev where Caleb settled, and we burned down Ziklag.

<sup>15</sup>Will you lead me to these troops? David asked him. He answered: Take an oath in front of God that you won't kill me or hand me over to my master and I'll lead you to these troops. <sup>16</sup>The Egyptian led him to them. They were spread out all over the land, eating, and drinking. They were celebrating because they had taken so much loot from Philistine territory and from the land of Judah.

<sup>17</sup>From dawn until evening the next day, David attacked them. No one escaped except 400 young men who rode away on camels. <sup>18</sup>David rescued everything the Amalekites had taken including his two wives. <sup>19</sup>Nothing was missing — young or old, sons or daughters, the loot or anything else they had taken with them. David brought back everything. <sup>20</sup>He took all the sheep and the cattle. His men drove the animals ahead of him and said: This is David's loot.

<sup>21</sup>David came to the 200 men who had been too exhausted to go with him and had stayed in the Besor Valley. They came to meet David and the people with him. As David approached the men, he greeted them. <sup>22</sup>Then every wicked and worthless man who had gone with David said: Since they didn't

go with us, they shouldn't be given any of the loot we recovered. Each of them should take only his wife and children and leave.

<sup>23</sup>But David said: My brothers, don't do that with the things which YHWH has given us. He has protected us and handed the troops that attacked us over to us. <sup>24</sup>Besides, who is going to pay attention to what you have to say in this matter? Certainly the share of those who go into battle must be like the share of those who stay with the supplies. They will all share alike. <sup>25</sup>From that time on he made this a rule and a custom in Israel as it is to this day.

<sup>26</sup>When David came to Ziklag, he sent part of the loot to his friends, the leaders of Judah. He said: Here is a gift for you from the loot taken from YHWH's enemies. <sup>27</sup>There were shares for those in Bethel, Ramoth in the Negev, Jattir, <sup>28</sup>Aroer, Siphmoth, Eshtemoa, <sup>29</sup>Racal, the cities belonging to the Jerahmeelites, the cities belonging to the Kenites, <sup>30</sup>Hormah, Borashan, Athach, <sup>31</sup>Hebron, and to all the places David and his men visited from time to time.

## Chapter 31

### The Death of Saul

<sup>1</sup>When the Philistines were fighting against Israel, the men of Israel fled from the Philistines and were killed in battle on Mount Gilboa. <sup>2</sup>The Philistines caught up to Saul and his sons. They killed Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malchishua, Saul's sons. <sup>3</sup>The heaviest fighting was against Saul. When the archers got him in their range, he was badly wounded by them.

<sup>4</sup>Saul told his armorbearer: Draw your sword. Stab me or these godless men will come, stab me, and make fun of me. But his armorbearer refused because he was terrified. So Saul took the sword and fell on it. <sup>5</sup>When the armorbearer saw that Saul was dead, he also fell on his sword and died with him. <sup>6</sup>So Saul, his three sons, his armorbearer, and all his men died together that day.

<sup>7</sup>When the people of Israel on the other side of the valley and across the Jordan River saw that the men of Israel had fled and that Saul and his sons were dead, they abandoned their cities. So the Philistines came to live in these cities.

<sup>8</sup>The next day when the Philistines came to strip the dead, they found Saul and his three sons lying on Mount Gilboa. <sup>9</sup>They cut off his head and stripped off his armor. Then they sent men throughout Philistine territory to tell the people this good news in their idols' temples. <sup>10</sup>They put his armor in the temple of their goddesses—the Asherahs —and fastened his corpse to the wall of Beth Shan.

<sup>11</sup>When the people living in Jabesh Gilead heard what the Philistines had done to Saul, <sup>12</sup>all the fighting men marched all night and took the dead bodies of Saul and his sons from the wall of Beth Shan. They came back to Jabesh and burned the bodies there. <sup>13</sup>They took the bones and buried them under the tamarisk tree in Jabesh. Then they fasted seven days.

## WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

After being chased by Saul for possibly seven years, David decides to leave Israel and live in Philistine territory. Surprisingly, King Achish of Gath welcomes David and his men. David is given a Philistine village in the south named Ziklag and made a vassal of the King. David again lies and tells the King only what he wants the King to know. Achish thinks David is attacking Israelites in the Judean desert but David is robbing and killing only non-Israelites, particularly the Arab tribes. David ensures what is really doing remains secret by killing all those he attacks and not taking any prisoners. He will do this for a year and four months.

In the meantime Saul is faced with a Philistine offensive in the north at Aphek. Not having any guidance from God, a priest, or a prophet, Saul turns to the occult. He locates a woman who conjures up a spirit identified as Samuel. The spirit tells Saul he will die and Israel will be defeated by the Philistines. This warning is ignored by Saul. He will go ahead with the battle anyway with his General Abner and his three sons

In the meantime, King Achish has ordered David to come to the Philistine camp at Aphek with his troops. The four other Philistine lords demand David and his troops leave. They don't want to be attacked from behind by Hebrews. Achish reluctantly sends David and his troops back

to Ziklag although he swears by the God of Israel that David is a dependable man. **1 Samuel 29:6.**

The battle goes badly. General Abner somehow escapes but Saul's three sons are killed. Saul commits suicide. The Philistines put Saul's armor in the temple of their goddess Asherah and hang Saul and his son's corpses on the wall of Beth Shan. But the men of Jabesh Gilead sneak into Beth Shan, take the corpses off the wall, and bury the corpses in their city. Then they fasted seven days in honor of the King.

## THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why doesn't David ask God if he should leave Israel with his troops?
2. Why were David and his men welcomed by King Achish? What were their value to him?
3. Why does David lie to King Achish about his activities in Ziklag?
4. Who did Saul talk with at Endor? Was it Samuel, an evil spirit, or God himself?
5. Why didn't Saul accept the warning given to him by Samuel and flee the coming battle?
6. Why did General Abner not die in the battle with his King?
7. Only the names of Saul's three sons, Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malchishua are given in **1 Samuel 31:2**. Why does a fourth son, Ishbosheth or Ishbaal appear later? What was he doing all this time? Note that **1 Chronicles 8:33** and **9:39** say that Saul had four sons.

## EXTRA CREDIT

If Saul was so very desperate and God wouldn't answer him by prophets or dreams, why wouldn't God have mercy on his anointed King and speak to him?

## Session Eight

### Saul Dies, David Is Anointed King of Judah

#### 2 Samuel Chapter 1

##### The Report of Saul's Death

<sup>1</sup> After Saul died and David returned from defeating the Amalekites David stayed in Ziklag two days. <sup>2</sup> On the third day a man came from Saul's camp. His clothes were torn and he had dirt on his head. When he came to David, he immediately bowed down with his face touching the ground.

<sup>3</sup> Where did you come from? David asked him. I escaped from the camp of Israel, he answered. <sup>4</sup> What happened? David asked him. Please tell me. The man answered: The army fled from the battle and many of the soldiers died. Saul and his son Jonathan are dead too. <sup>5</sup> How do you know Saul and his son Jonathan are dead? David asked the young man who had brought him the news.

<sup>6</sup> The young man answered: I happened to be on Mount Gilboa. Saul was there leaning on his spear and the chariots and horsemen were catching up with him. <sup>7</sup> When he looked back and saw me he called to me and I said: Yes? <sup>8</sup> He asked me: Who are you? I said to him: I'm an Amalekite.

<sup>9</sup> He said to me: Please stand over me and kill me. I'm alive but I'm suffering. <sup>10</sup> So I stood over him and killed him since I knew he couldn't survive after he had been wounded. And I took the crown that was on his head and the band that was on his arm and brought them here to you, sir.

<sup>11</sup> Then David grabbed his own clothes and tore them in grief. All the men with him did the same. <sup>12</sup> They mourned, cried, and fasted until evening because Saul, his son Jonathan, YHWH's army, and the nation of Israel had been defeated in battle.

<sup>13</sup>David asked the young man who had brought him the news: Where are you from? The young man answered: I'm an Amalekite, the son of a foreign resident. <sup>14</sup>David asked: Why weren't you afraid to take it upon yourself to destroy YHWH's anointed *mashiyach* King?

<sup>15</sup>Then David called one of his young men and told him: Come here and attack him. David's young man executed him <sup>16</sup>while David said: You are responsible for spilling your own blood. You testified against yourself when you said: I killed YHWH's anointed *mashiyach* King.

### David's Lament for Saul and Jonathan

<sup>17</sup>David wrote this song of mourning for Saul and his son Jonathan. <sup>18</sup>He said: Teach this *kesheth* to the people of Judah. It is recorded in the Book of Jashar.

<sup>19</sup>Your glory, Israel, lies dead on your hills. See how the mighty have fallen. <sup>20</sup>Don't tell the news in Gath. Don't announce the victory in the streets of Ashkelon or the daughters of the Philistines will be glad and the daughters of godless men will celebrate.

<sup>21</sup>You mountains in Gilboa, may there be no dew or rain on you or on your slopes, because warriors' shields were tarnished there. Saul's shield was never rubbed with olive oil. <sup>22</sup>From the blood of those killed and the fat of the warriors, Jonathan's bow did not turn away, nor did Saul's sword return unused.

<sup>23</sup>Saul and Jonathan were loved and well-liked while they were living. They were not separated even when they died. They were swifter than eagles and stronger than lions. <sup>24</sup>Daughters of Israel, cry over Saul, who dressed you in decorated, red clothes, who put gold jewelry on your clothes.

<sup>25</sup>See how the mighty have fallen in battle. On your hills Jonathan was killed. <sup>26</sup>I am heartbroken over you, my brother Jonathan. You were my great delight. Your love was more wonderful to me than the love of



women. <sup>27</sup>See how the mighty have fallen. See how the weapons of war have been destroyed.

## Chapter 2

### David Becomes King of Judah

<sup>1</sup>After this, David asked YHWH: Should I go to one of the cities of Judah? Go, YHWH answered him. Where should I go? David asked. To Hebron, YHWH replied.

<sup>2</sup>David went there with his two wives, Ahinoam from Jezreel and Abigail who had been Nabal's wife from Carmel. <sup>3</sup>David took his men and their families with him and they settled in the towns around Hebron. <sup>4</sup>Then the people of Judah came to Hebron and anointed *mashach* David to be King over the tribe of Judah.

They told David: The people of Jabesh Gilead were the ones who buried Saul. <sup>5</sup>So David sent messengers to the people of Jabesh Gilead. He said to them: May YHWH bless you because you showed kindness to your master Saul by burying him.

<sup>6</sup>May YHWH always show you kindness. I too will be good to you because you did this. <sup>7</sup>Now be strong and courageous. Because your master Saul is dead, the tribe of Judah has anointed me to be their King.

### General Abner Makes Ishbosheth King of Israel

<sup>8</sup>Ner's son Abner, commander of Saul's army, took Saul's son Ishbosheth and brought him to Mahanaim. <sup>9</sup>Abner made him King of Gilead, Asher, Jezreel, Ephraim, and Benjamin, that is, all Israel. <sup>10</sup>Saul's son Ishbosheth was 40 years old when he became King of Israel. He ruled for two years but the tribe of Judah followed David. <sup>11</sup>In Hebron David was King over the tribe of Judah for seven years and six months.

There are lots of questions here. How could General Abner escape the battle and leave King Saul alive alone? Ishbosheth has never been mentioned before as one of Saul's sons. Note the scribes changed his real name Ishbaal to Ishbosheth to mean *son of shame*. Where does Abner

get the authority to name Ishbaal King? The tribal elders of the ten tribes of the north should have anointed him.

## **The Civil War Between the Royal Families of Saul and David Begins in a Symbolic Battle** 1010-1002 BC

<sup>12</sup>Ner's son Abner and the officers of Saul's son Ishbosheth went from Mahanaim to Gibeon. <sup>13</sup>Zeruiah's son Joab and David's officers also left L Hebron J. Both groups met at the pool of Gibeon. They sat down there, one group on one side of the pool and the other group on the other side of the pool.

<sup>14</sup>General Abner said to Joab: Let's have the young men hold a contest." Joab agreed.

<sup>15</sup>The men got up and were counted as they passed by. Twelve were from the tribe of Benjamin representing Saul's son Ishbosheth and twelve were from David's officers. <sup>16</sup>Each one grabbed his opponent by the head, stuck his sword into his opponent's side and they fell down together. Therefore that place in Gibeon is called the Field of Enemies. <sup>17</sup>Fierce fighting broke out that day and David's men defeated Abner and the men of Israel.

<sup>18</sup>Zeruiah's David's sister three sons were there: General Joab, Abishai, and Asahel. Asahel was as fast on his feet as a wild gazelle. <sup>19</sup>He chased General Abner and refused to leave him alone. <sup>20</sup>When Abner looked back, he asked: Are you Asahel? Yes, Asahel answered. <sup>21</sup>Abner told him: Leave me alone Catch one of the young men and take his weapon.

But Asahel refused to turn away from him. <sup>22</sup>So Abner spoke again to Asahel: Stop following me, he said. Why should I kill you? How could I look your brother Joab in the face again?

<sup>23</sup>But Asahel refused to turn away. So Abner struck him with the butt of the spear. The spear went into his belly and came out his back. He fell down there and died on the spot. And everyone who came to the place where Asahel fell and died stopped there.

<sup>24</sup> But Joab and Abishai chased Abner. When the sun went down, they came to the hill of Ammah, opposite Giah on the road from Gibeon to the desert. <sup>25</sup> The men of Benjamin rallied behind Abner, banding together and taking their position on top of a hill.

Notice that only men of the tribe of Benjamin were there. There were no men from the other nine northern tribes. Why not? Apparently this was a battle between the house of David and the house of Saul although the house of Saul is referred to as Isarel.

<sup>26</sup> Then Abner called to Joab: Should this slaughter go on forever? Don't you know this will end in bitterness? How long will it be before you will call off your troops from chasing their relatives?

<sup>27</sup> Joab answered: I solemnly swear as God lives, if you had not spoken, the men would not have stopped chasing their relatives until morning. <sup>28</sup> So Joab blew a ram's horn and all the troops stopped. They didn't chase or fight Israel anymore.

<sup>29</sup> Abner and his men marched through the plains all that night. They crossed the Jordan River and passed through the entire Bithron until they came to Mahanaim.

Mahanaim was now the capital of Israel where King Ishbaal was located. It was located east of the Jordan River since Saul's Gibeon was too close to Philistine territory.

<sup>30</sup> Joab returned from chasing Abner. When he had gathered all the troops, only 19 of David's officers and Asahel were missing. <sup>31</sup> However, David's officers had killed 360 of the men of Benjamin under Abner's command. <sup>32</sup> They took Asahel and buried him in his father's tomb in Bethlehem. Then Joab and his men marched all night and arrived at Hebron by daybreak.

### Chapter 3

<sup>1</sup> As the war between the royal families of Saul and David dragged on, David's family became stronger and stronger and Saul's family became weaker and weaker.

## David's Sons

<sup>2</sup>Sons were born to David while he was in Hebron. His first son was Amnon, <sup>1</sup> born <sup>1</sup> to Ahinoam from Jezreel. <sup>3</sup>The second was Chileab, <sup>1</sup> born <sup>1</sup> to Abigail who had been Nabal's wife from Carmel. The third was Absalom, whose mother was Maacah the daughter of King Talmi from Geshur. <sup>4</sup>The fourth was Adonijah, whose mother was Haggith. The fifth was Shephatiah, whose mother was Abital. <sup>5</sup>The sixth was Ithream, <sup>1</sup> born <sup>1</sup> to David's wife Eglah. These sons were born to David while he was in Hebron.

## General Abner's Death

<sup>6</sup>During the war between the families of Saul and David, Abner strengthened his position in Saul's royal family. <sup>7</sup>Saul had a concubine named Rizpah, Aiah's daughter. Ishbosheth asked Abner: Why did you have sex with my father's concubine?

<sup>8</sup>Ishbosheth's question made Abner very angry. Have I been behaving like some Judean dog? he asked. Until now I've been faithful to your father Saul's family, to his relatives and friends and I haven't handed you over to David. But now you charge me with a crime because of this woman.

<sup>9</sup>May God strike me dead unless I do for David what YHWH had promised him with an oath. <sup>10</sup>I, YHWH, will transfer the kingship from Saul's family and establish David's throne over Israel and Judah from Dan to Beersheba.

<sup>11</sup>Ishbosheth couldn't respond to a single word because he was afraid of Abner.

<sup>12</sup>Then Abner sent messengers to David to speak on his behalf. Who owns this country? he asked. Make an agreement with me, he said. I'll support you and bring all Israel to you. <sup>13</sup>Good, David answered. I'll make an agreement with you. But there's one condition. You can't come to see me unless you bring Michal, Saul's daughter, when you come.

<sup>14</sup>Then David sent messengers to Saul's son Ishbosheth to say: Give me my wife Michal. I made a payment of 100 Philistine foreskins for her. <sup>15</sup>So Ishbosheth sent men to take her from her husband Paltiel, son of Laish. <sup>16</sup>Her husband went with her and cried over her all the way to Bahurim. Go home Abner told him. So he went home.

<sup>17</sup>Meanwhile, Abner sent the following message to the leaders of Israel: For some time now you've wanted to make David your King. <sup>18</sup>Do it now, because **YHWH** said about David: I will save my people Israel from the Philistines and all their other enemies through my servant David. <sup>19</sup>Abner also spoke specifically to the people of Benjamin.

When and where did **YHWH** say this about David?

Then Abner went directly to David in Hebron to tell him everything Israel and the entire tribe of Benjamin had approved. <sup>20</sup>So Abner came with 20 men to David in Hebron and David had a feast for Abner and his men. <sup>21</sup>Abner told David: I must go now so that I can gather all Israel for you Your Majesty. They will make a treaty *beriyth*-Covenant with you and you will rule everything your heart desires. Then David dismissed Abner who left peacefully.

Notice that Abner speaks only to the elders of the tribe of Israel. Yet he also commits the other nine tribes.

<sup>22</sup>Just then David's men and Joab were coming home from a raid with a lot of goods. Abner had been dismissed so he was no longer with David in Hebron. <sup>23</sup>When Joab came back with the whole army, he was told: Ner's son Abner came to the King but David dismissed him and Abner left peacefully.

<sup>24</sup>Then Joab went to the King and asked: What have you done? Abner came to see you. Why did you dismiss him and let him get away? <sup>25</sup>Certainly you must know that Ner's son Abner came to deceive you, to find out about your movements and learn everything you're doing.

## General Joab Kills General Abner

<sup>26</sup>After leaving David, Joab sent messengers after Abner. They brought him back from the cistern of Sirah without David knowing about it. <sup>27</sup>When Abner returned to Hebron, Joab took him aside in the gateway as if to talk to him privately. There he stabbed Abner in the belly. Abner died because he spilled the blood of Joab's brother Asahel.

<sup>28</sup>Later when David heard about it, he said: As far as YHWH is concerned, my kingdom and I are forever innocent of spilling the blood of Ner's son Abner. <sup>29</sup>May the blame fall on the head of Joab and all of his family. May there always be members of Joab's family who have oozing sores and skin diseases, who can only work a spindle, who die in battle, and who never have any food. <sup>30</sup>Joab and his brother Abishai killed Abner because he had killed their brother Asahel in the battle at Gibeon.

