

Commentary & Notes on 2 Samuel

The commentary and notes below are adapted from the teaching materials of Annie Kartoian (1906-1989). In 1934 Annie became a missionary in China with OMS. During World War II she spent 21 months in a Japanese concentration camp as a prisoner. She was repatriated in 1943 and sailed on the famous vessel Gripsholm. In 1949 she made a miraculous last-minute escape from Beijing before it fell to Mao's Communists. When she could no longer enter China, Annie went to Taiwan. Annie and her family have been life-long friends of our family. In 1989, while pastoring with the United Armenian Congregational Church of Hollywood I had the honor of participating in her funeral. It was during those years in Los Angeles that Annie gave me her teaching notes (the commentary below) - laboriously typed on what is now yellowed paper with hand written marginal notes, many of which are in Chinese. - Pastor Steve

INTRODUCTION

Introductory Study to the Books of 1 and 2 Samuel

These two books with the books of Kings were regarded as furnishing a complete history of the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah. Originally the two books of Samuel and the two books of Kings formed one volume of four books of the Kings.

I. Name

These two books are named after Samuel, not because he was the author, but because he was the principal man of the period described. The two great institutions, the PROPHETIC ORDER and the MONARCHY, which were brought forward and established during this period, are connected closely with the history of Samuel. This explains also why this part of sacred history bears the name of Samuel.

II. Period of Sacred History Covered

A. The first book of Samuel covers a period of transition in the history of the nation. It deals with the process from the judges to the kings. The condition of the chosen people under the judges was one of terrible degeneracy. They had practically rejected God from being King. The clamor for an earthly king which followed was the natural outcome of this practical rejection.

In 1 Samuel we have the history of the people from the last of the judges, Samuel and Eli, through the troubled times of Saul, in which they learned what government by man really meant, to the beginning of the reign of the king chosen by God, David. This period extended over about one century, from the birth of Samuel (1171 or 1114 B.C.) to the accession of David to the throne (1055 or 1003 B.C.).

B. The book of 2 Samuel deals almost exclusively with the history of David. His history begins in 1 Samuel and runs on into 1 Kings, and is dealt with from another standpoint in 1 Chronicles. 2 Samuel, however, is the principal history of his kingship, and presents to us the picture of the theocratic monarchy. The people had clamored for a king. God first gave them one after their own heart; He then gave them one after His own heart. By him also the failure of mediation in government was manifested. Yet he, by relation to God maintained even through times of sinning, contributed to the movement of history toward the one true King.

III. Author

The author of the books is unknown; but it is generally agreed that they are a compilation from different sources, including the writings of Samuel (1 Samuel 10:25), the book of Nathan the prophet (1 Chronicles 29:29), the book of Jasher (2 Samuel 12:18) - a national anthology (a collection of ancient records of honored men or noble deeds). The later two of these books which have perished.

IV. Period of Years Covered

Roughly speaking the two books cover a period of 150 years. 1 Samuel covers about 110 years. 2 Samuel covers about 40 years.

V. Outstanding Events

1. Establishment of the monarchy

It is evident that God intended the Israelites to become a great nation living immediately under His government and knit together by faith in Him. But they proved themselves unworthy. They disregarded God's commands; fell into evil ways and were fast losing their national and religious life. It was clearly seen that for salvation from their troubles a strong union must be made. Samuel was ordered by God to accede to the people's wishes; reluctant at first, he finally yielded and anointed Saul as king.

Although the institution of royalty began in Israel during this period, it had been contemplated and prepared for from the first. Passing from the promise to Abraham (Genesis 17:6,16), with its prophetic limitation to Judah (Genesis 49:10), we find the term kingdom applied to Israel as marking its typical destiny (Exodus 19:6), centering of course in The King (Numbers 24:17,19). The character of this royalty was also clearly defined in Deuteronomy 17, while from Judges 8:23 we learn, that the remembrance and expectation of this destiny were kept alive in Israel. It was, however, during the period which is to be studied that royalty was first actually introduced in Israel. It appeared in Saul in its negative, and in David in its positive aspect. Nor is it without the deepest significance in this respect that in the books of Samuel the designation "Lord of hosts" occurs for the first time, and that Hannah who was the first to use this in her prayer (1 Samuel 1:11), prophesied of that King (1 Samuel 2:10) in Whom all Israel's hopes were fulfilled, and Whose kingdom is the subject of grateful praise alike by the Virgin-mother, and by the father of John the Baptist (Luke 2).

2. Rise of the prophetic order

One of the most striking features of these books is the order of the Prophets which suddenly presents itself. No explanation is given for its origin. Up to this time the priest had been the chosen medium through which God communicated His will to His people. Now the prophet to a great extent takes his place. This order represented the independence of the moral portion of the nation and the Divine will as distinct from government or priestly enactment.

In Samuel we see the real commencement of the Old Testament prophetic order. The idea of it was no new. We can trace it as early as in Genesis 20:7; and we find not only Moses (Deuteronomy 34:10), but even Miriam (Exodus 15:20; Numbers 12:2) designated by the title of prophet; while the characters and functions of the office are

clearly defined in Deuteronomy 13:1-5; 18:9-22. Although Joshua was not himself a prophet, yet the gift of prophecy had not ceased in his time: Deborah (Judges 6:8; 14:4). The order of prophets as such evidently began with Samuel. Schools were established in which the prophets were trained for their work. Such a school was established in Ramah, Samuel's home. Instruction was given in the Sacred Books and poetry. The pupils were also taught to play upon musical instruments.

VI. Leading Characters

The three leading characters are Samuel, Saul, and David. The books open with the aged priest, Eli, as the priest, judge, and leader of the people. Samuel is born in answer to prayer; he takes the place of Eli. The people ask for a king; Saul is given; Saul proving unworthy is deposed and David takes his place. The books close with the end of David's reign.

COMMENTARY AND NOTES

Outline of Second Samuel

- I. DAVID'S RISE Chapters 1-10
 - A. The Reign Over Judah - Chapters 1-4
 - 1. His lamentation for Saul and Jonathan - Chapter 1
 - 2. His anointing as king of Judah - Chapter 2:1-4
 - 3. War between Judah and Israel - Chapters 2:5 - chapter 4
 - B. The Reign Over The Whole Nation - Chapters 5-10
 - 1. His crowing - Chapter 5:1-5
 - 2. His first victories - Chapter 5:6-25
 - 3. The provision for the Ark - Chapter 6
 - 4. Concerning the temple - Chapter 7
 - 5. His conquests - Chapter 8:1-14
 - 6. The appointment of officers - Chapter 8:15-18
 - 7. His kindness to Mephibosheth - Chapter 9
 - 8. Victories over Ammon and Syria - Chapter 10
- II. DAVID'S FALL Chapters 11-20
 - A. The Sin - Chapters 11,12
 - 1. War with Ammon - Chapter 11:1
 - 2. His sin - Chapter 11:2-27
 - 3. His repentance - Chapter 12
 - B. The Punishment - Chapters 13-18
 - 1. Punishment in the family - Chapters 13-14:24
(Amnon and Tamar; Absalom)
 - 2. Punishment in the kingdom - Chapters 14;24-chapter 28
(Absalom)
 - C. The Restoration - Chapters 19,20
 - 1. The king's return - Chapter 19
 - 2. Insurrection quelled - Chapter 20

I.

III. APPENDIX Chapters 21-24

A. The Government of God - Chapters 21 and 24

1. Famine - Chapter 21
2. The census - Chapter 24

B. The Character of David - Chapters 22-23:7

1. David's psalm praising God's deliverance - Chapter 22
2. David's psalm telling of his own failure, but of God's faithfulness - Chapter 23:1-7

C. David's Mighty Men - Chapter 23:8-39

These matters are not dealt with chronologically.

Chapter 1

Chapter Outline

- I. David hears of Saul's death - verses 1-16
- II. David mourns the death of Saul and Jonathan - verses 17-27

Notes

With the close of 1 Samuel we see David's persecution by Saul at an end and David after 16 months at Ziklag returning to God with all his heart. It is well that he did, for he was just on the eve of a marvelous change in his fortunes. Although David was soon to be exalted to become king, yet in his prosperity he had more temptations than he had during his rejection. There are more dangers in the Kingdom than in wilderness.

Verse 1: Ziklag is about 90 or 100 miles, as the crow flies, from the battlefield of Gilboa - between two and three days' journey for an active runner.

Verse 2: He recognized David as Saul's successor, and expected a reward for his tidings.

Verse 8: The news was brought by an Amalekite. According to 1 Samuel 15, Saul should have slain the Amalekites and should have published it. Now an Amalekite destroyed him and published it.

Verses 9,10: "Crown" - in all probability not the state crown but a light diadem worn round the helmet as a mark of royalty.

Saul's death is also recorded in 1 Samuel 31:3,4. Saul asked his armor bearer to slay him; which he refused to do. Saul then fell on his own sword but was not wholly successful in killing himself. He then asked the Amalekite to slay him; which he did.

Verse 12: "Mourned" literally denotes the beating of the breast. It brought real sorrow to David's heart. We should not rejoice over the downfall of our enemies, but weep over them. It is a terrible thing for a person to die in sin.

Verses 14,15: David caused the one who destroyed Saul to be put to death. This Amalekite was guilty of death. He had committed murder. He was already under the curse of God. Although it had been prophesied that Saul must die, yet he had no right to kill him. God has told us that the wicked will die, but we must not injure them, but do them good.

Verses 17,18: The Book of Jasher seems to have been a collection of ancient Jewish songs, or ballads, corresponding, in some degree, to the minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, the only other quotation from it in Scripture being the poetical commemoration of the victory of Joshua in the Valley of Ajalon.

In the LXX, verse 18 reads, “*and [David] ordered that the me of Judah be taught this lament of the bow (it is written in the Book of Jasher)*”. Appropriate as a memorial of Jonathan who was famous for his excellence in the use of that weapon. It was with his bow and sling that he won his first victory at Michmash; with his bow he sent he arrows by the stone Ezel when David parted from him after their mutual covenant.

Verses 19-27: David spoke of the good things in Saul’s life. He passed by all Saul’s faults. He did it with real sorrow of heart.

Lessons from Chapter 1

1. A Christian should forgive and forget personal injury
David seemed to have forgotten about Saul’s cruelty and persecution. Notice that the only real mourning for Saul was on the part of David whom the king had so bitterly persecuted to the death. This reminds us of David’s great Antitype, Who alone of all wept over that Jerusalem which was preparing to betray and crucify Him.
2. Any slight disobedience brings punishment upon the one who disobeys.
Saul was slain at the hands of one whom he had commanded to slay. This represents that which happens to those who are not willing to put to death the desires of our sinful flesh. It is an act of mercy to one’s own self to get rid of that which God has placed under the curse of death.

Chapter 2

Chapter Outline

- I. David received as king by Judah - verses 1-4
- II. David’s message to the men of Jabesh-gilead - verses 5-7
- III. Abner makes Ish-bosheth king over the eleven tribes - verses 8-11
- IV. The second civil war - verses 12-32

Meaning of proper names

Hebron - “alliance”
Ish-bosheth - “man of shame”
Abner - “father of light”
Joab - “Jehovah is father”

Notes

Verse 1: David saw that the way was clear for the fulfillment of God’s promise that he should be king. Still he desired divine direction.

