

**Sunday School Member Quarterly**

**Winter 2023 – 2024**

# **2 Samuel**

*Costs of Disobedience*

**Sunday School Lessons for Adults and Youth**

**Written by John O. Yates**



*Morningside*

**B A P T I S T C H U R C H**

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**Sunday School – 9:00 each Sunday Morning**

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2 Samuel.*

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Unless otherwise noted, all scripture quotations are taken  
from the King James Version of the Bible.

*Soli Deo Gloria!*

# Sunday School Lessons

December 2023 through February 2024

## 2 Samuel

### *Costs of Disobedience*

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# Daily Bible Reading Guide

Read the following scripture passages each day and complete the learning activities in this book each week. This will prepare you for Sunday School class, and God will bless you as you read, study, and memorize His Word.

## Week of November 27 – December 2

**Mon:** 1 Samuel 31; **Tues:** 2 Samuel 1; **Wed:** 1 Chronicles 10;  
**Thurs:** 2 Samuel 2; **Fri:** Romans 3:9-31; **Sat:** 2 Samuel 2

## Week of December 4 – 9

**Mon:** 2 Samuel 3; **Tues:** 2 Samuel 4; **Wed:** 2 Timothy 2;  
**Thurs:** Memorize Galatians 6:7-8; **Fri:** 2 Samuel 3;  
**Sat:** 2 Samuel 4

## Week of December 11 – 16

**Mon:** 2 Samuel 5; **Tues:** 2 Samuel 6;  
**Wed:** 1 Chronicles 11:1-9;  
**Thurs:** Memorize 1 Corinthians 14:40; **Fri:** 1 Chronicles 13;  
**Sat:** 1 Chronicles 15

## Week of December 18 – 23

**Mon:** John 1; **Tues:** Matthew 1; **Wed:** Matthew 2;  
**Thurs:** Luke 1; **Fri:** Luke 2; **Sat:** John 1

## Week of December 25 – 30

**Mon:** Genesis 2; **Tues:** Matthew 19:3-12; Romans 7:1-3;  
**Wed:** 1 Corinthians 7; **Thurs:** Memorize Ephesians 5:31;  
**Fri:** Deuteronomy 17:14-20; **Sat:** Ephesians 5:18-33

## Week of January 1 – 6

**Mon:** 2 Samuel 7; **Tues:** 2 Samuel 8; **Wed:** Romans 10;  
**Thurs:** Memorize Romans 10:13; **Fri:** 2 Samuel 9;  
**Sat:** 2 Samuel 10

### **Week of January 8 – 13**

**Mon:** 2 Samuel 11; **Tues:** Exodus 20:1-17; **Wed:** Matthew 5;  
**Thurs:** Memorize James 1:14-15; **Fri:** 1 Thessalonians 4;  
**Sat:** 2 Samuel 11

### **Week of January 15 – 20**

**Mon:** 2 Samuel 12; **Tues:** 2 Samuel 13:28-29; 16:20-23;  
18:14-15; 1 Kings 2:23-25; **Wed:** Psalm 51; **Thurs:** Psalm 32;  
**Fri:** Memorize Romans 6:23; **Sat:** 2 Samuel 12

### **Week of January 22 – 27**

**Mon:** 2 Samuel 13; **Tues:** 2 Samuel 3:2-5; 1 Chronicles 3:1-9;  
**Wed:** Leviticus 18:1-11; 20:17; Deuteronomy 27:22;  
**Thurs:** Galatians 5:16-25; **Fri:** 2 Samuel 13;  
**Sat:** 2 Samuel 14

### **Week of January 29 – February 3**

**Mon:** 2 Samuel 15; **Tues:** 2 Samuel 16; **Wed:** 2 Samuel 17;  
**Thurs:** Psalm 3; **Fri:** Psalm 63; **Sat:** 2 Samuel 12

### **Week of February 5 – 10**

**Mon:** 2 Samuel 18; **Tues:** 2 Samuel 19; **Wed:** 2 Samuel 20;  
**Thurs:** Deuteronomy 6; **Fri:** Colossians 3; **Sat:** 2 Samuel 18

### **Week of February 12 – 17**

**Mon:** 2 Samuel 21; **Tues:** 2 Samuel 22; **Wed:** Joshua 9;  
**Thurs:** Psalm 18; **Fri:** Ecclesiastes 5; **Sat:** 2 Samuel 21

### **Week of February 19 – 24**

**Mon:** 2 Samuel 23; **Tues:** 1 Chronicles 11:10-47;  
**Wed:** 2 Samuel 24; **Thurs:** Memorize 2 Sam. 24:24;  
**Fri:** 1 Chronicles 21; **Sat:** Genesis 22:1-14

**Coming Next Quarter**  
**(March – May 2024)**

**Jonah, Proverbs**

# Map



# Introduction to 2 Samuel

**Author:** Unknown

**Date:** 10<sup>th</sup> century, B.C. – probably written after the division of Israel into the Northern and Southern Kingdoms in 931 B.C.

Our modern books of 1 Samuel and 2 Samuel are considered one book in the Hebrew Bible. The two books of Samuel are historical books (all the books from Joshua through Esther fall into that category). Second Samuel tells about the reign of King David.

**General Outline:** Second Samuel may be generally divided as follows:

1. David's rise to reign over all of Israel (chapters 1 – 5).
2. King David made Jerusalem his capital and his kingdom grew (chapters 6 – 10).
3. David's great sins and their consequences (chapters 11 – 20).
4. The later years of King David's reign (chapters 21 – 24).

**Theme:** The theme of this quarter's study is "***Costs of Disobedience***." Disobedience toward God (sin) always costs us something. Often the cost of sin reaches beyond the sinner to hurt his or her family and friends, as well. Throughout this study of 2 Samuel, you will discover numerous examples of the costs of disobedience.

**Parallel Passages:** Many of the events described in 2 Samuel are also included in the book of 1 Chronicles. Additional insight can sometimes be gained from these parallel passages. References to those parallel passages are included in the **Daily Bible Reading Guide** (pages 4-5) when possible.

## Sin's Impact on Others

*“I’m only hurting myself.”*

How many people have used those words to justify their sin? Dan felt that his drinking didn’t affect anyone else, but it actually hurt his wife and their children. Samantha thought her smoking was no one else’s business, but when she lost her health and her family was adversely impacted by second-hand smoke she saw things differently. Alex insisted that his gambling wasn’t hurting anyone, until he lost his home and his family ended up on the street. Suzanne thought her secret relationship with the boss was her own business until they both lost their jobs and he lost his family.

One of the devil’s most popular lies is that our sin doesn’t affect anyone else. In this lesson you will learn about the death of King Saul and David’s subsequent rise to the throne, but you will also see some examples of sin’s terrible impact on others.

**2 Sam. 1:1-3** After the battle described in 1 Sam. 31, a man came to David in **Ziklag** (see the **Map** on page 6).

**2 Sam. 1:4** What did the man tell David?

**2 Sam. 1:5-10** David wanted to know how the man knew Saul and Jonathan were dead. What did the man tell David?

First Samuel 31 presents a different story of Saul’s death. Which one is correct? Probably this young Amalekite was an opportunist who happened upon Saul’s dead body, stole the king’s crown and bracelet, and then sought to get in good with Israel’s new king by claiming to have killed Saul. Remember that the Lord pledged to remove Saul from being king because he disobeyed God (1 Sam. 13:13-14; 15:28). Saul’s sin not only cost him his kingdom and his life, but it also cost the life of Saul’s innocent son Jonathan.



**2 Sam. 1:11-12** How did David react to the news of Saul's death?

**2 Sam. 1:13-14** The young Amalekite no doubt thought he would be a hero for claiming to have killed King Saul. What did David ask him?

**2 Sam. 1:15** What did David do to the young man?

**2 Sam. 1:16** Why did he do that?

David mourned for Saul and Jonathan (v. 17-27). Verses 25-27 remind us of David's great love for Jonathan.