## David Humiliates General Joab to Appease the People of Israel

<sup>31</sup>David told Joab and all the people with him: Tear your clothes, put on sackcloth, and mourn for Abner. King David followed the open casket. <sup>32</sup>They buried Abner in Hebron. The King cried loudly at Abner's grave and all the people cried. <sup>33</sup>The King sang a funeral song for Abner:

Should Abner die like a godless fool? <sup>34</sup>Your hands were not tied. Your feet were not chained. You fell as one falls in front of wicked men.

And all the people continued to cry for him.

<sup>35</sup>That entire day all the people tried to get David to eat some food. But David had taken an oath: May God strike me dead if I taste any food or anything else before the sun goes down. <sup>36</sup>Then all the people understood and approved of this as all the people approved of everything the King did.

<sup>37</sup>That day all the people of Israel knew the King wasn't responsible for killing Ner's son Abner.

<sup>38</sup>The King said to his officers: Don't you know that today a leader, a great man, has fallen in Israel? <sup>39</sup>Today I'm weak though I'm the anointed *mashach* King. These men, Zeruiah's sons, are too cruel for me. May YHWH repay this evildoer as his evil deeds deserve.

## Chapter 4

<sup>1</sup>When Saul's son Ishbosheth heard that Abner had died in Hebron, he lost his courage, and all Israel was alarmed. <sup>2</sup>Saul's son had two men who were captains of raiding parties. One was named Baanah, and the other was named Rechab. They were the sons of Rimmon from Beeroth from the tribe of Benjamin. Beeroth was considered a part of Benjamin, <sup>3</sup>even though the people of Beeroth had fled to Gittaim. They still live there today.

### Johnathan Had A Son Named Mephibosheth

<sup>4</sup>In addition, Saul's son Jonathan had a son who was crippled. When the boy was five years old, the news about the death of Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel. His nurse picked him up and fled to Gittaim. She was in a hurry when she left, and he fell from her arms and became disabled. His name was Mephibosheth.

### King Ishbosheth Is Murdered

<sup>5</sup>Rechab and Baanah, the sons of Rimmon from Beeroth, came to Ishbosheth's home at the hottest time of the day. Ishbosheth was taking his midday nap <sup>6</sup>when they came into the house as though they were going to get some flour. Instead, they stabbed him in the belly. Then Rechab and his brother Baanah escaped.

<sup>7</sup>They had come into the house while Ishbosheth was sleeping on his bed in his bedroom. They stabbed him, killed him, and cut off his head. They took his head and traveled all night along the road to the plains. <sup>8</sup>They brought Ishbosheth's head to David at Hebron. Here is the head of Ishbosheth, the son of your enemy Saul who tried to kill you, they told the King. Today YHWH has given Your Royal Majesty revenge on Saul and his descendants

<sup>9</sup>David responded to Rechab and his brother Baanah, the sons of Rimmon from Beeroth: <sup>10</sup>“I once seized a man who told me that Saul had died. He thought he was bringing good news. I killed him in Ziklag to reward him for his news. <sup>11</sup>How much more ┐ should I reward ┐ wicked men who kill an innocent man on his own bed in his home?

**YHWH** has rescued me from every trouble. I solemnly swear as **YHWH** lives I'll now seek revenge for his murder and rid the land of you. <sup>12</sup>So David gave an order to his young men who executed Rechab and Baanah, cut off their hands and feet, and hung their dead bodies by the pond in Hebron. Then they took Ishbosheth's head and buried it in Abner's tomb in Hebron.

David takes these actions because he doesn't want to be accused of ordering the killing of King Ishbaal just as he doesn't want to be accused of killing General Abner. But the rumors he has done so persist.

## Chapter 5

### David Anointed King of All Israel

<sup>1</sup>All the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron. We are your own flesh and blood, they said. <sup>2</sup>Even in the past when Saul ruled us, you were the one who led Israel in battle. **YHWH** has said to you: You will be shepherd of my people Israel, the leader of Israel.

<sup>3</sup>All the leaders of Israel had come to Hebron. King David made an agreement *beriyth*-Covenant with them at Hebron in front of **YHWH**. So they anointed *mashach* David King of Israel.

Now the tribal leaders of all the 12 tribes come to anoint David King of all Israel.

<sup>4</sup>David was 30 years old when he became King and he ruled for 40 years. <sup>1010-</sup>970 BC <sup>5</sup>In Hebron he ruled Judah for seven years and six months. In Jerusalem he ruled for 33 years over all Israel and Judah.



## David Captures Jerusalem

<sup>6</sup>The King and his men went to Jerusalem to attack the Jebusites who lived in that region. The Jebusites told David: You will never get in here. Even the blind and the lame could turn you away meaning that David could never get in there. <sup>7</sup>But David captured the fortress Zion, that is, the City of David.

<sup>8</sup>That day David said: Whoever wants to defeat the Jebusites must reach the lame and the blind who hate me by using the water shaft. So there is a saying: The blind and the lame will not get into the palace.

<sup>9</sup>David lived in the fortress and called it the City of David. He built the City of Jerusalem around it from the Millo rampart, mound to the palace. <sup>10</sup>David continued to grow more powerful because YHWH God of Armies was with him.

## David's Palace, Wives, and Children in Jerusalem

<sup>11</sup>Then King Hiram of Tyre sent messengers to David along with cedarwood, carpenters, and stonemasons. They built a palace for David. <sup>12</sup>So David realized that YHWH had established him as King of Israel and made his kingship famous for the sake of Israel, YHWH's people.

<sup>13</sup>David married more concubines and wives from Jerusalem after he had come there from Hebron and he fathered more sons and daughters. <sup>14</sup>These are the names of the children born to him in Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon, <sup>15</sup>Ibhar, Elishua, Nepheg, Japhia, <sup>16</sup>Elishama, Eliada, and Eliphelet.

## David Defeats the Philistines

<sup>17</sup>When the Philistines heard that David had been anointed *mashach* King of Israel, all of them came to attack David. But David heard about it and went to the fortress. <sup>18</sup>The Philistines had come and overrun the valley of Rephaim.

<sup>19</sup> David asked **YHWH**: Should I attack the Philistines? Will you hand them over to me? **YHWH** answered David: Attack. I will certainly hand the Philistines over to you.

<sup>20</sup> So David went to Baal Perazim and defeated the Philistines there. He said: **YHWH** has overwhelmed my enemies in front of me like an overwhelming flood. ” That is why that place is called Baal Perazim [ meaning **YHWH** Overwhelms]. <sup>21</sup> The Philistines left their idols there so David and his men carried the idols away.

<sup>22</sup> The Philistines again attacked and overran the valley of Rephaim. <sup>23</sup> David asked **YHWH** and he answered: Don't attack now but circle around behind them and come at them in front of the balsam trees. <sup>24</sup> When you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees, act immediately because **YHWH** has gone ahead of you to defeat the Philistine army. <sup>25</sup> David did as **YHWH** ordered him and defeated the Philistines from Geba to Gezer.

## WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

While Saul and his sons were leading the army of Israel against the Philistines at Mount Gilboa, David and his army were in the south fighting the Amalekites. Three days after Saul was killed, an Amalekite came from the battle with news. Saul and Jonathan were killed and the Israelite army fled from the battlefield. The Amalekite admitted that he killed Saul after he was badly wounded and had brought his crown and his arm band.

David and his men cried and tore their clothes in grief. Then David had the Amalekite killed because he had killed **YHWH**'s anointed King. David wrote a lament for Saul and Jonathan.

After this, David asked God if he should return to Israel. God told him to go to Hebron. At Hebron the tribal leaders of Judah anointed David King of Judah. In the meantime, General Abner, having escaped from the battle, declared that Saul's remaining son Ishbaal is now King of Israel. Abner made him King of Israel which was now divided into Gilead Asher, Jezreel, Ephraim and Benjamin. The capital was moved from Saul's home town of Gibeon to Mahanaim which is east of the Jordan River, a further distance from the Philistines.

For the next seven years and six months, there was civil war between the house of Saul and the house of David. David's house became stronger while Saul's house became weaker and weaker. Then King Ishbaal insulted Abner. So Abner went to David at Hebron and said he would

deliver the kingship of all Israel to him. David agreed but said he first wanted the return of his first wife Michal. Abner agreed.

Joab learned of Abner's visit. Incensed over the possibility he might be replaced and also that Abner had killed his brother, Joab lured Abner back to Hebron and stabbed Abner to death. Then two officers in Israel's army murdered Ishbaal and brought Ishbaal's head to David. David had them executed. David did not want to be accused to murdering Ishbaal.

All the tribal leaders of Israel came to Hebron and cut a Covenant with David and anointed him King of all Israel. David was now 30 years old. David selected a new capital called Jebus and captured it from the Jebusites. He called it Jerusalem and the City of David. The fortress there was called Zion. King Hiram of Tyre sent workmen to Jerusalem to build a palace for King David.

David brought his six wives and sons to Jerusalem. The first son was Amnon born to Ahinoam, the second was Chileab born to Abigail, the third was Absalom born to Maacah, and the fourth was Adonijah whose mother was Haggith. There were also two more sons born in Hebron. In Jerusalem David married more concubines and fathered more sons.

David then met the Philistines in the Valley of Rephaim where he soundly defeated them. The Philistines gave David little trouble from then on.

## THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. We can understand David lamenting for Jonathan whom he loved. But why did David's lament song include Saul?
2. Why did David select Hebron as the place in Judah to return to? What was the advantage of having his first capital there?
3. Previously, Samuel the prophet anointed Saul King. He had also anointed David King. Why didn't Gad, David's prophet, anoint David King of Judah?
4. What authority did General Abner have to declare Ishbaal, the previously unknown son of Saul, was now King of Israel? Wouldn't the tribes have had to make a Covenant with Ishbaal?
5. General Joab put David in a very difficult position when he killed Abner. Many would have said David ordered Joab to kill Abner. What did David do to attempt to dispel this accusation against him?
6. Many would also have accused David to ordering the murder of Ishbaal. What did David do to dispel this accusation against him?

7. When the tribal leaders met David in Hebron, they made a Covenant with him in front of **YHWH** and they anointed him King. No prophet is mentioned. Has the role of prophet changed since Samuel was prophet?

## **EXTRA CREDIT**

Why did David need so many wives and concubines?

## Session Nine

### David Attempts to Unite the Twelve Tribes into a Nation

#### Chapter 6

#### David Brings the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem

<sup>1</sup>David again assembled all the best soldiers in Israel, 30,000 men. <sup>2</sup>He and all the people with him left Baalah aka: Kiriath Jearim in Judah to bring God's Ark to Jerusalem. The Ark is called by the name of YHWH of Armies, who is enthroned over the angels. <sup>3</sup>David and his men put God's Ark on a new cart and brought it from Abinadab's home on the hill.

Uzzah and Ahio, Abinadab's sons, were guiding the new cart. <sup>4</sup>They brought it from Abinadab's home with Ahio walking ahead of the Ark. <sup>5</sup>David and the entire nation of Israel were celebrating in YHWH's presence with all kinds of instruments made from cypress wood and with lyres, harps, tambourines, sistrams coronets and cymbals.

#### YHWH Kills Uzzah Who Touched the Ark of the Covenant So David Delays Bringing the Ark to Jerusalem

<sup>6</sup>But when they came to Nacon's threshing floor, the oxen stumbled. So Uzzah reached out for the Ark of God and grabbed it. <sup>7</sup>YHWH became angry with Uzzah, so God killed him there for his lack of respect. He died beside the Ark of God.

<sup>8</sup>David was angry because YHWH had struck Uzzah so violently. That place is still called Perez Uzzah [meaning: The Striking of Uzzah] today. <sup>9</sup>David was afraid of YHWH that day. How can the Ark of YHWH come to my City? he asked.

<sup>10</sup>So David wouldn't bring the Ark of YHWH with him to the City of David. Instead, he rerouted it to the home of Obed Edom, who was from

Gath. <sup>11</sup>The Ark of **YHWH** stayed at the home of Obed Edom from Gath for three months and **YHWH** blessed Obed Edom and his whole family.

Again David knows someone from Gath. Apparently, it is the home of his mother's relatives.

<sup>12</sup>King David was told: **YHWH** has blessed Obed Edom's home and everything he owns because of the Ark of God. Then David joyfully went to get the Ark of God from Obed Edom's house and bring it to the City of David.

David inquired of the priests and learned that the Ark should not be placed on a cart but carried by Levites with poles.

[ Make an Ark of acacia wood 45 inches long, 27 inches wide, and 27 inches high. Cover it with pure gold inside and out, and put a gold molding around it. Cast four rings for it and fasten them to its four feet, two rings on each side. Make the poles of acacia wood and cover them with gold. Put the poles through the rings on the sides of the Ark to carry it. The poles must stay in the rings of the Ark. Never remove them. Then you will put into the Ark the Words of my Covenant which I will give you.

Make a throne of mercy to cover the Ark out of pure gold 45 inches long and 27 inches wide. Make two angels out of hammered gold for the two ends of the throne of mercy, one on each end. Form the angels and the throne of mercy out of one piece of gold. The angels should have their wings spread over the throne of mercy overshadowing it. They should face each other looking at the throne of mercy. After you place in the Ark the Words of my Covenant which I will give you, place the throne of mercy on top. I will be above the throne of mercy between the angels whenever I meet with you and give you all my commands for the Israelites. **Exodus 25:10-22** ]

<sup>13</sup>When those who carried the Ark of **YHWH** had gone six steps, David sacrificed a bull and a fattened calf.

<sup>14</sup>Wearing a linen ephod, David danced in **YHWH**'s presence with all his might. <sup>15</sup>He and the entire nation of Israel brought the Ark of **YHWH** with shouts of joy and the sounding of rams' horns.

David may have composed this psalm for the entry of the Ark into Jerusalem:

[ Lift up your heads you gates. Be lifted you ancient doors so that the King of Glory may come in. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord, strong and mighty. The Lord, heroic in battle. Lift up your heads, you gates. Be lifted you ancient doors so that the King of Glory may come in. Who then is this King of Glory? The Lord of Armies is this King of Glory. **Psalm 24:7-10.** ]

<sup>16</sup>When the Ark of **YHWH** came to the City of David, Saul's daughter Michal looked out of a window and saw King David leaping and dancing in **YHWH**'s presence so she despised him.

<sup>17</sup>The men carrying the Ark set it in its place inside the Tent David had put up for it. David sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings in **YHWH**'s presence.

Although David is not a priest, he still makes sacrifices before **YHWH** and blesses the people in the name of **YHWH**. King David can do no wrong.

<sup>18</sup>When David had finished sacrificing the burnt offerings and the fellowship offerings, he blessed the people in the name of **YHWH** of Armies. <sup>19</sup>He also distributed to all the people — to the whole crowd of Israelites, both men and women — one loaf of bread, one date cake, and one raisin cake. Then all the people went home.

<sup>20</sup>When David returned to bless his family, Saul's daughter Michal came out to meet him. She said: How dignified Israel's King was today. He was exposing himself before the eyes of the slave girls of his palace staff — like a mindless fool might expose himself.

<sup>21</sup>David answered Michal: ◡ I didn't dance in front of the slave girls but ◡ in front of **YHWH**. He chose me rather than your father or anyone in your

father's house and he appointed me leader of Israel, YHWH's people. I will celebrate in YHWH's presence <sup>22</sup> and I will degrade myself even more than this. Even if I am humiliated in your eyes, I will be honored by these slave girls you speak about. <sup>23</sup> So Saul's daughter Michal was childless her entire life.

## Chapter 7

### David's Wish to Build a House for God

<sup>1</sup> While King David was living in his house, YHWH gave him peace with all his enemies around him. <sup>2</sup> So the King said to the prophet Nathan: Look I'm living in a house made of cedar while the Ark of God remains in the Tent. <sup>3</sup> Nathan told the King: Do everything you have in mind because YHWH is with you.

<sup>4</sup> But that same night YHWH spoke his word to Nathan: <sup>5</sup> Say to my servant David: This is what YHWH says:

Are you the one who will build me a House to live in? <sup>6</sup> I haven't lived in a House from the day I took Israel out of Egypt to this day. Instead, I moved around in a Tent, the Tent of Meeting.

<sup>7</sup> In all the places I've moved with all the Israelites, did I ever ask any of the judges of Israel whom I ordered to be shepherds of my people Israel why they didn't build me a House of cedar?'

<sup>8</sup> Now this is what you will say to my servant David: This is what YHWH of Armies says: I took you from the pasture where you followed sheep so that you could be the leader of my people Israel. <sup>9</sup> I was with you wherever you went and I destroyed all your enemies in front of you.

I will make your name famous like the names of the greatest people on earth. <sup>10</sup> I will make a place for my people Israel and plant them there. They will live in their own place and not be troubled anymore. The wicked will no longer oppress them as they used to do <sup>11</sup> ever since I appointed



judges to rule my people Israel. So I will give you peace with all your enemies. I, YHWH, tell you that I will make a house for you.

### YHWH Makes a Covenant with King David

<sup>12</sup>When the time comes for you to lie down in death with your ancestors, I will send one of your descendants,  $\perp$  one  $\perp$  who will come from you. I will establish his kingdom. <sup>13</sup>He will build a House for my name and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. <sup>1</sup>

<sup>4</sup>I will be his Father, and he will be my Son. If he sins, I will punish him with a rod and with blows inflicted by people. <sup>15</sup>But I will never stop showing him my love as I did to Saul whom I took out of your way. <sup>16</sup>Your royal house will remain in my presence forever. Your throne will be established forever.

<sup>17</sup>Nathan told David all these words and everything he had seen.

### David Thanks God for His Kindness to Him.

<sup>18</sup>King David went into the tent and sat in front of YHWH.

Who am I, Almighty *'Adonay* YHWH he asked and why is my house so important that you have brought me *'ebed*-your servant this far? <sup>19</sup>And even this you consider to be a small act, Almighty *'Adonay* YHWH. You've also spoken about the distant future of my *'ebed* house. Almighty *'Adonay* YHWH, this is the teaching about the man.

<sup>20</sup>What more can I, David, say to you, Almighty *'Adonay* YHWH since you know me *'ebed* so well. <sup>21</sup>You've done this great thing because of your promise *dabar*-word and your own desire *leb*-heart. You made it known to me *'ebed*.

<sup>22</sup>That is why you are great YHWH God. There is no one like you, and there is no other god except you as we have heard with our own ears. <sup>23</sup>Who is like your people Israel? It is the one nation on earth that God came to free in order to make its people his own, to make his name

known, and to do great and wonderful things for them. You forced nations and their gods out of the way of your people whom you freed from Egypt to be your own. <sup>24</sup>You created the people of Israel to be your people forever. And you **YHWH** became their God.

<sup>25</sup>Now **YHWH** God keep the promise *dabar* you made to me *'ebed* and my house forever. Do as you promised. <sup>26</sup>Your name will be respected forever when **YHWH** of Armies is God over Israel. And the house of your servant *'ebed* David will be established in your presence. <sup>27</sup>You **YHWH** of Armies, God of Israel have revealed it especially to me *'ebed* saying: I will build a house for you. That is why I *'ebed* have found the courage to offer this prayer to you.

