

Narrabeen

ST. FAITH'S *Anglican Church*



THE KING WE ALL NEED

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A/ How should we read 2 Samuel?

As we come to study this Old Testament book, it is important to be clear on what we are doing. The following are some principles that we need to keep in mind. They shape the studies in this booklet.

1. First, we believe it is God's Word to us and so useful for teaching and correcting us. It is part of the "Word of God" that Jesus taught and accepted.
2. Second, the Bible reveals God's character and plans to us, step by step. Over the time period that the Bible covers, we gradually learn more and more about God and his purposes. This means that we need to consider what comes before 2 Samuel as we start to read, but also, we must keep in mind what it leads to – God's work in Jesus.
3. Third, then, we recognise that every part of the Old Testament is really leading up to God's final, complete work of salvation in Jesus. So we see 2 Samuel as part of what people call the unfolding story of "salvation history". A story or history that records God's dealing with Israel back then (C1000BC), but also prepares God's people for what God would later do in Jesus.

B/ The Studies

One way to apply these principles is to structure our studies around four questions:

1. What is the story of the Bible to this point?

In other words, where are we in the unfolding plan of salvation that focuses on Jesus?

One way to summarize the theme of the Bible is as the Kingdom of God, how it can be established, meaning:

"God's people
In God's place
Under God's rule"

As we come to 2 Samuel, God's people are the nation Israel, yet they have not been worshiping and honouring God. Their king Saul has failed to fear and respect God.

And the land God was giving them, they have, because of unfaithfulness, failed to conquer. 1 Samuel ends with the death of

Saul and Israel defeated by the Philistines. While living in God's place, they are not secure, not free to worship God.

Thirdly, God's rule over his people is unclear. Saul was not a ruler who led God's people in God's ways. David, the key figure in 2 Samuel is "on the sidelines" so far.

So as 2 Samuel begins, we await what God will do next to further his saving purposes in these areas.

2. What is happening in the passage we are reading?

2 Samuel records events in Israel's history. We need to carefully notice key people who are involved and what is happening. Especially to notice any events or actions that relate to the theme of the Bible we noted above. *(Note: Group members will need to read the passage ahead of the group meeting)*

3. What does this passage show us about God and the way God typically does things?

The God we know and serve is the same God who was at work in Israel in 1000BC. So what we learn of his character is still true today. Also, we can learn things about the way God normally works in his dealings with us, his creatures.

4. What does this show us about God and the way he does things in Jesus?

Here, we are trying to understand how the historical events described, point forward to Jesus and his saving work on the cross. Sometimes we will see a promise that clearly points to Jesus and his work. At other times, we will see why Jesus had to come because of failures by people in the historical records.

5. Having carefully worked through these four steps, we can then be ready to see how the passage applies to us. How it is God's Word to me today. Our purpose in studying 2 Samuel is that we grow to know God, our Father better. And this, so that we can better live as followers of Jesus. Only in this way can we truly bring due honour to God, the Creator of all.

Kerry Nagel
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STUDY ONE: David The New King

2 Samuel 1:1-2:7

1/ The story so far

- a) The Bible opens with the record of God's creation of the earth, the rebellion of people against God and his judgement. It seems the world has no future. Then we find God speaks to one sinner, Abram and he makes a promise that shapes the rest of the Bible. Read Genesis 12:1-3

God promised that:

- Abram would become a great nation
- this nation would have its own land
- through Abram God would bless all people

To put it another way, God would have his people in his chosen place, under his rule, as in the Garden of Eden.

- b) When we come to 1 Samuel, God's rule is expressed through the king in Israel, Saul. Read 1 Samuel 15:10-11. How has Saul grieved God?

2/ What's happening in our passage?

Read 2 Samuel 1:1 to 2:7 (or review if read already)

- a) How does David respond to the news that Saul is dead? (verses 11-16)
- b) Why does David have the Amalekite killed?
- c) What does this action show about David's attitude to God?
- d) From Chapter 2:1, what does David do before taking any further steps? What does this show about his attitude to God?

e) In verses 2 to 4, what is done to David? (Note: "Judah" is one part of the overall nation called Israel. Confusingly, the "Northern tribes" in 2 Samuel are called "Israel" as well)

3/ What do we learn about God's ways?

a) This passage shows us one step in God's plan to raise up a suitable king to lead his people. How is David different to Saul?

b) What does this show about the sort of king God is looking for? What matters to God in this regard?

4/ In what way does this "episode" point forward to Jesus?