Hebron is centrally located in the tribe of Judah. It is a priestly city located in a mountainous and defensible situation (Joshua 12:10; 21:11). It is perhaps the oldest city in the land. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob lived there (Genesis 25:9; 35:27-29; 49:29-32; 50:13). In its neighborhood David had spent a considerable portion of his fugitive live and

gained many supporters (1 Samuel 30:31).

Verse 4: David had already been anointed privately by Samuel to mark God's choice of him as the future king, but it was natural that the ceremony should now be repeated publicly as the formal inauguration of his reign, and even a third time, when he was made king over all Israel.

Verse 8: Both by his relationship of uncle to Saul (1 Samuel 14:5), and by his office as commander of the army, Abner was marked out as the natural champion of Saul's house.

Ish-bosheth, Saul's fourth son, was a mere tool in the hands of Abner. His original name was Esh-baal (1 Chronicles 8:33; 9:39) but was changed to avoid pronouncing the name of the false god, Baal.

Verse 10: Five years and a half were occupied with the reconquest of the land from the Philistines, and these two years corresponded with the last two years of David's reign at Hebron. No great interval seems to have elapsed between the deaths of Abner and Ish-bosheth, and the recognition of David as king over Israel.

Verse 12: After establishing Ish-bosheth's power over all Israel, Abner turned his arms against Judah. Gibeon is five miles northwest of Jerusalem.

Verse 14: In order to avoid civil war, Abner proposed to decide by combat.

Verses 15,16: All the combatants fell together by mutual slaughter.

Verses 17-19: A severe general fighting took place, ending in the defeat of Abner.

Verses 22,23: Asahel, though probably one of David's mighty warriors, was no match for the experienced warrior (23:24; 1 Chronicles 11:26; 27:7), who, wishing to avoid a feud with Joab (8:16; 1 Chronicles 2:16) and an obstacle to making favorable terms with David on the fall of Saul's house, again exhorted Asahel to abandon the pursuit.

Verse 28: This was not the final end of the war, which lasted for a long time afterwards (3:1).

Lessons from Chapter 1

1. A Christian must exercise patience in awaiting God's time.
David was not in haste. God had said He would give him the kingdom so he waited patiently upon God. David's men were at times impatient and urged him to put himself forward, but David took counsel of the Lord (2:1). He waited seven more years for God to make him king over the whole land.
2. Contrast between the honors given by man and the honors given by God.
David did nothing himself; God made him king. Ish-bosheth neither sought the Lord nor waited on Him. Abner had great power and used that power to make him king. Abner was the man behind the throne and the king was only a tool in his hand. If man promotes us, we simply become the slaves of man; if God promotes us we are not the tools of man, but the servants of Jehovah (Psalm 75:6,7).
3. David a type of Christ.
Saul sought David's life; after David became king at Hebron he had a rival king with

which to contend. Later he was the king of the whole kingdom with his seat in Jerusalem. This is a picture of Christ. The devil killed Him so that He might not become king; He was raised by God and made king, and even yet there is a rival king; but the day is coming when He will be King of Kings and Lord of Lords over all creation (Philippians 2:7-11).

Chapter 3

Chapter Outline

- I. David's family in Hebron - verses 1-6
- II. Abner deserts to David - verse 7-26
- III. Joab's murder of Abner - verses 27-39

Notes

Verses 1-5: David did not obey the instructions in Deuteronomy 17:17. Polygamy was tolerated by Mosaic law but discouraged. David's family history is a standing monument of the pernicious effects of this practice (1 Chronicles 3:1-4).

Amnon (3:2) was infamous for the sin which cost him his life, and indirectly proved the source of shame and calamity to his family and nation (chapter 13).

Absalom's (3:3) name meaning "father of peace" was belied by his conduct (chapters 13-18). His mother, Maacah, was a foreign princess. In marrying her David became a polygamist and directly broke the command which forbade the Israelites to marry with people of the land. It was the son of this woman whose after history brought such sorrow to the heart of David. Perhaps David married her to secure an ally in the neighborhood of Ish-bosheth's kingdom. Talmi's kingdom (Geshur) was a part of Syria northeast of Bashan.

Adonijah (3:4) made an ill return for his father's indulgence by setting up a rival claim to the throne in opposition to Solomon, in which he was supported by Joab and Abiathar (1 Kings 1:5ff). He was pardoned at the time, but shortly afterwards put to death for preferring a request which, viewed in the light of Oriental customs was equal to repeated treason.

Thus three of the six sons born to David in Hebron attained an unenviable history and notoriety; the remaining three, who are not mentioned again in history are perhaps happy in their obscurity.

Verse 7: An Oriental monarch took possession of his predecessor's harem (12:8; 16:21; 1 Kings 2:22). This act of Abner's was an invasion of royal rights and consequently implicit treason. Such an act was regarded as implying an open claim to the succession to Saul's throne.

Verse 10: Abner turned traitor and bargained to turn the kingdom over to David.

Verse 14: The restoration of Michal exhibited the strength of David and the weakness of Ish-bosheth (1 Samuel 25:44); it also gave Abner the opportunity to go to Hebron as Michal's escort and mature his plans for deposing Ish-bosheth. The condition of Ish-bosheth shows the danger of being indebted to men for position.

Verses 27-39: Abner was slain by Joab. He did this because Abner had slain his brother Asahel. The murder and traitor always meet with a sad ending. Every plan outside of God's will will come to naught, and the one who devises the plan will be destroyed.

Joab as next of kin to Asahel had a perfect right to do as he did. There are two things, however, which condemn him; Asahel had been slain in battle, and Hebron, where the murder took place, was a city of refuge (Numbers 35:6; Deuteronomy 19; Joshua 20:7). Abner's life should have therefore been respected until a least he had been tried by the elders.

Lessons from Chapter 3

1. Sin always brings punishment.
David broke God's command in marrying Maacah. God's law whether spiritual or physical, must be obeyed. To break it means punishment even though the guilt of it be forgiven. Often years may intervene before the final suffering for sin is inflicted by God who is righteous and just.
2. Be seeking your own advancement you find your own downfall.
Abner sided first with Ish-bosheth and then with David in an endeavor to find position for himself. He succeeded only in destroying himself.

Chapter 4

Chapter Heading

The murder of Ish-bosheth

Meaning of proper names

Mephibosheth - "destroying shame"

Notes

Verse 1: Abner's death took away the solitary pillar on which the kingdom of Ish-bosheth rested (3:1). He had been elevated by man, so he did not have the support of God when man failed him.

Verse 2: His murderers belonged to his own tribe.

Verse 4: Before narrating the murder, the historian inserted a remark which implied that with his death the cause of Saul's house would necessarily become hopeless, as its only other legitimate representative was a lame child of twelve years of age.

Verse 5: They came on the pretense of procuring wheat for their men from the king's granary.

Verse 8: Observe that Ish-bosheth was never honored with title of king. The murderers pretended piety and loyalty.

Verse 11: "*Destroy you from the earth*" - put you away out of the land. The guilt of murder defiled the land until expiated by the execution of the murderer (Numbers 35:33).

Lessons from Chapter 4

1. The honors of the world are not permanent.
Ish-bosheth had been exalted to the highest position of the land, but not by God. All that is man-made will eventually perish. Only that which God gives will prove to be eternal (Psalms 62:10; 146:3,4; Jeremiah 17:5).
2. The wages of sin is death.
The slaying of the two murderers is a proof that it is wrong to do evil that good may come.

Chapter 5

Chapter Outline

- I. David becomes king over Israel - verses 1-5
- II. Jerusalem made the capital of the united kingdom - verses 6-12
- III. Children of David born in Jerusalem - verses 13-16
- IV. War with the Philistines - verses 17-25

Meaning of proper names

Jerusalem - "founded in peace"

Notes

Ish-bosheth's death removed the last natural obstacle in the way of David's accession to the throne of Israel. But David did not make a move to become king. He waited for God to give him the kingdom. So Christ, although He has been anointed King by the Father waits for the Father to place Him on the throne (Psalm2). The Christian must wait for God to exalt him.

Verses 1,2: The national assembly was composed of all the warriors of the nation above the age of twenty (1 Chronicles 11:1-3; 12:23-40).

They gave three reasons for electing David king:

1. Relationship
2. His proven capacity as a military leader
3. Divine choice

Why should they refer to God's choice of David?

- a. Although they had know that David had been foreappointed to the throne, they had been struggling against that arrangement; so it was fitting now that they should express their repentance and declare their readiness to receive him in god's name and as from God's hand.
- b. They wished to remind him and themselves that the real King of their nation was Jehovah, and that he and they alike were under allegiance to Him. He was their ruler but his authority was recognized only in so far as it was confirmed by the

divine. Saul accepted the monarchy, designing to make it as absolute and autocratic as that of other kings; but David counted himself only an under-shepherd, and desired to rule and regulate his conduct as a ruler by the commands of God.

Verse 3: This “league” was probably a solemn contract in which the king on the one hand engaged to rule according to the laws, and the people on the other hand promised him their allegiance.

David was anointed for the third time.

Verses 6-9: Jerusalem was the most suitable place for the capital; in the very heart of the land. It had never been conquered, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem boasted that even the blind men and cripples could defend the city. If possible the devil will occupy the very citadel of our lives. David conquered it because God was with him. The Devil is no match for God (Joshua 15:63).

Verses 11,12: Other nations began to recognize his greatness. David recognized that this prosperity was of the Lord.

Verses 13-16: Nothing is known of any of these sons except Solomon and Nathan. It was through Nathan that Mary traced her lineal descent from David, according to the genealogy of our Lord given in Luke 3:31. Matthew traces the genealogy of Joseph through Solomon (Matthew 1:6).

Verse 17: Every blessing of God is followed by a new attack of the enemy.

Verse 19: David again inquired of the Lord and the result was that the enemy left even their gods behind.

Verse 23: David again inquired. There is a tendency to rely upon past victories. A new plan was needed for the second attack and David needed the help of the Lord. A constant inquiring of the Lord keeps us humble and depending on the Lord. It also keeps us watching (5:24).

Verse 24: A rustling in the tops of the trees was to be a signal that Jehovah Himself would lead David’s army to victory. When we see God moving against our enemies it is time to move, for victory is sure.

Lessons from Chapter 5

1. The only safe course is to always seek the advice of God.
No past leading is sufficient for a new problem - verses 19,23
2. Victory over our enemies is only assured when God goes before us.
3. God must train us for greater service in His kingdom.
Not all at once did David pass from the shepherd life of Bethlehem to the throne of Jerusalem. He had been consecrated by the prophet’s oil to be king of Israel, but there was a long and trying road to be traversed before he reached that position. Success is generally a matter of time, and trial, and diligence, and study. Success which is sudden is not a wholesome thing.

Chapter 6

Chapter Outline

- I. David seeks to bring the ark to Jerusalem - verses 1-11
- II. David brings up the ark - verse 12-23

Meaning of proper names

Abinadab - "father of nobility"
Uzzah - "strength"
Perez-uzzah - "breach of Uzzah"
Obed-edom - "serving Edom (red)"

Notes

During the reign of Saul (1 Chronicles 13:3b) the ark had been almost forgotten. Saul was not interested in the ark. It had remained in the house of Abinadab who lived in Kiriath-jearim a few miles from Jerusalem. It had been here ever since the Philistines had sent it back into the land of Israel (1 Samuel 6:21; 7:1). When David had been made king over Israel he began to think of the ark. The proper place for it was at Jerusalem. Jerusalem had been the stronghold of the enemy, now it became the dwelling place of God.