**2 Sam. 2:1** Remember that David was in Philistine territory in Ziklag. What did he ask the Lord?

Where did God tell him to go (see the **Map** on p. 6)?

**2 Sam. 2:2-4** David, his wives, and his soldiers settled in **Hebron**. What did the men of Judah do?

The "*house of Judah*" included the two southern tribes, Simeon and Judah. David was now king, but only over these two tribes.

**2 Sam. 2:8** **Abner** was Saul's cousin and the commander of his army. Now that Saul was dead, what did Abner do?

**2 Sam. 2:9** What did Abner do with **Ish-bosheth**?

**2 Sam. 2:10** Who was king over Israel (the northern tribes)?

Who was king over Judah (the southern tribes)?

**2 Sam. 2:11** How long did David reign in Hebron?

God chose David to be the new king over all Israel (1 Sam. 16:1-13). Saul and Jonathan knew this (1 Sam. 23:17), so surely Abner and Ish-bosheth knew it, too. Ish-bosheth disobeyed God in seizing the throne and Abner sinned by starting a civil war.

**2 Sam. 2:18** David had a sister named **Zeruiah**. Three of her sons (David's nephews) were in David's army. What were their names? \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_. **Joab** was David's commander.

**2 Sam. 2:19-32** There was a bloody civil war, in which David's army defeated Ish-bosheth's army. According to verses 30-31, how many died in this warfare?

**Concluding Thoughts:** Does our sin really impact others? Let's review what we have discovered in this lesson:

- King Saul disobeyed God (in 1 Sam.). His sin cost him the kingdom and his life, but it also cost the lives of Jonathan and two other sons (1 Sam. 31:2).
- The young Amalekite lied about killing Saul, for which he paid with his life. Did he have a family? We don't know; but if so his sin cost them dearly. Did they ever find out what happened to him? We'll never know.
- Ish-bosheth disobeyed God in seizing the throne that rightfully belonged to David. We'll learn about the cost of his sin next week.
- Abner pushed Ish-bosheth onto the throne and incited a civil war, costing the lives of hundreds of Israelites. Because of Abner's pride and ambition, hundreds of wives, children, and parents felt the grief of losing a loved one.

All sin is disobedience toward God. Is it true that your sin only hurts you? Not on your life! **Your sin always carries a cost and hurts others.** If you disobey God, your family will suffer.

Do you want to avoid hurting your family, friends, and others? Confess your sin (admit that it is wrong), turn away from it (stop doing it), and obey God in everything you know to do.

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**Project:** Take steps to correct any disobedient behavior this week. Do the **Daily Bible Readings** (pages 4-5) each day.

## Selfish Ambition

It's a dog-eat-dog world out there. These days you've got to claw your way to the top any way you can, even if that means stepping on your co-workers in the process. Like they say, all is fair in love and war; the modern workplace and job market is certainly a battleground. If you have to pad your resume' or lie a little to make yourself look good to a prospective employer, so what? After all, everyone else is doing it. What if you steal answers to a test or get someone else to write your term paper, who's going to know? So what if you lie on your tax form; isn't it better for you to keep your money than for the government to waste it?

It's fine to have dreams and goals of getting ahead in life, but when our ambitions move us to lie, steal, use trickery, or hurt others, then we can be sure we are out of God's will. This quarter's study of 2 Samuel is about the costs of disobedience. In this lesson we will learn about some people who disobeyed God by hurting others to try to get ahead. What will such selfish ambition cost them? Read the following verses to find out.

**2 Sam. 3:1**     The bloody civil war between **Ish-bosheth** and **David** continued. Who was growing stronger?

**2 Sam. 3:6**     Remember that **Abner** was the commander of Ish-bosheth's army. What did Abner do?

**2 Sam. 3:7**     What did Ish-bosheth ask Abner?

Ancient kings often kept a harem of concubines. By taking Saul's concubine, Abner was actually trying to steal Ish-bosheth's throne.

**2 Sam. 3:8**     Did Abner admit and repent of his wrong?

**2 Sam. 3:9-10**     What did Abner vow to do?

**2 Sam. 3:12** What did Abner offer to do for David?

Abner's selfish ambition moved him to try to steal the throne of Israel. When he got caught he deserted Ish-bosheth to join David's army in Hebron. He promised to rally all of Israel behind David.

**2 Sam. 3:23-24** How did **Joab**, David's general, react to the news?

**2 Sam. 3:25** What did he say Abner had come to do?

**2 Sam. 3:27** What did Joab do to Abner?

David said he was not responsible for Abner's murder (v. 28-30) and even led in public mourning for him (v. 31-39). The northern tribes were loyal to Abner and David needed their support.

**2 Sam. 4:1** How did Ish-bosheth (Saul's son) react to the news of Abner's death?

**2 Sam. 4:4** This verse introduces Jonathan's disabled son, whose name was \_\_\_\_\_. You will learn more about him later.

**2 Sam. 4:5** Two captains in Ish-bosheth's army came to him. What was Ish-bosheth doing at noon?

**2 Sam. 4:6-7** What did they do to Ish-bosheth?

**2 Sam. 4:8** Where did they take Ish-bosheth's head?

What did they say?

These men thought they would earn David's favor by murdering Ish-bosheth. Their ambition drove them to cold-blooded murder.

**2 Sam. 4:9-10** What previous incident did David recall (1:6-16)?

**2 Sam. 4:11-12** What did David do to these two men?

**Concluding Thoughts:** Abner's ambition caused him to steal, commit adultery, and desert his king. He said he would rally all the tribes of Israel behind David, but can you really trust a lying, stealing, adulterous deserter? What did Abner get in exchange for his selfish ambition? Joab unceremoniously murdered him by the city gate of Hebron.

Ish-bosheth's ambition led him to claim the throne of his father Saul, even though it was God's will for David to be king. The real power behind his throne, however, was Abner. When he deserted Ish-bosheth and went over to David's side Ish-bosheth became terribly weakened. What did Ish-bosheth get in exchange for his selfish ambition? He was murdered in his own bed.

The two men who murdered Ish-bosheth were also ambitious. They thought they would get in good with David, perhaps hoping for promotions to high places in his army. Even though they were officers in Ish-bosheth's army, they murdered him in his sleep. What did those two men get in exchange for their ambition? David executed them and hanged their dismembered bodies for all to see.

The lesson for us from these chapters is that **if you use deceit, trickery, and hurting others to get ahead, you will eventually pay for your actions.** The Bible says it this way: *"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting"* (Gal. 6:7-8).

Do you have selfish ambitions? Are you using dishonest or hurtful methods to get ahead? If so, you will eventually pay for your actions. Why don't you confess your sins to God right now? Ask Him to forgive you and make you an honest and caring person.

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**Project:** If you have wronged others in your quest to achieve, go back to them and ask forgiveness. Memorize **Galatians 6:7-8**.

## Does the End Justify the Means?

That is a question that philosophers have debated for years. Does it matter how we do a thing if the end result is good? If we are feeding starving children or helping missionaries in far-off lands, does it really matter where the money comes from? The question of whether the end justifies the means is sometimes referred to as situational ethics or moral relativism. In this age of widespread biblically illiteracy, many people are confused about what is right and wrong. Here are a few examples.

- Most people think killing is wrong and many even oppose the death penalty for convicted murderers, but women in this country can still abort their unborn baby for any reason at all.
- Gambling used to be considered a vice or sin, but today many charities use bingo, poker, and “Vegas-style” fundraiser events. States operate lotteries to help fund education.
- Many people will tell a lie if it is for a “good cause.”
- Churches water down the Bible and use wild rock music in their services to “attract the lost.”

In this lesson we will discover that King David tried to do a very good thing, but he went about it the wrong way.

**2 Sam. 5:1** Who came to David in **Hebron** (see **Map**, page 6)?

**2 Sam. 5:2** What did they acknowledge that the LORD had said concerning David?

**2 Sam. 5:3** What did the elders do?

David was now king over all of Israel. The country was united, but it still needed a capital: a center of government and worship.