<sup>28</sup>Almighty *'Adonay* **YHWH** you are God and your words are trustworthy. You promised me *'ebed* this good thing. <sup>29</sup>Now please bless my *'ebed* house so that it may continue in your presence forever. Indeed you Almighty *'Adonay* **YHWH** have promised it. With your blessing my *'ebed* house will be blessed forever.

## Chapter 8

### David's Successes

<sup>1</sup>After this, David defeated and crushed the Philistines. He took control of the main Philistine city from them.

<sup>2</sup>He also defeated Moab. He made the Moabites lie down on the ground and measured them with a rope. He measured two lengths which were to be killed and one length which was to be spared. So the Moabites became David's subjects and paid taxes **to him**.

<sup>3</sup>When David went to restore his control **over the territory** along the Euphrates River, he defeated Zobah's King Hadadezer, son of Rehob. <sup>4</sup>David took 1,700 horsemen and 20,000 foot soldiers from him. David also disabled all but 100 of their horses so that they couldn't pull chariots.

<sup>5</sup>When the Arameans from Damascus came to help King Hadadezer of Zobah, David killed 22,000 of them. <sup>6</sup>David put troops in the Aramean kingdom of Damascus and the Arameans became his subjects and paid taxes  $\perp$  to him  $\perp$ . Everywhere David went, **YHWH** gave him victories.

<sup>7</sup>David took the gold shields that belonged to Hadadezer's servants, and he brought them to Jerusalem. <sup>8</sup>King David also took a large quantity of bronze from Betah and Berothai, Hadadezer's cities.

<sup>9</sup>When King Toi of Hamath heard that David had defeated Hadadezer's whole army, <sup>10</sup>he sent his son Joram to greet King David and congratulate him for fighting and defeating Hadadezer. There had often been war between Hadadezer and Toi. Joram brought articles of gold, silver, and bronze with him.

<sup>11</sup>King David dedicated these articles to **YHWH**, along with the silver and gold he had dedicated from all the nations he conquered — <sup>12</sup>from Edom, Moab, Ammon, the Philistines, Amalek, and from the goods taken from Zobah's King Hadadezer, son of Rehob.

<sup>13</sup>David made a name for himself by killing 18,000 Edomites in the Dead Sea region as he returned  $\perp$  to Jerusalem  $\perp$ . <sup>14</sup>He put troops everywhere in Edom and all the Edomites were David's subjects. Everywhere David went, **YHWH** gave him victories.

<sup>15</sup>So David ruled all Israel. He did what was fair and right for all his people. <sup>16</sup>Zeruiah's son Joab was in charge of the army. Ahilud's son Jehoshaphat was the royal historian. <sup>17</sup>Ahitub's son Zadok and Abiathar's son Ahimelech were priests.

This is the first time Zadok appears as a co-High Priest. There is a theory that Zadok was the High Priest of Jebus when David conquered it. David made an agreement with Zadok to be David's co-High Priest in return for allowing David to rule the City peacefully. **1 Chronicles 6:8** lists Zadok as a descendant of Levi.

Seraiah was the royal scribe. <sup>18</sup>Jehoiada's son Benaiah was commander of the Cherethites and the Pelethites.

The Cherethites and Pelethites were David's bodyguards and they were Philistines.

And David's sons were priests.

## Chapter 9

### David Keeps His Promise to Jonathan

<sup>1</sup>David asked: Is there anyone left in Saul's family to whom I can show kindness for Jonathan's sake? <sup>2</sup>Now, Saul's family had a servant whose name was Ziba. He was summoned to  $\perp$  come to  $\perp$  David. Are you Ziba?" the King asked him.  $\perp$  Yes,  $\perp$ I am, he answered. <sup>3</sup>David asked: Is there someone left in Saul's family to whom I can show God's kindness? Jonathan has a son who is disabled, Ziba answered. <sup>4</sup>Where is he? the King asked. Ziba replied: He is at the home of Machir, Ammiel's son, in Lo Debar.

<sup>5</sup>So King David sent men to get him from the home of Ammiel's son Machir in Lo Debar. <sup>6</sup>When Mephibosheth, son of Jonathan and grandson of Saul came to David, he quickly bowed down with his face touching the ground. Mephibosheth, David said to him. Yes sir, he answered. <sup>7</sup>Don't be afraid, David told him: I will certainly show you kindness for your father Jonathan's sake. I will give back to you all the land of your grandfather Saul and you will always eat at my table. <sup>8</sup>Mephibosheth bowed down  $\perp$  again  $\perp$  and answered: Who am I that you would look at a dead dog like me?

<sup>9</sup>Then the King called for Ziba, Saul's servant, and said to him: I have given your master's grandson everything that belonged to Saul and his family. <sup>10</sup>You, your sons, and your servants should farm the land for him and harvest  $\perp$  the crops  $\perp$  so that your master's family will have food to eat. However, your master's grandson Mephibosheth will always eat at my table. Ziba had 15 sons and 20 servants. <sup>11</sup>Ziba responded: I will do everything you've commanded Your Majesty.

From then on, Mephibosheth ate at David's table as one of the King's sons. <sup>12</sup>Mephibosheth had a young son whose name was Mica. Everyone who lived at Ziba's home became Mephibosheth's servant. <sup>13</sup>However

Mephibosheth who was disabled lived in Jerusalem. He always ate at the King's table.

Jonathan's son Mephibosheth was previously described in **2 Samuel 4:4**.

## Chapter 10

### David Defeats Ammon and Aram

<sup>1</sup> Later the King of Ammon died and his son Hanun became King in his place. <sup>2</sup> David thought: I will show kindness to Hanun as his father Nahash showed me kindness. So David sent his servants to comfort Hanun after his father's death.

This is very surprising. King Nahash in **1 Samuel 11:1-2** was the man King Saul attacked for attempting to put out the right eyes of all the men of Jabesh-Gilead.

But when David's servants entered Ammonite territory,<sup>3</sup> the Ammonite princes asked their master Hanun: Do you think David is honoring your father because he sent men to comfort you? Hasn't David sent his men to explore the city, spy on it, and destroy it?

<sup>4</sup> So Hanun took David's men, shaved off half of each man's beard, cut off their clothes from the waist down, and sent them away. <sup>5</sup> After David was told what had happened, he sent someone to meet them because they were deeply humiliated. The King said to them: Stay in Jericho until your beards have grown back and then return to Jerusalem.

<sup>6</sup> The Ammonites realized that they had made themselves offensive to David. So they hired the Arameans from Beth Rehob and Zobah -- 20,000 foot soldiers, the army of the King of Maaca--1,000 men, and the men of Tob --12,000 men.

<sup>7</sup> After David heard about this, he sent Joab and all the elite troops. <sup>8</sup> The Ammonites formed a battle line at the entrance of the city gate, while the Arameans from Zobah and Rehob and the men from Tob and Maacah remained by themselves in the open country.

<sup>9</sup>When Joab saw he was under attack in front and behind, he took the select troops of Israel and organized them for combat against the Arameans. <sup>10</sup>He put his brother Abishai in charge of the rest of the troops. Abishai organized them for combat against the Ammonites.

<sup>11</sup>Joab said: If the Arameans are too strong for my  $\perp$  troops  $\perp$ , be ready to help me. And if the Ammonites are too strong for your  $\perp$  troops  $\perp$ , I'll come to help you. <sup>12</sup>Be strong. Let's prove ourselves strong for our people and for the cities of our God and **YHWH** will do what he considers right.

<sup>13</sup>Then Joab and his troops advanced to fight the Arameans and the Arameans fled. <sup>14</sup>When the Ammonites saw that the Arameans had fled, the Ammonites fled from Abishai and went into the city. So Joab stopped his campaign against the Ammonites and returned to Jerusalem.

<sup>15</sup>Realizing that Israel had defeated them, the Arameans reassembled  $\perp$  their troops  $\perp$ . <sup>16</sup>Hadadezer sent  $\perp$  messengers  $\perp$  to get Arameans from beyond the Euphrates River. The Arameans came to Helam with Shobach, the commander of Hadadezer's army, leading them.

<sup>17</sup>When David was told  $\perp$  about this  $\perp$ , he assembled Israel's army, crossed the Jordan River, and came to Helam. The Arameans formed a battle line against David's  $\perp$  troops  $\perp$  and fought him. <sup>18</sup>The Arameans fled from Israel and David killed 700 chariot drivers and 40,000 horsemen. David struck Shobach dead.

<sup>19</sup>When all the Kings who were subject to Hadadezer saw that Israel had defeated them, they made peace with Israel and became their subjects. And the Arameans were afraid to help the Ammonites anymore.

## WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

In order to bring the northern tribes together with Judah, a tribe that had almost always acted independently, David brings the most renowned religious object in Israel, the Ark of the Covenant to his new capital. But David forgets that God's holy objects are to be treated strictly in accordance with God's wishes. David failed to consult the Towrah to see how God wanted the Ark of the Covenant to be treated. It was only to be transported on its poles by Levites of a

certain clan. Because David failed to do this, God caused the oxen drawing the cart to stumble and a man to put his hands on the Ark that killed him instantly. David consulted with the priests and learned proper instructions. Then he brought the Ark to Jerusalem. The City was now a religious center as well as a political center.

David danced with abandon in the celebration parade bringing the Ark into the City. Michal, Saul's daughter criticized him for doing this. Kings should be austere, dignified, and formal, she thought. But David disagreed. He would be very familiar and express his love for God openly.

David felt guilty that he was living in a beautiful cedar palace while the Ark of God resided in only a tent. So David proposed to his prophet Nathan, mentioned here for the first time in the book, that he build a suitable dwelling for God. Nathan told him to go ahead. But God that night told Nathan: No. God would build a house for David. One of David's descendants would one day permanently inherit the throne of Israel.

David is astounded at this and offers a beautiful prayer to God calling God Almighty *Adonay* and himself only God's servant *'ebed*. The prayer stresses God's sovereignty and David's humility. The Davidic Covenant is the basis for the prophets looking for a Messiah *mashiyach* or an Anointed One in David's descendants.

Now the writer of **2 Samuel** lists David's military exploits. Many scholars feel the chronological order of events in this text is different than the order presented. I will not discuss it in this study. Let's simply say that God helped David achieve rest from his enemies. Remember that all wars in Israel are to be holy wars that defend Israel from enemies attempting to take territory away from Israel rather than territorial expansion.

The writer now gives David's chief official's positions. Joab was the General. Zadok and Ahimelech were co-High Priests. Benaiah led David's personal bodyguards, the Cherethites and the Pelethites who were Philistines. David's sons were chief ministers of state.

David kept his promise to Jonathan by allowing his son Mephibosheth to control Saul's former lands and to live at David's palace in Jerusalem.

## THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why does David want to make Jerusalem a religious center for the nation as well as a political capital?
2. Why does God allow David to be a priest-King and do things that only people from the tribe of Levi were allowed to do in the Towrah?

3. David clearly wanted the people of Israel to love God as he did. How did David attempt to convince the Israelites to do this?
4. What was David's reason for wanting to build a Temple for God in Jerusalem?
5. Why did David choose Philistines as his body guards?
6. If David had a baby with Saul's daughter Michal, that might have brought the northern tribes to unity with Judah. Why didn't David do this?
7. What is the great danger that Israel faces when David brings the nation rest from their enemies?



## Session Ten

### David's Fall from Grace

#### Chapter II

#### David Takes Bathsheba

<sup>1</sup>In the spring, the time when Kings go out to battle, David sent Joab, his mercenaries, and Israel's army  $\perp$  to war  $\perp$ . They destroyed the Ammonites and attacked Rabbah while David stayed in Jerusalem.

<sup>2</sup>Now, when evening came, David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof of the royal palace. From the roof he saw a woman bathing and she was very pretty. <sup>3</sup>David sent someone to ask about the woman. The man said: She's Bathsheba, daughter of Eliam and wife of Uriah the Hittite.

<sup>4</sup>So David sent messengers and took her. She came to him and he went to bed with her. She had just cleansed herself after her monthly period. Then she went home. <sup>5</sup>The woman had become pregnant. So she sent someone to tell David that she was pregnant.

<sup>6</sup>Then David sent a messenger to Joab saying: Send me Uriah the Hittite. So Joab sent Uriah to David. <sup>7</sup>When Uriah arrived David asked him how Joab and the troops were and how the war was going. <sup>8</sup>Go home, David said to Uriah, and wash your feet that is, go to bed with your wife. Uriah left the royal palace and the King sent a present to him. <sup>9</sup>But Uriah slept at the entrance of the royal palace among his superior's mercenaries. He didn't go home.

<sup>10</sup>When they told David Uriah didn't go home, David asked Uriah: Didn't you just come from a journey? Why didn't you go home? <sup>11</sup>Uriah answered David: The Ark and  $\perp$  the army of  $\perp$  Israel and Judah are in temporary shelters *cukkah*-booths, tents and my commander Joab and Your Majesty's mercenaries are living in the field. Should I then go to my house to eat and

drink and go to bed with my wife? I solemnly swear as sure as you're living I won't do this.

Remember the High Priest Ahimelech asked David if his young men prevented themselves from having intercourse so they could eat the holy bread. **1 Samuel 21:4-5**. Uriah was following this rule.

<sup>12</sup>David said to Uriah: Then stay here today and tomorrow I'll send you back. So Uriah stayed in Jerusalem that day and the next. <sup>13</sup>David summoned him, ate and drank with him and got him drunk. But that evening Uriah went to lie down on his bed among his superior's mercenaries. He didn't go home.

<sup>14</sup>In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it with Uriah. <sup>15</sup>In the letter he wrote: Put Uriah on the front line where the fighting is heaviest. Then abandon him so that he'll be struck down and die. <sup>16</sup>Since Joab had kept the city under observation, he put Uriah at the place where he knew the experienced warriors were. <sup>17</sup>The men of the city came out and fought Joab. Some of the people namely some of David's mercenaries fell and died—including Uriah the Hittite.

<sup>18</sup>Then Joab sent L a messenger ┘ to report to David all the details of the battle. <sup>19</sup>And he commanded the messenger: When you finish telling the King about the battle, <sup>20</sup>the King may become angry. He might ask you: Why did you go so close to the city to fight? Didn't you know they would shoot from the wall? <sup>21</sup>Who killed Jerubbesheth's son Abimelech? Didn't a woman on the wall of Thebez throw a small millstone at him and kill him? Why did you go so close to the wall? If the King asks this then say: Your man Uriah the Hittite is also dead.

<sup>22</sup>The messenger left and when he arrived, he reported to David everything Joab told him to say. <sup>23</sup>The messenger said: Their men overpowered us and came to attack us in the field. Then we forced them back to the entrance of the city gate. <sup>24</sup>The archers on the wall shot down at your mercenaries and some of Your Majesty's mercenaries died. Your man Uriah the Hittite also is dead.

<sup>25</sup>David said to the messenger: This is what you are to say to Joab: Don't let this thing trouble you because a sword can kill one person as easily as another. Strengthen your attack against the city and destroy it. Say this to encourage him."

<sup>26</sup>When Uriah's wife heard that her husband Uriah was dead, she mourned for him. <sup>27</sup>When her mourning was over, David sent for her and brought her to his home, and she became his wife. Then she gave birth to a son. But **YHWH** considered David's actions evil.

## Chapter 12

### Nathan Confronts David

<sup>1</sup> So **YHWH** sent Nathan to David. Nathan came to him and said:

There were two men in a certain city. One was rich and the other was poor. <sup>2</sup>The rich man had a very large number of sheep and cows <sup>3</sup>but the poor man had only one little female lamb that he had bought. He raised her and she grew up in his home with his children. She would eat his food and drink from his cup. She rested in his arms and was like a daughter.

<sup>4</sup>Now a visitor came to the rich man. The rich man thought it would be a pity to take one of his own sheep or cattle to prepare a meal for the traveler. So he took the poor man's lamb and prepared her for the traveler.

<sup>5</sup>David burned with anger against the man. I solemnly swear as **YHWH** lives, he said to Nathan, the man who did this certainly deserves to die. <sup>6</sup>And he must pay back four times the price of the lamb because he did this and had no pity.

<sup>7</sup>You are the man, Nathan told David. This is what **YHWH** God of Israel says:

I anointed you King over Israel and rescued you from Saul. <sup>8</sup>I gave you your master Saul's house and his wives. I gave you the house of Israel and Judah. And if this weren't enough, I would have given you even more.

<sup>9</sup>Why did you despise my Word by doing what I considered evil? You had Uriah the Hittite killed in battle. You took his wife as your wife. You used the Ammonites to kill him. <sup>10</sup>So warfare will never leave your house because you despised me and took the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.

<sup>11</sup>This is what **YHWH** says:

I will stir up trouble against you within your own household and before your own eyes I will take your wives and give them to someone close to you. He will go to bed with your wives in broad daylight. <sup>12</sup>You did this secretly but I will make this happen in broad daylight in front of all Israel.”

<sup>13</sup>Then David said to Nathan: I have sinned against **YHWH**.

Nathan replied: **YHWH** has taken away your sin. You will not die. <sup>14</sup>But since you have shown total contempt for **YHWH** by this affair, the son that is born to you must die. <sup>15</sup>Then Nathan went home.

For nine months, David had kept quiet. He may have struggled during this time but was unwilling to publicly confess his sin: He remembers this time in this psalm reflecting his agony:

[ Blessed is the person whose disobedience is forgiven and whose sin is pardoned. Blessed is the person whom the Lord no longer accuses of sin and who has no deceitful thoughts.

When I kept silent about my sins, my bones began to weaken because of my groaning all day long. Day and night your hand laid heavily on me. My strength shriveled in the summer heat. *Selah*

I made my sins known to you and I did not cover up my guilt. I decided to confess them to you, O **YHWH**. Then you forgave all my sins. *Selah*

For this reason let all godly people pray to you when you may be found. Then raging floodwater will not reach them. You are my hiding place. You protect me from trouble. You surround me with joyous songs of salvation. *Selah*

**YHWH** says: I will instruct you. I will teach you the way you should go. I will advise you as my eyes watch over you. Don't be stubborn like a horse or mule. They need a bit and bridle in their mouth to restrain them or they will not come near you. Many heartaches await wicked people but mercy surrounds those who trust in the Lord.

Be glad and find joy in **YHWH**, you righteous people. Sing with joy all whose motives are decent. **Psalm 32:1-11** ]

**YHWH** struck the child that Uriah's wife had given birth to for David so that the child became sick. <sup>16</sup>David pleaded with God for the child. He fasted and lay on the ground all night.

### **David May Have Prayed Psalm 51 at This Time:**

[<sup>1</sup> Have pity on me, O God, in keeping with your mercy.

In keeping with your unlimited compassion, wipe out my rebellious acts. <sup>2</sup>Wash me thoroughly from my guilt, and cleanse me from my sin.

<sup>3</sup>I admit that I am rebellious. My sin is always in front of me.

<sup>4</sup>I have sinned against you, especially you. I have done what you consider evil. So you hand down justice when you speak, and you are blameless when you judge.

<sup>5</sup>Indeed, I was born guilty. I was a sinner when my mother conceived me. <sup>6</sup>Yet, you desire truth and sincerity. Deep down inside me you teach me wisdom. <sup>7</sup>Purify me from sin with hyssop and I will be clean. Wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.