Verse 1: See 1 Chronicles 13:1-5 for a detailed account of David's preparations for this ceremony.

Verse 2: Baale-Judah - Kiriath-jearim which is called Baalah in Joshua 15:9 and 1 Chronicles 13:6; and Kiriath-Baal in Joshua 15:60.

Verse 3: This was a breach of Levitical law which prescribed that the ark should be borne upon the shoulders of the Levites (Numbers 4:15). No one else was even to touch it. This was the way the Philistines had done (1 Samuel 6:7). The Philistines, whose sin was ignorance, were smitten only with disease (1 Samuel 5:12).

Verse 5: They went up before it with singing.

Verse 6: The ark seemed to be on the point of falling from the cart, owing to some sudden start or stumble of the oxen, or the roughness of the road.

Verse 7: God could not allow irreverence to pass unpunished. If He had done so it might appear that the book of Leviticus was out of date and no longer binding.

Verse 8: "*Angry*" ("*displeased*" KJV) - the same word is used in 1 Samuel 15:11 - "*and Samuel was angry*" ("*grieved*" KJV).

Verse 9: He would not have needed to fear if he had obeyed the Lord. Disobedience brings fear and displeasure to men.

Verses 10,11: Obed-deom was a Levite belonging to the family of Korahites, who were descended from Kohath (Numbers 16:11; 1 Chronicles 26:4-8). He is called a Gittite probably because he was a native of the Levitical city of Gath-rimmon (Joshua 19:45; 21:24), in Dan or Manasseh.

Verse 13: The requirements of the law were now properly observed (1 Chronicles 15:2,12-15).

Verse 14: David laid aside his royal robes and appeared in the distinctive dress of a priest. As the head and representative of a “kingdom of priests” (Exodus 19:6) the king possessed a priestly character; and David on this occasion exercised priestly function in directing the sacrifices, even if he did not offer them himself (6:17,18) and blessing the people (6:18).

Verse 15: There are now two centers of worship: 1) The tabernacle established by Saul at Gibeon with Zadok as the high priest (1 Chronicles 16:39;40); and 2) The ark at Zion with Abiathar as high priest (2 Samuel 8:17). These were merged when Solomon built the temple.

Verse 16: “*Leaping and dancing*” - special modes of dancing anciently employed in religious solemnities (1 Chronicles 16:4-36; Psalms 96; 105:1-15). The proud daughter of the house of Saul was incapable of appreciating the honor of humility.

Verse 20: “*Uncovering himself*” - stripped off his royal robe, and appeared in a plain ephod.

Verse 21: David answered that no service offered to God to whom he owed all his advancement could be degrading.

Verse 23: She was condemned to the reproach of childlessness, the sharpest privation to an Oriental woman.

Lessons from Chapter 6

1. True obedience

To obey God we must obey every part of His law. All the ordinances regarding the ark formed one complete whole, of which not the smallest detail could be altered without disturbing the symmetry of all, and destroying their meaning. The neglect of any single ordinance involved the breach of all, and also showed a lack of obedience and absolute submission to Jehovah.

They had already suffered for this very thing; the men of Bethshemesh who looked into the ark, Levites though they were, were smitten by death, because they ought to have known the law of God upon the matter. Now Uzzah was stricken down because ignorance where knowledge ought to have been possessed is not extenuation of guilt.

2. God’s displeasure for irreverence

The ark was the symbol of His presence and the Levitical ordinances were designed to secure the strictest reverence for it. It is probable that Uzzah was a Levite, and if so, he ought to have known these injunctions; but in any case, as the ark had been under his charge he ought to have made himself acquainted with them. Perhaps he had come to regard the sacred symbol which had been in his house so long with undue familiarity. It seemed to him to have been the question of the safe transport of a sacred vessel, not of the reverent handling of the very symbol of the Divine Presence.

Nor was David free of guilt in allowing such a neglect of the law. It was the first step in the inauguration of a new era of worship in the newly established capital of the kingdom; and if these breaches of the divine commission had been left unpunished,

the lessons they were intended to teach might have been neglected. Uzzah's death was necessary for a solemn warning to David and the people.

If such reverence was due to the symbol, with how much greater reverence should the realities of the Christian Covenant be regarded (Hebrews 10:28,29). The Corinthians were guilty of the sin of Uzzah when, forgetting the sacred character of the Lord's Supper they became intoxicated at the table of the Lord. We shall also be guilty of it if, with hearts estranged from God, and lives which are inconsistent with His Word, we presume to connect ourselves with His Church and take part in the management of its affairs.

Chapter 7

Chapter Outline

- I. David's desire to build the Lord's house - verses 1-3
- II. The Davidic covenant - verses 4-17
- III. David's worship and prayer - verses 18-29

Meaning of proper names

Nathan - "gift"

Notes

Verse 1: Read 1 Chronicles 17. In actuality the events of this chapter may chronologically follow chapter 8 but are placed here because it has to do with the ark. Many years have elapsed since the bringing of the ark to Jerusalem. David had conquered his enemies and was dwelling peaceably in his cedar house in Jerusalem which had been built by Hiram of Tyre (5:11).

Verse 2: This is the first mention of Nathan. It was he who rebuked David for his sin with Bathsheba (12:1ff); who became Solomon's tutor (12:25); who took a leading part in securing Solomon's succession to the throne (1 Kings 1:22ff); who wrote a history of the reign of David and of part at last of the reign of Solomon (1 Chronicles 29:29; 2 Chronicles 9:29). It is from this that in all probability a large portion of the books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles is derived.

Verse 3: This was Nathan's own individual opinion (he gave it as a man, not as a prophet). Neither David nor the prophet had the mind of the Lord. Man's plans are often different from God's plans. Today men are full of plans and schemes. They want to do something for God, when they really need to have God do something for them. Modernism is man working for God. People want to see what the Lord has done for us. In the case of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus the people came to see Lazarus because God had done something for him. The way to render unto God is to take from Him (Psalm 116:12,13). That is the way David secured the throne; the Lord gave it to him.

Verse 4: Observe the clear distinction between Nathan's own judgment, which approved of David's resolution, and the divine message which he was commissioned to deliver to David.

Verses 5,6: God speaks through Nathan that: 1) David will not build a house for Him (7:5-7); 2) But God, who has chosen David to be the ruler of His people, will build a house for

David (7:8-11); and 3) David's son will be the one to build a house for Him. There were reasons why David's zeal had to be checked. The unsettled condition of the nation had made a fixed sanctuary impossible hitherto, and even now the time for it was not fully come. The house of David was first to be firmly established and peace secured, before this great step in the history of the national religion could be advantageously taken. Again, David was not to build a house "*because you have shed so much blood before Me on the earth*" (1 Chronicles 22:8), "*for you are a man of war*" (1 Chronicles 28:3). Thus personally David was not the fitting man to build the temple, though he is not blamed for wars which were a necessity of the time; and the very fact that he had to wage these wars, shewed that the time for building the temple had not come, because the kingdom was not yet firmly established. God's ark was not yet to exchange the tabernacle, which was the symbol of unsettled abode, for the temple, which was the emblem of permanent residence.

Verse 10: "*As formerly*" - refers to the beginning of the nation's history in Egypt. Since then they had experienced various oppressions through the time of the Judges down to the present.

Verse 12: "*Your offspring after you, who shall come from your body*" - in the elevation of Solomon to the throne (1 Kings 8:15-20) this promise was first fulfilled; then the line of David's descendants who succeeded him on the throne of Judah followed; in Christ the promise will reach its highest fulfillment (Luke 1:31-33; Acts 2:29-31; 13:22,23).

Here we reach a new landmark in the development of Messianic prophecy in the Old Testament. The promised deliverer is spoke of first as "*her offspring*" (Genesis 3:15); then as the seed of Abraham (Genesis 22:18); then as the son of Jacob (Genesis 49:10); then as the Messiah (Shiloh) of the tribe of Judah; and in this instance as the seed of David whose family was the tribe of Judah.

Verse 14: Israel is honored with the lofty title of the Lord's "*firstborn son*" (Exodus 4:22,23; Psalm 80:15; Hosea 11:1) a designation of relationship before God which here is applied to Solomon. This high designation, however, was not exempt from the danger of sin nor from its punishment. Psalm 2:7 (and the entirety of Psalm 2) applies the title of "Son" to the Son of God, meaning the Messiah who is to come. Hebrews 1:5 (quoting 2 Samuel 7:14) brings 2 Samuel 7:14 and Psalm 2:7 together in accord with the argument of that book (Hebrews) that Jesus is the fulfillment of what God has designated and the messianic heir of David. Note also the one significant difference between Solomon and Jesus, in that Solomon sinned and so disqualified himself, and Jesus the Messiah Who was sinless.

Verse 15: Punishment within the family of God is always remedial, not penal (Hebrews 12:5-11); judgment of the wicked is penal, not remedial.

Summary of the David Covenant - verses 4-17

Through this covenant God promised to David (7:16):

1. A posterity or family - "house"
2. A sphere of rule - "kingdom"
3. Royal authority - "throne"
4. A lasting promise - "forever"

This fourfold covenant has but one condition: disobedience in the Davidic family is to be visited with chastisement, but not to the place of taking back the covenant (2 Samuel 7:15; Psalm 89:20-37; Isaiah 24:5; 54:3). The chastisement fell first in the division of the kingdom under Rehoboam, and finally in the captivities (2 Kings 25:1-7). Since that time but one King of the Davidic family has been crowned at Jerusalem and He was crowned with thorns. But the Davidic covenant confirmed to David by the oath of Jehovah, and renewed to Mary by the angel Gabriel, immutable (Psalm 89:20-37), and the Lord God will yet give to that thorn-crowned One "*the throne of His father David*" (Luke 1:31-33; Acts 2:29-32; 15:14-17).

Verses 18-29: David's address to God consists of: 1) Humble thanksgiving for the undeserved favor shown to him and to his house (7:18-21); 2) Praise for God's past manifestations of His glory in and to Israel (7:22-24); and 3) Petition for the final fulfilment of the promise (7:25-29).

Notice in the prayer of David: 1) His humility (7:18); 2) His appreciation of God's favors (7:19); 3) His praise of God's wisdom (7:20), grace (7:21), greatness (7:22), and mercy (7:23,24); and 4) His petitions (7:25-29).

David abandoned all his plans and fell in with God's plans. He stopped thinking about building a house and prepared for someone else to build. He helped another to do what he was not permitted to do. Let us always follow God's plan for us; It is always the best.

Lesson from Chapter 7

1. The importance of finding God's will for us and of doing His will.
We must not only be zealous for the Lord, but we must be zealous along the line of His will. Zeal without knowledge of God's will is dangerous.

Chapter 8

Chapter Heading

The full establishment of David's kingdom (1 Chronicles 18:1-17)

Meaning of proper names

Moab - "progeny of a father"
Ammon - "faithful"
Philistines - "wanderers"

Notes

Philistines, northwest; Moab, southeast; Hadadezer was north, near Mount Hermon; Syrians, northeast; Hamath was the principal city of upper Syria, its king surrendered to David without fighting. Each victory extended David's territory. David had already conquered Jerusalem, the heart of the country. David was fully yielded to have God's plan worked out in his life. After this God gave him these victories. Victory and increase come to the yielded soul.

Why God wanted David to drive out his enemies:

1. All this land had been given to Abraham and his seed (Genesis 15:18). David was

only taking possession of what God had given the Israelites. We are to take possession of what Christ gives us.

