

GOD'S MERCY, OUR SALVATION

JACKIE OESCH

**STORIES FROM THE BOOKS OF FIRST AND SECOND SAMUEL,
FIRST AND SECOND KINGS, FIRST AND SECOND CHRONICLES**

LESSON 1: DAVID AND SAMUEL – *THE LORD LOOKS ON THE HEART*

LESSON 2: DAVID AND THE PHILISTINE – *THE BATTLE IS THE LORD'S*

LESSON 3: DAVID, ABIGAIL, AND SAUL – *THE LORD WAS WITH HIM*

LESSON 4: DAVID AND ISRAEL – *THE LORD IS GOD OVER ISRAEL*

LESSON 5: SOLOMON AND THE KINGS – *ISRAEL SINNED AGAINST THE LORD*

LESSON 6: ELIJAH AND ELISHA – *THE LORD IS GOD; FOLLOW HIM*

“...I have stored up Your Word in my heart...”

Psalm 119:11

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GETTING STARTED

You are embarking on an adventure that will shape the rest of your life. Your journey will be unique to you and will be determined in part by your eager and enthusiastic desire to grow in your understanding of the book called The Holy Bible. Your commitment to the study promises to enrich your life as God speaks to you through His Word.

As you study you are encouraged to have some recommended supplies on hand:

1. This Bible Study unit: *God's Mercy, Our Salvation*
2. English Standard Version of the Holy Bible (ESV). Note: If you are making a new purchase, look for a Bible, if possible, that has:
 - a. a cross-reference column preferably down the center of each page,
 - b. a Concordance usually found in the back of the Bible, and
 - c. a few basic maps also usually found in the back.
3. Pen or pencil
4. 3x5 or 4x6 index cards

With the three features listed in #2 you will be adequately supplied for your study and be ready to successfully navigate through these lessons. If, however, this is your first exposure to the Bible, you may want to consider beginning with the study entitled *Navigating the Bible*. This study provides navigational tools designed to help you develop skills and make you a more confident Bible student. *Navigating the Bible* may be downloaded at no cost or obligation from the CrossConnect Ministries website (www.crosscm.org). Although this study is recommended, it is not essential for success in studying *God's Mercy, Our Salvation*.

Do not hesitate to mark up your Bible. It's your Bible to study. Make it your own with your notes, your underlining, highlighting, circling and arrows! You may choose to use a notebook or tablet for recording thoughts, questions, and tracking your journey through the study.

The study material is written so that you are able to learn on your own. With a degree of self-discipline you will cover the material with little or no difficulty. At the same time, you will acquire new information, share new insights, and ask some challenging questions that will beg for answers. Anticipating this response you are encouraged to seriously consider inviting a couple of friends to study with you.

May you find joy in your study. May your heart be receptive as God speaks to you through His Word. May these Bible stories reassure you of His great love given to you through His Son Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

Editor's note: For clarification, capitalized pronouns reference God. i.e. "...what He said."

LESSON ONE

THE LORD LOOKS ON THE HEART

1 SAMUEL 16 – DAVID AND SAMUEL

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INTRODUCTION

In the previous unit *God's Will, Our Way*, we learned that Israel wanted to be ruled by a king like the other nations of the earth. Their desire to be like the nations around them superseded their desire to live uniquely as a people belonging to God living securely as His children under His rule and reign. Their demand for a king, in essence, was the rejection of God as their King. After they were warned about the hardships of living under a king's rule, God gave them what they demanded. The prophet Samuel was instructed by God to anoint Saul king over His people. God gave Saul the Spirit of the Lord and encouraged him with the words, "Do whatever your hand finds to do, for God is with you."

Not long after Saul became king we learn of his foolish acts of disobedience and his failure to keep the commands of the Lord. Eventually, Saul rejected the Word of the Lord and the Lord rejected him as king. God grieved that He had made Saul Israel's king and withdrew His Spirit from him.

In this lesson God is on a search for a man after His own heart. Learn where the next king is found and discover God's criteria for this new anointed king. Watch how God uses him and wins the favor of King Saul. Anticipate God's regret for having selected Saul as the first king of Israel.

Part 1

INTRODUCTION: Samuel and King Saul have parted ways (1 Kings 15). Samuel left for Ramah and Saul for his home in Gibeah. Although Samuel mourned for Saul, he never went to see him again. The Lord grieved that He had made Saul king and now rejected him as king over Israel.

It is important to understand that the Lord was not the one who initiated Saul's rejection. First Samuel 15:26 tells us that Saul first rejected the Word of the Lord. Saul rejected the relationship God wanted to establish with him as Israel's king. Because of Saul's decision to reject God, God rejected him as king.

ASSIGNMENT: The story continues. Read 1 Samuel 16:1-13.

- Where did God send Samuel?
- Why was he sent?
- What did he do?

EXERCISE:

1. What was the Lord's question to Samuel in verse 1? _____

2. God had a new assignment for Samuel. He was ready to appoint a new king over Israel and He wanted Samuel to be on his way to anoint the one He had chosen. What was God's command in the middle of verse 1? _____

TEACHING: The command to "fill your horn with oil" meant that a new king was about to be anointed. In 1 Samuel 10:1 we read about Samuel anointing Saul to be king, the leader over God's inheritance, Israel. Notice the use of oil that was poured over Saul's head. The anointing with oil symbolized to the people that this individual was set apart for a holy purpose. Saul was set apart in Chapter 10 and now a new man is about to be set apart for God's holy use.

EXERCISE:

1. Where did God send Samuel (verse 1)? _____
2. Jesse is not an unfamiliar character. Review Ruth 4:21 and 22. Note the family line.
 - a. Ruth and Boaz are the parents of _____.
 - b. Naomi is the great grandmother of _____.
 - c. Who is Jesse's son? _____

3. Why was Samuel sent to Bethlehem (verse 1)? _____
4. What was Samuel's fear (verse 2)? _____
5. What did the Lord instruct Samuel to do and say?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
6. What was God's specific instruction to Samuel at the end of verse 3? _____

7. Samuel obeyed (verse 4) and arrived in Bethlehem where he met the elders of the town. Undoubtedly, they served as gatekeepers and were gathered at the city gates when Samuel arrived. What did they ask Samuel in verse 4? _____
8. What did Samuel tell them (verse 5)? Why had he come? _____
9. What were his instruction and invitation to the elders? _____

10. Who were the others that he included? _____

Part 2

REFLECTION QUESTION: God had sent Samuel to Jesse in Bethlehem to anoint a new king. If you were sent by God to make the selection, what would be the criteria for the choice you would make?