Read John 12:27-28

When Jesus is "tested", what concern is first in his heart? How is this like David?

5/ Getting personal

a) We don't think much of the "rulers" and politicians of our world, but God has shown that he will bless his people through a worthy king he will raise up.

The first question for us is, "will I respect the king God has appointed? (John 3:36)

b) To follow Jesus is to seek the same things as him. How can we do this? Discuss.

PRAYER POINTS

STUDY TWO: The King – Resisted and Tested 2 Samuel 2:8-5:5

1/ Getting started

What makes you wonder whether God really is in control of this world? How do you respond to this challenge? Discuss.

2/ The story do far

We have already seen that God's plan to bless the world involved him establishing his rule through a human king. In 1 Samuel 8:19-20, we see that when Israel asked for a king, it was not so that they could better be God's people. It was so that they could be like other nations, secure under their king's protection in war. So, God gave them the sort of king they wanted, Saul.

But it was not long before Saul rejected God's authority and tried to rule without God. God rejected him as king (1 Samuel 15). Instead God's prophet Samuel was told to anoint David as king. A man whose heart (1 Samuel 16:7) trusted and honoured God.

The rest of 1 Samuel is the record of Saul's refusal to hand over the kingship to David and David's refusal to grasp power by force. (David refuses to kill Saul even though Saul is seeking to kill David!)

Now even though all the people knew this (see 2 Samuel 5:2) many still rejected David's rule after Saul died. David is ruling as king over the tribe of Judah only. Will Israel (the other tribes) now accept God's chosen king?

3/ What is happening in our passage?

a) From the events of 2 Samuel 2:8-32, what is Abner seeking to do?

b) Read 2 Samuel 3:1-11. What had Abner known all along about God's plans for his people? (verses 9-10)

c) Why do you think he fought against David then?

d) From 2 Samuel 3:12-4:12, summarise the response of David to the murders recorded. What does this tell us about David?

e) Read 2 Samuel 5:1-5. In what way is David's rule described in verse 2? (*recall also what David had earlier been, see 1 Samuel 16:11 and 17:15*)

4/ What does this tell us about the way God does things?

a) Notice that God's king was opposed by his own people. God could have destroyed Abner and the others but did not. What does this show about God?

b) When God's chosen king is FINALLY accepted as king by God's people, he is introduced as the "Shepherd King". (2 Samuel 5:2). How is David different to Saul and to men like Abner?

5/ What does this tell us about the way God does things in Jesus?

a) In John 1:10-11 we read that Jesus was not accepted by many in Israel. And today, people see that Jesus is ignored by many and wonder if he can possibly be God's King. How do the events in 1 and 2 Samuel help us to understand this, if at all?

b) In what way does David's kingship point us toward the way Jesus led God's people? What does this mean for us?

PRAYER POINTS

STUDY THREE: God's Holy City

2 Samuel 5:6-25

1/ Getting started

Jerusalem, the city in Palestine, has been a focus of conflicts for many years. Why in recent history do you think this is? Discuss.

2/ Turning to the Bible

- a) Read 2 Samuel 5:6-16. Who was living in Jerusalem at the time David became king over all Israel? (verse 6)

- b) What had God said about these people? (see Genesis 15:12-21)

- c) To whom does the "narrator" attribute the rise of David? (verse 10)

- d) From verse 12, what does David see as the reason for God making him king?

- e) Read 2 Samuel 5:17-25. God had promised that his people would defeat the Philistines and occupy their land. But before battle what does David do anyway?

- f) What do you think the actions described in verse 21 indicated to the people of the time?

- g) How does the conquest of Jerusalem and the Philistines fulfill God's promises and the hopes of God's people then?

3/ Looking ahead

So, David's conquest of Jerusalem and victory over surrounding nations gave the Israelites (God's people) a taste of living securely under His rule, under God's king David.

- a) Read Revelation 21:1-4. What is the focus of hope for the Christian?
- b) How will the "New Jerusalem" be similar to the one David ruled from?
- c) How will it be different?

4/ Getting personal

- a) God promised Abram that his descendants would occupy the land. What aspect of God's character do we see on view in 2 Samuel 5? How might this help us hold on to the hope of a "New Jerusalem" ourselves? Discuss.
- b) How can this hope be a comfort to us?

PRAYER POINTS

STUDY FOUR: God with His People 2 Samuel 6:1-23

1/ Getting Started

You may have seen movies involving “the Ark of the Covenant”. What do you think it signified according to our movie directors?