**2 Sam. 5:6-9** David conquered **Jerusalem** (see Map on page 6), making it the new capital of his unified kingdom.

**2 Sam. 5:10** “And David went on, and grew \_\_\_\_\_, and the \_\_\_\_\_ God of hosts was \_\_\_\_\_ him.”

King Hiram of **Tyre** (see the **Map** on page 6) sent craftsmen and materials to build David a palace in Jerusalem (v. 11-12). God gave David and his army victories over the Philistines (v. 17-25).

**2 Sam. 6:1-2** David gathered his soldiers. What did he want to bring up to Jerusalem?

The Ark of the Covenant had been in **Baale of Judah** (an ancient name for **Kiriath-jearim** – see the **Map** on page 6) for 20 years, ever since the Philistines returned it to Israel (1 Sam. 6:21 – 7:2). Now that David ruled over a united kingdom from his new capital city, it was time to bring the Ark into Jerusalem.

**2 Sam. 6:3** Where did they place the Ark?

Remember that the Ark was the gold-covered box containing the tablets of the Ten Commandments. Atop the Ark was the mercy seat, where the Lord met with men. The Ark of the Covenant represented God’s presence. Read Exodus 25:12-14 and Numbers 4:15. How was the Ark supposed to be transported?

**2 Sam. 6:4-5** They brought the Ark out with great celebration.

**2 Sam. 6:6** The Ark rocked unsteadily on the cart. What did Uzzah do?

**2 Sam. 6:7** What happened to Uzzah?

Why (see Num. 4:15)?

David was upset and fearful. They left the Ark in the home of Obed-edom for three months before trying to move it again.

**2 Sam. 6:13** How did they transport the Ark this time?

**2 Sam. 6:14** “And David \_\_\_\_\_ before the \_\_\_\_\_  
with all his might; and David was \_\_\_\_\_  
with a linen \_\_\_\_\_ (robe).”

**2 Sam. 6:15** They came into Jerusalem with great celebration.

**2 Sam. 6:16** How did David’s wife Michal feel about him?

**2 Sam. 6:17** Where did they put the Ark?

What did David do next?

**Concluding Thoughts:** King David wanted to do a good thing. After years of bloody civil war Israel was united again. David had established and fortified a new capital city. He wanted to bring the Ark into Jerusalem to make it the center of worship for all Israel. This was a good thing, and was a step toward the eventual building of the permanent Temple in the place of God’s choosing (Deut. 12:1-14), just north of David’s city on Mount Moriah.

Since David was doing a good thing, why was his first attempt to transport the Ark of the Covenant marred by the death of Uzzah? Simply because he did not transport the Ark in the correct manner. He did a good thing but he didn’t do it God’s way. David disobeyed God in his method of transporting the Ark, costing a man’s life.

We opened this lesson with the question, “Does the end justify the means?” King David’s experience with the Ark vividly illustrates the fact that our desire to do a good thing doesn’t excuse us for doing it the wrong way. **The end doesn’t justify the use of improper means.** If we disobey God we will pay the cost.

Are you using dishonest, unethical, or inappropriate methods to do supposedly “good” things? God will never bless that. Confess your sin and commit to doing things God’s way.

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**Project:** Memorize **1 Corinthians 14:40**.



## Who Is It?

Imagine for a moment that you go home from work or school as usual, pull out your house key, and put it in the lock. You try to turn the key, but to your surprise, the door does not unlock. After a few more tries you go around to the back door, but your key won't unlock that door either. Realizing that other family members should be home by this time, you ring the doorbell. No one answers, so you ring again. In desperation you pound on the door, hoping someone will let you in.

Finally one of your family members cracks the door cautiously and asks, "Who is it?" You identify yourself and ask to come in, but the family member refuses. You insist that this is your house and you want to come in, but your family member says, "I don't know you, I've never seen you before, and I won't let you in. Go away!"

That would be a strange and upsetting experience. How would you feel if your close family rejected you and would not receive you into your own home? It's hard for us to imagine such rejection, but that's the sort of rejection Jesus Christ experienced.

**John 1:1** Jesus is called the Word because He is the full expression of everything God wants to say to us. How long has He existed (see also verse 2)?

"... and the Word (Jesus) was \_\_\_\_\_."

Jesus Christ is the **Word** of God. In fact, He is **God**.

**John 1:3** What was made by Him?

Jesus Christ is the **Creator** of everything in the universe.

**John 1:4** "In Him was \_\_\_\_\_; and the life was the \_\_\_\_\_ of men."

**John 1:5** Did the sin-darkened world understand Him?

Jesus Christ is the giver of **life** and the **light** for our dark world. The man sent to bear witness of (point people to) Christ was John the Baptist (verses 6-8).

**John 1:9** Jesus “was the \_\_\_\_\_ Light.”

**John 1:10** “He (Jesus) was \_\_\_\_\_ the world, and the world was \_\_\_\_\_ by Him.”

Jesus Christ is the true **light** and the **creator** of the world.

**John 1:10** Did the world know who Jesus was?

**John 1:11** “His own” refers to the Jewish people. Did they receive Jesus?

Jesus Christ was **rejected** by His own people.

**John 1:12** What did Jesus do for those who received Him?

Who was given this blessing?

Jesus Christ is the **Savior** for those who believe in Him.

**John 1:14** What did Jesus (the Word) do?

Describe His glory:

Jesus Christ was **God in human flesh**. Verses 15-28 tell about the ministry of John the Baptist. Look at verse 26.

**John 1:26** Jesus was among His people. Did they know Him?

Jesus Christ was **not recognized** by His people as their Savior.

**John 1:29** What did John call Jesus?

What does Jesus do?

Jesus Christ is the **Lamb of God** who has power to **take away sin**.

**John 1:32-33** How did John know who Jesus was?

Jesus Christ was **revealed by the Spirit** to be the Lamb of God.

**John 1:34** What did John call Jesus?

Jesus Christ is the **Son of God**.

**Concluding Thoughts:** Christmas, the day we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, is tomorrow.

The Bible reveals that Jesus Christ came to His own people, but they rejected Him. Why did they reject Him? Because they didn't know who He was. Concerning Jesus Christ, here are the facts John 1 reveals to answer the question, "Who is it?"

1. Jesus is the **Word** of God.
2. Jesus Christ is **God**.
3. He is the **Creator**.
4. Jesus is the giver of **life** and the **true light**.
5. He was **rejected** by His own people.
6. Jesus Christ is the **Savior**.
7. Jesus was **God in human flesh**.
8. He was **not recognized** by His people as their Savior.
9. Jesus is the **Lamb of God** who has power to **take away sin**.
10. Christ was **revealed by the Spirit**.
11. Jesus Christ is the **Son of God**.

That's who Jesus is, but have **you** received Him as **your** Savior? If so, thank Him for suffering rejection to come and save you. If not, read the verses printed on the back of this book, turn from your sins, and place your trust in Jesus for salvation. Merry Christmas!

---

**Project:** As you enjoy loving fellowship with your family and friends this Christmas, remember that Jesus Christ was rejected by the people He loved the most.

## Marriage – Man’s Way or God’s Way?

What constitutes a marriage? How would you define marriage?

For centuries, the Christian world defined marriage as a union between a man and a woman. Laws were made to legitimize and protect such marriages. Recently, however, same-sex marriages have become legally recognized in America and other countries.

Many people in America today would define marriage as a union of two persons, regardless of their gender. In some religions and some parts of the world polygamy is openly practiced.

Are we free to define marriage any way we choose? What, if anything, does the Bible say about marriage? If God has a design for marriage, what happens when people choose to ignore His plan?

What is God’s plan for marriage? Did King David practice marriage man’s way or God’s way? This week’s lesson is drawn from several different scripture passages. First, let’s start with God’s original design for marriage, given in the Garden of Eden.