2. These nations were sinful and deserved to die. The cup of their iniquity was full. David was God's instrument in executing God's punishment upon them.
3. Israel must destroy them to preserve themselves. If Israel had not destroyed them, they would have destroyed Israel. We must either put our enemies to death or they will put us to death.

Verse 2: "*Making them lie down on the ground*" - The Moabite prisoners, doubtless only the fighting men, were ordered to lie down upon the ground in rows, which were measured with a measuring line. Two thirds of them were executed, and only the remaining third spared. Why David inflicted such terrible vengeance on this nation is not certain. His parents had been given refuge there (1 Samuel 22:3,4). A Jewish tradition relates that the king of Moab betrayed his trust and murdered David's parents. Possibly the Moabites may have been guilty of some special act of treachery in one of David's wars with their neighbors. By this victory Balaam's prophecy was fulfilled (Numbers 24:17).

Verses 7-11: The character of David's life work was fighting (1 Chronicles 28:3), not building. But in his fighting he was clearing the way for another to build. After the war was over, Solomon built the temple with the material David had gathered. David represents Christ in His sufferings and victories over His enemies. Solomon represents Christ in His glory after the sufferings were over. Solomon was no fighter, he was a builder.

Verse 14: He defended and kept what he won by placing garrisons where necessary. We need to protect what we have won; hold what we win.

Verse 15: Judgment and justice are two of the attributes of God; David proved himself the true representative of Jehovah.

Verses 16-18: David's chief officers of state. These men were tried men and placed in the very positions for which they were fitted (1 Timothy 3:6).

This closes the narrative of David's reign. What follows are detailed accounts of incidents at various periods, not necessarily in chronological order.

Lessons from Chapter 8

1. God wants to drive the enemy entirely out of the land.
2. Victory comes only after we have yielded ourselves to God's will.
3. As ministers of the Lord we should be careful to place tried men into offices of responsibility.

Chapter 9

Chapter Heading

David's kindness to Mephibosheth

Meaning of proper names

Ziba - "planter"

Notes

Since Mephibosheth was only five years old at the time of his father's death (4:4) and now had a younger son (9:12), the event recorded here could not have occurred till David had been reigning at Jerusalem for some seven years at least, when Mephibosheth would be about twenty years of age.

Verse 1: This was in fulfillment of his oath of Jonathan (1 Samuel 20:14-17,42).

Verse 3: Machir must have been a man of wealth and position to judge from the welcome which he gave David in his flight from Absalom (17:27-29).

Verse 7: Mephibosheth might be afraid that David had only hunted him down to treat him after the common fashion of Oriental usurpers, who often put all their predecessor's kindred to death. David returned to him Saul's estate which passed into David's possession when he came to the throne (11:8).

Verse 12: Micha had a numerous posterity (1 Chronicles 8:34ff). He is also called Micah.

Lessons from Chapter 9

David's kindness to Mephibosheth is a type of what Christ has done for the sinner.

1. Mephibosheth, the sinner's type
 - a. Both his feet were lame as the result of a fall. Sinners are crippled by sin.
 - b. He dwelt in Lo-debar which means "no pasture", "no word". The sinner lives in a land where there is no pasture, nothing to satisfy his soul.
 - c. He lived in the house of Machir which means "sold". The sinner is sold under sin and in bondage to it.
2. David the type of Christ
 - a. David sent Ziba, the servant, after the crippled boy. The Holy Spirit searches out the poor sinner.
 - b. David spoke kindly to him. Jesus speaks with mercy and kindness to the sinner.
 - c. David promised to restore all that he had lost. Through Jesus the sinner regains all that was lost through the entrance of sin into the world.

Chapter 10

Chapter Heading

The Ammonite-Syrian war (1 Chronicles 19:1-19)

Meaning of proper names

Hanun - "whom God pities"

Notes

The Ammonites were blood relatives of Israel; descendants of Lot and his two daughters (Genesis 19:38). They were wicked people. They were former enemies of the Israelites, having fought against them in the time of Jephthah (Judges 11) as well as in the time of Saul (1 Samuel 11).

Verse 2: Perhaps when David took refuge in Moab (1 Samuel 22:3) he had been befriended by the Ammonites whose land was contiguous to the land of the Moabites. Perhaps he had sent congratulations on David's accession to the throne.

Verse 3: The unjust suspicions of David's motives may have been excited by his recent conquest of Moab.

Verses 4,5: This was a gross insult for, to an Oriental, the beard was the badge of the dignity of manhood (Leviticus 19:27). It was only shaved as the deepest sign of mourning or as a sign of slavery. The ambassadors wore, long dignified garments.

Verse 6,7: "*Became a stench*" - had made themselves odious. The way one treats the servants of God shows his attitude toward God (Matthew 10:40-42).

Verse 9: The Ammonites were posted in front of the city, the Syrians on the plain opposite to them: if Joab had attacked either force separately, his rear would be exposed to the other. His choice of the picked men to attack the Syrians, and his taking command of this division in person, indicate that the mercenary troops were the most formidable part of the Ammonite force.

Verse 12: They were fighting the Lord's battle that the cities which He had given them might not fall into heathen hands and be given over to the worship of heathen gods (cf. 1 Samuel 17:36; 18:17).

Verses 18,19: David himself went out to fight in the second battle. The Holy Spirit gives victory over the enemy; but Christ Himself will be the final Conqueror of the enemy.

Lesson from Chapter 10

1. Fighting God's battles at His appointed time and in His way brings certain victory.

Chapter 11

Chapter Heading

David's great sin

Meaning of proper names

Bathsheba - "daughter of the oath"

Uriah - "light of Jehovah"

Notes

The truthful account of the sin of Biblical heroes is one of the evidences of the authenticity and credibility of the Scriptural narratives. Legendary accounts always seek to lessen the

sins of Biblical personages, or even to deny their guilt. The Talmud (the Hebrew civil and canonical laws, traditions, etc.) denies the adultery of David on the ground that every warrior had, before going to the field, to give his wife a divorce, so that Bathsheba was free. This view, however was controverted, for in the Talmudic tractate of Avodah Sarah (4.b, 5.a) a very proper application is made of the sin of David, while that of Israel in making the golden calf is not only excused but actually given thanks for!

Verse 1: This battle took place at the time of year when kings were accustomed to reopen the campaign after the winter cessation of hostilities. Probably this is in the spring. The new year began in the spring with the month of Abib (Nisan).

Rabbah was the capital of the Ammonites and was about 22 miles east of the Jordan, on a branch of the valley of the Jabbok (Deuteronomy 3:11; Joshua 13:25).

David's tarrying at Jerusalem exposed him to the temptation of idleness.

Verse 3: Uriah the Hittite was one of David's "*mighty men*" (23:39). His name indicates that although he was a Canaanite by race, he had adopted the Jewish faith.

Verse 4: It does not appear that Bathsheba offered any resistance.

Verse 5: According to Mosaic law both offenders were to be punished by death (Leviticus 20:10; Deuteronomy 22:22-24). David accordingly sent for Uriah in the hope that his return to his wife might cover the shame of his own crime.

Verse 7: David's pretense in sending for Uriah was to bring him word about the progress of the war.

Verse 8: Washing the feet was an indispensable refreshment after a journey in the East.

Verse 10: David expressed surprise and displeasure that Uriah had not done as men usually do on their return from a journey, and gone to his own home. Uriah's brave resolution not to enjoy the comforts of his home even for a single night, while his comrades were enduring the hardships of a campaign, bade fair to frustrate David's scheme for concealing his sin. He may, too, have had some suspicion of his wife's unfaithfulness.

Verse 11: These wars were considered the wars of "Jehovah" (10:12) and the ark had been taken along with the army as the symbol of His presence and favor.

Verse 13: David made Uriah drunk in the hope that he might forget his oath and break his resolution not to go home (Habakkuk 2:15).

Verse 15: So blinded was David by his passion, and so eager to screen himself and Bathsheba from the disgrace of exposure, that he did not shrink from plotting the murder of one of his bravest soldiers.

Verse 20: Joab assumed that David would find fault with him for bad generalship until he knew that his commission was executed by Uriah's death.

Verse 26: Seven days were usually spent in mourning (Genesis 50:10; 1 Samuel 31:13); in exceptional cases thirty days were observed (Numbers 20:29; Deuteronomy 34:8).

Verse 27: the divine sentence on David's conduct prepares the way for the mission of Nathan in the next chapter (cf. Hebrews 10:31).

Lessons from Chapter 11

1. Circumstances which lead to sin
 - a. A period of prosperity
For seventeen years David had enjoyed a period of unbroken prosperity. He had been successful in war and had been the recipient of the praise of the people. Prosperity is dangerous in that it has a tendency to weaken spiritual character and to make one more tolerant of evil.
 - b. Idleness
David allowed Joab and his brave soldiers to do the fighting while he tarried in Jerusalem. He enjoyed the luxury of the palace while his men were enduring the hardship and peril of the camp (12:29). Satan tempt all Christians, but the idle man tempts Satan and in him the evil one finds something to do.
 - c. Indulgence of personal weakness
During the career of David we find that he had a noticeable weakness and that he indulged that weakness. He had been especially susceptible in the very matter in which now he fell. The law of Moses forbade the multiplication of wives on the part of Hebrew kings (Deuteronomy 17:17), that their hearts would not turn away from Jehovah. David had indulged this weakness in himself (2 Samuel 2:2; 3:2-5; 5:13).
2. Steps that lead into sin
 - a. David saw - verse 2
 - b. David sent and inquires - verse 3
 - c. David took her - verse 4
 - d. The sin followed - verse 4
3. One sin leads to other sins
No one great sin ever stands alone. Sins breed and multiply like a pest. Either other sins of less apparent enormity lead up to it, or additional transgressions have to be committed for the purpose of concealing it from public view.
 - a. David tried to deceive - verse 8
 - b. David used treachery - verse 13
 - c. David committed murder - verse 24
 - d. David gave occasion to others to sin - 2 Samuel 12:14

Chapter 12

Chapter Outline

- I. David's repentance - verses 1-23
- II. The birth of Solomon - verses 24,25
- III. David and Joab take Rabbah - verses 26-31

Meaning of proper names

Solomon - "peaceable"
Jedidiah - "beloved of the Lord"

Notes

Verses 1-4: A year had passed before Nathan was sent to rouse the king's seared conscience. Psalms 51 and 52 belong to this period.

This parable seems perfect in its adaptation to the end which the divine messenger had in view.

Verses 7-8: The consciousness that they were God's messengers inspired the prophets with fearless courage.

God's successive favors to David were enumerated to bring out the baseness of his ingratitude and the folly of his sin.

Verse 9: Great as was David's sin against Uriah and Bathsheba, his sin against God was greater in this breaking two express commandments of the decalogue.

Verse 10: This prophecy was fulfilled by Ammon's murder (13:28,29); Absalom's death as a rebel (18:14); and Adonijah's execution as a traitor (1 Kings 2:25). These were the bitter fruits of David's sin.

Verses 11,12: Fulfilled in 16:21,22.

Verse 13: True confession needs but few words. In David there was no excuse, no attempt to lessen his sin; he was crushed by the sense of his sin in the sight of God (cf. Genesis 3:12; 1 Samuel 15:21,24,25,30; 1 Kings 21:20; 22:27).