Don't forget to consider your disappointment with the first king.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

EXERCISE: Let's find out who God chose...

1. Samuel is looking for God's choice. In verse 6 who did Samuel see? _____
2. What was Samuel's opinion of the man? _____
3. What did the Lord tell Samuel *not* to consider in verse 7? _____
4. What do we know about the appearance and height of King Saul? See 1 Samuel 9:2. _____

5. The Lord rejected Eliab. The next words give insight into the mind of the Lord. Write the remainder of verse 7: _____

6. What was Samuel's response to each of the sons Jesse brought before him (verses 8-10)? _____

7. Finally, what does Samuel ask Jesse in verse 11? _____
8. What was Jesse's response? _____
9. What was Samuel's directive (verse 11)? _____
10. And the youngest one who had been tending the sheep was brought in. How is he described in verse 12? _____
11. What did the Lord command Samuel to do? _____
12. Samuel anointed David in the presence of his brothers. What are we told about David (verse 13)?

- This is familiar. What are we told about Saul in 1 Samuel 11:6? _____
13. With his assignment completed, Samuel leaves for his home in _____ (verse 13).

MEMORIZATION: Do you find yourself looking at the outward appearance of a person rather than at the heart? Write out verse 7 on an index card for your memory assignment. God gives Samuel some direct counsel: "Do not look on his appearance...The Lord sees not as man sees." Man gets deceived by looking at one's outward appearance; the Lord looks at, searches, and knows the heart. The heart holds the values, the character, and the essence of the person.

1. What is God telling Samuel to do? _____
2. How do we reveal our heart for others to see? _____

3. What does the heart tell us about an individual? _____

4. What do others learn about me as I reveal my heart? _____

SOMETHING TO CONSIDER: Up to this point some things about Saul and David are similar. Both were considered to be insignificant and inexperienced.

1. What do we learn about Saul in 1 Samuel 9:21? _____

2. What two things do we learn about David in 1 Samuel 16:11?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
3. Finally, what are we told about these two men in 1 Samuel 9:2 and 1 Samuel 16:12? _____

Part 3

INTRODUCTION: We have just finished observing the similarities between these two men, between Saul and David. The next verses expose what made all the difference between them. In 1 Samuel 15:23 and 26 we learn that because of Saul's rebellion and arrogance, his disobedience, the Lord rejected Him as Israel's king. 1 Samuel 16:14-23 reveal another consequence of Saul's actions.

ASSIGNMENT: Read 1 Samuel 16:14-23.

- What replaced the Spirit of the Lord?
- Who was called into service for Saul?
- What was he asked to do?

EXERCISE:

1. What departed from Saul (verse 14)? _____
2. The Spirit of the Lord had empowered Saul (1 Samuel 11:6). This new and destructive spirit had a different effect on him. We are told that this evil spirit _____ him (Verse 14).
3. Saul's servants who attended him realized what was happening. What was their solution to Saul's tormenting spirit (verses 15-16)? _____

4. In verse 17 we learn that Saul agrees and instructs his attendants to proceed with identifying and bringing to him someone who plays the harp (lyre) well. One attendant knows David, the son of Jesse. What does he say about David (verse 18)?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____, a _____
 - c. _____, and _____
 - d. And _____
5. In verse 19 what action does Saul take? _____
6. In verse 20 how does Jesse respond? _____
Notice Jesse's generosity and respect for his king.
7. What does verse 21 tell us about David's service to King Saul? _____

8. What do we learn about the relationship between Saul and David? _____

9. What did Saul ask Jesse, David's father (verse 22)? _____

10. Saul appears to have a solution for times when the evil spirit from the Lord would come upon him (verse 23). David took _____.
Saul was _____ and the harmful spirit _____.

TEACHING: Our obedience to God’s Word is important to the Lord. It doesn’t matter how right we think we might be, God delights in our obedience to Him. His Word is His gift to us. His Word gives us guidance and direction that keep us from evil and danger. His Word protects our coming and going all the days of our lives. In Exodus 20 we read the Ten Commandments and learned they were given by God to His people in order that they might live together as a community reflecting their love for Him to the world around them. God’s commands were His best for them given out of His heart of love and yet the Israelites chose to disobey. Their acts of disobedience were acts of rejection of Him as their God.

As we consider Saul we find that he, too, chose to willfully disobey the Word of the Lord. Disobedience has consequences. Nothing pleases the Lord as much as our trust in Him and that trust is reflected in our obedience. 1 Samuel 15:22 says that to obey is *better than...* and to heed is *better than...* Verse 23 reminds us that disobedience is rebellion and arrogance. We need to understand that disobedience to His voice, to His Word, reflects a heart that rejects God and His authority.

Part 4

REFLECTION:

1. What are those things and when are those times that make it more difficult for me to heed the Word of the Lord? _____
2. When I listen to God’s voice as He speaks through His Word I... _____

3. Obedience to God as our authority is difficult for everyone. In Genesis 3 we learned that Adam and Eve were deceived into believing that they had found a better way than obedience to God’s voice. Rebellion and arrogance are difficult concepts. We don’t like to think of ourselves as being this way. Saul’s rejection of the Word of God resulted in God’s rejection of him as king. Have you experienced rejection, rejection caused by your own rebellion/arrogance? What was said or done? What might have been said or done for a different outcome?

MEMORIZATION: Once again Psalm 1 speaks to us. Review your memory work of Psalm 1. (Please note: If this is your first reference to Psalm 1 take time to write this first psalm on an index card and commit these six short verses to memory.) Give particular attention to verse two. “But his delight is in

the law of the Lord...” The Lord delights in our obedience to His Word. Why is obedience so important to the Lord? _____

Psalm 1:2 tells us that the person who walks in a relationship with the Lord delights in obeying Him and meditating on His Word. This person’s greatest delight is not engaging in the activities and advice of the wicked, the sinners, and the mockers—those who are not in a relationship with God. Just think, God delights in us and we delight in Him by expressing our love and trust in Him as we obey Him.