<sup>8</sup>Let me hear <sub>L</sub> sounds of <sub>L</sub> joy and gladness. Let the bones that you have broken dance. <sup>9</sup>Hide your face from my sins and wipe out all that I have done wrong.

<sup>10</sup>Create a clean heart in me, O God and renew a faithful spirit within me. <sup>11</sup>Do not force me away from your presence, and do not take your Holy Spirit from me. <sup>12</sup>Restore the joy of your salvation to me and provide me with a spirit of willing obedience. <sup>13</sup><sub>L</sub> Then <sub>L</sub> I will teach your ways to those who are rebellious, and sinners will return to you.

<sup>14</sup> Rescue me from the guilt of murder O God, my Savior. Let my tongue sing joyfully about your righteousness. <sup>15</sup> O Lord open my lips, and my mouth will tell about your praise. <sup>16</sup> You are not happy with any sacrifice. Otherwise, I would offer one  $\perp$  to you  $\perp$ . You are not pleased with burnt offerings. <sup>17</sup> The sacrifice pleasing to God is a broken spirit. O God, you do not despise a broken and sorrowful heart.

<sup>18</sup> Favor Zion with your goodness. Rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. <sup>19</sup> Then you will be pleased with sacrifices offered in the right spirit— with burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings. Young bulls will be offered on your altar. **Psalm 51:1-19** ]

<sup>17</sup> The older leaders in his palace stood beside him to raise him up from the ground, but he was unwilling. And he wouldn't eat with them.

<sup>18</sup> On the seventh day the child died.

Here was the first of four lambs David had to pay back for his sin.

But David's officials were afraid to tell him that the child was dead. They thought: While the child was alive, we talked to him and he wouldn't listen to us. How can we tell him the child is dead? He may harm  $\perp$  himself  $\perp$ .

<sup>19</sup> But when David saw that his officials were whispering to one another, he realized that the child was dead. Is the child dead? David asked them.  $\perp$  Yes,  $\perp$  he is dead, they answered. <sup>20</sup> So David got up from the ground, bathed, anointed himself, and changed his clothes. He went into **YHWH's** House and worshiped. Then he went home and asked for food. They placed food in front of him and he ate.

<sup>21</sup> His officials asked him: Why are you acting this way? You fasted and cried over the child when he was alive. But as soon as the child died, you got up and ate. <sup>22</sup> David answered: As long as the child was alive, I fasted and cried. I thought: Who knows? **YHWH** may be gracious to me and let the child live. <sup>23</sup> But why should I fast now that he's dead? Can I bring him back?  $\perp$  Someday  $\perp$  I'll go to him but he won't come back to me.

<sup>24</sup>Then David comforted his wife Bathsheba. He went to bed with her and she later gave birth to a son. David named him Solomon. **YHWH** loved the child <sup>25</sup>and sent a message through the prophet Nathan to name the baby Jedidiah [meaning: **YHWH**'s Beloved].

## **David Defeats the Ammonites**

<sup>26</sup>Meanwhile, Joab fought against the Ammonite city of Rabbah and captured its royal fortress. <sup>27</sup>So he sent messengers to tell David: I fought against Rabbah and captured the fortress guarding its water supply. <sup>28</sup>Gather the rest of the troops, surround the city and capture it. Otherwise I will capture the city and it will be named after me.

<sup>29</sup>So David gathered all the troops and went to Rabbah. He fought against the city and captured it. <sup>30</sup>He took the gold crown from the head of Rabbah's King and put it on his own head. The crown weighed 75 pounds and contained a precious stone. David also took a lot of goods from the city. <sup>31</sup>He brought out the troops who were there and put them to work with saws, hoes, and axes. He did the same to all the Ammonite cities. Then David and all the troops returned to Jerusalem.

## **Chapter 13**

### **God Begins the Trouble in David's House with the Crown Prince Amnon**

<sup>1</sup>After this David's son Amnon fell in love with Tamar, the beautiful sister of David's son Absalom. <sup>2</sup>Amnon was so obsessed with his half-sister Tamar that he made himself sick. It seemed impossible for him to be alone with her because she was a virgin.

<sup>3</sup>Amnon had a friend by the name of Jonadab, a son of David's brother Shimea. Jonadab was a very clever man. <sup>4</sup>He asked Amnon: Why are you, the King's son, so worn out morning after morning? Won't you tell me? I'm in love with Absalom's sister Tamar, he answered.

<sup>5</sup>Then Jonadab told him: Lie down on your bed. Act sick and when your father comes to see you, say to him: Please let my sister Tamar come to feed

me. She can prepare a meal in front of me as I watch her and she can feed me. <sup>6</sup>So Amnon lay down and acted sick and the King came to see him. Amnon asked the King: Please let my sister Tamar come and make some bread in front of me and she can feed me. <sup>7</sup>David sent for Tamar at the palace. Please go to your brother Amnon's home, he said, and prepare some food for him.

<sup>8</sup>So Tamar went to her brother Amnon's home. He was lying down. She took dough, kneaded it, made flat bread in front of him and cooked it. <sup>9</sup>Then she took the pan and served him the bread. But he refused to eat. Have everyone leave me, he said. So everyone left him. <sup>10</sup>Amnon told Tamar: Bring the food into the bedroom so that you can feed me.

Tamar took the bread she had prepared and brought it to her brother Amnon in the bedroom. <sup>11</sup>When she handed it to him to eat, he grabbed her and said: Come to bed with me, Tamar. <sup>12</sup>No, she told him, don't rape me. That shouldn't be done in Israel. Don't do this godless act. <sup>13</sup>Where could I go in my disgrace? And you will be considered one of the godless fools in Israel. Speak to the King. He won't refuse your request to marry me. <sup>14</sup>But Amnon wouldn't listen to her. He grabbed his sister and raped her.

<sup>15</sup>Now Amnon developed an intense hatred for her. His hatred for her was greater than the lust he had felt for her. Get out of here, he told her. <sup>16</sup>She said to him: No, sending me away is a greater wrong than the other thing you did to me. But he wouldn't listen to her. <sup>17</sup>Then he called his personal servant and said: Get rid of her. Put her out and bolt the door behind her. <sup>18</sup>She was wearing a long-sleeved gown. The King's virgin daughters wore this kind of robe. So his servant took her out and bolted the door behind her.

<sup>19</sup>Tamar put ashes on her head, tore the long-sleeved gown she had on, put her hands on her head, and went away crying. <sup>20</sup>Her brother Absalom asked her: Has your brother Amnon been with you? Sister be quiet for now. He's your brother. Don't dwell on this matter. So Tamar stayed there at the home of her brother Absalom and was depressed.



<sup>21</sup>When King David heard about this, he became very angry. But David didn't punish his son Amnon. He favored Amnon because he was his firstborn son – the Crown Prince. <sup>22</sup>Absalom wouldn't speak at all to Amnon. He hated Amnon for raping his sister Tamar.

### **Absalom Murders His Brother Amnon**

<sup>23</sup>Two years later Absalom had sheepshearers at Baal Hazor near Ephraim. He invited all the king's sons. <sup>24</sup>Absalom went to the King and said: Since I have sheepshearers, Your Majesty and your officials are invited to feast with me. <sup>25</sup>No, Son, the King answered Absalom. If we all go, we'll be a burden to you. Even when Absalom continued to urge him, David did not want to go though he did give Absalom his blessing.

<sup>26</sup>So Absalom said: If you won't go, then please let my brother Amnon go with us. Why should he go with you? the King asked him. <sup>27</sup>But when Absalom urged him, he let Amnon and all the rest of the King's sons go with him.

<sup>28</sup>Then Absalom gave an order to his servants. Watch now, he said. When Amnon begins to feel good from drinking too much wine, I'll tell you: Attack Amnon. Then kill him. Don't be afraid. I've given you the order, haven't I? Be strong and courageous. <sup>29</sup>Absalom's servants did to Amnon as Absalom had ordered.

David had given the second lamb to God.

Then all the King's sons got up, mounted their mules and fled. <sup>30</sup>While they were on their way, David heard this rumor: Absalom has killed all the King's sons and not a single one is left. <sup>31</sup>The King stood up, tore his clothes and lay down on the ground. All his servants were standing beside him with their clothes torn to show their grief.

<sup>32</sup>Then Jonadab, the son of David's brother Shimea said: Sir, don't think that all the young men, all the King's sons have been killed. Only Amnon is dead. Absalom decided to do this the day his half-brother raped his sister

Tamar. <sup>33</sup>You shouldn't burden your heart with the idea that all the King's sons are dead Your Majesty. Only Amnon is dead. <sup>34</sup>Absalom has fled.

When the servant who kept watch looked up, he saw many people coming down the road beside the mountain west of him. <sup>35</sup>Then Jonadab told the King: The King's sons have come. It's just as I said. <sup>36</sup>When he finished speaking, the King's sons arrived and cried loudly. The King and all his men also cried very bitterly.

<sup>37</sup>Absalom however fled to Geshur's King Talmi, Ammihud's son.

This is his father-in-law. **2 Samuel 3:3**

But the King mourned for his son Amnon every day. <sup>38</sup>Absalom, having fled to Geshur, stayed there three years. <sup>39</sup>King David began to long for Absalom once people had consoled him over Amnon's death.

## Chapter 14

### Absalom Returns to Jerusalem

<sup>1</sup>Joab, Zeruiah's son, knew the King was still thinking about Absalom. <sup>2</sup>So Joab sent someone to Tekoa to get a clever woman from there. He told her: Please act like a mourner and dress in mourning clothes. Don't rub olive oil on yourself but act like a woman who has been mourning for the dead for a long time. <sup>3</sup>Go to the King and tell him this. ... Then Joab told her exactly what to say.

<sup>4</sup>The woman from Tekoa came to the King and immediately bowed down with her face touching the ground. Help me Your Majesty, she said. <sup>5</sup>The King asked her: What can I do for you? She answered: I'm a widow; my husband is dead. <sup>6</sup>I had two sons who quarreled in the field and there was no one to separate them. One killed the other.

<sup>7</sup>Then the entire family turned against me. They said: Give us the man who killed his brother so that we can kill him because he took his brother's life. We're going to destroy the one who now would be the heir. In this way

they wish to extinguish the  $\perp$  one  $\perp$  burning coal that is left for me. They will not let my husband's name or descendants remain on the face of the earth.

<sup>8</sup>Go home, the King told the woman. I will order someone to take care of this matter. <sup>9</sup>The woman from Tekoa said to the King: Let me be held responsible for the sin Your Majesty. Let my father's family be held responsible. Your Majesty and your throne are innocent. <sup>10</sup>The King said: If anyone says anything against you, bring him to me. He'll never harm you again.

<sup>11</sup>She said: Your Majesty please pray to **YHWH** your God in order to keep an avenger from doing more harm by destroying my son. I solemnly swear as **YHWH** lives he said, not a hair on your son's head will fall to the ground.

<sup>12</sup>The woman said: Please let me say something else to you. Speak, he said. <sup>13</sup>Why have you devised something like this against God's people? she said. When you say this you condemn yourself because you haven't brought back the one you banished. <sup>14</sup>We are all going to die. We are all like water that is poured on the ground and can't be gathered up. But doesn't God forgive a person? He never plans to keep a banished person in exile.

<sup>15</sup>I've come to say this to you because the people have frightened me. So I thought: I will speak to the King about this. Maybe the King will do something for me, his subject. <sup>16</sup>Maybe the King will listen and rescue me, his subject, from the man who wants to cut off both me and my son from  $\perp$  our  $\perp$  God-given inheritance. <sup>17</sup>I thought that you would reassure me. You are like God's Messenger, who is able to distinguish right from wrong. May **YHWH** your God be with you.

<sup>18</sup>The King said to the woman: Please don't refuse to answer the question I'm going to ask you. The woman responded: Please speak, Your Majesty. <sup>19</sup>Did Joab put you up to this? the King asked. The woman answered: I solemnly swear on your life Your Majesty, you are absolutely right. Yes, your servant Joab ordered me  $\perp$  to do this  $\perp$ . He told me to say exactly what I

said. <sup>20</sup>Your servant Joab has done this to portray the matter in a different light. You are as wise as God's Messenger who knows everything on earth.

<sup>21</sup>Then the King told Joab: This is what you'll do. Bring back the young man Absalom. <sup>22</sup>Joab quickly bowed down with his face touching the ground and he blessed the King. He said: Today I know that you have been kind to me because you have done what I wanted.

<sup>23</sup>So Joab went to Geshur and brought Absalom back to Jerusalem. <sup>24</sup>But the King said: Absalom should return to his own house. He will not see me. So Absalom returned to his house and didn't see the King.

### **Absalom Remains in Jerusalem Without Seeing David**

<sup>25</sup>Now no one in all Israel was praised for his good looks as much as Absalom was. He had no blemish from head to toe. <sup>26</sup>At the end of every year he used to cut his hair because it became heavy for him. When he cut the hair on his head and weighed it, it weighed five pounds according to the royal standard. <sup>27</sup>Absalom had three sons and one daughter. His daughter Tamar was a beautiful woman.

<sup>28</sup>Absalom stayed in Jerusalem two full years without seeing the King. <sup>29</sup>So Absalom sent for Joab in order to send him to the King but Joab refused to come. Absalom sent for him a second time but he still refused to come. <sup>30</sup>So Absalom said to his servants: Look Joab's field is next to mine. He has barley in it. Go and set it on fire. So Absalom's servants set it on fire.

Joab's servants came to him in grief and said: Absalom's servants have set your field on fire. <sup>31</sup>Then Joab immediately went to Absalom at his home. Why did your servants set my field on fire? he asked. <sup>32</sup>Absalom answered Joab: I sent someone to tell you to come here because I wanted to send you to the King to ask him why I had to come from Geshur. It would be better for me if I were still there. Let me see the King now. If I'm guilty of a sin, he should kill me.

<sup>33</sup>Joab went to the King and told him this. The King then called for Absalom who came to the King and bowed down with his face touching the ground. And the King kissed Absalom.

## WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

This is the story of David's great fall. Given the heroic light in which David is held, it is surprising these stories have been retained. However, the Biblical writers guided by the Holy Spirit tell the truth wherever it may lead.

David, as the King of Israel, should have been with his troops fighting the Ammonites. Instead, he was resting at home. So restless with his idleness, when he saw a beautiful woman bathing, he lusted after her. Calling her to the palace, although she was a married woman, he had sex with her and sent her home. Many days later, she told him she was pregnant.

What was David to do? He would call her husband home and allow him to sleep with her. So David sent a message to General Joab to send Uriah to Jerusalem to report on the progress of the battle. Uriah arrived, reported, then David told him to go home to his wife. Uriah refused as he was in holy war that forbade intercourse with women. See **1 Samuel 21:4-5**. So David sent him back to Joab with a message to place Uriah at the hottest place in the battle so he would be killed. Later Joab sent a message Uriah was dead.

After Bathsheba was told of the death and her mourning days were over, David married her. But although David's conscience bothered him about his sin of adultery, his murder of Uriah, and his lack of confessing this sin, he kept quiet. But God was angry. So he sent his prophet Nathan to expose David's sin.

Nathan told David a parable about a rich man who stole a poor man's sheep. What should be done about this? Nathan asked. The man should be killed after having given the poor man four sheep in restitution, David said. You are this rich man, Nathan said. God asks: After all I have given you as King over Israel, how could you do this? As punishment for your contempt for **YHWH**, I will stir up trouble in your own household. Warfare will never leave your house.

David confessed: I have sinned against **YHWH**. Nathan said: God has taken away your sin. You will not die. But the son that Bathsheba is carrying must die. David pleased with God for the child and laid on the floor all night. He fasted and prayed often. His officials attempt to cheer him but he refused them.

On the seventh day, the child died. David got up, went to the tent where the Ark of the Covenant was and worshiped. Then he washed himself and ate a meal. When asked why he did this, David replied:

As long as the child was alive, I fasted and prayed. Who knows? **YHWH** may be gracious to me and let the child live. But why should I fast now that he's dead. Can I bring him back? Someday I will go to him but he won't come to me. **2 Samuel 12:22-23**

David then impregnated Bathsheba again. She gave birth to a son and David named him Solomon.

**YHWH** loved the child and sent a message to David to name the baby Jedidiah meaning **YHWH's Beloved**. **2 Samuel 12:25**

### The Trouble Starts in David's House

Amnon, the Crown Prince, fell in love with his half-sister Tamar, the sister of his half-brother Absalom. He wanted her so he convinced King David to send her to his room to give him food as he claimed to be sick. Tamar came and Amnon raped her, then threw her out of his room. Embarrassed and sad, Tamar went to her brother Absalom crying bitterly. When King David heard about this, he was very angry but he didn't do anything. Why not?

For two years Absalom had hatred for his brother. Then at sheep shearing time, he commanded his servants to murder Absalom. Then he fled to his father-in-law, the King of Geshur. He stayed there the next three years. King David longed for Absalom to return. General Joab realized this so he plotted with a clever woman from Tekoa.

The woman came to King David telling him she was a widow with two sons. One murdered the other and the family demanded the remaining brother be killed. This would break my heart as I would then have no children. David was compassionate and said: I will not let the brother be killed. But then the woman said: Haven't you done this? Haven't you exiled your son? Job put you up to this, didn't he? Yes, said the woman. Then David turned to Joab: Absalom may return but he may not see my face.

Absalom returned but didn't see David. So he had his servants set fires to Joab's field to make Joab see him. When Joab met him, Absalom demanded to see David. If I am guilty of a sin, then let him kill me, said Absalom. David met with Absalom. King David kissed Absalom who was now the Crown Prince. But there was a coldness between them.

## THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why did David need another woman? Count the number of wives the Bible says David has at this time. What was his motivation to take Bathsheba?

2. What David did, many pagan Kings also did. And there was no consequence to them for doing this. What was different in David's case?
3. Why was Nathan's parable so effective with King David in bringing him to confess his sin?
4. Why did **YHWH** kill the first child?
5. Why did **YHWH** love the second child? What was his purpose in re-naming him Jedidiah? This name only appears once in the Bible. Was God saying this would be David's successor as King?
6. What would have been the normal punishment for a man who raped a woman? What would have been the normal punishment for intentional murder? Why didn't David execute punishment?
7. Why would David allow Absalom to return and then not see him? What benefit was there in doing this?

## **EXTRA CREDIT**

Why did Bathsheba tell David she was pregnant? If she had only told her husband she might have gotten royal privileges for her son. Discuss Bathsheba's options at this point.

## Session Eleven

### Absalom Attempts to Take His Father David's Kingdom

#### Chapter 15

Soon after this, Absalom acquired a chariot, horses and 50 men to run ahead of him. <sup>2</sup>Absalom used to get up early and stand by the road leading to the city gate. When anyone had a case to be tried by King David, Absalom would ask: Which city are you from?

After the person had told him which tribe in Israel he was from, <sup>3</sup>Absalom would say: Your case is good and proper but the King hasn't appointed anyone to hear it <sup>4</sup>He would add: I wish someone would make me judge in the land. Then anyone who had a case to be tried could come to me and I would make sure that he got justice.