**Genesis 2:24** “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall \_\_\_\_\_ unto his \_\_\_\_\_: and they shall be \_\_\_\_\_ flesh.”  
How many wives are there to be in a marriage?

From the very beginning, God’s design for marriage has been for one man to be united to one woman for life. Since these instructions are found in the Old Testament, some dismiss them as old-fashioned or obsolete. Read Matthew 19:5-6. During His earthly ministry Jesus Christ quoted Genesis 2:24 and reaffirmed God’s design for marriage (see also Mark 10:7-8). The principle of **marriage as a union of one man and one woman** is repeated in the New Testament. Turn to the book of Ephesians.

**Ephesians 5:31** “For this cause shall a \_\_\_\_\_ leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his \_\_\_\_\_, and they \_\_\_\_\_ shall be \_\_\_\_\_ flesh.”

Now let's turn our attention back to King David. Did he follow God's plan for marriage?

**2 Sam. 3:2-5** After becoming king of Judah, David fathered six sons. How many wives are named in these verses?

Let's review David's marital situation. After he killed Goliath, David was given King Saul's daughter Michal as his wife (1 Sam. 18:20-29). Later, David took two more wives (1 Sam. 25:39-43). Before becoming king, David had at least 3 wives, and after becoming king of Judah he had at least 7. Why would David do such a thing? Did God approve of David's polygamy?

Polygamy was common in the ancient Middle East (as it is in some non-Christian cultures even today). Why? There were two main reasons. First, men needed sons to work their farms and defend them against attackers. If one wife couldn't bear enough sons, take two or three more. Secondly, in such cultures men are pre-eminent and women are viewed as nothing more than property. If a man wants six wives, so be it: after all, he's a man. When Christianity touches a culture, however, women are honored and elevated.

King David was a polygamist. Does that mean God approves of polygamy? **Polygamy always causes family strife and conflict;** whenever a Bible character practiced polygamy the Bible tells us about the problems in their families.

Do you remember Joseph? He was one of 12 sons born to 4 wives. His brothers wanted to kill him and finally sold him into slavery. David's family was no exception. Among the sons listed in 2 Samuel 3:2-5, one raped his half-sister, another murdered his half-brother and later led a rebellion against his father, and a third son sought to seize the throne from David's appointed successor. Turn to chapter 5.

**2 Sam. 5:13**     What did David do after becoming king of all Israel and moving to Jerusalem?

Concubines were female slaves kept by men purely for sexual gratification. They had no rights and their sons were not heirs.

Had God given any specific instructions about whether kings should have multiple wives? Read Deuteronomy 17:14-20.

**Deut. 17:17**     **Why** were kings supposed not to have many wives?

God knows that **no man can keep his heart right while having marital relations with more than one woman.**

**2 Sam. 5:14-16**     How many more sons were born to David?

One thing we must realize is that David's family in no way mirrors our Christian image of a loving father and mother living with and nurturing their children. Each wife or concubine probably lived in separate quarters with her children. David fathered many children by many different women, but he was never a "Daddy."

Remember that two weeks ago we learned about David joyously bringing the Ark of the Covenant into Jerusalem. Let's see what happened in David's "happy" family on that day of celebration.

**2 Sam. 6:16**     How did David's wife Michal react when she saw David rejoicing before the Lord?

**2 Sam. 6:20**     Michal came out to meet David when he returned home. How did she greet him?

**2 Sam. 6:21-22**     Do you detect some tension in their relationship?

**2 Sam. 6:23**     What does this verse tell you about Michal?

Even though Michal was his wife, David had nothing more to do with her and she died childless. This was no big deal for David: after all, he had dozens of other women available to him.

**Concluding Thoughts:** King David disobeyed God by taking many wives and concubines. The theme of this quarter’s study is “*Costs of Disobedience*.” David and his family paid a heavy price because he violated God’s plan for marriage. In fact, as we study the rest of 2 Samuel, we will learn about much more trouble in David’s family. It can all be traced back to David’s disobedience.

**You can’t have a happy marriage if you don’t do it God’s way.**

Polygamy may not be common in our society, but many people still choose to handle their marriages man’s way rather than God’s way. For example, huge numbers of couples now “cohabitate” – living together without being married. When they get tired of their current partner they simply move out and find another. Among those who actually marry, many use divorce as a way to trade in their old spouse for a newer model. Sex outside of marriage is rampant. You may not know anyone with two wives, but many married people have a “mistress” on the side. Sadly, children pay a very heavy price for their parents’ immorality.

**There can be no true happiness, security, peace, or contentment in the home unless we follow God’s rules for marriage.** God’s plan is for two believers to come together in an exclusive, lifelong, covenant relationship.

Have you violated God’s plan for marriage? Confess your sin and ask God’s forgiveness. Live by God’s rules from now on.

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**Project:** Memorize **Ephesians 5:31**. Follow God’s commandments to have a happy and blessed life.

**Promises Made, Promises Kept**

We often make promises to others. “I’ll do the dishes;” “I will be there no later than 3 o’clock;” “I’ll have that report ready first thing tomorrow morning;” “You can count on me to pay that bill;” “I will love, honor, and cherish you until the day I die.” Promises can be wonderful things, but some people don’t do the things they promise. In truth, a promise is nothing more than nice words unless the person making the promise can be counted on to follow through and do what he says.

We all make promises, but do you keep your promises?

In this lesson we will learn about some important promises, and discover whether those promises were kept.

**2 Sam. 7:1** In the opening chapters of 2 Samuel, David became king of Judah and six years later he rose to rule over all of Israel. He captured **Jerusalem** (see the **Map** on page 6) and moved the Ark of the Covenant into the city, making Jerusalem the governmental and religious capital of Israel.

**2 Sam. 7:2** “That the king said unto Nathan the prophet, See now, I dwell in an \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_, but the \_\_\_\_\_ of God dwelleth within \_\_\_\_\_.”

Since David lived in a fine palace and had rest from warfare, he wanted to build a permanent Temple in which to house the Ark. This was a noble dream.

**2 Sam. 7:3** What did Nathan tell King David?

**2 Sam. 7:4** What happened that night?

**2 Sam. 7:5** What did God (through Nathan) ask David?



**2 Sam. 7:6** The Ark represented God’s presence. Where had it been housed since the days of the Exodus?

**2 Sam. 7:7** What did God ask David?

**2 Sam. 7:8-9** God reminded David of His blessings upon him.

**2 Sam. 7:10** What promises had God made to Israel?

**2 Sam. 7:11** Did God keep those promises?

What else did he promise David?

The word “*house*” in that verse doesn’t mean a place to live; it refers to a dynasty, David’s descendants, who would rule over Israel.

**2 Sam. 7:12** What did God promise to do after David died?

**2 Sam. 7:13** God made two promises in this verse:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

**2 Sam. 7:16** What did God promise?

Nathan told all these things to David, who prayed and thanked the LORD (v. 17-29). David was overwhelmed by God’s goodness. In chapter 8 David defeated some enemies and enlarged his kingdom.

**2 Sam. 9:1** What did David ask?

Remember that David and Jonathan (King Saul’s son) loved each other very much (1 Sam. 18:1-3). In fact, David had promised to show kindness to Jonathan’s descendants (1 Sam. 20:14-17).

**2 Sam. 9:3** What did David ask one of Saul’s servants?

What did the servant tell David?

David sent for Jonathan's disabled son **Mephibosheth** (see 2 Sam. 4:4). Mephibosheth humbled himself before the king.

**2 Sam. 9:7**     What did David promise Mephibosheth?

**2 Sam. 9:8**     How did Mephibosheth respond?

King David restored all of Saul's property to Mephibosheth and promised to feed him at the king's table for the rest of his life. In chapter 10, David and his army fought and defeated the Ammonites.