PRAYER: O Lord, merciful Father, I find it difficult to confess to You my rebellious and arrogant ways. I want to be in charge. I want to be the one who determines what I will do and not do. But, I am learning that as I respond obediently to Your Word that I delight You. Make obedience to You and reverence for Your Word my delight all the days of my life. Fill me with a love that finds its greatest joy in You. _____

LESSON TWO

THE BATTLE IS THE LORD'S

1 SAMUEL 17 – DAVID AND THE PHILISTINE

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INTRODUCTION

Sometime later Saul and the Israelites encountered Goliath and the Philistines. The Israelites were terrified by the boasting and defiance of Goliath. What was Israel missing? Why didn't the Israelite army engage in battle against their Philistines enemies? The boy David, however, would not stand for the disgrace Goliath brought upon the armies of the living God. The story may be familiar but study it as though it were the first time. What was David's armor? What were his weapons? What was the outcome of doing battle with the Philistine giant?

Part 1

TEACHING: We are about to begin the study of 1 Samuel 17, one of the most well-known stories in the Bible. It is the story of David and Goliath. Michelangelo's David is one man's concept of the young boy David, the shepherd, the youngest son of Jesse. Other contrasting and less noted works were done by the sculptor Verrocchio and others.

The prophet Samuel in obedience to God poured oil on his head in the presence of his brothers (1 Samuel 16:13). This young boy was now the anointed king of Israel set aside for God's purposes. He was the one whom the Spirit of the Lord came upon in power. Although he was anointed king, many years would pass before he would sit on the throne as Israel's reigning king.

Several strange names are used in 1 Samuel 17:1-3. Socoh, Ephes-dammin, Azekah, and the Valley of Elah are all locations along the coastal region of the Mediterranean Sea. Many Bible maps do not identify where these ancient towns were located. Most, however, do show the land of Philistia, a narrow strip of land running along the Mediterranean coast between Joppa to the north and Gaza to the south. This land was occupied by the Philistines, Israel's archrivals. Throughout First and Second Samuel the Philistines are mentioned, often referencing a battle or maneuver against the Israelites.

In 1 Samuel 17:3 we are told that the army of the Philistines and the army of Israel each occupied an opposing hill with a valley situated between them. This is the stage set for the story of David and Goliath. If you have never read the story account as recorded in 1 Samuel, you may choose to track in your notebook those new pieces of the story that you didn't know before. These accumulated bits and pieces may give you some new insights and a fresh appreciation for God's miraculous work accomplished through this young shepherd boy David.

ASSIGNMENT:

1. Write a brief summary of the things you recall from memory about the story—facts, characters, words, etc. _____

2. Read 1 Samuel 17. Note the words, phrases, and actions that describe Goliath and begin to list for yourself some things you are beginning to learn about David.

EXERCISE:

1. Verses 4-7 describe Goliath, the champion of the Philistines. Consider this one man the Philistines had for their side:
 - a. His appearance: _____
 - b. His armor: _____
 - c. His weapons: _____
 - d. His strength: _____
2. After these observations what is your conclusion? _____

3. From Goliath’s perspective in verse 8 who were the opposing forces? _____

4. Goliath was the man to defeat. What did Goliath shout to the Israelites? _____

5. It’s interesting to note how Goliath considered the battle to be all about him. Underline all the personal pronouns Goliath used in verses 8, 9, and 10.
6. Goliath poses the challenge (verse 10): _____

7. Whom did Goliath assume he would be fighting? _____
8. What did Goliath now know? _____
9. Reread verse 11. What words are used to describe the Israelites? _____ and _____.

Note: Other translations use the word terrified. The word dismayed has the meaning of something or someone *breaking down*. The breaking down can be caused by violence, confusion, or fear and results in making someone afraid, discouraged, and terrified.

REFLECTION: What is happening? What’s going on? This whole story appears to be a psychological game. The teams are the Philistines with their champion Goliath against the Israelites and their king Saul. Goliath appeared before Israel dressed for the fight with height, armor, weapons, muscle, and even a shield bearer who went ahead of him. Who wouldn’t be intimidated?

1. Not only is Goliath dressed and armed for the fight but now he stands and shouts to the army of Israel. In essence he seems to be saying, “Let’s keep this simple. I’ll fight for the Philistines and you send out your best man to fight for the Israelites. And may the best man win. If I lose the Philistines will be subject to you and if you lose the Israelites will serve us.” It’s important that

we consider for a moment who is Israel's champion (1 Samuel 9:2). What do we read about him in 1 Samuel 17:11? _____

2. Israel's king is reported to be dismayed and greatly afraid. Are you surprised by his reaction to Goliath? How would you expect your king leader to respond? What kind of leader does he appear to be? Take time to consider what the relationship appears to be between people and king:

3. If you were in the Israelite army and saw this armed giant and heard his bold challenge what words would you use to describe you? _____

APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. What are some of the giants I face? _____

2. When life appears filled with these giants, what emotions tend to rise up within me? _____

3. How do I tend to respond to the challenges of the giants? _____

4. How do I feel about the way I respond to the giants yelling at me? _____

PRAYER: O Lord, I must confess that all too often I encounter giants in my life that terrify me. I feel as though I'm breaking down, cowering in a corner, and defeated. My giants come in all shapes and sizes. I just know that I am powerless against them. Forgive me for failing to remember that You are my Shield and Savior, my Deliverer. You are the One who fights the giants in my life for me. Thank You for caring for me. You are my Champion! _____

Part 2

ASSIGNMENT: Reread 1 Samuel 17.

EXERCISE:

1. Jesse, David's father, was well advanced in years. He had eight sons. We are told that the three oldest sons had followed Saul to the war (verses 12-13). The three sons were named _____, _____, and _____.