<sup>5</sup>When anyone approached him and bowed down, Absalom would reach out, take hold of him, and kiss him. <sup>6</sup>This is what he did for all Israelites who came to the King to have him try their case. So Absalom stole the hearts of the people of Israel.

<sup>7</sup>Four years later Absalom said to the King: Let me go to Hebron and keep the vow I made to YHWH. <sup>8</sup>I made a vow while I was living at Geshur in Aram. I said: If YHWH will bring me back to Jerusalem, I will serve YHWH. <sup>9</sup>Go in peace, the King told him. So he went to Hebron.

#### Absalom Conducts a Conspiracy in His Hometown of Hebron

<sup>10</sup> But Absalom sent his loyal supporters to all the tribes of Israel and said: When you hear the sound of the ram's horn say: Absalom has become King in Hebron. <sup>11</sup>Two hundred men invited from Jerusalem went with Absalom. They went innocently knowing nothing <sup>12</sup> about Absalom's plans <sup>13</sup>.

Absalom was anointed King of Israel by the people. **2 Samuel 19:10**



<sup>12</sup>While Absalom was offering sacrifices, he sent for Ahithophel, David's adviser, to come from his home in Giloh.

Ahithophel was Bathsheba's grandfather. **2 Samuel 11:3; 15:12; 23:34**

Meanwhile, the conspiracy grew stronger, and the number of people siding with Absalom kept getting larger. <sup>13</sup>Someone came to tell David: The hearts of the people of Israel are with Absalom.

### **King David Flees Jerusalem**

<sup>14</sup>David told all his men who were with him in Jerusalem: Let's flee immediately or none of us will escape from Absalom. Let's leave right away or he'll catch up to us and bring disaster on us when he massacres the City.

Did David think Absalom would kill him?

<sup>15</sup>The King's servants told him: No matter what happens, we are Your Majesty's servants. <sup>16</sup>The King left on foot and his whole household followed him except ten concubines whom the King left behind to take care of the palace. <sup>17</sup>As the King and his troops were leaving the City on foot, they stopped at the last house. <sup>18</sup>All his mercenaries passed by him; all the Cherethites, all the Pelethites, Ittai and all 600 men who had followed him from Gath were marching past the King.

<sup>19</sup>The King asked Ittai from Gath: Why should you go with us? Go back and stay with King Absalom. You are a foreigner, an exile from your homeland. <sup>20</sup>You came to us just yesterday. Should I make you wander around with me when I don't even know where I'm going? Go back and take your countrymen with you. **└ May YHWH ┘** always show you kindness

<sup>21</sup>But Ittai answered the King: I solemnly swear as **YHWH** and the King live: Wherever you are, whether you're dead or alive, I'll be there. <sup>22</sup>So David told Ittai: Go ahead and keep marching. So Ittai from Gath marched on with all his men and all the families who were with him.

David has a most unusual relationship with the people from Gath, one of the five Philistine city-states. Remember that his personal bodyguards, the Pelethites and the Cherethites were also Philistines.

<sup>23</sup>The whole country was crying loudly as all the troops were passing by. The King was crossing the Kidron Valley and all the people were moving down the road toward the desert. <sup>24</sup>High Priest Zadok and all the Levites with him were carrying the Ark of God's Covenant. They set down the Ark of God beside High Priest Abiathar until all the troops had withdrawn from the city.

<sup>25</sup>The King told High Priest Zadok: Take God's Ark back to the City. If YHWH looks favorably on me, he will allow me to come back and see both it and its dwelling place again. <sup>26</sup>But if he says: I'm not pleased with you, let him do to me what he considers right.

<sup>27</sup>Aren't you a seer? the King asked Zadok the priest. Go back to the City peacefully and take your son Ahimaaz and Abiathar's son Jonathan with you. <sup>28</sup>I'll wait at the river crossings in the desert until I receive a message from you. <sup>29</sup>So Zadok and Abiathar took the Ark of God back to Jerusalem and stayed there.

<sup>30</sup>David cried as he went up the Mount of Olives. He covered his head and walked barefoot. And all of the troops with him covered their heads and cried as they went. <sup>31</sup>Then David was told: Ahithophel Bathsheba's grandfather is among those conspiring with Absalom. So David prayed: YHWH make Ahithophel's advice foolish.

<sup>32</sup>When David came to the top of the Mount of Olives where people worshiped God, Hushai from Archi's family was there to meet him. His clothes were torn, and he had dirt on his head. <sup>33</sup>David told him: If you go with me, you will only be a burden to me. <sup>34</sup>But if you go back to the city and say to Absalom: Your Majesty I'll be your servant. I was your father's servant in the past, but now I'll be your servant, then you'll help me by undoing Ahithophel's advice.

<sup>35</sup>The priests Zadok and Abiathar will be with you there. When you hear anything from the royal palace, tell it to the priests Zadok and Abiathar. <sup>36</sup>They have two sons with them: Zadok has Ahimaaz, and Abiathar has Jonathan. Send them to report to me anything you hear. <sup>37</sup>So Hushai, David's friend, went to the City as Absalom was entering Jerusalem.

## Chapter 16

### Ziba, Mephibosheth's Servant, Lies to David

<sup>1</sup>When David had gone over the top of the Mount of Olives, Ziba, Mephibosheth's servant, met him with a pair of saddled donkeys. They were loaded with 200 loaves of bread, 100 bunches of raisins, 100 pieces of ripened fruit, and a full wineskin. <sup>2</sup>Why did you bring these? David asked Ziba. The donkeys are for the King's family to ride on, Ziba answered. The bread and the ripe fruit are for your servants to eat. The wine is for those who become tired and thirsty in the desert.

<sup>3</sup>Where is your master Saul's grandson Mephibosheth? the King asked. He's staying in Jerusalem, Ziba answered the King. He said: Today the house of Israel will give me back my grandfather's kingdom. <sup>4</sup>The King told Ziba: In that case everything that belonged to Mephibosheth now belongs to you. I sincerely thank you, said Ziba. I hope to remain in your good graces Your Majesty.

<sup>5</sup>When King David came to Bahurim, a man who was a distant cousin of Saul came out cursing. His name was Shimei, son of Gera. <sup>6</sup>He threw stones at David and David's servants although all the people and all the warriors were shielding David.

<sup>7</sup>Shimei cursed and said: Get out. Get out you bloodthirsty man. You worthless person. <sup>8</sup>YHWH is paying you back for all the blood you spilled in the family of Saul whom you succeeded as King. YHWH is giving the kingship to your son Absalom. Now you're in trouble because you're a bloodthirsty man.

<sup>9</sup>Abishai, Zeruiah's son, asked the King: Why should this dead dog curse you, Your Majesty? Let me go over there and tear off his head. <sup>10</sup>But the King said: You don't think like me at all, sons of Zeruiah. Let him curse. If **YHWH** has told him: Curse David, should anyone ask: Why do you do that?

<sup>11</sup>David told Abishai and all his servants: My own son, my own flesh and blood, is trying to kill me. Why then shouldn't this Benjaminite do this? Leave him alone. Let him curse since **YHWH** has told him to do it. <sup>12</sup>Maybe **YHWH** will see my misery and turn his curse into a blessing for me today. <sup>13</sup>As David and his men went along the road, Shimei was walking along the hillside parallel to him. Shimei cursed, hurled stones and threw dirt at David.

<sup>14</sup>The King and all the people with him finally arrived **└** at their destination **┘** and rested there.

### **Absalom Enters Jerusalem**

<sup>15</sup>Meanwhile Absalom and all Israel's troops came to Jerusalem and Ahithophel was with him. <sup>16</sup>When David's friend Hushai from Archi's family came to Absalom he said: Long live the King. Long live the King. <sup>17</sup>Is that how loyal you are to your friend? Absalom asked Hushai. Why didn't you go with him? <sup>18</sup>Hushai answered Absalom: No I want to be with the one whom **YHWH**, these people, and all Israel have chosen. I will be his **└** friend **┘** and stay with him. <sup>19</sup>And besides, whom should I serve? Shouldn't it be his son? As I served your father, so I'll serve you

<sup>20</sup>Then Absalom asked Ahithophel: What's your advice? What should we do? <sup>21</sup>Ahithophel told Absalom: Sleep with your father's concubines whom he left to take care of the palace. Then all Israel will hear about how you have made your father despise you. Everyone who is with you will support you even more. <sup>22</sup>So a tent was put up on the roof for Absalom and he slept with his father's concubines in plain sight of Israel. **2 Samuel 12:11-12**

<sup>23</sup>In those days both David and Absalom thought that Ahithophel's advice was like getting an answer from God.

## Chapter 17

### Absalom Gets Advice from Hushai Overriding Ahithophel's Advice

<sup>1</sup>Ahithophel said to Absalom: Let me choose 12,000 men and leave tonight to go after David. <sup>2</sup>I'll attack him while he's tired and weak, and I'll cause him to panic. All the people with him will flee but I'll kill only him. <sup>3</sup>I'll return all the people to you as a bride is returned to her husband. Since you will be seeking the life of only one man, all the people will have peace. <sup>4</sup>Absalom and all the leaders of Israel approved this plan.

<sup>5</sup>Absalom said: Please call Hushai who is descended from Archi's family and let us hear what he, too, has to say. <sup>6</sup>When Hushai arrived Absalom said to him: Ahithophel has told us his plan. Should we do what he says? If not, tell us. <sup>7</sup>This time Ahithophel's advice is no good, Hushai said to Absalom.

<sup>8</sup>You know your father and his men. They are warriors as fierce as a wild bear whose cubs have been stolen. Your father is an experienced soldier. He will not camp with the troops tonight. <sup>9</sup>He has already hidden in one of the ravines or some other place. If some of our soldiers are killed in the initial attack, others will definitely hear about it and say: The troops that support Absalom have been defeated. <sup>10</sup>Even the bravest man with a heart like a lion would lose his courage because all Israel knows that your father is a warrior and the men with him are brave.

<sup>11</sup>So my advice is to gather all Israel's troops from Dan to Beersheba since they are as numerous as the sand on the seashore. Lead them into battle yourself. <sup>12</sup>Then we'll attack him wherever we find him. We'll fall on him as dew falls on the ground. Neither he nor any of his men will be left alive. <sup>13</sup>If he retreats into a city, all Israel will bring ropes to that city and drag it into a valley so that not even a pebble will be found there.

<sup>14</sup>Absalom and all the people of Israel said: The advice of Hushai from Archi's family is better than Ahithophel's advice. YHWH had commanded Ahithophel's good advice to be defeated in order to ruin Absalom.

<sup>15</sup>Then Hushai told the priests Zadok and Abiathar: Ahithophel advised Absalom and the leaders of Israel to do one thing but I advised them to do something else. <sup>16</sup>Now send messengers quickly to tell David: Don't rest tonight in the river crossings in the desert but make sure you cross the river or Your Majesty and all the troops with him will be wiped out.

<sup>17</sup>Jonathan and Ahimaaz were waiting at En Rogel. They could not risk being seen coming into the City so a servant girl was to go and tell them and they were to go and tell King David. <sup>18</sup>But a young man saw Jonathan and Ahimaaz and told Absalom. So both of them left quickly and came to the home of a man in Bahurim who had a cistern in his courtyard and they went down into it. <sup>19</sup>The man's wife took a cover, spread it over the top of the cistern, and scattered some grain over it so that no one could tell it was there.

<sup>20</sup>Absalom's servants came to the woman at her home: Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan? they asked. The woman said: They've crossed the stream. The servants looked for them but did not find them. So Absalom's servants returned to Jerusalem. <sup>21</sup>After Absalom's servants left, both men came out of the cistern and went and told King David. Leave right away, they told David. Cross the river quickly because this is what Ahithophel has advised against you.... <sup>22</sup>David and all the troops with him left to cross the Jordan River. When the dawn came, everyone had crossed the Jordan River.

<sup>23</sup>When Ahithophel saw that his advice hadn't been followed, he saddled his donkey and went home to his own city. He gave instructions to his family. Then he hanged himself and was buried in his father's tomb.

<sup>24</sup>David had already come to Mahanaim by the time Absalom and all the men of Israel with him crossed the Jordan River. <sup>25</sup>Absalom appointed Amasa to take Joab's place as commander of the army. Amasa was the son of a man named Ithra, a descendant of Ishmael. His mother was Abigail the

daughter of Nahash and sister of Joab's mother Zeruah. <sup>26</sup>The Israelites and Absalom camped in the region of Gilead.

<sup>27</sup>When David came to Mahanaim, Shobi, son of Nahash from Rabbah in Ammon, and Machir, son of Ammiel from Lo Debar, and Barzillai from Rogelim in Gilead <sup>28</sup>brought supplies and food for David and his troops: bedding, bowls, pots, wheat, barley, flour, roasted grain, beans, lentils, <sup>29</sup>honey, buttermilk, sheep, and calves. They brought these things because they thought: The troops in the desert are hungry, exhausted, and thirsty.

## Chapter 18

### David Defeats Absalom

<sup>1</sup>David called together the troops that were with him. He appointed commanders in charge of regiments and battalions. <sup>2</sup>David put a third of the troops under Joab's command, another third under Joab's brother Abishai, Zeruah's son, and the last third under Ittai from Gath.

I am going into battle with you, the King said to the troops. <sup>3</sup>You're not going with us, the troops said. If we flee, they won't care about us, and if half of us die, they won't care either. But you're worth 10,000 of us. It's better for you to be ready to send us help from the city. <sup>4</sup>I'll do what you think best, the King responded. So the King stood by the gate while all the troops marched out by battalions and regiments.

### King David Said: Don't Kill Absalom

<sup>5</sup>The King ordered Joab, Abishai, and Ittai: Treat the young man Absalom gently for my sake. All the troops heard him give all the commanders this order regarding Absalom.

<sup>6</sup>So the troops went out to the country to fight Israel in the forest of Ephraim. <sup>7</sup>There David's men defeated Israel's army and the massacre was sizable that day — 20,000 men. <sup>8</sup>The fighting spread over the whole country. That day the woods devoured more people than the battle.

<sup>9</sup>Absalom happened to come face to face with some of David's men. He was riding on a mule and the mule went under the tangled branches of a large tree. Absalom's head became caught in the tree. So he was left hanging in midair when the mule that was under him ran away. <sup>10</sup>A man who saw this told Joab: I saw Absalom hanging in a tree.

<sup>11</sup>What. You saw that, Joab said to the man who told him. Why didn't you strike him to the ground? Then I would have felt obligated to give you four ounces of silver and a belt. <sup>12</sup>But the man told Joab: Even if I felt the weight of 25 pounds of silver in my hand, I wouldn't raise my hand against the King's son.

We heard the order the King gave you, Abishai, and Ittai: Protect the young man Absalom for my sake. <sup>13</sup>If I had done something treacherous to him, would you have stood by me? Like everything else, it wouldn't stay hidden from the King.

<sup>14</sup>Then Joab said: I shouldn't waste time with you like this. He took three sharp sticks and plunged them into Absalom's heart while he was still alive in the tree. <sup>15</sup>Then ten of Joab's armorbearers surrounded Absalom, attacked him and killed him.

<sup>16</sup>Joab blew the ram's horn to stop their fighting, and the troops returned from pursuing Israel. <sup>17</sup>They took Absalom, threw him into a huge pit in the forest, and piled a large heap of stones over him. Meanwhile all Israel fled and went back to their homes.

<sup>18</sup>While he was still living, Absalom had taken a rock and set it up for himself in the King's valley. He said: I have no son to keep the memory of my name alive. He called the rock by his name and it is still called Absalom's Monument today. **2 Samuel 14:27**

<sup>19</sup>Then Ahimaaz, Zadok's son, said: Let me run and bring the King the good news that YHWH has freed him from his enemies. <sup>20</sup>But Joab told him: You won't be the man carrying good news today. You can carry the news some other day. You must not deliver the news today because the King's son



is dead. <sup>21</sup>Then Joab said to a man from Sudan: Go tell the King what you saw. The messenger bowed down with his face touching the ground in front of Joab and then ran off.

<sup>22</sup> Ahimaaz, Zadok's son, spoke to Joab again: Whatever may happen, I also want to run after the Sudanese messenger. Now son, why should you deliver the message? Joab asked. You won't be rewarded for this news. <sup>23</sup>Whatever happens, I'd like to run, replied Ahimaaz. Run, Joab told him. So Ahimaaz ran along the valley road and got ahead of the Sudanese messenger.

<sup>24</sup>David was sitting between the two gates while the watchman walked along the roof of the gate by the wall. As he looked, he saw a man running alone. <sup>25</sup>The watchman called and alerted the King. If he's alone, the King said: he has good news to tell. The runner continued to come closer.

<sup>26</sup>When the watchman saw another man running, the watchman called: There's another man running alone. The King said: This one is also bringing good news. <sup>27</sup>The watchman said: It seems to me that the first one runs like Ahimaaz, Zadok's son. He's a good man, the King said. He must be coming with good news.

<sup>28</sup>Then Ahimaaz came up to the King, greeted him and bowed down in front of him. Ahimaaz said: May YHWH your God be praised. He has handed over the men who rebelled against Your Majesty. <sup>29</sup>Is the young man Absalom alright? the King asked. Ahimaaz answered: I saw a lot of confusion when Joab sent me away but I didn't know what it meant. <sup>30</sup>Step aside and stand here, the King said. He stepped aside and stood there.

<sup>31</sup>Then the Sudanese messenger came. Good news for Your Majesty, he said. Today YHWH has freed you from all who turned against you. <sup>32</sup>Is the young man Absalom alright? the King asked. The Sudanese messenger answered: May your enemies and all who turned against you be like that young man.

<sup>33</sup>The King was shaken <sup>L</sup> by the news <sup>J</sup>. He went to the room above the gate and cried. My son Absalom, he said as he went. My son, my son Absalom. I wish I had died in your place. Absalom, my son, my son.

## Chapter 19

### Joab Chastises David and Warns If He Does Not Change, He Will Lose His Throne

<sup>1</sup>Joab was told: The King is crying and mourning for Absalom. <sup>2</sup>The victory of that day was turned into mourning because all the troops heard that the King was grieving for his son. <sup>3</sup>That day the troops sneaked into the city as if they had fled from battle and were ashamed of it. <sup>4</sup>The King covered his face and cried loudly: My son Absalom. Absalom, my son, my son.

<sup>5</sup>Then Joab came into the house. Today you have made all your men feel ashamed, he said. They saved your life and the lives of your sons, daughters, wives, and concubines today. <sup>6</sup>You love those who hate you and hate those who love you. Today you have made it clear that your commanders and servants mean nothing to you. I think you would be pleased if Absalom were alive and all of us were dead.

<sup>7</sup>Now, get up, go out, and encourage your men. I swear to you by **YHWH** that if you don't go out, no one will stay with you tonight, and that will be worse than all the trouble you've had in your entire life.

<sup>8</sup>The King sat in the gateway. When all the troops were told: The King is sitting in the gateway, they came to the King.

Meanwhile, Israel had fled and went back to their own homes. <sup>9</sup>All the people in all the tribes of Israel were arguing with one another, saying: The King rescued us from our enemies and saved us from the Philistines but now he has fled from Absalom and left the country. <sup>10</sup>However, Absalom, whom we anointed *mashach* to rule us has died in battle. Why is no one talking about bringing back the King?