The sentence which he had pronounced on himself (12:5) should not be executed though he deserved to die as an adulterer and murderer (Leviticus 20:10; 24:17).

Verse 14: The enemies of Jehovah would mock and blaspheme Him when they knew that His chosen king had broken his law. It was necessary that the sin be punished although David's repentance was genuine. Therefore a long series of chastisements, beginning with the death of the child followed.

1. The death of Bathsheba's child.
2. His own guilt was repeated in the sin of Ammon (including murder).
3. The rebellion of Absalom.
4. Ahithophel, the grandfather of Bathsheba (11:3; 23:34), adhered to Absalom and made his rebellion possible (15:12; 16:20; 17:1,23).
5. The death of Absalom.

Verse 20: David laid aside all the outward signs of mourning.

Verse 23: This gives assurance of the salvation of those who die in infancy.

Verse 24: Solomon was one of the human ancestors of Christ. The birth of this child was the seal of God's renewed favor of David. His name was given in anticipation of the peace and quietness promised to Israel in his reign in contrast to his father's wars.

Verse 25: It is supposed that Nathan was Solomon's tutor. This new name was given because Jehovah love the child; and it served as a pledge to David that he was again fully received into God's favor.

Verse 27: The capture of the lower city probably deprived the city of its water supply, and so rendered it untenable for any length of time.

Verse 31: The Ammonites were evidently a savage and brutal nation (1 Samuel 11:1,2; 2 Samuel 10:1-5; Amos 1:13). They were treated no worse than they were accustomed to treat others.

Lessons from Chapter 12

1. Forgiveness does not stop the consequences of our sins. Though David was forgiven he reaped, for years, the bitter fruits of his sin.
2. Lessons regarding the illness and death of little children.
 - a. The death of little children may be connected with the conduct and spiritual history of their parents. This does not mean that whenever an infant dies there must have been some iniquity in father or mother to cause it. However there are times when the death of infants is the one way in which parents may be visited with the penal consequences of their sins. Other times such sorrows are sent to quicken spiritual life, or to lead to repentance.
 - b. The only comfort in the time of such sorrow is to be found in God.
 - c. We find in David's words in verse 23 the assurance of the salvation of those who die in infancy.

David's Sin and Its Punishment - 2 Samuel 11,12

A man may be pardoned and nevertheless he may be punished. God forgave David, and yet bereaved him. This is no exceptional case. In all ages sin of penitent men are forgiven them; in all ages penitent men have to endure the punitive results of the very sins that have been forgiven. Whatsoever they sow, that they also reap, however bitterly they may repent. Abraham sinned by taking Hagar to wife - sin forgiven, but strife and discord in his tent. Jacob deceived his father and defrauded his brother. God forgave his sin and yet he had to eat bitter fruit of it through long years of labor, sorrow, and fear.

Every sin has a twofold aspect and calls for a twofold treatment by God. It has a sphere related to the body and a sphere related to the soul. *"The soul who sins shall die"* (Ezekiel 8:4;20). But his soul penalty of sin can be remitted, put away, forgiven, lifted off the soul forever. *"The Lord also has put away your sin; you shall not die"* (2 Samuel 12:13). This is the sphere of the atonement made by our Lord Jesus Christ. However, men and women are set together in social and family circles, so that the actions of any one of them shall affect the rest of them for good or for evil. No man is permitted to stand alone, the results of his conduct must reach to the good, or the misery, of somebody else. Sin, in its outward aspect, is the infringement of the laws by which God has ordained that these groups be governed. To every such infringement a natural penalty is attached. *"Whatever one sows, that will he also reap"* (Galatians 6:7). The redemption provided in Jesus Christ does not immediately touch these natural penalties of sin. The child of the drunkard will not have the spirit of the drunkard taken out of him, nor will he be renewed from his physical deterioration, because his father becomes a Christian.

Why does the forgiving God permit this punishment?

1. Punishment deepens both our sense of sin and our hatred for it. Before punishment, David was not conscious of his transgression, nor alive to its enormity.
2. Punishment deepens self-distrust and reliance upon God. David knew that he could

not rule himself; he could think no good thought, do not good act, save as God inspired and sustained him.

3. Punishment puts our repentance to the proof. Punishment will prove whether or not it was merely fear of judgment which led to confession. When the child died David bowed to the will of God. His penitence surmounted the test.
4. Punishment is for proof to others of God's justice.

David was pardoned for the breaches of the sixth and seventh commandments, although the guild of sin is not transferable (Ezekiel 18:20) the penalty is. The death, being the penalty of David's sin, was inflicted on the child. The terrible list of calamities which befell the house of David were traceable to his sin.

Psalm 51 and David's Repentance

This is one of the great penitential psalms, the fourth of the seven usually so described: 6,32,38,51,102,130,143.

True penitence:

1. Sees sin as against God. Some sins are only against God; others against man also. None is exclusively against man; who sins against man, sins against God.
2. Sees in sin a corruption of nature. This is sin traced back to its cause.
3. Sees that all religious acts are mockery of God. Truth must be in the inward parts.
4. Sees that sin deprives him of joy, and therefore of power. There is joy after repentance and confession.
5. Offers no excuse for sin. "My sin."
6. Sees that public sin demand public confession.
7. Justifies God in His judgment of sin.

A penitent's prayer is: 1) a prayer for pity and mercy; 2) a prayer for purification; 3) a recognition of his perilous position; and 4) a recognition of his personal responsibility.

Outline of Psalm 51 and David's Repentance

- 1-3: A general cry for pardon, coming from a deep sense of sin and a deep desire for forgiveness. It is God Who forgives and forgets that the slate and writing will be erased - "*blotted out*" (verse 2).
- 5-6: Sin traced back to its cause - pollution of the nature.
- 7-10: A resulting cry for purity, cleansing of the heart and renewal of spirit.
- 11-13: A longing for things which follow cleansing:
- 11: Fellowship through God's Spirit with him.
 - 12: Consciousness of joy. There is joy after repentance and confession of sin, but not always an easy attainment.
 - 13: Place of service. Pardoned sinners are the ones to teach transgressors.

General:

- 14: He was guilty of blood who shed no blood.
- 15: Sin seals the lips.
- 17: A broken heart - all secrets have flowed out
- 19: A man's person must be first accepted before his gifts can please.

Chapter 13

Chapter Outline

- I. Amnon's crime - verses 1-22
- II. Absalom's vengeance for Tamar's wrong - verses 23-36
- III. Absalom's flight to Geshur - verses 37-39

Meaning of proper names

Tamar - "a palm tree"
Jonadab - "Jehovah is bounteous"
Amnon - "faithful"
Absalom - "father of peace"

Notes

Verse 1: Very little is written of Amnon, but all that was written is evil. He was the eldest son of David (3:2), and naturally he would have become king after David's death. Tamar and Absalom were the children of Maacah, daughter of the king of Geshur (3:3).

Verse 3: Among the reasons for Amnon's sin was the fact that he had a corrupt friend. This is a strong warning against the danger of evil companions. The bad example of his father, David, also was a reason for the sin of Amnon.

Verses 5,6: A wise and clever friend if he be unprincipled, is a menace to anyone.

Verse 12: Tamar is to be commended for the disapproval she expressed. Though such acts were common among heathen nations, they were forbidden by law to the Israelites (Leviticus 18:9). "*Outrageous*" ("folly" KJV) is a term especially applied to unchastity.

Verse 13: "*Fools*" - denotes one who has abandoned the fear of God and cast off the restraints of decency and morality.

Verse 15: It is a characteristic of human nature to hate one whom you have injured.

Verse 19: These were all the marks of grief and shame.

Verse 20: The only thing to be admired in the life of Absalom was his love for his sister. For two years he watched for an opportunity to revenge his sister.

Verse 21: David was angry but did not punish Amnon. The penalty of this transgression was death, but if he insisted upon it in the case of his son it would only bring out the more forcibly that he had not paid the full penalty for his own sin with Bathsheba.

Verse 23: Sheepshearing was and still is an occasion of festivity.

Verse 24: This was a clever plan for removing all suspicion from Amnon's mind.

Verse 26: The pretense was that if David could not go, at least he might send his oldest son as a representative. David's reluctance to consent shows that he felt some misgivings that Absalom had not forgiven Amnon.

Verses 28,29: Absalom did this to revenge his sister, but may have also welcomed the pretext for getting rid of Amnon who stood between him and the succession to the throne.

Verses 32,33: This is an illustration of the wisdom of Jonadab. He predicted accurately what had really happened.

Verses 38,39: Absalom fled to his grandfather (3:3). During this time David's grief for Amnon abated, but his longing for Absalom increased.

Lessons learned from Chapter 13

1. David's sins repeated in the lives of his children.
 - a. Amnon committed the sin which his father had committed with Bathsheba.
 - b. Absalom committed murder, just as his father had done - through the hands of another, though the plan was his own.
 - c. Both of these sons followed the example of their father in sinning. Neither of them, however, repented before his death. Very often we see parents who have sinned and repented. Their children follow in their steps in sin, but no in repentance.

Chapter 14

Chapter Outline

- I. Jacob's craft in the recall of Absalom - verses 1-20
- II. David's half-hearted forgiveness of Absalom - verses 21-24
- III. David forgives Absalom - verses 25-33

Notes

Verse 1: Like Cain after he had murdered his brother, Absalom had gone to the land of Nod. Political and judicial reasons prevented David from yielding to the dictates of affection and recalling his son. Perceiving this, Joab planned his scheme in order to give the king the excuse he desired for recalling his son. The refusal to see Absalom may have been prompted by the hope that the discipline of disapproval might bring him to a state of penitence for his offense.

Verse 7: Her surviving son was compared to the live coal still left among the embers, by which the fire almost extinct may be rekindled.

Verse 9: She wished to lead the king to a more definite promise, before she applied her parable to the case of Absalom.

Verse 11: David makes his oath and promise in the name of the Lord.

Verse 13: The woman's argument is that he must treat his own son as he promised to treat her son. The promise of protection to her son was a condemnation of his own conduct towards Absalom. He had acknowledged the possibility of an exception to the general rule of punishment for murder, but he had not extended this exception to his own son, in spite of the strongest reasons for doing so.

Verse 14: The statement is general but may contain a pointed allusion to God's mercy in sparing David's own life when he had deserved death for adultery and murder.

Verse 19: The king discerns the exact state of the case.

Verse 21: To recall Absalom without giving him a full pardon was a most dangerous policy. Not so had God forgiven David.

Verse 29: Joab was evidently afraid of incurring David's displeasure.

Verse 32: His desire is to have the king treat him either as guilty or innocent.

Verse 33: This was a pledge of reconciliation. This reconciliation was but a hollow thing as far as Absalom was concerned, for he began at once to make preparations for a revold against David.

Lessons from Chapter 14

1. The true way to regain a lost inheritance.
There was not sorrow in Absalom's heart; he was restored to his home through fraud. There is a right way to be restored, that is through confession and repentance. Multitudes are willing to get back to God but want to come the right way.

Chapter 15

Chapter Outline

- I. Absalom steals the love of the ten tribes - verses 1-6
- II. Outbreak of Absalom's rebellion - verses 7-12
- III. Flight of David from Jerusalem - verses 13-37

Meaning of proper names

Ahithophel - "brother of impiety"
Ittai - "ploughman"
Zadok - "just"
Abiathar - "father of plenty"
Hushai - "hasting", "loyalty"

Notes

Verse 1: Absalom imitated the magnificence of foreign monarchs in order to make an impression on the people. He worked at looking the part of a king. David rode on a mule (1 Kings 1:33).