2/ Background

- a) The Lord has established David as king over the whole house of Israel. David is God’s appointed ruler through whom God rules his people and blesses them. David’s first recorded actions were to capture Jerusalem and defeat the Philistines, both things God had commanded.
Now David turns to bring the “Ark of God” up to Jerusalem. The Ark was the symbol of God’s presence with his people.

- b) Read Exodus 25:10-22. What was placed in the Ark (verse 16) and what did God promise to do “from” the Ark? (verse 22)

3/ God with His People

- a) Read 2 Samuel 6:1-11. Why do you think David chose so many men for the task of moving the Ark (verse 1)?

- b) What is the significance of the description of the Ark in verse 2?

- c) Why does David at first, abandon his plan to bring the Ark up to Jerusalem?

- d) Read Numbers 4:4-6, 15, 17-20. How does this help us understand what happened to Uzzah?
- e) What should the people (including David) learn about God from this event?
- f) Read 2 Samuel 6:12-23. Why do you think David makes a second attempt to bring the Ark into Jerusalem?
- g) What is different about the second attempt? (see also Deuteronomy 12:8-14)
- h) Compare the responses of David, the people of Israel and Michal to the Ark coming up to Jerusalem. Summarise the attitudes of each –

(i) David

(ii) The people

(iii) Michal

4/ Looking ahead

a) In chapter 6:18, we see God's king blessing God's people. He feeds them. How do these actions point forward to Jesus?

(i) from Matthew 1:23

(ii) from Matthew 14:13-21

5/ Getting personal

a) This study has reminded us of the holiness of God. In what ways might you not treat Jesus with the respect he deserves? Discuss.

b) The people of God experienced great blessing because God dwelt with them as symbolised in the Ark. How do we experience God's presence and blessing today? (see Colossians 1:19, 2:9) Discuss.

PRAYER POINTS

STUDY FIVE: The House that God Built

2 Samuel 7:1-29

1/ Getting Started

Have you ever made careful plans to do something that has not worked out? If so, how did you feel? Why? Discuss.

2/ The story so far

- a) David is now king over all Israel. He has subdued Israel's enemies on all sides. He has brought the Ark of God into Jerusalem. Read Deuteronomy 12:8-14. Once they entered the land, where were Israel told to worship God?

- b) David seems to recognise that God has chosen to 'dwell' in Jerusalem, to be worshiped there. What are the signs of this?

3/ To build the house

- a) Read 2 Samuel 7:1-17. How does Nathan first respond to David's plan? (verse 3)

- b) From verses 4 to 7, how does God respond to David's plans? Why?

- c) God now begins to declare his plans to David. From verses 8 to 11a, what does the Lord say he is going to do?

- d) What sort of "house" does the Lord then promise to build? (verses 11b to 17)

- e) What is promised regarding David's "son"?

4/ Looking forward

- a) How are God's promises here fulfilled in Solomon?

- b) Which are only fulfilled in Jesus?

5/ Getting personal

- a) How then, can we share in these promised blessings of God? Discuss.

PRAYER POINTS

STUDY SIX: The Surprising Character of the Kingdom

2 Samuel 8:15–9:13

1/ Getting started

- a) We have seen that David's kingdom is a "pattern" of the coming kingdom of God. Given this, what aspects of the way David has become king are disturbing to us? Discuss.

2/ Background

In this study we focus on David's treatment of Saul's descendants. We need to remember that Saul had sought to kill David. Read 1 Samuel 20:14-15. What had David promised to show to Jonathan's descendants (and so, Saul's descendants)?

3/ A surprising king

- a) Read 2 Samuel 9:1-13. Who is the descendant of Saul mentioned in this chapter and what is striking about him?

- b) What does David do for him?

- c) Why does David do this? List the verses that give David's reasons, to get a sense of the emphasis the narrator wants us to feel here.

d) What does this say about the character of David? Why?

4/ Looking ahead

a) In what way do we see David and his kingdom “fulfilled” in the kingdom Jesus establishes? (e.g. Matthew 11:2-6) Discuss.

b) How does this give us confidence when we come to Jesus?

PRAYER POINTS

STUDY SEVEN: Disaster

2 Samuel 11:1-27

1/ Getting started

- a) Have you ever had great hopes for a project or plan only to be disappointed? How did you feel? Discuss.