2. What are we told about David in verses 14 and 15? _____

3. The taunting of the Philistine giant went on twice a day for _____ days!
4. Jesse called for David and sent him loaded down with food supplies to the Israelite camp where his brothers were. This father was eager to hear about the health and well-being of his sons. David did as his father instructed. What was happening when David reached the camp (verses 20-21)? _____
5. Who stepped forward as David was talking with his brothers? _____
6. David heard Goliath shouting his defiance against the armies of the living God. What was the reaction of the Israelite army (verse 24)? _____
7. What had the king promised to the Israelite who would kill this man who defied Israel (verse 25)?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
8. David asked the men near him to tell him what would happen to the man who killed the Philistine who brought such disgrace on Israel. How does David refer to Goliath in verse 26? _____

David in essence said, "Who does he think he is? How dare he think that he can defy the armies of the living God?"
9. In verse 28 Eliab's anger toward David is exposed. What is Eliab's accusation? _____

10. David turns to confirm the information (verses 31-32). Saul hears about David and sends for him. What does David tell Saul? _____
11. What does David volunteer to do? _____
12. What is Saul's response? _____
David's physical size and experience in battle are the only things Saul considered important assets and necessary for doing battle against Goliath. What is David's response (verses 34-35)? _____
 - a. What animals had David fought against? _____ and _____
 - b. How did he consider this uncircumcised Philistine? _____
 - c. Why (verse 36)? _____
13. Who was David's deliverer (verse 37)? _____
14. Saul instructed David to go with the blessing of the Lord. But what did Saul do before he sent David out (verses 38-39)? _____

15. What was David's response to wearing Saul's armor? _____

16. What did he do instead (verses 39-40)? _____

REFLECTION: In 1 Samuel 17:38-41 we learn that Saul and David have different ideas about what David should wear when facing the giant. Saul insists that David be dressed in his armor. When you think about it, don't you think David must have been quite a sight? He was only a lad dressed in the tunic, coat of armor, and helmet carrying the sword of a man who was over a head taller than anyone around! David, however, recognized that he couldn't go out to meet Goliath because he wasn't accustomed to wearing all of this paraphernalia. Instead he takes his staff, five smooth stones, and his sling shot, the only things she used in his defense against lions and bears as he protected his sheep.

Consider for a moment that in this battle the lions and bears were a giant and that some sheep were the army of Israel, the armies of the living God. David did not see himself as the sheep's deliverer, as Israel's deliverer, from this lion or bear, this giant Goliath. He knew that as God delivered him from the lion and the bear while protecting his sheep, so he also knew that God would be the One to deliver him from the hand of this Philistine while protecting the armies of the living God!

David approached the Philistine with his shepherd's staff, five stones, and a sling. When God delivers you and me from the giants in our lives that come in all shapes and sizes, He transforms us from the physical reality portrayed by Verrocchio and the other artists' imagery of David to the imposing creation like that of Bernini and Michelangelo's Davids. With David carrying the sling shot and facing the giant the playing field was leveled. The two enemies approach each other. Take time to consider what makes the difference? What transformed David into a giant?

Part 3

APPLICATION QUESTIONS: We need to find places in this story where we find application to our own life situations. At the end of Part 1 we considered what giants we encounter in our lives. This time let's look at our attire as we attempt to face these giants.

1. Review your giants—those things, individuals, situations that take their stand and shout terrifying threats against you: _____
2. When the Israelites encountered the Philistine champion they ran from him in great fear (verse 24). What is your pattern of behavior when you find yourself in a situation that calls for a

confrontation with those giants who are against the things of God and people of God? _____

3. Saul and Goliath had armor. David had stones and a sling. What is your armor for battling the enemy that stands against the armies of the living God? _____
4. Goliath was the Philistine champion. Who do you consider to be your own champion? Who goes to battle for you? Who delivers you from your enemies? _____

MEMORIZATION:

1. In the New Testament Book of Ephesians St. Paul talks about armor, the armor of God. Read Ephesians 6:10-17. First, he encourages us to be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power. In verse 11 we are told to put on all the armor of God. He doesn't want any part of us vulnerable to the forces of evil against us. He makes it clear that the champion of evil that we are fighting against is the devil. In verse 12 St. Paul articulates who we are fighting against. Who is our struggle against?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

2. What does God supply in order that we are able to stand (verses 14-18)? Therefore...

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____
- f. _____
- g. _____

God empowers us with His strength, His mighty power and He proves us with His armor to fight off the schemes of the evil one. His armor fits perfectly! It is all we need to stand our ground and to remain standing. We are encouraged to make this armor our armor the armor that we are accustomed to wearing. Write out verses 13-18 on an index card and work to memorize these

verses as you memorize, be sensitive to God's Spirit teaching you about the pieces of armour that God makes available and what each piece means for obtaining victory in your battles. You may choose to make a visual for yourself by drawing and then dressing a figure in the armor of God.

PRAYER: O Lord, my God, daily I engage in battles against the enemy. I am challenged beyond my ability to fight and stand my ground. I run and hide in fear of what others will think rather than stand up against those who defy Your most holy name. My enemies are often those who invade my thinking and corrupt my attitudes and character. Your Word gives me armor that evil cannot penetrate. Each day as I rise enable me to envision putting on the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, shoes of readiness with the good news of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of the Word and prayer. May I face each moment of each day ready to live knowing and believing that You are my Deliverer for without You I can do nothing. Thank You for the peace that comes from knowing that with You I can do all things. _____

Part 4

INTRODUCTION: As we continue with our study of David and Goliath in 1 Samuel 17:41 we see the enemy approaching David. We are about to learn what God meant when said in 1 Samuel 16:7 that He doesn't look at the things man looks at. Although man looks at the outward appearance God looks at the heart. The Philistine's giant Goliath has no idea of the man's heart he is about to encounter.

ASSIGNMENT: Read again 1 Samuel 17:41-51.

EXERCISE:

1. Who did Goliath bring with him to battle (verse 41)? _____
2. Man looks at the outward appearance. What did Goliath see? _____
3. How did the Philistine feel about what he saw (verse 42)? _____
4. What did Goliath say that revealed his heart (verse 43-44)? _____
5. What was David's response? What did each champion bring (verse 45)?
 - a. Goliath: _____
 - b. David: _____

It's interesting to note that David saw himself coming into battle not with the armor of stones and a sling but in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel!