Verse 3: He artfully flattered each suitor by pronouncing a favorable decision on his case, and condoned him on the improbability of obtaining a hearing.

Verse 4: He hinted that matters would be different if he were in power.

Verse 5: Instead of permitting the people to do him homage, he saluted them familiarly with a kiss.

Verse 6: Whether David was at fault or not, it is a fact that Absalom stole the hearts of the people.

He gained favor by the following means.

1. He appeared in pomp (14:1). People like show and splendor and easily fall victim to the one who pretends to be great.
2. He pretended sympathy (14:2-6).
3. He pretended piety (14:7-9)

Verse 7: A deceitful heart will not stop at anything to gain its ends, even assuming a religious garb.

Verse 10: He was to be proclaimed king simultaneously all over the country. The choice of Hebron plainly shows that Absalom expected to find his main support in the tribe of Judah.

Verse 11: In all probability they were men of distinction and would naturally be regarded as accomplices in the conspiracy. No doubt Absalom hoped that many of them, finding themselves thus compromised, and seeing the number of supporters, would decide to join him. He may have anted to hold them as hostages if they turned against him.

Verse 12: By comparing 2 Samuel 11:3 and 23:34 we judge that Ahithophel was the grandfather of Bathsheba. It would seem then that the reason he left David for Absalom was because of the displeasure which he felt at the wrong done ten years before to the wife of Uriah. The name of this man has been justly linked with that of Judas. There is a striking parallel between the treachery and suicide found in the lives of both men.

Verse 16: It was apparently early on the morning of the day after he had received the news of the rebellion that the king left the city of Jerusalem. Some of the Psalms were written during this period, or refer to this period. Psalm 63 was probably written while in the wilderness of Judah between the flight from Jerusalem and the passage on the Jordan. Psalms 3 and 4 are morning and evening hymns composed on the day after he had quitted Jerusalem. Psalms 26 and 62 refer to the traitors who deserted him at this crisis. Psalms 27 and 28 refer probably to the exile at Mahanaim.

Verse 18: David had with him 600 who had been with him in exile.

Verses 19-22: Ittai was a newcomer to Jerusalem who had taken service under David. We conjecture that he had left his home, Philistia, because of a revolution or some such hardship. David did not wish him to have a repetition of such hardships, so assured him that he might take service under Absalom or any other reigning king without breach of faith. His answer to David compares well with the answer given by Ruth to her mother-in-law.

Verse 23: The brook Kidron in the life of the One of Whom David is a type. David crossed it while fleeing from Jerusalem and Christ followed the same course after leaving the city which had rejected Him (John 18:1).

Verses 24-29: The ark was considered the symbol of the presence of Jehovah. Hence the priests brought it along. David ordered it back to Jerusalem. In process, Zadok and Abiathar were commissioned to tell David how matters were going in the city. David committed himself into the hands of God. His words show true resignation and humble submission to the will of God.

Verse 30: The covered head marks the deep grief which shuts itself out from the outer

world; the bare feet betoken affliction, self-humiliation and penitence.

Verses 31-37: When David learned of the disloyalty of Ahitophel he sent Hushai back to counteract the influence of the traitor and advised him to cooperate with Zadok and Abiathar.

Lessons from Chapter 15

1. God's enemies come often as an angel of light.
The workings of Absalom show us the method Satan uses in turning hearts from the service of the Lord.
 - a. He was beautiful to the eye, but his outward appearance was deceiving.
 - b. He flattered the people and pretended to sympathize with them.
 - c. He pretended to be pious. Satan often attacks under the guise of piety.

Chapter 16

Chapter Outline

- I. The false servant of Mephibosheth - verses 1-4
- II. Shimei curses David - verses 5-14
- III. Absalom enters Jerusalem - verses 15-23

Meaning of proper names

Ziba - "planter"
Shimei - "my fame"
Abishai - "father of a gift"

Notes

Verse 1: Ziba was clever enough to see the outcome of the rebellion and wished to secure the king's favor.

Verse 3: Ziba's story was a lie invented in the hope of securing something for himself.

Verse 4: David made a rash and hasty decision. Deceived by Ziba he gave the wrong decision, thus injuring a friend.

Verse 5: Shimei's connection with the family of Saul accounts for his bitter hatred.

Verse 6: The road apparently was parallel to a ridge and separated from it by a deep ravine so that Shimei was out of easy reach, though within a stone's throw of David and his party.

Verse 8: Shimei probably referred to the deaths of Saul and his sons at Gilboa, of Abner and Ish-bosheth by treacherous murder, charging David with the guilt of the crimes which he had repudiated and punished; he probably did not refer to the death of Uriah, though David would feel that it was for his death that the curse was not undeserved.

Verse 9: Abishai's answer was consistent with his character on the former occasion when he was eager to slay Saul (1 Samuel 26:8); and on the later occasion when he was for refusing Shimei's suit for pardon (19:21). His fiery zeal reminds us of the Sons of Thunder

(Luke 9:54), and David's answer recalls Christ's answer to Peter (John 18:10,11).

Verses 11-13: David recognized Shimei as the divinely appointed instrument for his chastisement, and therefore he could say, "the Lord has told him to." But Shimei's cursing was on this part sinful, and God commands no man to sin. God makes use of the evil passions of men to work out His purposes, but those evil passions are not thereby excused or justified. Since He is the Author and Cause of all things, and in a certain sense nothing can be done without His will, He is sometimes said to do what He permits to be done, to command what He does not forbid (Genesis 45:5; Acts 2:23).

Verse 15: Absalom seems to have entered Jerusalem soon after David left, perhaps about noon on the same day (15:37).

Verse 21: Ahithophel advised Absalom to make a decisive assumption of royal authority by publicly taking possession of the royal harem. This act was a claim of heirship and succession and was not regarded with abhorrence by the Israelites, whose feelings on such matters were blunted by the practice of polygamy. Its object was to make the breach between Absalom and his father irreparable, and to strengthen the resolution of his followers, by proving that the rebellion was not to end in his securing a pardon for his father and leaving them to their fate, but that he was determined to run all risks.

Verse 22: The fact that the very roof on which David was walking when he secretly conceived his great sin was the public scene of its punishment (11:2), and the nature of the punishment, corresponding to the nature of the sin, as Nathan had foretold, make this retribution signally striking (12:11,12).

Verse 23: "*Consulted the word of God*" - refers to the fact that inquiry was made of the Lord by means of the Urim and Thummim in the breastplate upon the high priest's ephod (15:31).

Lessons from Chapter 16

1. Lessons to Parents

- a. There is a warning against over-indulgence and neglect of discipline. The parent who does not secure the obedience and allegiance of his child, as really violates the fifth commandment as does the child who disobeys and dishonors him.
- b. If parents would have thorough discipline of their homes they must be pure and holy themselves. David's weakness sprang out of his own sin. His conscience made him a coward. He was afraid to bring the law into effect against his children, lest its sword should descend also on his own head.
- c. Parents must learn to put the right estimate upon personal beauty. It does not indicate spiritual loveliness. It is a gift from God so we should not despise it. IF we do not have it ourselves, we are not to envy those who do; while, if we do possess it, we must be on our guard lest it prove either a temptation to others or a snare to ourselves.

Chapter 17

Chapter Heading

The diverse counsel of Ahithophel and Hushai

Notes

Verse 1: Ahithophel's advice as excellent. The success of the rebellion would be ensured by striking a sudden blow, and securing the king's person. A small body of picked troops might easily have overtaken David, who was not likely to get more than twelve miles or fifteen miles from Jerusalem on the first day. This happened on the night following David's flight and Absalom's entrance into Jerusalem.

Verse 3: *"And I will bring all the people back to you... You seek the life of only one man."* This would avert civil war.

Verse 8: The bear is proverbial for its ferocity. The Syrian bear is said to be particularly ferocious.

Verse 9: *"Pit"* - a cave or natural hiding place. *"Place"* - artificially strengthened position.

Verse 14: Hushai's scheme was cleverly devised to appeal to Absalom's vanity and love of display. It seemed safe and easy; it was a far more attractive idea for Absalom to march in person against David at the head of an immense army, than for him to let Ahithophel complete the revolution by a decisive action at once. His vanity proved his ruin. He forgot that a general levy would involve no slight delay; he forgot that the rising was by no means certain and that when the first general surprise of the insurrection was over, many would return to their alliances to David. But Absalom and his counsellors were blinded by a divinely ordered infatuation.

Verse 17: Hushai had evidently communicated David's plan to Zadok and Abiathar and commissioned the young men to be in waiting at a convenient place. The high priests were known to be on David's side so their movements were watched.

Verse 20: The Scriptures affirm the universal duty of truth without any exception (Leviticus 19:11), nor can it be understood to sanction breaches of this general law by recording them without express disapproval.

Verse 23: This is the first suicide on record and was prompted by mortification at the rejection of his counsel; by the chagrin of baffled ambition; by the conviction that now the rebellion would inevitably fail, and that he would only live to suffer the death of a traitor.

Verse 24: Before Absalom passed over Jordan a considerable interval must have elapsed, during which Absalom was formally anointed and a general levy of the nation raised according to Hushai's counsel, while David had time to organize his forces and establish himself at Mahanaim.

Lessons from Chapter 17

1. God's will and purposes are supreme - verse 14
 - a. They cannot be set aside by the enemy.
 - b. They cannot be stopped by the wisdom of man.
 - c. They must come at God's appointed time.

Chapter 18

Chapter Outline

- I. The battle of Mount Ephraim - verses 1-8
- II. The slaying of Absalom - verses 9-18

III. David is told of Absalom's death - verses 19-32

IV. The touching grief of King David - verse 33

Meaning of proper names

Ephraim - "fruitful"

Ahimaaz - "brother of anger"

Cushi - "black"

Notes

Verse 1: An interval of a few weeks must be assumed during which the rival armies were mustered and organized.

Verse 2: The division of an army into three bodies seems to have been a common practice (Judges 7:16; 9:43; 1 Samuel 11:11).

Verse 8: Owing to the nature of the ground more were slain in the pursuit through the forest, than in the actual battle. They were so tangled in the thicket that they were easily overcome.

Verse 9: His head was caught in the forked boughs of the tree, and he hung there, stunned and helpless. Perhaps his long, thick hair got entangled, but there is nothing to support the common idea that he was suspended merely by his hair.

Verse 13: He would not only have disobeyed the king but have been false to his own interest and forfeited his life.

Verse 15: Absalom's death was unquestionably the speediest and surest way of ending the rebellion; and Joab probably took credit to himself for serving his country while he satisfied his private revenge (14:30).

Verse 16: He sounded the call to stop further pursuit.

Verse 17: He reared a monument of shame over the rebel's grave, as over that of Achan (Joshua 7:26) and the king of Ai (Joshua 8:29). Some think it was symbolic of the stoning which was the penalty of a rebel son (Deuteronomy 21:20,21). It is still a custom in the East for passers by to cast stones on the grave of a malefactor.

Verse 18: His three sons must have all died in infancy (14:27). His actual grave was very different from the pillar he had reared to himself in the king's dale.

Verse 20: Joab would not let Ahimaaz have the thankless task of carrying news which to the king would be no good news.

Verse 21: He gave that errand to an Ethiopian slave who would have little to lose by the king's displeasure.