**Concluding Thoughts:** What promises did you find in this lesson?

- God promised that David would have a son who would build a permanent Temple. The book of 1 Kings reveals that God kept that promise: David's son Solomon became king and built the Temple in Jerusalem.
- God promised to establish David's throne forever. Did God keep that promise? For almost 400 years David's descendants ruled from Jerusalem. Israel does not have a king today, but God's promise finds its ultimate fulfillment in the reign of King Jesus. Speaking of Jesus, the angel Gabriel told Mary, "*He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto Him the **throne** of His father David: And He shall reign over the house of Jacob **for ever**; and of His kingdom there shall be **no end***" (Luke 1:32-33).
- David promised kindness to Jonathan's children: he kept that promise by caring for crippled Mephibosheth.

God always keeps His promises. His greatest promise is that anyone who truly trusts in Jesus Christ will be saved (Rom. 10:13).

Do you know Jesus Christ as your personal Savior? If not, would you please read the verses printed on the back of this book? If you confess your sins and place your trust in Jesus, He will give you eternal life. You can trust God to keep that promise!

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**Project:** Memorize **Romans 10:13**. Read the Bible every day.

## Costs of Lust

Lust is a strong desire for something that you cannot morally or legally fulfill. In other words, if you want something you are not allowed to have, that is lust. If a child wants a cookie but his mother has forbidden him to have it: that is lust. When a thief desires your money: that is lust. The type of lust we most often think of is when someone desires anyone other than their lawful spouse in a sexual manner. Such lust is rampant in our modern sex-charged culture. Movies, TV shows, magazines, and even advertisements are designed to arouse lust. Many of our modern clothing styles are intended to stimulate lust.

Is there anything wrong with lust? After all, if the desire is only in your mind, does that hurt anyone? The problem with that argument is that **lust in the mind leads to immoral actions**. Sin starts as an idea before it is carried out in real life. The Bible puts it this way: *“But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death”* (James 1:14-15).

This lesson is about the costs of lust. As we study the following verses we will discover what one man’s lust cost and who it hurt.

**2 Sam. 11:1**    What time of year was it?

Where was King David?

**2 Sam. 11:2**    David arose and walked upon his rooftop. What did he see?

What did he notice about her?

Remember that David had plenty of wives and concubines; but what he had was not good enough: he wanted **another** woman who was **not** his wife. David lusted for the woman he saw, directly violating

the last of God's Ten Commandments: "*Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife*" (Ex. 20:17).

**2 Sam. 11:3** What did David do?

**Uriah** was one of David's trusted military leaders.

**2 Sam. 11:4** "And David sent messengers, and \_\_\_\_\_ her; and she \_\_\_\_\_ in unto him, and he \_\_\_\_\_ with her."

David's lust in verses 2 and 3 led to an act of sinful adultery in verse 4. David violated the 8<sup>th</sup> commandment: "*Thou shalt not steal*" (Ex. 20:15), and David and Bathsheba both violated the 7<sup>th</sup> commandment: "*Thou shalt not commit adultery*" (Ex. 20:14).

**2 Sam. 11:5** What happened next?

David had a problem. What would he do? He tried a cover-up.

**2 Sam. 11:6-8** Why did David bring Uriah back from battle?

**2 Sam. 11:9-13** Why didn't David's plan to cover his sin (by bringing Uriah home to his wife) work?

**2 Sam. 11:14** What did David do next?

**2 Sam. 11:15** What did he tell Joab to do with Uriah?

**2 Sam. 11:16-17** What did Joab do?

What happened to Uriah?

David violated the 9<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> commandments (Ex. 20:16, 13) by lying and committing murder. Lust is powerful; think how far David's lust took him!

**2 Sam. 11:26** What did Bathsheba do when she learned that her husband Uriah was dead?

**2 Sam. 11:27** What did David do when Bathsheba's time of mourning was completed?

David thought he had gotten away with his sin. He stole Uriah's wife and had him killed. He married Bathsheba and she gave birth to their son. Everything was neat and tidy and only a few people knew about David's sins; but did David really "get away with" it? Look back at verse 27.

**2 Sam. 11:27** "But the thing that David had done \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_." Did David get away with his sin?

**Concluding Thoughts:** Lust is a powerful desire for something you cannot morally or legally have. Lust is in the mind but it draws us to do sinful actions. As we have seen in David's life, lust causes us to break God's rules.

This lesson is titled "Costs of Lust." What did David's lust cost?

1. **Bathsheba lost her honor** and became an immoral woman.
2. **Uriah lost his wife.** He was a faithful, devoted warrior, but his king – his commander in chief – stole his wife away from him.
3. **Uriah lost his life.** After satisfying his lustful desires, David callously ordered Uriah's murder. What a betrayal of trust!
4. **Other soldiers died** (verse 24) to help cover David's sin.
5. **David became an adulterer and a murderer.**
6. **God was displeased with David.** As bad as the other costs were, this was perhaps the highest cost of David's lust.

David's lust cost him (and others) dearly. How can we defend against lust and its terrible costs? Ask God to help you **recognize** lustful thoughts. Ask God to enable you to **resist** your lustful desires. **Replace** the lustful thoughts with godly ones by quoting scripture or singing a gospel song. The Bible says it this way: "*Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh*" (Gal. 5:16).

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**Project:** Memorize **James 1:14-15**. Recognize – resist – replace.

**Costs of David's Sins**

In last week's lesson we learned that King David had lustful thoughts toward a woman. His lust led him to commit sinful actions: he stole another man's wife, committed adultery, lied to try to "cover his tracks," and murdered one of his trusted soldiers. After marrying the widowed Bathsheba David probably thought he had gotten away with his sin, but 2 Samuel 11:27 reveals that the LORD was displeased with David's behavior.

Will David ever come clean and admit what he did? Will he confess his sin to God? What will God do about David's sins? Will there be any costs or consequences for David's sins? We will find answers to those questions as we study 2 Samuel 12.

**2 Sam. 12:1** Who did the LORD send to David?

He told David a story about two men.

**2 Sam. 12:2** Describe the rich man's possessions:

**2 Sam. 12:3** What did the poor man own?

**2 Sam. 12:4** What did the rich man use to feed his guest?

**2 Sam.  
12:5-6** How did David react?

What did he say should be done to the rich man?

**2 Sam. 12:7** "And Nathan said to David, \_\_\_\_\_ art the man."

Nathan used the fictional story to arouse David's sympathy and help him to see the injustice and selfishness of his own actions.

**2 Sam.  
12:7-8** What are some things God had done for David?

**2 Sam. 12:9** “Wherefore hast thou \_\_\_\_\_ the commandment of the LORD, to do \_\_\_\_\_ in his sight?”

We use the word “despised” to speak of things that are hated, but the biblical meaning is to disesteem, take lightly, or think little of something. David did not think God’s commandments forbidding murder and adultery were important enough to obey.

**2 Sam. 12:9** What specific sins did God name?

In verses 10-14 God told David some of the costs of his sins.

**2 Sam. 12:10** “Now therefore the \_\_\_\_\_ shall never \_\_\_\_\_ from thine \_\_\_\_\_.” Violence plagued David’s family in his lifetime and for generations to come.

**2 Sam. 12:11** “Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will raise up \_\_\_\_\_ against \_\_\_\_\_ out of thine own \_\_\_\_\_.” In later years David’s son Absalom led a rebellion and civil war against his own father. What did God say would happen to David’s wives?

**2 Sam. 12:12** David tried to keep his sins secret. Would the costs of his sins remain secret?

**2 Sam. 12:13** “And David said unto Nathan, I have \_\_\_\_\_ against the \_\_\_\_\_.” God graciously forgave David’s sin and spared him from death.

**2 Sam. 12:14** What had David’s sin given God’s enemies opportunity to do?

Our behavior **matters!** Whenever we act like lost sinners, we give the world opportunities to ridicule our faith and our Lord.