6. Goliath saw himself coming into battle just to kill David and make for himself an even greater name. What did David want everyone to know (verses 46-47)? _____

 7. David knew the end of the story (verse 47). Who was Israel's Champion? _____
 8. What would be the outcome? _____
 9. In verses 48-49 we are told that the Philistine moved closer to attack. David, on the other hand, _____
 10. David released the stone and struck the Philistine killing him before he ever knew what happened. Verse 50 summarizes what happened: _____

- Goliath didn't even have time to draw his sword from the sheath! David drew out Goliath's own sword and having killed him cut off his head with it.

REFLECTION: The champion of the enemy is dead. So what do I learn about fighting my giants, the enemies that wage war within me?

1. Do I approach like Goliath moving toward the enemy and sizing it up as "only a youth, ruddy and handsome in appearance?"
2. Do I disdain the enemy regarding as something to be laughed at?
3. Or, do I approach like David running quickly toward the battle line knowing that the enemy is far more powerful than I am by myself?
4. Do I run knowing that "the Lord saves; for the battle is the Lord's?"

Part 5

ASSIGNMENT: Read 1 Samuel 17:51-58.

EXERCISE:

1. Goliath is dead. Now who turns and runs? _____
2. What was the reaction of the armies of the living God, the men of Israel and Judah (verse 52)? _____

They pursued the Philistines all the way to _____ Goliath's hometown (1 Samuel 17:4), and to the gates of _____.

Note: If you have maps in the back of your Bible, Gath and Ekron may be identified on the map that shows the land divisions of the twelve tribes of Israel.

3. What did the Israelites do to the Philistine army camp (verse 53)? _____
 The Philistines did turn and run. One gets the sense they thought the victory was theirs as they stood and watched. When it didn't happen they turned and ran for their lives. Most likely they left behind their weapons of war. The Philistines were advanced in technology, especially regarding things that pertained to iron. Imagine what a find for the Israelites when they returned and plundered the Philistine camp.
4. What happened to the head of Goliath (verse 54)? _____
5. Where was the Philistine's armor kept? _____

EPILOGUE:

1. Verses 55-58 appear like an epilogue. It's the end of the story that begs one major question: If David had been ministering to Saul when an evil spirit tormented him (1 Samuel 16:14-23), why didn't Saul recognize him? Neither Saul nor Abner, the commander of the army, knew who he was. In verse 58 Saul asks him: _____
 and David answered? _____
2. Although we do not know why Saul did not recognize him, we do know that this is the same David whom God had Samuel anoint as Israel's future king, the son of Jesse of Bethlehem. Recall what one of Saul's servants said about David in 1 Samuel 16:18: _____

ASSIGNMENT: You may have heard the story of David and Goliath but never actually read the story from the Bible. Take a few minutes and note the following:

1. Different facts you learned about the story.
2. An insight into who God is and the relationship He wants with his people.
3. An insight into what humankind is like.
4. One point of application you can integrate into your own life.

LESSON THREE

THE LORD WAS WITH HIM

STORIES FROM 1 SAMUEL 18-31
DAVID, ABIGAIL, AND SAUL

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INTRODUCTION

What was the result of David's success? Why was He successful in everything he did? What were the ramifications of David's success? How did Saul respond? At the end of First Samuel we are told what happens to David's friend Jonathan and his father King Saul in the battle against the Philistines.

How do you find yourself responding to the success of others? In spite of David's success and the king's attempts to take his life, learn how David treats the Lord's anointed. Glean godly wisdom and learn how one regards his/her own success and the success of others.

Part 1

TEACHING: Chapter 18 begins by introducing us to a new character Jonathan, Saul’s son. David and Jonathan became close, intimate friends. We are told that Jonathan became one in spirit with David, loved him as himself, and covenant with David calling David’s enemies to account (1 Samuel 20:16-17). Theoretically, as son of the king he was in line to be king upon the death of his father. Because of the extensive amount of biblical material on David we will not study in detail the relationship between David and Jonathan. Suffice it to say, their relationship endured throughout their lifetime. You may choose to learn more about Jonathan. The following references will help you begin:

1. 1 Samuel 19:1-7 – Jonathan as David’s advocate
2. 1 Samuel 20 – Jonathan warns David of his father’s intent to kill him.
3. 1 Samuel 31:2 – Jonathan’s death
4. 2 Samuel 4:4 – Jonathan’s son Mephibosheth (2 Samuel 9)

ASSIGNMENT: Read 1 Samuel 18:5-17.

EXERCISE: These few verses reveal the relationship Saul had with David:

1. How did Saul treat David? _____
2. What do you learn about David? _____
3. How did the people and Saul’s officers respond to David? _____
4. How did the women receive David when he returned home from battle (verses 6-7)? _____

5. What did they sing? _____
6. How did Saul respond to their accolades in verse 8? _____
7. Verse 9 uses a meaningful word. What is it? _____

Different translations use different words. The NIV says that Saul kept a “jealous eye” on David. In *God’s Call, Our Deliverance* of the CrossConnect Series we discussed the meaning of the word jealous. It was noted that one who is jealous is one who fears being replaced. Why would Saul be jealous? Why would he keep a “jealous eye” on David? _____

8. What was the next thing that happened (verses 10-11)?
 - a. To Saul: _____
 - b. To David: _____

9. What was Saul's greatest fear (verse 12)? _____
10. What was Saul's solution to his fear (verse 13)? _____
11. David became a warrior. He was given a high rank in the army and led the troops in their campaigns. He was successful in everything he did because (verse 14) _____
12. David was successful and how did Saul respond to him (verse 15)? _____

Part 2

TEACHING: The word *success* is used several times in this chapter. We often measure success in terms of financial gain, position, possessions, and prestige. References to David's success address his *wisdom*. Other versions of the Bible translate verse 14, "David behaved himself wisely in all his ways; and the Lord was with him." Verse 15 may be translated that "Saul saw that he behaved himself very wisely and was afraid of him."