<sup>11</sup>What all Israel was saying reached the King at his house. So King David sent <sup>11</sup>this message <sup>11</sup>to the priests Zadok and Abiathar: Ask the leaders of Judah: Why should you be the last <sup>11</sup>tribe <sup>11</sup>to bring the King back to his palace? <sup>12</sup>You are my relatives, my own flesh and blood. Why should you be the last to bring back the king?

<sup>13</sup>And tell Amasa: Aren't you my flesh and blood? May God strike me dead unless you are given Joab's place to serve me always as the commander of the army.

David apparently learned that General Joab had killed Absalom. Even if Amasa had been Absalom's General, he was still family.

<sup>14</sup>All the people of Judah were in total agreement. So they sent the King this message: Come back with all your servants. <sup>15</sup>The King came back to the Jordan River and the people of Judah came to Gilgal to meet the King and bring him across the Jordan River.

<sup>16</sup>Shimei, Gera's son from the tribe of Benjamin and the town of Bahurim hurried down with the people of Judah to meet King David. <sup>17</sup>One thousand people from Benjamin were with him. And Ziba, the servant of Saul's family, rushed to the Jordan River across from the King. Ziba brought his 15 sons and 20 servants. <sup>18</sup>They crossed the river to bring over the King's family and to do anything else the King wanted.

Shimei, Gera's son, bowed down in front of the King as he was going to cross the Jordan River. <sup>19</sup>He pleaded with the King: Don't remember the crime I committed the day you left Jerusalem. Don't hold it against me or even think about it Your Majesty. <sup>20</sup>I know I've sinned. Today I've come as the first of all the House of Joseph to meet you.

The House of Joseph would be the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh representing the ten northern tribes. Ephraim was the most important tribe.

<sup>21</sup>But Abishai, Zeruiah's son, replied: Shouldn't Shimei be put to death for cursing YHWH's anointed *mashiyach* King?

<sup>22</sup> David responded: Are you sure we're from the same family, sons of Zeruah? You are my enemies today. Should anyone in Israel be killed today? Don't I know that I'm King of Israel again?

<sup>23</sup> The King promised Shimei: You won't die and the King swore to it.

<sup>24</sup> Mephibosheth, Saul's grandson went to meet the King. He had not tended to his feet, trimmed his mustache, or washed his clothes from the day the King left until he came home safely. <sup>25</sup> When he came from Jerusalem to meet the King, the King asked him: Why didn't you go with me, Mephibosheth?

<sup>26</sup> He answered: My servant deceived me Your Majesty. Since I am disabled, I said: Saddle the donkey for me and I'll ride on it and go with the King. <sup>27</sup> He told you lies about me Your Majesty. However you are like God's Messenger. Do what you think is right. <sup>28</sup> You could have killed anyone in my entire family Your Majesty. Instead, you've seated me with those who eat at your table. So I no longer have the right to complain to the King.

<sup>29</sup> The King asked him: Why do you keep talking about it? I've said that you and Ziba should divide the land. <sup>30</sup> Let him take it all, Mephibosheth told the King. It's enough for me that you've come home safely.

<sup>31</sup> Barzillai, the man from Gilead, came from Rogelim with the King to the Jordan River to send him on his way. <sup>32</sup> Barzillai was an elderly man, 80 years old. Because he was a very rich man he had provided the King with food while he was staying at Mahanaim. <sup>33</sup> The King told Barzillai: Cross the river with me. I'll provide for you in Jerusalem.

<sup>34</sup> Barzillai replied: I don't have much longer to live. I shouldn't go with Your Majesty to Jerusalem. <sup>35</sup> I'm 80 years old now. How can I tell what is pleasant and what is not? Can I taste what I eat or drink? Can I still hear the singing of men and women? Why should I now become a burden to you Your Majesty? <sup>36</sup> I'll just cross the Jordan River with you. Why should you give me such a reward? <sup>37</sup> Please let me go back so that I can die in my city

near the grave of my father and mother. But here is Chimham. Let him go across with you. And do for him what you think is right.

<sup>38</sup>Chimham will go across with me, the King said. I will do for him whatever you want. Anything you wish I'll do for you. <sup>39</sup>All the troops crossed the Jordan River and then the King crossed. The King kissed Barzillai and blessed him. Then Barzillai went back home. <sup>40</sup>The King crossed the river to Gilgal and Chimham went with him.

All the troops from Judah and half of the troops from Israel brought the King across.

### **The Division Between Judah and the Rest of the Ten Tribes Grows Even Larger**

<sup>41</sup>Then all the people of Israel kept coming to the King. They asked: Why did our cousins, the people of Judah, kidnap you and bring Your Majesty and your family and men across the Jordan River? <sup>42</sup>All the people of Judah answered the people of Israel: Because the King is our relative. Why are you angry about this? Did we eat the King's food, or did he give us any gifts?

<sup>43</sup>The people of Israel answered the people of Judah: We have ten times your interest in the King and a greater claim on David than you have. Why, then, do you despise us? Weren't we the first to suggest bringing back our King? But the people of Judah spoke — even — more harshly than the people of Israel.

## **Chapter 20**

### **Sheba's Rebellion**

<sup>1</sup>A good-for-nothing man by the name of Sheba, Bichri's son, from the tribe of Benjamin happened to be at Gilgal. He blew a ram's horn — to announce —: We have no share in David's kingdom. We won't receive an inheritance from Jesse's son. Everyone to his own tent Israel. <sup>2</sup>So all the people of Israel left David to follow Sheba, Bichri's son.

Later in Israel's history in 925 BC, when the ten northern tribes separated from Judah ruled by Solomon's son Rehoboam., the people of the north repeated these exact words. **1 Kings 12:16.**

But the people of Judah remained loyal to their King <sup>2</sup> on his way <sup>1</sup> from the Jordan River to Jerusalem. <sup>3</sup>When David came to his palace in Jerusalem, he took the ten concubines he had left to look after the palace and put them in a house under guard. He provided for them but no longer slept with them. So they lived like widows in confinement until they died.

<sup>4</sup>The King told Amasa: Call the people of Judah together for me and in three days be here yourself. <sup>5</sup>Amasa went to call Judah together but he took longer to do it than David had given him. <sup>6</sup>David then told Abishai: Sheba, son of Bichri will do us more harm than Absalom. Take my men and go after him or he will find some fortified cities and take the best ones for himself.

<sup>7</sup>So Joab's men, the Cherethites, Pelethites, and all the soldiers went with Abishai. They left Jerusalem to pursue Sheba, Bichri's son. <sup>8</sup>When they were at the large rock in Gibeon, Amasa met them there.

### **General Joab Kills General Amasa**

Joab wore a military uniform and strapped over it at his hip was a sword in a scabbard. As he stepped forward the sword dropped <sup>9</sup> into his hand <sup>8</sup>. <sup>9</sup>How are you, my brother? Joab asked Amasa. He took hold of Amasa's beard with his right hand to kiss him. <sup>10</sup>Amasa wasn't on his guard against the sword in Joab's <sup>9</sup> left <sup>8</sup> hand. Joab stabbed him in the stomach and his intestines poured out on the ground. He died without being stabbed again.

Then Joab and his brother Abishai pursued Sheba, son of Bichri. <sup>11</sup>One of Joab's young men stood beside Amasa and said: Anyone who favors Joab and is on David's side should follow Joab. <sup>12</sup>Amasa was wallowing in his blood in the middle of the road. When the man saw that all the troops stopped as they came to the body, he carried Amasa from the road to the field and threw a sheet over him. <sup>13</sup>As soon as he was moved from the road, everyone followed Joab and pursued Sheba, Bichri's son.

<sup>14</sup>Sheba passed through all the tribes of Israel to Abel also known as Beth Maacah. All the Berites were gathered together and followed him to the

city. <sup>15</sup>Joab's army came and attacked him in Abel or Beth Maacah. They put up a dirt ramp against the city and it stood level with the outer wall. All the troops with Joab were trying to destroy the wall and tear it down.

<sup>16</sup>Then a clever woman called from the city: Listen, listen. Tell Joab to come here so that I can talk to him. <sup>17</sup>He came near and she asked: Are you Joab? I am, he answered. Listen to what I have to say, she told him. I'm listening, he answered.

<sup>18</sup>So she said: There's an old saying: Be sure to ask at Abel <sub>L</sub> before doing anything <sub>L</sub>. That's the way they settle matters. <sup>19</sup>We are peaceful and faithful Israelites. Are you trying to destroy a mother city in Israel? Why should you swallow up what belongs to YHWH?

<sup>20</sup>Joab answered: That's unthinkable. I don't wish to swallow <sub>L</sub> it <sub>L</sub> up or destroy <sub>L</sub> it <sub>L</sub>. <sup>21</sup>That isn't the case. A man from the mountains of Ephraim by the name of Sheba, son of Bichri, has rebelled against King David. Give him to me and I'll withdraw from the city.

That's fine, the woman told Joab. His head will be thrown to you from the wall. <sup>22</sup>Then the woman went to all the people with her clever plan. They cut off Sheba's head and threw it to Joab. He blew the ram's horn and everyone scattered and withdrew from the city and went home. Joab went back to the King in Jerusalem.

## David's Officials

<sup>23</sup>Now Joab was put in charge of Israel's whole army. Benaiah, son of Jehoiada, was in charge of the Cherethites and Pelethites. <sup>24</sup>Adoram was in charge of forced labor. Jehoshaphat, son of Ahilud, was the royal historian. <sup>25</sup>Sheva was the royal scribe. Zadok and Abiathar were High Priests. <sup>26</sup>And Ira, a descendant of Jair, was a priest to David.

## WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

King David now faces a rebellion from his son Absalom, the Crown Prince. In Jerusalem he plots against his father who is preoccupied with gathering materials for the Temple his son will

build and training musicians in the worship of **YHWH**. **1 Chronicles 22:1-26:32**. Apparently he is neglecting the affairs of state as all the enemies of Israel are quiet. Absalom goes around Jerusalem bad mouthing his father.

Four years later, Absalom asks his father if he can travel to Hebron, his hometown, to fulfill a vow. Absalom leaves taking 200 men from Jerusalem with him including Ahithophel, David's counselor and Bathsheba's grandfather. In Hebron, he is anointed King by the people and starts for Jerusalem with a army of local soldiers. Word leaks out to David who orders his household to flee as he will travel north away from the City.

The King left on foot with his whole household except ten concubines ordered to guard the palace. Joab led the army. Ittai from Gath followed David with his 600 men. The King asked him why he was going. Ittai replied: We are loyal to you my King. The country around Jerusalem was crying as the King left the City. David sent the High Priests Zadok and Abiathar back into the City with the Ark of the Covenant.

David was told Ahithophel has joined Absalom. Hushi, David's friend or counselor, was sent back into the City to refute Ahithophel's advice. He was told to send messages from the City to David by the High Priest's sons Ahimaaz and Jonathan. Mephibosheth's servant Ziba brought provisions and told a lie saying Mephibosheth was staying in Jerusalem so Absalom would give the nation to him as the rightful King in the line of Saul. David said all his possessions are now yours Ziba.

As they approached Bahurim, one of Saul's relatives named Shimei cursed David and threw stones at him. Abishai asked the King for permission to kill him. David said: No. If my son can curse me, so can this man. Apparently, **YHWH** has told him to do so. The King and his company reached the Jordan River.

Meanwhile Absalom entered Jerusalem. Ahithophel told him to sleep with the 10 concubines at the palace to fulfill Nathan's curse. Hushai met Absalom and pledged allegiance to him.

Ahithophel then told Absalom to allow him to choose 12,000 soldiers and go after David. He will be worn out, he said. But then Hushai spoke up and counseled: It would be better to raise a large army first or David will defeat you. Absalom agreed with Hushai. Ahithophel then went home and hanged himself

By the time Absalom reached the Jordan River with his army, David had reached the old capital of Mahanaim. Shobi from Ammon, Machir and Barzillai brought provisions. David's army was split in three groups headed by Joab, Abishai, and Ittai. David wanted to go into battle but they refused. Absalom only wants you killed, they advised.



As they left David commanded: Treat the young man Absalom gently for my sake. David's army massacred 20,000 men. Absalom ran into some of David's men. He was riding on a mule and his heir got caught in the branches of a tree and he was helpless hanging there in the air. Joab saw this and killed him. Then Joab blew the shophar and the battle stopped.

A runner went to tell David. Is the young man Absalom all right? asked David. The second runner told David Absalom was dead. David cried profusely and wouldn't stop. As a result, his soldiers crept into the camp without sounds of victory. Joab told David to shape up and be King or he would lose the army. David straightened up and congratulated the army on their victory.

Meanwhile, the people of the ten northern tribes and the people of Judah returned to their homes. They argued among themselves saying: Why is no one ready to greet King David returning to Jerusalem? News of this reached David so he sent a message: Ask the Judean tribal leaders: Why are you, my relatives, the last to greet me and bring me back to Jerusalem? Also tell Amasa, I'm replacing Joab with him.

The Judean elders replied: Come back with all your servants. When David reached the Jordan River at Gilead, the people of Judah met him. Shimei brought 1,000 men of Benjamin to greet the King and apologized. . Mephibosheth also came saying Ziba lied. But the hostility between the people of Judah and the ten northern tribes was intense.

A worthless man named Sheba then called all the northern tribes to abandon David. Many men followed him. David told Amasa to get troops ready to march against Sheba in three days. Amasa failed to do so. David told Abishai to take the army against Sheba. As they were traveling north, Amasa joined them and Joab killed him. The rebellion was quickly put down.

## THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why did Absalom go to Hebron to be anointed King? What were the advantages being in Hebron rather than in Jerusalem?
2. As soon as David heard Absalom was coming with a large army, he chose to flee Jerusalem for the north. Why didn't he stay and fight?
3. Why didn't David take the Ark of the Covenant with him to Mahanaim?
4. Who was Ittai and why did he bring 600 men to Jerusalem from the Philistine city-state of Gath?
5. Why did Joab kill Absalom when David asked him not to?
6. Why was David so distraught over Absalom after all he had done to shame him?

7. Why were the ten northern tribes so ready to revolt against King David?

## EXTRA CREDIT

Many times in **1 Samuel** and **2 Samuel** the people of God are referred to as Judah and Israel. 4x in **1 Samuel**: vs. **11:8; 15:4; 17:52; 18:16**. 8x in **2 Samuel**: vs. **11:11; 12:8; 19:12; 19:13; 20:2; 21:2; 24:1; 24:9**. This division between north and south had become more pronounced as the book proceeds and especially in Chapter 24. It seems reasonable to conclude that David never fully united Israelites of the northern and southern tribes. Only Judah and Benjamin were with David. Simeon seems to have been absorbed into Judah. Nine of the tribes resent political authority from Jerusalem.

Does the book simply state this as an actual fact of history or was the Book of Samuel written after the United Monarchy was dissolved and the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah were formed in 925 BC? **1 Kings 12:1-17**

How did the menace of the Philistines keep the Israelites united?

## Session 12

### Additional Material about David

#### Chapter 21

#### David and the People of Gibeon

<sup>1</sup>In the time of David, there was a famine for three successive years, and David asked YHWH's advice about it. YHWH answered: It's because of Saul and his family. They are guilty of murder because they killed the people of Gibeon.

<sup>2</sup> The Gibeonites were not a part of Israel but were left over from the Amorites. Although the Israelites had sworn  $\perp$  to spare them  $\perp$ , Joshua 9:15. Saul, in his eagerness, tried to destroy them for Israel and Judah.

The King David called the Gibeonites<sup>3</sup> and asked them: What can I do for you? What should I  $\perp$  give you  $\perp$  to make peace with you so that you will bless what belongs to YHWH? <sup>4</sup> We do not want silver or gold from Saul's family, the Gibeonites answered him. And none of us wants to kill  $\perp$  anyone  $\perp$  in Israel.

The King asked: What are you saying that I should do for you? <sup>5</sup>They answered the King: Give us seven of the male descendants of the man Saul who wanted to finish us off. He planned to wipe us out to keep us from staying anywhere in Israel's territory. <sup>6</sup>We will execute them in YHWH's presence at Saul's town Gibeah. It was Saul whom YHWH had chosen. I will give them  $\perp$  to you  $\perp$ , the King said. <sup>7</sup>But the King spared Mephibosheth, Jonathan's son and Saul's grandson, because of the oath in YHWH's name between David and Jonathan, son of Saul.

<sup>8</sup>The King took Armoni and Mephibosheth, the two sons whom Rizpah, Aiah's daughter, Saul's concubine gave birth to for Saul, and five sons whom Merab, Saul's daughter, gave birth to for Adriel, son of Barzillai from

Meholah. <sup>9</sup>The King handed them over to the Gibeonites who executed them on the mountain in YHWH's presence. All seven died together. They were killed at the beginning of the harvest when people started harvesting barley.

When David did this, he apparently broke his oath to Saul:

[ Swear an oath to the Lord for me that you will not wipe out my descendants or destroy my name in my father's family. So David swore to Saul. Then Saul went home and David and his men went to their fortified camp. 1 Samuel 24:21-22 ]

<sup>10</sup> Rizpah, Aiah's daughter, took sackcloth and stretched it out on the rock for herself from the beginning of the harvest until the sky rained on the dead bodies. She wouldn't let any birds land on them during the day or any wild animals come near them during the night.

<sup>11</sup>When David was told what Saul's concubine Rizpah, Aiah's daughter, had done, <sup>12</sup>David went and took the bones of Saul and of his son Jonathan from the citizens of Jabesh Gilead. They had stolen them from the public square of Beth Shean, where the Philistines had hung them the day they killed Saul at Gilboa. 1 Samuel 31:11-13

<sup>13</sup>When David brought up the bones of Saul and Jonathan, his men gathered the bones of those who had been executed. <sup>14</sup>Then they buried the bones of Saul and his son Jonathan in the land of Benjamin in Zela in the tomb of Saul's father Kish. They did everything the King ordered. After that, God answered the prayers for the land.

### The Giants of the Philistines Defeated

<sup>15</sup>Once again there was a battle between the Philistines and Israel. So David and his men went to fight the Philistines but David became exhausted. <sup>16</sup>A descendant of Haraphah named Benob who had a bronze spear weighing  $7\frac{1}{2}$  pounds which he wore on a new belt, captured David and intended to kill him. <sup>17</sup>But Abishai, son of Zeruiah, came to help David. He attacked the

Philistine and killed him. Then David's men swore an oath, saying: You'll never go into battle with us again. The lamp of Israel must never be extinguished.

<sup>18</sup>After this, there was another battle with the Philistines at Gob. Then Sibbecai from Hushah killed Saph, another descendant of Haraphah. <sup>19</sup>When more fighting broke out with the Philistines at Gob, Elhanan, son of Jaare Oregim from Bethlehem, killed Goliath of Gath. The shaft of Goliath's spear was like a beam used by weavers.

<sup>20</sup>In another battle at Gath, there was a tall man who had a total of 24 fingers and toes: six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot. He also was a descendant of Haraphah. <sup>21</sup>When he challenged Israel, Jonathan, son of David's brother Shimei, killed him. <sup>22</sup>These four were descendants of Haraphah from Gath and David and his men killed them.