**2 Sam. 12:14** What would happen to the innocent baby?

**2 Sam. 12:15** “And the LORD struck the child that Uriah’s wife bare unto David, and it was very \_\_\_\_\_.”

David fasted and prayed for seven days, hoping the Lord might graciously spare the child's life. Finally, it died.

**2 Sam. 12:20** What did David do after the baby died?

**2 Sam. 12:23** What did he say about being reunited with his dead child?

**2 Sam. 12:24** Who was the 2<sup>nd</sup> son born to David and Bathsheba?

**Concluding Thoughts:** Through Nathan's parable, David finally recognized the selfishness and sinfulness of his actions. When David confessed his sin, he did not try to excuse or justify his actions. He agreed that he had violated God's commands and simply admitted, *"I have sinned against the LORD."* David wrote Psalm 51 and Psalm 32 during this time, expressing his regret, his desire for forgiveness, and the joy he felt when God forgave him.

Even though David confessed his sin, there were still costs that resulted from his sinful actions. The innocent baby died, reminding us that our sins always hurt others. Also, the seeds of rebellion, murder, and family discord David sowed would bear terrible fruit for years to come. If we could ask him today, David would say his sin wasn't worth the cost.

All sin carries a cost. The Bible says it this way: *"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord"* (Rom. 6:23). The Good News in that verse is that if we place our faith in Jesus Christ, He will forgive us and give us eternal life. You see, **He paid the price** for your sin on the cross. Read the verses printed on the back of this book. If you have never done so before, confess your sins and trust Jesus Christ for salvation.

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**Project:** When you see hurt and heartache in the world, remember that these are some of the costs of mankind's sins. Read the **Daily Bible Readings** (pages 4-5) each day. Memorize **Romans 6:23**.



## The Apple Doesn't Fall Far from the Tree

Have you ever heard that old expression? Similar to the old saying, “Like father like son,” it means that children often mimic the behavior of their parents. It is not unusual for a child to walk, talk, and act much like his or her parent. You can often identify the parent simply by watching the child.

Children learn good traits from their parents, such as honesty, respectfulness, and a good work ethic. Unfortunately, they also pick up their parents’ bad traits. Patterns and expectations in family life are often repeated generation after generation.

David’s lust caused him to commit adultery and murder. When confronted by the prophet Nathan, David admitted and confessed his sin. In last week’s lesson, however, we learned that God said the sword would never depart from David’s house. In this lesson you will discover the first fulfillment of that prophecy.

Remember that King David, in violation of God’s rules (Deut. 17:17), had many wives and concubines. There were many half-brothers and half-sisters in David’s family. **Absalom** and **Tamar** were brother and sister, while **Amnon** was their half-brother.

**2 Sam. 13:1**     How did Amnon feel about his half-sister Tamar?

**2 Sam. 13:2**     Amnon had the same kind of lustful thoughts toward Tamar that his father David had toward Bathsheba.

The Jewish Law clearly forbid sexual relations between a brother and sister, even if she was only a half-sister (Lev. 18:9, 11). Such a relationship would be incestuous, just as David’s relationship with Bathsheba was adulterous. Both are simply wrong.

**2 Sam. 13:3-4**     Amnon told his friend (who was also his cousin) about his “problem.”

**2 Sam. 13:5** What did he suggest?

**2 Sam. 13:6-8** Amnon followed his friend's advice.

**2 Sam. 13:9** Where did he send all his servants?

**2 Sam. 13:10** Tamar brought the cakes to her brother's bedside.

**2 Sam. 13:11** What did Amnon do?

Tamar tried desperately to reason with her half-brother, but he overpowered her and raped her (verses 12-14).

**2 Sam. 13:15** What became of Amnon's so-called "love" for Tamar after he raped her?

Amnon threw Tamar out (v. 16-18). She put ashes on her head and tore her garment as signs of grief and shame (v. 19). Tamar went home to her brother Absalom's house, where she remained unmarried and childless the rest of her life (v. 20).

**2 Sam. 13:21** How did David feel about this incestuous rape?

Did he do anything about it?

**2 Sam. 13:22** How did Absalom feel about Amnon?

Two years later Absalom's servants were shearing sheep. This was a time of great celebration, so he invited all the king's sons to come to a special feast (verses 23-27).

**2 Sam. 13:28** What instructions did Absalom give his servants?

Just like David had arranged Uriah's death (2 Sam. 11:14-17), Absalom orchestrated his brother Amnon's death.

**2 Sam. 13:29** What did Absalom's servants do?

**2 Sam. 13:32** How long had Absalom planned to kill Amnon?

**2 Sam. 13:37** Absalom ran away and stayed with his grandfather (3:3), the king of **Geshur** (see the **Map** on page 6).

**2 Sam. 13:38** How long did Absalom stay in Geshur?

**2 Sam. 13:39** What did David want to do?

**Concluding Thoughts:** The apple doesn't fall far from the tree. Just as David allowed his lustful thoughts to become sinful reality in an adulterous affair with another man's wife, his son Amnon acted on his lustful thoughts by raping his half-sister. Just as David plotted the murder of Uriah with cold-blooded calculation, his son Absalom planned for two years to kill his half-brother Amnon. Like father like son; David's sons duplicated his sinful actions.

One lesson for parents from this sordid story is that our children are watching our behavior. Parents must model morality and godliness if they want their children to be moral and godly people.

That is the natural explanation for the actions of David's sons, but there was more in operation than mere natural tendencies. After David's sin with Bathsheba, God clearly told him that "*the sword shall never depart from thine house*" (2 Sam. 12:10). Absalom's murder of Amnon was the first fulfillment of that terrible prophecy.

The theme of this quarter's study is, "***Costs of Disobedience.***" All sin is disobedience to Almighty God. David witnessed the costs of his sin being paid by his children. Amnon paid for his sin with his life. Absalom's sin cost his relationship with his father.

Are you contemplating some sinful act? Don't do it! There **will be** terrible costs to pay.

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**Project:** Whatever kind of legacy you want to leave your children, you must start living **today**. Remember, you are being watched.

## More Costs of David's Sins

Have you ever bought something on credit? Credit can be a wonderful thing because it enables you to make a large purchase now but spread the cost over several months or years. Credit can also be troublesome, however, because another payment is due each and every month. Have you ever noticed that those creditors never forget to send you a bill? Part of the cost of buying on credit is that the bills keep coming.

Back in chapter 11, we learned that King David committed adultery and murder to steal another man's wife. David eventually confessed his sins, but in chapter 12, the Lord told him some of the costs of his sin. In chapter 13, David saw incest and murder touch his own family. Were there still more costs for David's sins?

Remember that after murdering his brother Amnon, David's son Absalom fled the country. In chapter 14, David's general Joab convinced David to bring Absalom back to Jerusalem, but it took two more years before David agreed to see Absalom face to face.

**2 Sam. 15:1**    The chariots, horses, and men to run before him were trappings of a king (1 Sam. 8:11). Absalom did these things to make himself *look* like a king.

**2 Sam. 15:2-3**    What did Absalom do every day?

**2 Sam. 15:4**    What did he promise if he was king?

**2 Sam. 15:5**    How did Absalom treat everyone?

**2 Sam. 15:6**    What did his actions accomplish?

Almost like a modern politician, Absalom “campaigns” to become king. David was now an older man and probably less accessible to the people, but Absalom was everybody's friend.

**2 Sam. 15:10** What message did Absalom send throughout Israel?

**2 Sam. 15:11-12** Absalom left **Jerusalem** for **Hebron** (see the **Map** on page 6), taking soldiers and one of David's counselors with him. "And the conspiracy was \_\_\_\_\_; for the people \_\_\_\_\_ continually with \_\_\_\_\_."

**2 Sam. 15:13** What did the messenger tell David?

**2 Sam. 15:14** What did David tell his servants?

**2 Sam. 15:16** Who did he leave behind?

King David fled from Jerusalem, taking his family, servants, and loyal soldiers with him. He left some key people behind to serve as his spies. Absalom and his forces entered Jerusalem. David was on the run and Absalom was in the capital, but he still needed to do more to strengthen his hold on the throne.