In Psalm 111:10 we read that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. David lived in an intimate relationship with the Lord. He revered the Lord. He knew and observed the laws and decrees of God and through those laws and decrees God bestowed on David wisdom and understanding. Saul, on the other hand, knew that the Spirit of the Lord had departed from him and now an evil spirit tormented him. In order to remove David from his presence Saul positioned David as a leader of a thousand men whom he led into battle. David's wise actions made God's presence evident to Saul and all the people. "In everything he did he had great success *because the Lord was with him.*"

REFLECTION: In these few verses of 1 Samuel 18 we see how different these two men were. We see David successful in battle and Saul afraid and jealous because of David's success. He knew that the Lord was with David but had departed from him. We see David ministering to Saul while playing his harp and Saul hurling his spear at David attempting to "pin him to the wall." And all the time we learn that Israel and Judah loved David, because he (verse 16) _____

In verse 17 Saul says to himself, "I will not raise a hand against [David]. Let the Philistines do that!" If he could send him off to battle, the Philistines would do what he wanted to accomplish. Saul, in essence, aligned himself with the enemy in order to rid himself of the threat David was to him. Saul's jealousy ultimately drove him to attempt to murder David.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. Who are those individuals you know who act wisely? _____
2. What fear rises up within you? _____

3. What causes you to be intimidated by others, threatening you and causing you to feel less than?

4. What difference would it make for you to know that the Lord is with you? _____

Part 3

DIGGING DEEPER: The remaining chapters of First Samuel include stories of Saul's attempts to kill David, David running for his life, the strategies and battles fought against Israel's enemies, and the situations in which David chose to spare Saul's life rather than kill him. You may find it interesting to read these chapters and track in your notebook the different names and places that are mentioned. This list will help to keep you from getting bogged down with the unfamiliar. Keep your Bible apps available should you choose to identify the different locations.

ASSIGNMENT: Read 1 Samuel 25. In 1 Samuel 25:1 we are told that Samuel, the man who had anointed David to be king, died. After he was buried in Ramah David moved to the Desert of Paran. Let's take a brief look at an interesting story recorded in this same chapter.

1. Identify the characters.
2. What was David's request and Nabal's response?
3. What was Abigail's reaction?
4. What were the consequences and outcomes of the story?

EXERCISE:

1. What do we learn about Nabal (verses 2-3)? _____

2. What do we learn about Abigail (verse 3)? _____
3. In verses 4-8 David sends some of his young men to Nabal asking for provisions. What was the introduction David sent with his men to Nabal (verses 5-6)? _____

4. What was the second part of David's message to Nabal (verses 7-8)? _____

5. What response did Nabal send back to David (verses 10-11)? _____

6. What was David's response to Nabal's message (verses 12-13)? _____

7. What did one of the servants report to Abigail, Nabal's wife (verses 14-17)? _____

8. Abigail went into action. What did she do (verses 18-19)? _____

9. What had David just finished saying (verses 20-22)? _____

10. What was Abigail's posture before David (verses 23-24)? _____

11. What did she ask of David and say about her husband Nabal (verse 25)? _____

12. In verses 26-31 how does she speak of David and what reverence does she make of herself?

Part 4

REFLECTION: Take a few minutes and reflect on Abigail, both what she said and what she did. Abigail not only prostrated herself before David physically (verse 23) but she prostrated herself before him with an attitude of humility. The words servant and master articulate how she perceived herself in relationship to him. Note how many times my lord and my master are used in these verses. _____ She came to David as one making peace. She was willing to bear all the blame for Nabal's foolishness and folly in order to avert disaster.

Abigail acknowledged God's intervention that kept David from avenging himself and causing bloodshed. She offered the gift of all that she had prepared (verse 18) for David and his men. She asked to be forgiven for the offense *she* had caused and recognized before David that the Lord would make a lasting dynasty for him because he fought the Lord's battles. Even though another was in pursuit of David's life she reminded him that the Lord would keep him secure and safe. Then she speaks of David's enemies reminding him of his encounter with Goliath using only a sling. Finally, she says that when the time is right and he is appointed to be leader over Israel his conscience will be free from guilt for no needless blood was shed nor did he avenge himself.

APPLICATION QUESTION: How eager am I to bring peace and avert disaster by taking the blame for the words and actions of someone else, especially when their words and actions are considered foolish?

EXERCISE:

1. David's response is a four-part acknowledgement of God's grace:
 - a. Verse 32: Of the Lord _____
 - b. Verse 33: Of Abigail _____
 - c. Verse 34: Of himself _____
 - d. Verse 34: Of Nabal and his men _____

David received her gift, sent her home, and promised to grant her request (verse 35).

2. What was going on when Abigail got home (verse 36)? _____

3. What happened the next morning (verse 37-38)? _____

4. How does the story end (verses 39-42)? _____

APPLICATION:

1. David sent for Abigail asking her to be his wife. What does verse 41 tell us? _____

2. Abigail acknowledged with humility the privilege it was for her to be asked to be David's wife. She was ready to serve him and wash the feet of his servants. In humility she regarded herself a servant to his servants!
 - a. In what ways do her words and actions align with *societies* views of the marriage relationship? _____
 - b. In what ways do her words and actions align with your *personal* views of the marriage relationship? _____

Part 5

INTRODUCTION: How will Saul be remembered? From the days of Goliath until the time of his death, Saul's obsession was with David. Saul was a man who lived in fear and jealousy. He knew that David had the Spirit of the Lord, the Spirit that once was his. Then God chose to have Samuel anoint the young shepherd boy David to be the next king. In his anger Saul sought to have David killed by the Philistines in battle but as a desperate man Saul pursued David to kill him until his own death when he was critically wounded by the Philistines!

ASSIGNMENT: Read 1 Samuel 31.

EXERCISE:

1. The Philistines fought and pursued Israel. What happened in verses 1-3?
 - a. To the Israelites: _____
 - b. To Jonathan and his brothers: _____
 - c. To Saul: _____
2. What did Saul ask his armor-bearer to do (verse 4)? _____
3. He was terrified and wouldn't obey. What did Saul choose to do? _____
4. Saul was dead. What did his armor-bearer choose to do? _____
5. Verse 6 summarizes what happened that day: _____

6. What was the consequence of the defeat of the Israelite army and the death of Saul and his sons (verse 7)? _____
7. Verses 8-10 give the gruesome details of war. The Philistines came to plunder the dead. What did they find? _____
8. What did they do? _____
9. And what did the people of Jabesh-gilead (Israelites) do when they heard what the Philistines had done to Saul (verses 11-13)? _____

REFLECTION: This is a sad day in Israel's history. So how was Saul remembered? The chapters of First Samuel do not paint a pretty picture of this man who had everything and yet died with nothing. The strength of his manhood as a king and as a leader was gone. His sons were dead. He was a picture of the defeated army he once led but that had now abandoned their towns and fled. The Philistines conquered the Israelites, stripped them of their belongings and treated their king and his sons like booty hanging their bodies from the wall of Beth Shan.