Verse 23: Ahimaaz struck down into the Jordan Valley and ran by a longer but easier route, while the Cushite took the direct but more difficult route over the hills.

Verse 25: If the army had been routed, a number of fugitives would have been seen coming together.

Verse 27: The king rightly judged that Joab would not choose a distinguished messenger like Ahimaaz to carry bad news.

Verse 33: The cry “Would I have died instead of you” was not only the utterance of self-sacrificing love, but the confession that he had himself deserved the punishment which fell upon another (24:17).

Lessons from Chapter 18

1. God’s laws cannot be ignored without punishment.
 - a. David suffered for his own sin in the punishment of his son.
 - b. Absalom suffered for his own sin and the sin of his father.

Chapter 19

Chapter Outline

- I. Joab reproaches David - verses 1-8
- II. David’s return to Jerusalem - verse 9-40
- III. The old strife begins anew - verses 41-43

Meaning of proper names

Barzillai - “of iron”
Chimham - “longing”

Notes

Verse 3: Out of respect for the king’s sorrow the army stole into the city silently in small parties.

Verse 5: Joab’s speech was exaggerated and unfeeling but it roused David from the extravagance of his grief to a sense of duty, and saved him from flinging away the fruits of victory.

Verse 7: Joab’s argument is that they will not continue faithful to a king who allows private grief to outweigh his gratitude for their services.

Verse 8: David “*took his seat in the gate*” to give audience to these subjects.

Verse 10: This is the only reference to the anointing of Absalom.

Verse 11: The elders of Judah would naturally be leaders in the restoration of the king (5:3). Their backwardness is explained by the prominent part which Judah had taken in the insurrection (15:10): while David’s message to the priests was prompted by the desire to conciliate the good will of the most powerful tribe of the nation, and persuade them to take a leading part in his recall.

Verse 13: Amasa was David’s nephew (17:25). It was bold policy to promise the post of commander-in-chief to the general of the rebel army. By doing so, David designed at once to secure the allegiance of that army and to punish Joab for killing Absalom in defiance of his command.

Verse 14: The men of Judah were inclined to restore him to the throne.

Verse 15: The representatives of Judah were sent to escort the king back to Jerusalem.

Verse 16: Shimei and Ziba came with guilty consciences to seek favor by seeming to show special zeal in bringing back the king.

Verse 18: They crossed over to meet the king on the eastern bank.

Verse 21: Since the king was Jehovah's representative, to curse him was to curse God (Exodus 22:28; Leviticus 24:15; 1 Kings 21:10).

Verse 23: David cannot be acquitted of breaking the spirit of not the letter of his oath by the charge which he gave to Solomon (1 Kings 2:8ff).

Verse 28: Since all David's favors to him were underserved, he had no ground for making a complaint, and demanding the restoration of his property as a right.

Verse 29: This is usually supposed to be a compromise between the two claimants, either because David suspected the truth of Mephibosheth's, or because he was unwilling to alienate Ziba, and possibly a considerable part of Benjamites, by entirely revoking the grant to him (16:4). But it may be a confirmation of the original arrangement by which Ziba was to be Mephibosheth's tenant, and as he certainly did not cultivate the land for nothing, might be said to share it with him.

Verse 30: Mephibosheth's affection for the master, not his property.

Verse 31: Barzillai had helped David greatly and supplied him with food before the battle (17:27-29).

Verse 37: He commended his son to the favor of the sovereign. Later Chimham and his brothers were specially commended to Solomon's care (1 Kings 2:7). From the mention of Chimham in Jeremiah 41:17 it has been inferred that he received a grant of land from David's patrimony at Bethlehem which retained his name for a least four centuries.

Verse 39: David's followers are termed "*all the people.*"

Verse 40: While the king was at Gilgal the representatives of the rest of Israel arrived, and complained to David that they had been cheated of the honor and privilege of escorting him back. They justly censured the men of Judah for doing by themselves that which should have been the united act of the whole nation.

Verse 42: The men of Judah defended themselves by alleging the purity of their motives.

Verse 43: The northern tribes claimed a share of the king in proportion to their number. The men of Judah asserted that David belonged especially to them because he was of their tribe.

Lessons from Chapter 19

1. An example of true loyalty.
Shimei was willing to follow anyone who would show him favors. There are those who only follow Christ for what they can get out of it. Mephibosheth was not serving David

for his gifts. He truly loved David and was loyal to him.

2. A Christian should be meek under false accusation.

He who is always standing on his own vindication and insisting on having himself put right, will do himself and the cause more harm than good. Let him be still and God will vindicate him. If men will not take his word let him wait until God proves his truthfulness. The Christian has always his court of appeal in heaven. Mephibosheth did not care for his own interests. He sought no revenge on Ziba.

Chapter 20

Chapter Outline

- I. The new rebellion under Sheba - verses 1-3
- II. Joab murders Amasa - verses 4-12
- III. Suppression of Sheba's revolt - verses 13-22
- IV. The officers of David's court - verses 23-26

Meaning of proper names

Sheba - "an oath"
Benaiah - "whom Jehovah hath built"
Adoram - "lord of height"
Jehoshaphat - "whom Jehovah judges"
Sheva - "vanity"
Ira - "watchful"

Notes

Verse 1: The dispute opened an immediate opportunity for a bold and ambitious leader to lead a revolt. Sheba was a descendant of the second son of Benjamin, Becher (Genesis 46:21).

"Every man to his tents" - the same words were used as a signal for the revolt from Rehoboam (1 Kings 12:16).

Verse 3: Since they had been appropriated by Absalom they could not longer be regarded as members of the royal harem, nor could they be set at liberty.

Verse 4: The commission was given to Amasa in fulfillment of the promise privately made to him (19:13).

Verse 5: Some may have resented the change of generals and distrusted Amasa; some may have been half-hearted about David's restoration; so that he found that the task took longer than he expected.

Verse 6: David now gave his orders to Abishai, being determined at any rate to supersede Joab. For the moment Joab seemed to consent, and marched out under his brother's command (20:7), intending to wait his opportunity. This speedily presented itself: without scruple he murdered his rival, and then by Abishai's consent, resumed his old position as commander-in-chief (20:10,11).

Verse 8: In the girdle which Joab wore over his military dress was stuck a dagger. As he

met Amasa he contrived to let fall out of its sheath on the ground. He picked it up in his left hand, and the movement being apparently purely accidental, excited no alarm in Amasa's mind.

Verse 9: It is said to be still customary among Arabs and Turks to lay hold of a persons' beard in giving him the kiss of welcome.

Verse 11: One of Joab's young men remained behind to invite Amasa's followers to join Joab. He appealed to their personal attachment to himself as general, and to their loyalty to David; insinuating that Amasa was not faithful to the king, and had met his death justly for his treachery. Joab's real motive in murdering Amasa, as before in the case of Abner, was jealousy.

Verse 15: The besiegers erected a mound of earth against the city wall to enable them to batter the upper and weaker part of it.

Verse 18: It should be rendered, *"In old time they clearly spoke saying, 'They will surely ask at Abel, and so conclude.'"* It may be taken as claiming, on behalf of the city, and application of merciful law in Deuteronomy 20:10-12, which Joab seemed to have disregarded by commencing the siege without first inquiring whether the people of Abel adhered to Sheba or not.

Verse 19: The woman speaks in the name of the city, asserting its peaceableness and loyalty.

Verse 23: Joab retained his post in spite of David's resolution to depose him.

Verse 24: Forced labor is used in preparation for building the Temple and fortified cities. Forced labor was increased by David; increased by Solomon; later the cause of revolt in 1 Kings (1 Kings 5:13,14; 9:20-22; 12:4).

Verses 23-26: Compare this list with 8:16-18. Some differences between the lists are explained by their belonging to different periods. Sheva is apparently another name for Seraiah of 8:17. The priestly posts were formerly held by David's sons (8:18).

Lessons from Chapter 20

1. God gives songs in the night.
During this period David wrote many Psalms. We learn from these Psalms that communion with God is the most precious solace which a believer can have in the time of trial. In the days of calamity and darkness it was David's habit to fall back into the arms of Jehovah.
 - a. The third and fourth Psalms are written in connection with his flight from Jerusalem.
 - b. Psalms 41,55,69 were written after he heard of Ahithophel's treachery.
 - c. While sojourning at Mahanaim he wrote and sang Psalms 42,43,84.

Chapter 21

Chapter Outline

- I. The three years' famine - verses 1-14
- II. War with the Philistines - verses 15-22

Meaning of proper names

Gibeon - "pertaining to a hill"
Rizpah - "Hot coal"

Notes

Verse 1: David sought to ascertain the cause of this judgment, for famine was one of the "*four disastrous acts of judgment*" (1 Kings 8:35-37; Ezekiel 14:21).

Verse 2: Joshua had made a treaty with the Gibeonites (Joshua 9:1-15). The oath though obtained by fraud was acknowledged to be binding. Its violation was a breach of the third commandment. Saul, in his zealous efforts to clear the land of the heathen, had broken this old but binding covenant.

Verse 4: No money compensation could expiate Saul's offense. Money compensation for murder was forbidden by the Mosaic Law (Numbers 35:30-32). The cry for vengeance was against the house of Saul and not against the nation at large.

Verse 6: Seven was the sacred number - their execution was to be an act of expiation. According to the principle of blood-avengement the Gibeonites had a right to make this demand.

Verse 7: David remembered this covenant with Jonathan.

Verse 9: Barley harvest preceded wheat harvest, and began about the middle of April.

Verse 10: The bodies were left hanging until assurance was given that the crime was expiated. The heavy rains showed that the judgment of the drought was withdrawn.

Verses 12-14: David, learning what Rizpah had done, took the bones of Saul and his sons, and these men who were put to death, and buried them in the family burying place in the country of Benjamin. Thus God accepted the intercession made on behalf of the land.

Verses 15-22: David's enemies, the Philistines once more came against him. Some in their ranks were men of gigantic stature and great strength, belonging to the family of Goliath. One of these, Ishbi-benob, fought against David. But for the interference of Abishai, David would have been slain. His men then prevailed upon him not to take the field any more. Then in two decisive encounters his men seem to have subdued the Philistines.

David began his fighting days with victory over the giants of Gath (1 Samuel 17), and he ended the with the slaughter, by the hands of his servants.

Lessons from Chapter 21

1. Physical calamities often are divine chastisements.
God often checks the sins of men by sending physical calamities. These calamities usually come through the ordinary operation of physical laws, but these laws have been so adjusted by God that through them, and without any miraculous interference with them, He visits moral evil with physical chastisement. So it is wise for people, under such a visitation, to enquire of the Lord for the cause.

2. Sin must be atoned for.

Chapter 22

Chapter Heading

David's Song of Deliverance

Notes

Verses 1-4: These verses are an introduction and general indication of the character of the Psalm (see Psalm 18). There are two things which specially claim attention in his words:

1. The variety of terms which he employs to describe the protection which God afforded him.

He seems to have difficulty in finding one word which would adequately express all that Jehovah had been to him. So he heaps one term upon another, calling Him "*my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold and my refuge, my savior.*" It is an attempt to describe, from many sides, that which he felt could not be fully shown from any single stand-point. For every sort of peril in which he had been placed, God had been the protection appropriate thereto. Though we may have proved His power to help us in one way, we are apt to fall into despair when some new danger threatens us. God is perfect protection in every emergency. (see also 2 Samuel 23:25; Psalm 40:2; Isaiah 51:1)

2. The emphatic personal manner in which he speaks.

Numerous as are the figures under which God's help is pictured, each of them is preceded by the emphatic appropriating "*my*". When in great sorrow or joy, the heart speaks in personal phraseology. A fortress is threatening and terrible to all who are outside of it; but it is, just because of that, only the more safe to those who are within it; and only when we believingly appropriate God as our own do we enter into the divine fortress and enjoy His protection. So long as we are unreconciled to Him, His glorious attributes, His infinite resources, His boundless might appear arrayed against us; but when, through Jesus Christ, we enter into covenant with Him, all these are on our side.