These giants may have been the descendants of the giants the Israelites encountered when they first came to Canaan to spy out the land. **Numbers 13:13**

## Chapter 22

### David's Song of Deliverance

<sup>1</sup>David sang this song to **YHWH** when **YHWH** rescued him from all his enemies, especially from Saul. <sup>2</sup>He said:

**YHWH** is my Rock *cela'* and my Fortress *matsuwd* and my Savior *palat*-deliverer, <sup>3</sup>my God *'elohiym*, my Rock *tsuwr* in whom I take refuge *chacab*-trust, my Shield *magen*, the Strength *qeren*-horn of My Salvation *yasha'*, my Stronghold *misgab*-high tower, my Refuge *manowc*, and my Savior *yasha'* who saved me from violence.

<sup>4</sup>**YHWH** should be praised. I called on him and I was saved from my enemies. <sup>5</sup>The waves of death had surrounded me. The torrents of destruction had overwhelmed me. <sup>6</sup>The ropes of the grave had surrounded me. The clutches of death had confronted me. <sup>7</sup>I called on **YHWH** in my distress. I called to my God for help. He heard my voice

from his temple *heykal*-palace, and my cry for help reached his ears.  
8 Then the earth shook and quaked. Even the foundations of the Heavens trembled. They shook violently because he was angry. 9 Smoke went up from his nostrils, and a raging fire came out of his mouth. Glowing coals flared up from it.

10 He spread apart the Heavens and came down with a dark cloud under his feet. 11 He rode on one of the angels *keruwb*-cherubim as he flew, and he soared on the wings of the wind. 12 He surrounded himself with darkness. He made the dark rain clouds his covering.

13 Out of the brightness in front of him, he made lightning. 14 YHWH thundered from Heaven. The Most High *elyown* made his voice heard. 15 He shot arrows and scattered them. He flashed streaks of lightning and threw them into confusion. 16 Then the ocean floor could be seen. The foundations of the earth were laid bare at YHWH's stern warning, at the blast of the breath from his nostrils.

17 He reached down from high above and took hold of me. He pulled me out of the raging water. 18 He rescued me from my strong enemy and from those who hated me because they were too strong for me. 19 On the day when I faced disaster, they confronted me, but YHWH became my defense. 20 He brought me out to a wide-open place. He rescued me because he was pleased with me.

21 YHWH rewarded me because of my righteousness, because my hands are clean. He paid me back 22 because I have kept the ways of YHWH and I have not wickedly turned away from my God, 23 because all his judgments are in front of me and I have not turned away from his laws. 24 I was innocent as far as he was concerned. I have kept myself from guilt. 25 YHWH paid me back because of my righteousness, because he can see that I am clean.

26  $\perp$  In dealing  $\perp$  with faithful people you are faithful, with innocent warriors you are innocent, 27 with pure people you are pure.  $\perp$  In

dealing  $\perp$  with devious people you are clever. <sup>28</sup>You save humble people, but your eyes bring down arrogant people. <sup>29</sup>O YHWH, you are my lamp. YHWH turns my darkness into light. <sup>30</sup>With you I can attack a line of soldiers. With my God I can break through barricades.

<sup>31</sup>God's way *derek* is perfect *tamiym*. The promise *'imrah*-word of YHWH has proven to be true *tsaraph*. He is a shield *magen* to all those who take refuge *chacah*-trust in him. <sup>32</sup>Who is God *'el* but YHWH? Who is a Rock *tsuwr* other than our God *'elohiym*? <sup>33</sup>God *'el* arms me with strength *ma'owz*. His perfect *tamiym*-perfect Way *derek* sets me free.

<sup>34</sup>He makes my feet like those of a deer and gives me sure footing on high places. <sup>35</sup>He trains my hands for battle so that my arms can bend an  $\perp$  archer's  $\perp$  bow of bronze. <sup>36</sup>You have given me the shield of your salvation. Your help makes me great. <sup>37</sup>You make a wide path for me to walk on so that my feet do not slip.

<sup>38</sup>I chased my enemies and destroyed them. I did not return until I had ended their lives. <sup>39</sup>I ended their lives by shattering them. They were unable to get up. They fell under my feet. <sup>40</sup>You armed me with strength for battle. You made my opponents bow at my feet.

<sup>41</sup>You made my enemies turn their backs to me, and I destroyed those who hated me. <sup>42</sup>They looked, but there was no one to save them. They looked to YHWH, but he did not answer them. <sup>43</sup>I beat them into a powder as fine as the dust on the ground. I crushed them and stomped on them like the dirt on the streets.

<sup>44</sup>You rescued me from my conflicts with my people. You kept me as the leader of nations. A people I did not know will serve me. <sup>45</sup>Foreigners will cringe in front of me. As soon as they hear of me, they will obey me. <sup>46</sup>Foreigners will lose heart, although they are armed in their fortifications.

<sup>47</sup>YHWH lives *chay*. Thanks *barak*-blessed be to my Rock *tsuwr*. May God *'elohiym*, the Rock *tsuwr* of my Salvation *yeshah*, be glorified *ruwm*-exalted. <sup>48</sup>God

*el* gives me vengeance. He brings people under my authority. <sup>49</sup>He frees me from my enemies. You lift me up above my opponents. You rescue me from violent people.

<sup>50</sup>That is why I will give thanks to you O YHWH among the nations and make music to praise your name. <sup>51</sup>He gives great victories to his King. He shows mercy *checced* to his anointed *mashiyach*, to David and to his descendant forever.

## Chapter 23

### David's Last Words

<sup>1</sup>These are the last words of David:

“Here is the declaration by David, son of Jesse — the declaration by the man whom God raised up *quwm*, whom the God *elohiyim* of Jacob anointed *mashiyach*, the *na'iyim*-sweet singer of Israel's psalms *zamiyr*. <sup>2</sup>The Spirit *ruwach* of YHWH spoke through me. His words were on my tongue.

<sup>3</sup>The God *elohiyim* of Israel spoke to them. The Rock *tsuwr* of Israel told me: The one who rules humans with justice *tsaddiyq* rules with the fear *yir'ah* of God *elohiyim*. <sup>4</sup>He is like the morning light as the sun rises, like a morning without clouds, like the brightness after a rainstorm. The rain makes the grass grow from the earth.

<sup>5</sup>Truly God *el* considers my house to be that way because he has made a lasting *owlam* Covenant *beriyth* to me with every detail arranged and assured. **2 Samuel 7:16.** ◡ He promised ◡ everything that helps me, everything that pleases me. Truly he makes these things happen.

<sup>6</sup>Worthless people are like thorns. All of them are thrown away because they cannot be picked by hand. <sup>7</sup>A person who touches them uses iron ◡ tools ◡ or the shaft of a spear. Fire will burn them up completely wherever they are.



## David's Three Fighting Men

<sup>8</sup>These are the names of David's fighting men: Josheb Basshebeth from Tahkemon's family was leader of the three. He used a spear to kill 800 men on one occasion.

<sup>9</sup>Next in rank to him was Eleazar, another one of the three fighting men. He was the son of Dodo and grandson of Aho. Eleazar was with David at Pas Dammim when the Philistines gathered there for battle. When the soldiers from Israel retreated, <sup>10</sup>he attacked and killed Philistines until his hand got tired and stuck to his sword. So **YHWH** won an impressive victory that day. The army returned to Eleazar but they only returned to strip the dead.

<sup>11</sup>Next in rank to him was Shammah, the son of Agee from Harar. The Philistines had gathered at Lehi where there was a field of ripe lentils. When the troops fled from the Philistines, <sup>12</sup>he stood in the middle of the field and defended it by killing Philistines. So **YHWH** won an impressive victory.

<sup>13</sup>At harvest time three of the thirty leading men came to David at the cave of Adullam when a troop from the Philistine army was camping in the valley of Rephaim. <sup>14</sup>While David was in the fortified camp, Philistine troops were at Bethlehem. <sup>15</sup>When David became thirsty he said: I wish I could have a drink of water from the well at the city gate of Bethlehem.

<sup>16</sup>So the three fighting men burst into the Philistine camp and drew water from the well. They brought it to David but he refused to drink it. He poured it out  $\perp$  as an offering  $\lrcorner$  to **YHWH** and said: <sup>17</sup>It's unthinkable that I would do this, **YHWH**. This is the blood of men who risked their lives. So he refused to drink it.

These are the things which the three fighting men did.

## David's Thirty Fighting Men

<sup>18</sup>Joab's brother Abishai, Zeruiah's son, was the leader of the thirty. He used his spear to kill 300 men. He was as famous as the three <sup>19</sup>and was honored

more than they were. So he became their captain but he didn't become a member of the three.

<sup>20</sup> Benaiah, son of Jehoiada, was from Kabzeel and was a brave man who did many things. He killed two distinguished soldiers from Moab. He also went into a pit and killed a lion on the day it snowed. <sup>21</sup> And he killed a handsome Egyptian. The Egyptian had a spear in his hand. Benaiah went to him with a club, grabbed the spear from him, and killed him with it. <sup>22</sup> These are the things that Benaiah, son of Jehoiada, did. He was as famous as the three fighting men. <sup>23</sup> He was honored more than the thirty but he was not a member of the three. David put him in charge of his bodyguards.

<sup>24</sup> One of the thirty was Joab's brother Asahel. <sup>25</sup> The thirty leading men were <sup>26</sup> Elhanan, son of Dodo from Bethlehem, <sup>27</sup> Shammah from Harod, Elikah from Harod, <sup>28</sup> Helez the Paltite, Ira, son of Ikkesh from Tekoa, <sup>29</sup> Abiezer from Anathoth, Mebunnai, son of Hushai, <sup>30</sup> Zalmon, descendant of Ahohi, Maharai from Netophah, <sup>31</sup> Heleb, son of Baanah from Netophah, Ittai, son of Ribai from Gibeah in Benjamin, <sup>32</sup> Benaiah from Pirathon, Hiddai from the Gaash ravines, <sup>33</sup> Abi Albon from Beth Arabah, Azmaveth from Bahurim, <sup>34</sup> Elihba from Shaalbon, Bene Jashen, <sup>35</sup> Jonathan, <sup>36</sup> son of <sup>37</sup> Shammah the Hararite, Ahiam, son of Sharar the Hararite, <sup>38</sup> Eliphelet, son of Ahasbai and grandson of a man from Maacah, Eliam, son of Ahithophel from Gilo, <sup>39</sup> Hezrai from Carmel, Paarai from Arabah, <sup>40</sup> Igal, son of Nathan from Zobah, Bani from the tribe of Gad, <sup>41</sup> Zelek from Ammon, Naharai from Beeroth, armorbearer for Zeruah's son Joab, <sup>42</sup> Ira, descendant of Ithra, Gareb, descendant of Ithra, <sup>43</sup> Uriah the Hittite — 37 in all.

Note that Joab is not included.

## Chapter 24

### David's Sin—He Takes a Census

<sup>1</sup> YHWH became angry with Israel again so he provoked David to turn against Israel. He said: Go, count Israel and Judah. <sup>2</sup> King David said to

Joab, the commander of the army who was with him: Go throughout the tribes of Israel from Dan to Beersheba and count the people. That way I will know how many there are.

Why did David do this? Perhaps there was a threatening nation developing nearby and David wanted to know his army's strength.

<sup>3</sup>Joab responded to the King: May YHWH your God multiply the people a hundred times over and may Your Majesty live to see it. But why does Your Majesty wish to do this? <sup>4</sup>However, the King overruled Joab and the commanders of the army. So they left the King in order to count the people of Israel.

Joab objected because the army should win battles in God's strength not in the strength of the number of warriors.

<sup>5</sup>They crossed the Jordan River and camped at Aroer, south of the city in the middle of the valley. Then they went to Gad and to Jazer. <sup>6</sup>They went to Gilead and to Tahtim Hodshi and then to Dan Jaan and around toward Sidon. <sup>7</sup>They went to the fortified city of Tyre and all the cities of the Hivites and the Canaanites. Then they went to Beersheba in the Negev of Judah.

<sup>8</sup>When they had covered the whole country, they came to Jerusalem after 9 months and 20 days. <sup>9</sup>Joab reported the census figures to the King: In Israel there were 800,000 able-bodied men who could serve in the army and in Judah there were 500,000.

<sup>10</sup>After David counted the people, his conscience troubled him. David said to YHWH: I have committed a terrible sin by what I have done. YHWH, please forgive me because I have acted very foolishly.

<sup>11</sup>When David got up in the morning, YHWH spoke his Word to the prophet Gad, David's seer. <sup>12</sup>Go and tell David: This is what YHWH says: I'm offering you three choices. Choose the one you want me to do to you.

<sup>13</sup>When Gad came to David, he told David this and asked: Should seven years of famine come to you and your land, or three months during which you

flee from your enemies as they pursue you, or should there be a three-day plague in your land? Think it over and decide what answer I should give the one who sent me.

<sup>14</sup> I'm in a desperate situation, David told Gad. Please let us fall into **YHWH**'s hands because he is very merciful. But don't let me fall into human hands.

<sup>15</sup> So **YHWH** sent a plague among the Israelites from that morning until the time he had chosen. Of the people from Dan to Beersheba, 70,000 died. <sup>16</sup> But when the Messenger stretched out his arm to destroy Jerusalem, **YHWH** changed his mind about the disaster. Enough, he said to the Messenger who was destroying the people. Put down your weapon. The Messenger of **YHWH** was at the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.

<sup>17</sup> When David saw the Messenger who had been killing the people, he said to **YHWH**: I've sinned. I've done wrong. What have these sheep done? Please let your punishment be against me and against my father's family.

<sup>18</sup> That day Gad came to David and said to him: Go, set up an altar for **YHWH** at Araunah the Jebusite's threshing floor. <sup>19</sup> David went as Gad had told him and as **YHWH** had commanded him. <sup>20</sup> When Araunah looked down and saw the King and his men coming toward him, he went out and bowed down with his face touching the ground in front of the King. <sup>21</sup> Why has Your Majesty come to me? Araunah asked. David answered: To buy the threshing floor from you and to build an altar for **YHWH**. Then the plague on the people will stop.

<sup>22</sup> Araunah said to David: Take it Your Majesty and offer whatever you think is right. There are oxen for the burnt offering and there are threshers and oxen yokes for firewood. <sup>23</sup> All this Araunah gave to the King and said: May **YHWH** your God accept you.

<sup>24</sup> No, the King said to Araunah. I must buy it from you at a fair price. I won't offer **YHWH** my God burnt sacrifices that cost me nothing. So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for  $1\frac{1}{4}$  pounds of silver. <sup>25</sup> David built

an altar for YHWH there and sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. So YHWH heard the prayers for the country and the plague on Israel stopped.

This threshing floor later became the site of the Holy of Holies in Solomon's Temple. It was also supposed to be the site of Mount Moriah where God called Abraham to sacrifice Isaac.  
**Genesis 22**

## WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

These last chapters give us additional information about David.

A famine had come on Israel for three consecutive years. God's prophet told David this was because of Saul's actions. The people of Gibeon were Canaanites who tricked Joshua into making a peace treaty with them. God had commanded the Israelites to kill all the Canaanites when they captured the Promised Land. King Saul did not like these people and killed many of them.

David asked the Gibeonites how he could make retribution. They asked they be given seven male descendants of Saul so they could publicly kill them. David gave the men to them and they were killed. Rizpah, Saul's concubine, mourned publicly. So David took the bones of Saul and Jonathan from Jabesh Gilead and buried them honorably in the tomb of Saul's father Kish. After that, God did not allow the famine to continue.

Then there is an event where David was almost killed by a Philistine. But Abishai killed that Philistine. David's men swore an oath David would never go into battle again. David's men including Jonathan killed several of the giants who were descendants of Haraphah from Gath.

David's great Psalm of Deliverance is included here. It appears in the Book of Psalms as **Psalm 18**. David praises God with many titles that he will use in many of the 73 of his Psalms in the Book of Psalms. God saved David many times from the battles he fought. David presents a theophany describing God riding on the wings of the cherubim within a dark cloud. God praises David for treating him well as he has tried to live his life according to God's plan. As a result David has prospered and been rescued from many conflicts. David looks to God as his Rock, the Rock of His Salvation who shows mercy to him.

We are now given the last words of David who is 70 years old.

David praises God for having exalted him, for having anointed him, and allow him to compose hymns which glorify God. David says he rules justly only because he has the fear of YHWH

within him. David praises God for having made a Covenant with him that his descendant will rule on the throne of Israel forever. God has made David very happy in his life.

David has fought many battles during his life. But there were outstanding men who helped him. There were three outstanding warriors: Josheb Basshebeth, Eleazar, and Shammah. Early in David's career as a warrior, David expressed a wish for water from the well at Bethlehem. Although the Philistines occupied the town, the three snuck into the town and brought David the water. But David poured it out to God saying he was not worthy to drink it.

There were also thirty fighting men. Abishai, the brother of Joab was their leader. Among them was Uriah the Hittite. Joab was not included.

Finally, we have a story of David taking a census presumably because there was the threat of a powerful enemy. David commissioned Joab to do this although Joab objected because taking a census implied the army would be trusting in the number of warriors for its success instead of depending on God. After the census was taken, David's conscience bothered him.

The prophet Gad said God was going to punish him for taking the census and gave him three options. David chose the three day plague and God killed 70,000 men. But then God relented. David saw the angel killing so he said to God: I've sinned. Please let your punishment be on me and my family rather than the people. God then told David to purchase the threshing floor of Araunah. David purchased it and built an altar to **YHWH** and sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings and the plague stopped. This site later became the Holy of Holies of Solomon's Temple.

## THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. God regards murder very seriously. Saul's murder of the Gibeonites was punished by God with a three year famine. What are other instances in the Bible where God punishes for murder?
2. In this chapter it says that Elhanan of Bethlehem killed Goliath of Gath. **2 Samuel 21:19**. This contradicts that David killed Goliath. Why was this included in the Bible?
3. In David's great psalm, one of the principal themes is that David trusted God. Locate the verses where David said this. Cite some instances where David's trust of God led to a victory.
4. Why does God surround himself with darkness? In the Holy of Holies where the Ark of the Covenant was located, there was no light. How did the High Priest find his way around in the darkness?

5. In his last words David says: *The Rock of Israel told me: The one who rules humans with justice rules with the fear of God.* **2 Samuel 23:3.** How did David show his fear of God in his life?
6. David does not include Joab among the Thirty Fighting Men. What is David's opinion of Joab? See **I Kings 2:5-6.**
7. Joab may not have wanted to take the census because he remembered the story of Gibeon. Summarize the principles taught in this story. **Judges 7**

## **EXTRA CREDIT**

Why does the Book of Second Samuel end with the story of David purchasing the threshing floor in Jerusalem? What has David learned by this?

## Epilogue

### David's Death and Succession

#### 1 Kings Chapter 1

<sup>1</sup> King David had grown old and although he was covered with blankets, he couldn't get warm. <sup>2</sup> His officials told him: Your Majesty let us search for a young woman who has never been married. She can stay with you and be your servant. She can lie in your arms and keep you warm.