Saul's reign reflected Israel's dark days under the constant harassment and attacks of the Philistine army. Saul knew the Lord was with David. He knew that the people sang the praise of David, their hero who was mighty in battle. Undoubtedly, the greatest sign of defeat for Saul was taking his own sword and falling on it. Saul ended life with no hope. The battle was lost His sons were dead. His army was on the run and he feared death by "these uncircumcised fellows [who] will come and run me through and abuse me."

Part 6

APPLICATION: What does life look like when there is no hope? When life has no purpose or meaning, where is hope? The greatest contrast between these two men, Saul and David, is that Saul lived only in the hope of David’s death. David, on the other hand, lived in the hope of life and a future in his relationship with the Lord, his living God (1 Samuel 17:36).

1. Where do I find hope? On what do I base my hope? _____

2. What are some ways in which my life reflects my hope and my future? _____

3. Consider God’s Good News for each of us. The prophet Jeremiah writes in Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV), “For I know the plans I have for you...plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” Then in verses 12 and 13 God encourages us to _____ upon Me and _____ and _____ to Me. And He promises to _____ you. You will _____ Me and _____ Me when you _____ Me with all your _____.
4. What difference might God’s promise of hope and a future make in the way I live my life? _____

PRAYER: Because the Lord graciously gives me the promise of a future and a hope, I give to Him my prayer of praise and thanksgiving: _____

MEMORIZATION: Psalms 42 and 43 repeat one verse three times. Write Psalm 42:5a and 11 and Psalm 43:5 on an index card. You have been studying the life of David as a warrior and as a man on the run against King Saul. As you read these words listen to the heart of the Psalmist as he describes the soul of one who is downcast. Read both Psalm 42 and 43 in their entirety and memorize these verses. Sometimes we can feel as though we have been relentlessly pursued by our enemies. We can become discouraged and depressed. It was no different for David. The Psalmist indicates that the antidote for feelings of hopelessness and despair is to praise Him who is our Savior and our living God. Write on your index card words that come to mind, words that affirm your gratitude to God for His presence, protection, peace, and power at work in your life.

LESSON FOUR

THE LORD IS GOD OVER ISRAEL

2 SAMUEL 1-13 – DAVID AND ISRAEL

OVERVIEW OF LESSON 4

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INTRODUCTION

At last David was established as king over Israel. The process was long and arduous. Old leadership needed to be replaced with David's choices. Learn how this process took place before David was recognized by the people as their king and peace reigned in the land.

What was David like as a man, a father, and as Israel's king? We are told that David was a man after God's own heart but his life was not lived perfectly. His life was marred with shortcomings and failures as a man and as a father. How did God respond to David's relationship with Bathsheba? What were the consequences? Was he forgiven? Was the relationship restored? Was he able to remain on the throne?

God's mercy is great. Even David in a time of deep distress said, "Let us fall into the hands of the Lord, for His mercy is great..." God is merciful. God's mercy is not based on man's condition but on who God is. God's attribute, the essence of who He is, is that of showing mercy. But, does God's mercy eliminate consequences? God grants mercy not because mercy is something deserved or earned but because the one giving mercy, namely God, chooses to do nothing else but give mercy to those who live in a relationship of love with Him.

Part 1

TEACHING: Israel is without a king. Saul is dead. David has now heard about the death of Saul and his dear friend Jonathan. In 2 Samuel 2:1 David inquires of the Lord where he is to go. The Lord sends him to Hebron. He settles his family in Hebron and its towns. The men of Judah come and anoint him king over the house of Judah. Now take time to locate Hebron on your map. The town is situated just south of Bethlehem and on the west side of the Dead Sea (Salt Sea).

It is important to note that references have been made to Israel and the house of Judah. An example is found in 2 Samuel 2:4a. “And the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah.” By referring to a map that shows the division of land of the twelve tribes it is easy to see the vast amount of land allotted to Judah. You will also note that Hebron is in Judah. Now David needed the rest of Israel, men from the other parts of the country to also agree to have him as their new king. As king, David unified the people of the land and all of Israel remained united throughout the reign of David and his son Solomon.

What happens in the next few chapters is the process of establishing David on the throne as king. This process demanded the removal and even the death of members of the previous king’s family, his army commanders, and loyal subjects. It meant taking possession of the concubine(s) and doing away with anyone who was a potential threat to the new monarchy. We will do a brief overview of this process as we look at the first six chapters of 2 Samuel.

ASSIGNMENT: Read 2 Samuel 2:4-7. This is David’s initial attempt to unify the support of the people.

EXERCISE:

1. Recall what the men of Jabesh-gilead had done (1 Samuel 31:11-13): _____

2. David included three parts in his message to these men:
 - a. Verse 5: _____
 - b. Verse 6: _____
 - c. Verse 7: _____

TEACHING: His message in essence thanked them for the loyalty they had shown to Saul and asked that the Lord bless them for what they had done. Then David asked that the Lord show them steadfast

love and faithfulness. He promised to do the same. Then he encouraged the men of Jabesh-gilead by informing them that the house of Judah had anointed him as their king.

This message was David's overture to the Israelites in the north asking them to embrace him as their king. However, scholars say that as much as five years may have passed before the northern tribes responded. In this world where communication is transmitted in terms of nanoseconds this process of affirming David as their king may seem absurd, even foolish.

EXERCISE: Now there's a complication. Abner was the commander of Saul's army and Ish-Bosheth is Saul's son. Abner brought Ish-Bosheth and made him king over Israel attempting to pass the kingship to Saul's surviving son (2 Samuel 2:8-11).