2/ Background

- a) Hopes. God has made great promises to David. Promises that pick up his plans to bless the whole world through Abraham's descendants. In 2 Samuel 7, God promised David rest from his enemies, victory, security, peace – and a future (2 Samuel 7:16). And David has been presented to us as the model, godly king, ruling on God's behalf, for God's glory, displaying God's character. A picture of the 'Kingdom of God'. The narrator has led us to have great hopes. Read 2 Samuel 8:15 and 2 Samuel 10:19 to see examples of this.

3/ Disaster

- a) Read 2 Samuel 11:1-5. In what way does David abuse his power? Why does he do it?

- b) Read 2 Samuel 11:6-13. What are David's actions and why does he do what he does?

- c) What are Uriah's actions and why does he do what he does?

- d) How do the actions of Uriah compare with those of David? What does this highlight about David?

- e) Read 2 Samuel 11:14-25. What actions does David take and why?

- f) Read 2 Samuel 11:26-27. David has tried to hide his actions from his people and from God. What indication is there that this has not worked?

4/ Looking ahead

- (a) Personal Here a good man, a great man, has "crashed" spectacularly. We should not read this without taking warning over the danger of sexual temptation. Read again Matthew 5:27-28. Did Jesus have David in mind? We share David's humanity. How can we take warning from his fall?

(b) God's plans David has abused the power God had entrusted to him in awful ways. David is key to God's plans and promises and so these plans and hopes have been dashed, destroyed. It is not too strong a statement to say that the seeds sown here lead to civil war again within God's people, lead to sin and idolatry spreading through the nation Israel and its ultimate destruction under the judgment of God. (exile to Babylon) God's people as seen in the physical nation of Israel never recover. But God's plan is renewed. Read Matthew 1:1. How is Jesus described? And from Matthew 4:10, how does Jesus respond when tempted?

(c) How does Jesus go on to establish God's kingdom where David failed to do so? Discuss.

PRAYER POINTS

STUDY EIGHT: Sin Exposed

2 Samuel 12:1-31

1/ Getting started

- a) "Sin always has its consequences". Discuss from your experience of your own sin or that of others.

2/ Sin exposed

- (a) Read 2 Samuel 12:1-6. What does Nathan's story emphasise about David's sin?
- (b) Read 2 Samuel 12:7-14. What does God consider to be David's sin?
- (c) Because of David's position what is one consequence of David's actions? (verse 14)

- (d) From verses 10 to 12, what will be the consequences for David's family of his actions?

- (e) From verse 13, what is David's response?

- (f) Also in verse 13, what is surprising about what "the Lord" does?

3/ Looking ahead

- (a) In Israel. If you have time, read chapters 13 to 19 to see the sad story of the consequences of David's sin. Rape, murder, endless violence and betrayal destroy David's family from within. David's leadership is over as he fails to restrain evil in Israel. Read Psalm 51. What confidence does David still have before God?

- (b) For us. When we sin can we also be confident of forgiveness, regardless of the 'horror' of our evil? If so, on what basis can we hope God will forgive?

PRAYER POINTS

STUDY NINE: Victory Assured

2 Samuel 22:1-51

1/ Getting started

Have you ever bought some shoes or clothes that you later realised didn't "fit"? Or others told you didn't "match"? How did you feel? What did you do?

2/ Background

- (a) Read 2 Samuel 22:1. When did David 'sing' this song?

- (b) Chapters 11 to 21 of 2 Samuel have recounted David's sin and its consequences – disastrous – for his family and for Israel. His son Absalom has been killed (Chapter 18), the tribes are at war – "civil war" and while the Philistines have reappeared and been defeated, what "ominous note" is sounded in Chapter 21:15-17?

3/ Victory assured

- (a) Read 2 Samuel 22:2-20. What has God repeatedly done that David celebrates?

- (b) What does this passage say about the character of God?

- (c) Read 2 Samuel 22:21-32. What does this passage say about the character of God?

- (d) From verses 21-28, what does David claim about himself?

- (e) What is your reaction to these claims by David, about himself?

- (f) Read verses 33 to 51. What is David's response to God's goodness to him?

4/ Looking ahead

- a) From verse 1, it seems that this song was composed either after the incident recorded in 1 Samuel 24:16-21, or after his victories over the Philistines etc, but before David's adultery. Why then, do you think the writer of 1 and 2 Samuel puts it here toward the end of his account of David?

- b) Look again at verses 22-25 and verses 44-51. Who do these verses point forward to? (e.g. Philippians 2:6-11)

5/ Getting personal

- a) In what ways can we share David's confidence in God? Discuss.

- b) Why is Jesus' "righteousness" important for us? Discuss.

PRAYER POINTS