**2 Sam. 16:20** What did Absalom ask his advisor?

**2 Sam. 16:21** "And Ahithophel said unto Absalom, Go in unto thy father's \_\_\_\_\_."

A new king usually claimed the harem of his predecessor. Doing so was a public statement that he was now the king and owned everything that had belonged to the previous king.

**2 Sam. 16:22** Where did they spread a tent?

What did Absalom do?

Who knew about this terrible act?

Absalom's repugnant action made it appear to all Israel that he was indeed the new king. Now Absalom needed to kill his father and destroy his forces.

**2 Sam. 17:22** Where did David go?

**2 Sam. 17:24** David and his people crossed the **Jordan River** and moved north to the city of **Mahanaim** (see the **Map** on page 6). What did Absalom and his soldiers do?

The stage was set for a dreadful and bloody civil war.

**Concluding Thoughts:** David's own son turned on him, led a rebellion against him, seized the throne, defiled his concubines, and pursued him with an army intent on his destruction. Why did poor David have to endure such terrible things?

These were more costs of David's sins. Turn back to chapter 12 and read verses 11-12. Why did David's son rebel against him? God said one of the costs of his sins with Bathsheba and Uriah was that *"I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house."* Absalom's rebellion was a fulfillment of God's promise and one of the costs of David's sins. In addition, Absalom's terrible behavior with David's concubines was another cost of his sins. God said, *"I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbor, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun."* David had tried to keep his sins secret, but God vowed *"I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun."* All of these promises were fulfilled in the horrible events found in this lesson.

Like a credit card bill or a loan payment that must be made every month, the costs of David's sins just kept on coming. The same is true for us. Our sin brings many painful costs and hurts many other people. Terrible consequences of our sins often haunt us for years. The worst cost of sin comes when a person never repents and places his trust in Jesus Christ: that person will suffer eternal torment in hell for his sin.

Have you confessed your sins? If not, please do so now.

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**Project:** Sin is costly. Ask God to help you avoid it at all costs.

## A Father's Regret

The word regret means to mourn a loss or to be very sorry for something you've done. Many people live with regret. They might lament a lost opportunity or feel sorry for past actions that have produced unpleasant results. The word regret implies that there is no way to go back and fix the problem or correct the mistake, making regret a very sad word. One of the saddest examples of regret is someone weeping over an open casket, wishing they could have one more conversation with their deceased loved one so they could settle some trivial dispute or set their relationship right again. The cold hard fact of death makes reconciliation or apology impossible, causing deep regret.

As you recall from previous lessons, King David had many wives and fathered many sons. He disobeyed God in having multiple wives and the cost of his disobedience was family discord and loss of the chance to be a godly father to his many children. In last week's lesson David's son Absalom rebelled and tried to seize the throne. David fled Jerusalem, and Absalom and his army followed. The stage was set for a bloody civil war, pitting father against son.

**2 Sam. 18:1-2** David organized his troops under three battlefield commanders, **Joab**, **Abishai**, and **Ittai**.

**2 Sam. 18:3** What did the soldiers tell David?

**2 Sam. 18:4** Where did David stand?

**2 Sam. 18:5** He instructed his commanders: "Deal \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ sake with the young man, even with \_\_\_\_\_." Who heard these orders?

**2 Sam. 18:6-8** There was a terrible bloody battle that day in the thick forest. Who won the battle?

**2 Sam. 18:9** Absalom encountered David's soldiers. What happened to him?

What a bizarre sight! The mule ran off, leaving Absalom hanging by his head or his thick hair from the limbs of a tree.

**2 Sam. 18:10-11** One of the soldiers told Joab. What did Joab ask?

**2 Sam. 18:12** Why didn't the soldier kill Absalom?

**2 Sam. 18:14** What did Joab do to Absalom?

**2 Sam. 18:15** What did his ten armor bearers do?

**2 Sam. 18:16** Joab called an end to the fighting.

**2 Sam. 18:17** What did they do with Absalom's body?

Messengers ran back to the city with news of the victory (v. 19-28).

**2 Sam. 18:29** What did David ask the first messenger?

**2 Sam. 18:32** What did he ask the second messenger?

David learned of the military victory, but his greatest concern was for his son Absalom. How would he react to news of his death?

**2 Sam. 18:33** "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would God I had \_\_\_\_\_ for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" You can sense David's deep regret.

**2 Sam. 19:1** Who heard about David's grief?

**2 Sam. 19:2-3** How did the victorious soldiers react to his grief?

**2 Sam. 19:4** What was David doing when his soldiers arrived?

**2 Sam. 19:5** What did Joab say David had done?



**2 Sam. 19:6** What did he say would have pleased David?

Joab warned David that if he didn't pull himself together and greet his victorious soldiers with encouraging words, they would desert him before morning. David followed Joab's advice. He returned to Jerusalem in triumph as king over all of Israel. In chapter 20 another revolt occurred, but it was quickly put down.

**Concluding Thoughts:** Why did David mourn so over Absalom's death? After all, Absalom had orchestrated a revolution against David, seized his throne and capital city, violated his concubines in a public show of disrespect, and chased him with a huge army, intent on crushing David once and for all. Absalom was David's sworn enemy and would have killed him if he could. Why did David give his battlefield commanders orders to spare Absalom's life and why was he so sad when he learned of Absalom's death?

The answer is **regret**. There is no other reason he would be so upset over his enemy's death. David was a lifelong warrior who had seen death many times. He had already buried two sons. He was acquainted with death, but what he couldn't handle was regret.

In Deuteronomy 6:4-9 God outlined a father's duty to his children, but unfortunately, David was not that kind of father to Absalom. He was uninvolved and he even shut Absalom out of his life for five years. David failed Absalom in many ways and their relationship was broken. When he learned of Absalom's death, David regretfully realized he could never make things right.

Do you have regret over some past mistake or broken relationship? If possible, go back and fix the problem or mend the relationship. If that's no longer possible, confess your sins to God and ask Him to free you from the pain of regret.

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**Project:** Start working now to mend broken relationships so you won't have to live with regret later. Read **Deuteronomy 6:4-9**. If you are a parent, strive to follow God's instructions.

**Costs of a Broken Promise**

Has anyone ever broken a promise they made to you? Broken promises come in all shapes and sizes:

- “I’ll meet you at 10:00 sharp.”
- “Don’t give it another thought, I’ll take care of it.”
- “I’ll pray for you.”
- “Trust me, the bill will be paid on time.”
- “... ‘til death do us part.”

It hurts when someone breaks a promise to you, doesn’t it? What are some of the costs of a broken promise? In this lesson we will learn some costs of a promise that was made and broken long ago.

**2 Sam. 21:1** “Then there was a \_\_\_\_\_ in the days of David \_\_\_\_\_ years.”

This was a serious problem in ancient times. Since there were no supermarkets, highways, or trucks to bring food from distant places, a famine could be deadly. The situation was serious.

**2 Sam. 21:1** What did David do?

What did the LORD tell him?

The background for this story is found in Joshua 9. When Joshua led the Israelites into the Promised Land, God warned them not to make peace treaties with any of the local people. The Gibeonites tricked Joshua and the elders of Israel into thinking they were from a faraway land, so Israel made a peace treaty with them. Look at the following verses from the book of Joshua.

**Josh. 9:19** What did the Israelites promise?

**Josh. 9:20** What would happen if they harmed the Gibeonites?

**2 Sam. 21:2** David summoned the Gibeonites. The town of **Gibeon** was only 5 miles north of Jerusalem (see the **Map** on page 6). What had Saul done to them?

By killing the Gibeonites, King Saul broke the promise Israel made centuries earlier to them. God does not take broken promises lightly, so He sent a famine upon Israel to get their attention.