<sup>3</sup> So they searched throughout Israel for a beautiful, young woman. They found Abishag from Shunem and brought her to the King. <sup>4</sup> The woman was very beautiful. She became the King's servant and took care of him but the King did not make love to her.

#### David's Eldest Son Adonijah Plots to Become King

<sup>5</sup> Adonijah, son of Haggith, was very handsome. His mother gave birth to him after she had Absalom. Adonijah was boasting that he was King. So he got a chariot and horses and 50 men to run ahead of him.

Adonijah was the fourth son of King David and next in line for the throne. The second son Chileab apparently had died. **2 Samuel 3:2-5**. David had never made it known publicly that Solomon was to succeed him and built the Temple for God. In **1 Chronicles 22:1-16**, David tells Solomon that **YHWH** said that Solomon would succeed him as King and built his Temple. *Then David ordered all the leads of Israel to help his son Solomon. 1 Chronicles 22:37*

<sup>6</sup> His father had never confronted him Adonijah by asking why he was doing this. <sup>7</sup> But Adonijah had discussed his actions with Joab, son of Zeruiah, and with the High Priest Abiathar so they supported him. <sup>8</sup> But the High Priest Zadok, Benaiah, son of Jehoiada, the prophet Nathan, Shimei, Rei, and David's  $\sqcup$  thirty  $\sqcup$  fighting men did not join Adonijah.

<sup>9</sup> Adonijah sacrificed sheep, cattle, and fattened calves at Zoheleth Rock near En Rogel. He had invited all his brothers, the King's  $\sqcup$  other  $\sqcup$  sons, all the



men of Judah, and the King's officials. <sup>10</sup> But he didn't invite the prophet Nathan, Benaiah, the fighting men or his brother Solomon.

### The Prophet Nathan Helps Solomon Become King

<sup>11</sup> Then Nathan asked Solomon's mother Bathsheba: Haven't you heard that Adonijah, Haggith's son, has become King and our master David doesn't even know about it? <sup>12</sup> Bathsheba let me give you some advice about how to save your life and your son's life. <sup>13</sup> Go to King David and ask him: Your Majesty didn't you swear to me that my son Solomon will be King after you, and that he will sit on your throne? Why is Adonijah acting as King? <sup>14</sup> And while you're still there talking to the King, I'll come in and confirm what you have said.

<sup>15</sup> Bathsheba went to the King in his private room. The King was very old and Abishag from Shunem was taking care of him. <sup>16</sup> Bathsheba knelt and bowed down in front of the King. What do you want? the King asked.

<sup>17</sup> Sir, she answered: You took an oath to **YHWH** your God. You said that my son Solomon will be King after you and that he will sit on your throne. <sup>18</sup> But now, you see Adonijah has become King and you don't even know anything about it Your Majesty. <sup>19</sup> He has sacrificed many fattened calves, bulls, and sheep. He has invited all the King's sons, Abiathar the High Priest, and Joab the commander of the army to his feast. But he hasn't invited your servant Solomon. <sup>20</sup> All Israel is looking to you Your Majesty to tell them who should succeed you on your throne. <sup>21</sup> Otherwise my son Solomon and I will be treated like criminals when you lie down in death with your ancestors.

In pagan kingdoms, new Kings traditionally slew all rivals to the throne, even if they were his relatives.

<sup>22</sup> While she was still talking to the King, the prophet Nathan arrived. <sup>23</sup> The servants told the King: The prophet Nathan is here. When he came to the King, he bowed down in front of him.

<sup>24</sup> Nathan said: Your Majesty you must have said that Adonijah will be King after you and that he will sit on your throne <sup>25</sup>because today he went and sacrificed many bulls, fattened calves, and sheep. He invited all the King's sons, the army's commanders, and the High Priest Abiathar  $\perp$  to his feast  $\perp$ . They are eating and drinking with him and saying: Long live King Adonijah.

<sup>26</sup> But he didn't invite me or the High Priest Zadok or Benaiah, who is Jehoiada's son or your servant Solomon. <sup>27</sup>Did you allow this to happen without telling me who would sit on your throne next?

<sup>28</sup> Then King David answered: Call Bathsheba in here. So she stood in front of him <sup>29</sup>and he swore an oath. He said: I solemnly swear as YHWH who has saved my life from all trouble lives. **Genesis 48:16.** <sup>30</sup> I will do today exactly what I swore to you by YHWH God of Israel. Your son Solomon will be King after me. He will sit on my throne. <sup>31</sup>Then Bathsheba bowed down with her face touching the ground in front of the King. May Your Majesty King David live forever, she said.

<sup>32</sup> King David said: Summon the High Priest Zadok, the prophet Nathan, and Benaiah, son of Jehoiada. So they came to the King <sup>33</sup>and he said: Take my officials with you. Put my son Solomon on my mule and take him to Gihon.

Gihon was where the Wilderness Tabernacle was located.

<sup>34</sup> Have the High Priest Zadok and the prophet Nathan anoint him King of Israel there. Then blow the ram's horn and say: Long live King Solomon. <sup>35</sup>Follow him  $\perp$  back  $\perp$  here when he comes to sit on my throne. He will be King in place of me. I have appointed him to be the leader of Israel and Judah.

<sup>36</sup> So be it, Benaiah, son of Jehoiada, answered the King. YHWH your God says so too. <sup>37</sup>As YHWH has been with you, so may he be with Solomon. May Solomon be an even greater King than you King David.

<sup>38</sup>Then the High Priest Zadok, the prophet Nathan, Benaiah, son of Jehoiada, the Cherethites, and the Pelethites David's Philistine body guards put Solomon on King David's mule and brought him to Gihon.

<sup>39</sup>The High Priest Zadok took the container of olive oil from the tent and anointed *mashach* Solomon. They blew the ram's horn, and all the people said: Long live King Solomon. <sup>40</sup>All the people followed him, blew flutes, and celebrated so loudly that their voices shook the ground.

### Adonijah's Plot Fails

<sup>41</sup>Adonijah and all his guests heard this as they finished eating. When Joab heard the sound of the horn, he asked: What's the reason for the noise in the City? <sup>42</sup>He was still speaking when Jonathan, son of the High Priest Abiathar, arrived. Come in, Adonijah said. You're an honorable man so you must be bringing good news."

<sup>43</sup>Not at all, Jonathan answered Adonijah. His Majesty King David has made Solomon King. <sup>44</sup>The King has sent the High Priest Zadok, the prophet Nathan, Benaiah, son of Jehoiada, the Cherethites and the Pelethites with him. They have put him on the King's mule. <sup>45</sup>The High Priest Zadok and the prophet Nathan have anointed *mashach* him King at Gihon. They have come from there celebrating, so the City is excited. That is the sound you heard.

<sup>46</sup>Solomon is now seated on the royal throne. <sup>47</sup>Furthermore, the royal officials have come to congratulate His Majesty King David saying: May your God make Solomon's name more famous than yours and his reign greater than your reign. The King himself bowed down on his bed <sup>48</sup>and said: Praise YHWH God of Israel who has let me see the heir to my throne.

<sup>49</sup>Adonijah's guests were frightened so they got up and scattered in all directions. <sup>50</sup>Adonijah was afraid of Solomon. He got up, went to the Tent of Meeting, and took hold of the horns of the altar. <sup>51</sup>Someone told Solomon: Adonijah is afraid of you King Solomon. He is holding on to the

horns of the altar and saying: Make King Solomon swear to me today that he will not have me killed.

<sup>52</sup> Solomon said: If he will behave like an honorable man, not one hair on his head will fall to the ground. But if he does <anything> wrong, he will die. <sup>53</sup> King Solomon sent men to take him from the altar. Adonijah bowed down in front of King Solomon. Go home, Solomon told him.

## Chapter 2

### David's Advice to Solomon

<sup>1</sup> When David was about to die, he instructed his son Solomon, <sup>2</sup> I'm about to leave this world. Be strong and mature. <sup>3</sup> Fulfill your duty to **YHWH** your God. Obey his directions, laws, commands, rules, and written instructions as they are recorded in Moses' Teachings. Then you'll succeed in everything you do wherever you may go.

<sup>4</sup> You'll succeed because **YHWH** will keep the promise *dabar*-word he made to me: If your descendants are faithful to me with all their hearts and lives, you will never fail to have an heir on the throne of Israel. **2 Samuel 7:16.**

<sup>5</sup> You know what Joab, Zeruiah's son, did to me and to the two commanders of Israel's army — Abner, son of Ner, and Amasa, son of Jether. Joab killed them. When there was peace, he shed blood as if it were wartime. With their blood he stained the belt around his waist and the shoes on his feet. <sup>6</sup> Use your wisdom. Don't let that gray-haired, old man go to his grave peacefully.

<sup>7</sup> Be kind to the sons of Barzillai from Gilead. Let them eat at your table. They helped me when I was fleeing from your brother Absalom.

<sup>8</sup> Shimei, son of Gera from Bahurim in Benjamin, is still with you. He cursed me repeatedly when I went to Mahanaim. But when he came to meet me at the Jordan River, I took an oath by **YHWH** and said: As long as I'm King, I won't have you killed. <sup>9</sup> Now don't let him go unpunished. You are wise and know what to do to him: Put that gray-haired, old man into his grave by slaughtering him.

<sup>10</sup> David lay down in death with his ancestors and was buried in the City of David. <sup>11</sup> He ruled as King of Israel for 40 years. He ruled for 7 years in Hebron and for 33 years in Jerusalem.

### **Solomon Establishes His Authority**

<sup>12</sup> Solomon sat on his father David's throne and his power was firmly established.

<sup>13</sup> Then Adonijah, son of Haggith, went to Bathsheba, Solomon's mother. Is this a friendly visit? she asked. Yes, he answered. <sup>14</sup> Then he added: I have a matter I want to discuss with you. What is it? she asked. <sup>15</sup> He said: You know the kingship was mine. All Israel expected me to be their King. But the kingship has been turned over to my brother because YHWH gave it to him.

<sup>16</sup> Now I want to ask you for one thing. Don't refuse me. What is it? she asked. <sup>17</sup> He said: Please ask King Solomon to give me Abishag from Shunem as my wife. He will not refuse you. <sup>18</sup> Very well Bathsheba answered. I will talk to the King for you. <sup>19</sup> Bathsheba went to King Solomon to talk to him on Adonijah's behalf. The King got up to meet her and bowed down in front of her. Then he sat on his throne. He had a throne brought for his mother and she sat at his right side.

<sup>20</sup> I'm asking you for one little thing, she said. Don't refuse me. Ask, Mother, the King told her. I won't refuse you. <sup>21</sup> She replied: Let Abishag from Shunem be given to your brother Adonijah as his wife. <sup>22</sup> King Solomon then said: Why do you ask that Abishag from Shunem be given to Adonijah? That would be the same as giving him the kingship. After all he is my older brother. The High Priest Abiathar and Joab, Zeruiah's son are supporting him."

<sup>23</sup> King Solomon took an oath by YHWH and said: May God strike me dead if Adonijah doesn't pay with his life for this request. <sup>24</sup> YHWH set me on my father David's throne and gave me a dynasty as he promised. So I solemnly swear as YHWH who has established me lives that Adonijah will be put to

death today. <sup>25</sup>King Solomon gave this task to Benaiah, son of Jehoiada. Benaiah attacked and killed Adonijah.

<sup>26</sup>The King told the High Priest Abiathar: Go to your land in Anathoth. You deserve to die but I won't kill you at this time because you carried the Ark of the Almighty **YHWH** ahead of my father David and because you shared all my father's sufferings. <sup>27</sup>So Solomon removed Abiathar as **YHWH's** High Priest and fulfilled **YHWH's** Word spoken at Shiloh about Eli's family.

[ I'm going to do something in Israel that will make the ears of everyone who hears it ring. On that day I will do to Eli and his family everything I said from beginning to end. I told him I would hand down a permanent judgment against his household because he knew about his son's sin – that they were cursing God – but he didn't try to stop them. That is why I have taken an oath regarding Eli's family line: No offerings or sacrifice will ever be able to make peace for the sins that Eli's family committed. **1 Samuel 3:11-14** ]

<sup>28</sup>The news reached Joab. He had supported Adonijah although he hadn't supported Absalom. So Joab fled to **YHWH's** Tent and clung to the horns of the altar. <sup>29</sup>After King Solomon heard that Joab had fled to the altar in the Tent of **YHWH**, Solomon sent Benaiah, son of Jehoiada to kill Joab.

<sup>30</sup>When Benaiah came to the Tent of **YHWH**, he told Joab: The King says: Come out. No, Joab answered, I'll die here. So Benaiah reported to the King what Joab had said and how he had answered. <sup>31</sup>The King answered: Do as he said. Kill him and bury him. You can remove the innocent blood – the blood which Joab shed – from me and my father's family.

<sup>32</sup>**YHWH** will repay him for the slaughter he caused. Joab killed two honorable men who were better than he was. He used his sword to kill Abner, who was the son of Ner and the commander of Israel's army and Amasa, who was the son of Jether and the commander of Judah's army. Joab did this without my father's knowledge. <sup>33</sup>The responsibility for their blood

will fall on Joab and his descendants forever. But may David, his descendants, family and throne always receive peace from **YHWH**.

<sup>34</sup>Then Benaiah, son of Jehoiada, went and attacked Joab, killed him and buried him at his home in the desert. <sup>35</sup>The King then appointed Benaiah, son of Jehoiada, to replace Joab as commander of the army. King Solomon also replaced High Priest Abiathar with High Priest Zadok.

<sup>36</sup>The King summoned Shimei and said to him: Build a house for yourself in Jerusalem and stay there. Don't leave **the City** to go anywhere else. <sup>37</sup>But the day you leave and cross the brook in the Kidron Valley, you can be certain that you will die. You will be responsible for your own death. <sup>38</sup>Very well, Shimei answered. I'll do just what Your Majesty said.

So Shimei stayed in Jerusalem for a long time. <sup>39</sup>But after three years, two of Shimei's slaves fled to Gath's King Achish, son of Maacah. Shimei was told that his slaves were in Gath <sup>40</sup>so he saddled his donkey and went to Achish in Gath to search for his slaves. Shimei went to Gath and got his slaves.

<sup>41</sup>After Solomon heard that Shimei had gone from Jerusalem to Gath and back, <sup>42</sup>he summoned Shimei. Solomon asked him: Didn't I make you take an oath by **YHWH**? Didn't I warn you that if you left **the City** to go anywhere, you could be certain that you would die? Didn't you say to me: Very well. I'll do just what you said? <sup>43</sup>Why didn't you keep your oath to **YHWH** and obey the command I gave you?

<sup>44</sup>Shimei, you know in your heart all the evil that you did to my father David. **YHWH** is going to pay you back for the evil you have done. <sup>45</sup>But King Solomon is blessed and David's dynasty will always be firmly established by **YHWH**.

<sup>46</sup>Then the King gave orders to Benaiah, son of Jehoiada. He went to attack and kill Shimei. Solomon's power as King was now firmly established.

## WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

We have two different accounts of Solomon's accession to the throne of David. In **1 Chronicles 28**, there is an alternate view:

David held a meeting in Jerusalem for all the leaders of Israel—the leaders of the tribes, the leaders of the army units that served the King, the commanders of regiments and battalions, the officials in charge of all the property and livestock belonging to the King and his sons, the palace officials, the soldiers, and the fighting men.

David stood in front of them and said: Listen to me, my relatives and subjects. I had my heart set on building the Temple where the Ark of **YHWH's** Covenant could be placed. This Temple would be a footstool for our God's feet and I have made preparations to build it. But God told me: You must not build the Temple for my name. You have fought wars and caused bloodshed.

Yet from my entire family **YHWH** God of Israel chose me to be King of Israel permanently. He had chosen the tribe of Judah to lead Israel. From the families of Judah he chose my father's family. From among my father's sons he was pleased to make me king of all Israel. And of all my sons, **YHWH** has given me many sons, he chose my son Solomon to sit on the throne of **YHWH's** Kingdom to rule Israel.

He told me: Your son Solomon will build my Temple and my courtyards because I have chosen him to be my son. I will be his father. I will establish his kingdom forever if he will remain determined to obey my commands and laws, as he is doing today.

Now leaders I order you in the sight of Israel, **YHWH's** congregation, and as our God listens to dedicate your lives to doing everything the **LORD** your God has commanded. Then you will be able to possess this good land and leave it as an inheritance to your descendants.



And you my son Solomon learn to know your father's God. Serve **YHWH** wholeheartedly and willingly because he searches every heart and understands every thought we have. If you dedicate your life to serving him, he will accept you. But if you abandon him, he will reject you from then on. <sup>10</sup>So be careful because **YHWH** has chosen you to build the Temple as his holy place. Be strong and do it. **1 Chronicles 28:1-10.**

In this passage David said God chose Solomon to be the next King. Is this prefigured in **2 Samuel 12:25** when he re-named Solomon Jedidiah meaning **YHWH's Beloved**?

In the passage in **1 Kings**, it is Bathsheba motivated by the prophet Nathan who approaches King David to request Solomon be anointed King as David's successor. She does this because David's fourth son, the Crown Prince Adonijah was already celebrating his kingship. Joab, the commander of the army, and one of the two High Priests, Abiathar, were supporting him.

David immediately orders Bathsheba to summon the other High Priest Zadok, the prophet Nathan, and Benaiah, the leader of David's bodyguards. He said: Place my son Solomon on my mule, take him to Gihon where the Wilderness Tabernacle is, and anoint him King of Israel. They blew the ram's horn and all the people said: Long live King Solomon.

David then told Solomon to eliminate two people who might prove a disturbance, Joab and Shimei. Adonijah did himself in by requesting Bathsheba to ask Solomon to allow him to marry Abishag, David's concubine. This was a clear way of claiming the throne. Solomon commanded Benaiah to kill him. Then Solomon exiled the High Priest Abiathar. Solomon had Benaiah kill Joab, as David suggested. Then Solomon had Benaiah kill Shimei because Shimei broke his oath to Solomon and went outside Jerusalem.

Our story of King David ends by saying:

Solomon's power as King was now firmly established. **1 Kings 1:46**

## THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why would Adonijah think he would succeed David as King? Apparently, David had not made public his choice of Solomon.
2. If David had made his choice of Solomon known, why would Joab support another of David's sons?
3. Was Adonijah anointed King by High Priest Abiathar? This would be strange if King David hadn't ordered it. Did they blow the shophar at their festive meal?

4. How foolish it was of Adonijah to ask to marry David's concubine Abishag? Didn't he remember what Absalom did to David's concubines in Jerusalem? He should have remembered what happened when General Abner slept with one of Saul's concubines. And history should have told him what happened when Reuben slept with one of Jacob's concubines. What does it signify to sleep with a King's concubine?
5. Why did King David's other sons attend Adonijah's party? We don't really hear much about them. Where were they when Absalom came to Jerusalem take over the City? Did they leave Jerusalem with David?
6. We don't hear of Bathsheba or Nathan the prophet after this. Why not?
7. When Solomon dies, his son Rehoboam becomes King. What happened to the rest of Solomon's many sons? Solomon was probably only 21 when he became King and he reigned 40 years so he was only 61 when he died. Wouldn't some of David's sons still be alive?

## Sermons of Alistair Begg on David

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