Verses 5-20: Description of the dangers in which he had been involved and the deliverances which God wrought for him.

In this description there is every circumstance of horror which can be imagined. God is introduced in a manner worthy of His majesty, encompassed with all the powers of nature and His attendants. Though every way seemed shut against him, the way to God was always open, and when he got near to Jehovah, he was safe. It is possible to line one's self with Omnipotence.

Verse 6: "*the cords of Sheol*" - cords or nets of the hunter.

Verse 8ff: The picture is designed to serve as a description of God's intervention for his deliverance in general, and not upon any single occasion.

Verse 11: The cherubim are represented as the living throne upon which God

traversed space.

Verse 16: All nature is pictured as convulsed to its lowest depths owning their Lord and Master.

Verse 20: "*because He delighted in me*" - this was the ground of God's deliverance, and it now becomes the leading thought of the Psalm. This phrase fitly introduces the next section of the Psalm.

Verses 21-29: An exposition of the principle of divine administration in accordance with which he had been delivered.

David asserts that God deals with men according to the principles on which men themselves act toward each other. The general principle is this, that God is on the side of right, and that if men conscientiously adhere to that which they know to be their duty, He will, in the long run, deal with men "*according to my righteousness*" (22:21). In the main David did this, so far, at least, as his public administration and public enemies were concerned. Even in the present life there is a retributive element in God's moral government, and men shall be done by as they do.

Verse 21: This is no boasting of his own merits, but a testimony to the faithfulness of Jehovah to guard and reward His faithful servants (Luke 7:47).

Verse 26: God's attitude toward men is regulated by men's attitude toward God.

Verses 30-49: A recapitulation in simpler terms of the deliverances which David had experienced.

The writer recognizes God's hand in every thing. There had been human agents employed in working for him, but his highest praise is to God who wrought through them. Often we see the visible instrument, but forget the invisible Author of all our mercies. Our songs of praise should be to Him. There are specially three attributes of God which are mentioned:

1. His faithfulness: "*The word of the Lord proves true*" (22:31).

Here the word "proves" means put to the test and satisfactorily passed. By his emergencies David had put a strain upon the promises of God and he had found that they were true.

2. His gentleness: "*Your gentleness made me great*" (22:36).

This is the heart and center of the cross of Christ. David felt that God's kindness to him, in his weakness, his waywardness, his very wantonness of sin, had lifted him up. Even when we are suffering under His hand, He manifests gentleness in our very chastisement. Every day we live we are receiving new proofs of His tender love for us.

3. His eternity: "*The Lord lives, and blessed be my rock*" (22:47).

One after another of his early friends had been taken away; Samuel and Jonathan. But there was One always true.

Verse 30: The word “troop” is the same as used when referring to the Amalekites which had sacked Ziklag (1 Samuel 30:8,15,23).

Verse 35: David recognizes that, though he led his people as a king, still it was not his hand that saved them; it was the hand of Jehovah.

Verse 37: To enlarge the steps is to afford ample room for walking freely without hinderance. The opposite figure is that of confined steps (Job 18:7; Proverbs 4:12). Meaning of the verse: Thou wilt guide me safely. His steps had been hindered; now all obstacles had been taken out of the way.

Verse 44: This reference seems to be to the civil wars in the land.

Verse 48: God will avenge, and vindicate the innocence of His servants.

Verses 50,51: An expression of gratitude and praise.

Verse 50: The celebration of Jehovah’s praise is not to be limited to the narrow borders of Israel. The heathen also should hear.

Verse 51: There is a reference to the promise in 7:12-16. David claims the continual favor of God for his posterity.

Lessons from Chapter 22

1. After crying to God in our difficulty we must remember to praise Him at the time of deliverance. We cry to God when the crisis of some great agony is on; we must also remember to think of Him when the danger is past and the suffering is gone.

Chapter 23

Chapter Outline

- I. The last words of David - verses 1-7
- II. David’s mighty men - verse 8-39

Notes

The coronation of Solomon took place before the events in this chapter (1 Kings 1; 1 Chronicles 28,29).

Verse 1: This gives a description of the psalmist himself. He realized that he had been an instrument in the hand of the Lord.

Verse 2: This direct claim of inspiration is witnessed to by Christ Himself (Matthew 22:43). This verse gives us a definition of true inspiration (2 Timothy 3:16).

Verses 3,4: This prophecy is the companion and complement of the prophecy in chapter 7. There the promise of eternal dominion is given to the house of David, finding a partial fulfillment in his descendants, and a complete fulfillment only in Christ. Here David himself is taught by inspiration to draw a portrait of a ruler, some features of which were partially realized in Solomon and the better kings of Judah, but which finds its perfect realization in Christ.

Verse 5: He expresses the confidence that God will in due time cause the salvation promised to him and to his house to come to pass.

Verses 6,7: The judgment and destruction of the wicked is the necessary consequence of the perfect rule of the righteous king. Those who submit themselves to the rule of God are benefited; those who refuse to own His sway are to be destroyed.

Verse 8: The Tachmonite - he joined David at Ziklag (1 Chronicles 12:6), and was afterwards made general of the first division of the army (1 Chronicles 27:2).

Verse 16: That which had been won by the lives of these three gallant chiefs was too sacred for him to drink, but it was on that very account deemed worthy to be consecrated in sacrifice to God.

Verse 18: Abishai was David's valiant but hard-hearted nephew, who shared the command of the army with his brother Joab in the Ammonite war with Absalom's rebellion (10:10,14; 18:2).

Verse 20: Benaiah was commander of the body-guard (8:18; 20:23), and general of the third division of the army (1 Chronicles 27:5,6). He was an active supporter of Solomon against Adonijah, and was rewarded by being made commander-in-chief in place of Joab (1 Kings 1:8,26,32ff; 2:25-35,46; 4:4).

Verses 24-39: These thirty heroes are for the most part distinguished by the names of their native places or residences; and these are in some cases identical with clan or family names, because the head of the clan gave his name to the place where his family settled. 1 Chronicles 11:41 adds one to the list.

There are 37 in all. Three are mentioned in verses 8-12. Three are mentioned in verses 13-23. Although only two are named.

Lessons from Chapter 23

1. God has a list of "*mighty men*."
God will not forget any of His mighty men (Romans 16; Hebrews 11). The record of the service of each one is carefully kept. When our Lord comes to reward His servants, He will reward each one according to his works.

Chapter 24

Chapter Outline

- I. David's sin in numbering the people - verses 1-9 (1 Chronicles 21:1-6)
- II. David's choice of punishment - verse 10-17
- III. David buys Araunah's threshing floor and erects an altar - verses 18-25

Meaning of proper names

Aroer - "ruins"
Gilead - "hill of witness"
Dan-jaan - "woodland"
Zidon - "fishing"
Tyre - "rock"

Beersheba - "well of the oath"

Araunah - "calf"

Notes

Verse 1: The statement that God incited David to do what was afterwards condemned and punished as a heinous sin cannot of course mean that He compelled David to sin, but that in order to test and prove his character He allowed the temptation to assault him. In 1 Chronicles 21:1 we read that Satan moved David. The former record speaks only of God's permissive action; the later tells us of the malicious instrumentality of Satan.

Verse 2: The king yield to the temptation to which he was subjected by permission of God through the instrumentality of Satan.

The law provided for the taking of a census of the population, but in connection with the enumerating, and probably to check the disposition to boasting which it was likely to evoke, it enacted thus (Exodus 30:12-16). We have no record of the making of this offering here, and perhaps in neglect of this offering we have the occasion of the pestilence that followed. The omission of this acknowledgment of God may be regarded as indicating the presence of that spirit of vainglory which God desired to punish and repress. The command of David was not sinful in itself, but became so, from the spirit of pride and vainglory out of which it originated, and which was shared by the people over whom he ruled. The Lord's anger was kindled against the people, not only David. Meaning that the people may not have been the innocent victims as a consequence of David's sin, so much as willing participants for their own vain-glories' sake.

Verse 3: Joab seem to sense the wrong of the act. Just what his motives were is not certain.

Verse 8: Joab omitted the Levites, in accordance with the direction given by Moses (Numbers 1:47ff), because they were exempt from military service; and the Benjamites, possibly in order to avoid exciting disaffection in a tribe specially read to take offense (1 Chronicles 21:6).

Verses 10,11: He became aware of his guilt.

Verse 13: Famine, war, pestilence - these are three of the Lord's sore judgments (Ezekiel 14:21). Two of them David had already experienced.

Verse 14: War would place the nation at the mercy of its enemies: famine would make it dependent on corn-merchants who might greatly aggravated the miseries of scarcity: only in the pestilence would the punishment come directly from God, and depend immediately upon His will.

Verse 16: Angels are God's ministers in temporal judgment now, as well as in the final judgment hereafter (Exodus 12:23; 2 Kings 19:35; Psalm 78:49; Matthew 13:41; Acts 12:23).

God "*relented*" when upon man's penitence He withdraws or mitigates a punishment; or when upon man's faithlessness or disobedience He cancels a promise or revokes a blessing. God's repentance does not mean that He changes His position, but that man changes his position in relation to God.

Verse 17: David takes all the blame upon himself, for his offense had been the immediate cause of the plague, and it is characteristic of true penitence to dwell exclusively on its own sin, without respect to the complicity of others. But it is clear from verse 1 that the sin was of the people as well as David.

Verse 18: Gad's message was the answer to David's prayer. David was still in Jerusalem, praying perhaps at the tent in which the ark was, when he saw the appearance of the angel hovering above the neighboring hill, and apparently about to strike the city.

Verse 22,23: Araunah nobly offered to give all to David.

Verse 24: David refused to accept it without paying for it.

The threshing floor and oxen for fifty shekels of silver (1 Chronicles 21:25,31) - for the place, six hundred shekels of gold by weight. First David paid fifty shekels of silver for the threshing floor and oxen for the service of sacrifice at the time; later he paid six hundred shekels of gold for the ground adjoining to build the temple. As soon as the location had been settled, David prepared the materials (1 Chronicles 22:1-4).

Verse 25: The plague was stayed when David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings, signifying a full surrender. It was here that the temple was erected, the place where God's mercy was shown. It was on this spot that Abraham was supposed to have lifted up his hand to slay Isaac (Genesis 22:2; see 2 Chronicles 3:1).

Lessons from Chapter 24

1. The Christian must guard against pride.
Anything done from a proud motive gives Satan an opportunity. When pride is found in a person's life, it gives Satan an opportunity to move him. This applies to the individual as well as to the nations.
2. Sincere sacrifice must cost us something.
David would not offer burnt offering of that which did not cost him anything. Whatever we lay upon God's altar must cost us something if it is to be accepted.
3. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin.
The plague was stayed in connection with the offering of sacrifice. Only through the sacrifice of Christ can the plague of sin be removed from human hearts.