**2 Sam. 21:3** What did King David ask the Gibeonites?

**2 Sam. 21:4** What did the Gibeonites **not** want?

**2 Sam. 21:5-6** Saul was the one who broke the promise. What did the Gibeonites want?

This was a strange demand, but in the pagan minds of the Gibeonites the death of seven of Saul's male descendants would make things right. How did David respond?

**2 Sam. 21:7** Why did David spare Jonathan's son Mephibosheth?

**2 Sam. 21:8** David handed over two sons of **Rizpah** (one of Saul's concubines) and five of Saul's grandsons.

**2 Sam. 21:9** What did the Gibeonites do to the seven men?

**2 Sam. 21:10** Why did Rizpah stay and watch over the bodies?

How long did she stay there?

When David heard of Rizpah's devotion, he retrieved the bones of Saul and Jonathan from **Jabesh-gilead** (see the **Map** on page 6), gathered the bones of these seven men, and gave them all a respectful burial in their family tomb. God then lifted the famine.

The Philistines attacked Israel again. David and his army went out to face them, but David, now an older man, grew weary in the battle. His soldiers insisted he not go to war anymore, fearing that he would die in battle and quench "*the light of Israel.*" In this and other

battles, David's loyal soldiers killed the four sons of Goliath, the giant David had killed so many years before (1 Sam. 17).

David wrote a song of thanksgiving and praise to God. The words of this song are found in chapter 22, which is almost identical to Psalm 18. Read chapter 22. Verses 1-7 speak of David's dependence upon the Lord, while verses 8-16 describe God's power over His creation. In verses 17-30, David praised God for His mercy and deliverance. Verses 31-46 tell that God gives strength and victory in battle, and in verses 47-51 David praised and thanked God.

**Concluding Thoughts:** What are some costs of a broken promise? King Saul, years before David became king, broke a promise Joshua and the Israelites made hundreds of years earlier. What were the costs of that broken promise?

- Israel paid with three years of famine. Many Israelites probably grew sick and undoubtedly some died because of the lack of food. Since there was no surplus food to sell, Israel's economy was depressed and everyone was discouraged. All of this happened during King David's reign, years after Saul died.
- Seven descendants of Saul paid with their lives. Their families paid for that broken promise through their grief.
- Rizpah paid through weeks of round-the-clock vigil over the decaying bodies of her sons.

Broken promises hurt. Have you broken any promises to another person? If possible, go to that person and apologize. Make restitution if appropriate, doing what you originally promised.

Have you broken any promises to God? If so, confess that as sin. Ask God to forgive you and enable you to do what you promised. Get started today keeping your promises to God.

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**Project:** Strive to be a person of integrity. Do what you say you will do. Come to Sunday School Sunday morning.

**Bad Costs and Good Costs**

In this quarter's study of 2 Samuel we have seen that people who are disobedient to God pay a high price for their sin. Much of this quarter has been about human failings and their terrible results. Much like paying a traffic ticket, the cost of sin is a **bad** cost.

Some costs, however, are not bad costs. Parents gladly pay the costs associated with bringing a new baby into the family. We purchase gifts for those we love and pay the cost of eating out or going on vacation. These are not bad costs; they are **good** costs.

In this lesson we will discover that David paid a bad cost for one choice and a good cost for another.

**2 Sam. 23:1** King David was nearing the end of his life.

**2 Sam. 23:2-3** What did the LORD tell David about leadership?

**2 Sam. 23:4** Such a godly and righteous king would be a blessing to his people, like sunlight on a clear morning and new vegetation springing up after the rain.

**2 Sam. 23:5** What did David realize about himself?

In spite of this, what had God done for him?

David recognized and admitted his shortcomings. He knew he could not be right with God based on his merits because he was a sinner. In spite of David's sins, God chose to make "*an everlasting covenant*" with him. Why did God do this? Because of His **grace**. The same thing happens when Christ saves us. We are sinners, but God graciously saves us and makes an everlasting covenant with us. Salvation is something we can't earn and don't deserve. Have you experienced God's grace in salvation? If not, please read the verses

printed on the back of this book, repent of your sins, and place your trust in Jesus Christ.

**2 Sam. 24:1** How did God feel toward Israel?

This was undoubtedly due to sin Israel had committed, perhaps conceit over their military victories. The LORD allowed Satan (1 Chron. 21:1) to provoke David to count the fighting men in **Israel** (the 10 northern tribes) and **Judah** (the 2 southern tribes).

**2 Sam. 24:2** What did David tell Joab to do?

Why did he want Joab to do this?

**2 Sam. 24:3** How did Joab respond?

Joab tried to convince the king not to number the fighting men.

**2 Sam. 24:4** Did David heed Joab's warning?

After more than 9 months traveling the length and breadth of Israel, Joab returned with the results. (verses 5-9).

**2 Sam. 24:10** "And David's heart \_\_\_\_\_ him after that he had \_\_\_\_\_ the people. And David said unto the LORD, I have \_\_\_\_\_ greatly in that I have \_\_\_\_\_: and now, I beseech thee, O LORD, \_\_\_\_\_ the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very \_\_\_\_\_."

We don't know for sure why this census was sinful. It may have been that David was swollen with pride over the size of his available fighting force, or it could be that they failed to pay the redemption money required by God whenever a census was taken (see Ex. 30:11-16). Such sin would bring pestilence.

**2 Sam. 24:11-12** The LORD told the prophet Gad to deliver a message to David. What was David to do?

**2 Sam. 24:13** What were David's three choices?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

**2 Sam. 24:14** David made a wise choice. What was it?

David knew that God was more merciful and gracious than man.

**2 Sam. 24:15** What did the LORD do?

How many died because of David's unwise choice?

**2 Sam. 24:16** The LORD stopped His destroying angel from harming Jerusalem. Where was this angel?

A **threshing floor** was a large, flat area near the top of a hill, where freshly harvested grain was winnowed to separate the usable grain from the useless chaff. **Araunah** was not an Israelite: he was a Jebusite who had been allowed to remain in the area after David captured Jerusalem years earlier. His threshing floor was located just north of the city on Mount Moriah, the future site of Israel's Temple (and the present site of the Muslim Dome of the Rock).

**2 Sam. 24:17** Who did David say should pay for his sin?

**2 Sam. 24:18** What did the prophet Gad tell David to do?

David went up to meet with Araunah, who bowed before the king.

**2 Sam. 24:21** What did David say he had come to do?

**2 Sam. 24:22-23** What did Araunah offer to give David?

**2 Sam. 24:24** How did David respond to Araunah's offer?

What did he refuse to offer to God?

What did David do?

**2 Sam. 24:25** What did he build and do?

How did God respond?

**Concluding Thoughts:** David made an unwise choice that cost his people dearly. Seventy thousand of David's proud fighting men died of a sudden disease, leaving behind tens of thousands of grieving wives, children, parents, and siblings.

Fortunately, David recognized and admitted his sin. He regretted his sin and asked the LORD to forgive him. God told David to build an altar on a particular mountain just north of Jerusalem. That mountaintop was the very spot where God once told Abraham to offer his son Isaac, but then stayed his hand and provided a ram for the offering (Gen. 22:1-14). It was also the place where the LORD later told Solomon to build the Temple (2 Chron. 3:1).

David refused to offer God anything that cost him nothing. He understood that **offerings always involve sacrifice**. Giving the Lord things that don't cost us anything is not really giving at all.

God doesn't want your leftovers, He wants your best. He told His people to bring the first fruits to Him. God gave us His very best: His only Son. Are you giving your best to God? If not, confess your sin and take your tithes and offerings to the Lord at His church.

The best and most valuable thing God wants is **you**. Have you given yourself to Him? If not, confess your sin and give yourself wholeheartedly to the Lord, trusting Christ as your Savior. Read the verses printed on the back of this book for more guidance. Contact your teacher if you have questions. Do it today.

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**Project:** Memorize **2 Samuel 24:24**. Give your best to the Lord this week. Watch out for unwise choices – they are costly!