1. The battle between the house of Saul and the house of David lasted a long time (2 Samuel 3:1).

But what are we told about these houses in verse 1? _____

2. Abner turns his loyalty to David and broke his relationship with Ish-Bosheth because of an accusation Ish-Bosheth made against Abner (2 Samuel 3:6-11). What was the accusation?

TEACHING: The accusation Ish-Bosheth made of Abner sleeping with the concubine Rizpah was an accusation that Abner was attempting to take the kingship from him. In verse 6 we are told that Abner's position in the house of Saul had been growing stronger. Ish-Bosheth was threatened by Abner. In anger Abner turned his loyalty from the house of Saul to David and began working to establish David on the throne over all of Israel, from Dan (north) to Beersheba (south).

EXERCISE: 2 Samuel 3

1. Abner was instrumental in bringing all of Israel under the kingship of David (verses 12 and following). What did David require of him (verses 13-16)? _____
2. Joab was the commander of David's armies. In chapter 2 we read that Abner kills Joab's brother. Toward the end of chapter 3 we learn that Joab kills Abner to avenge the blood of his brother. David does not avenge Joab for Abner's murder. Although anointed king, David was still weak. What does he ask of the Lord in verse 39? _____
3. Saul's son Ish-Bosheth is murdered in 2 Samuel 4 and finally in 2 Samuel 5 David is acknowledged to be the king of all God's people. He is to serve as a _____ to the people and was to be _____ over Israel (verse 2).

4. Who lived in Jerusalem (verse 6)? _____ Jerusalem was built on a hill called _____.
5. The Jebusites believed there was no way David would be able to capture the fortress built on Zion. What does verse 7 tell us? _____
6. In verses 9-16 what do we learn about David? _____

7. In 2 Samuel 6:14-15 we read of the great rejoicing that went on as the ark of God was brought into the City of David. What are some words that describe the celebration? _____

8. What did David observe in 2 Samuel 7:2? _____
9. The Word of the Lord came to the prophet Nathan (verses 5-16). Read these verses carefully and in your own words articulate what the Lord wanted David to know: _____

10. After Nathan reported everything to David, David “sat before the Lord (verse 18).” What are some of the things David said about the Lord (verses 22 and following)? _____

11. Consider David’s frequent use of the word servant. As king he regarded himself to be a servant of the Lord. What difference might this mindset make in the way he ruled as Israel’s king? _____

12. David’s reign is filled with victories (2 Samuel 8 and 10). In between these chapters, however, we are introduced to a new character. What does David ask in 2 Samuel 9:1? _____

13. Ziba, a servant of Saul’s household is brought to David. What does he tell David in verse 3? _____

14. Mephibosheth is brought to David (verse 6). What did David promise Mephibosheth? How was he treated (verses 7-13)? _____

CONCLUSION: David’s kingdom has been established by the Lord. It wasn’t easy and it didn’t happen overnight as we might think. We leave David in this lesson at the height of his reign. He had been given everything and all he could ask was, “Who am I...and what is my family, that you have brought me this far?” The Ark of the Covenant, the physical representation of the Lord’s presence, was in Jerusalem.

Peace was in the land. Their enemies were defeated. God had established David as His king and God had established His people Israel as His very own. He was their God! David's concern was that the Name of the Lord would be great forever. "How great you are! There is no one like you, and there is no God but you..." May David's prayer be our own declaration. He is our God and we are His people. To God be all the glory and honor!

Part 2

INTRODUCTION: The story of David and Bathsheba, like the story of David and Goliath, is well known. It is told in 2 Samuel 11-12:25. God had blessed David with His very best. Everything that he could have ever dreamt or hoped for happened in his life. The Lord made Israel victorious over its enemies. God fought the battles for His people. Life and times were good!

ASSIGNMENT: Read 2 Samuel 11:1-27.

- Who are the characters?
- What wrong was done?
- What was the cover-up?
- What was Joab's report to David?

EXERCISE:

1. What time of the year is it (verse 1)? _____ and what happens during this time of the year? _____
2. The king sent _____ and his servants out with the _____.
3. What are we told about David (verse 1)? _____
4. David had time on his hands. What is the temptation (verse 2)? _____

5. Who was Bathsheba (verse 3)? What do we learn about her? _____

6. What was David's order (verse 4)? _____
7. She was brought to David; he slept with her; she went home and what was the message she sent to him (verse 5)? _____
8. In verse 6 David ordered Joab to send Uriah back to him in Jerusalem. After inquiring how things were going with the soldiers and the battle, what did David tell Uriah to do (verses 7-8)?

9. Verse 9 begins with the word “but.” Everything was working according to David’s plan until now. But what? _____
10. When David asks Uriah why he didn’t go home to his wife Bathsheba, what was Uriah’s reply (verses 10-11)? _____
11. Getting desperate, David encouraged him to remain an extra day. He invited Uriah to eat and drink with him until he was drunk. Another “but” happened. What are we told about Uriah in verse 13? _____
12. David’s first plan failed. He sent Uriah to Joab with a letter. What did the letter from David say?

13. What happened to Uriah in verses 16-17? _____
14. What was Joab’s message to David (verses 18-21)? _____

15. The messenger reported all that Joab had sent him to say. David received the message from Joab and what was the reply (verse 25) _____
16. How does this part of the story end (verses 26-27)? _____

17. Then at the very end of Chapter 11 we are told that _____

REFLECTION: One can’t help but take time to reflect on what has just happened. Up to this time David is the model character, the ideal king. In 1 Samuel 13:14 we read that the Lord “sought out a man after his own heart and appointed him leader of His people...” This man was David. Now, what has he done? What is your reaction to this story? _____

What do we learn about temptation? David had time on his hands. He allowed himself to look on Bathsheba and lust after her. David!?!? Israel’s hero and now Israel’s king! The same man who faced Goliath, who was pinned to the wall with Saul’s spear, and who refused to kill the Lord’s anointed when given the opportunity...David was the man who had everything. Why would he lust after the one thing that was not his, the wife of Uriah? And, his lust led him to commit adultery with her. Did David lack for wives and concubines? We know his wives Michel and Abigail. 2 Samuel 5:13 tells us about his concubines and other wives. David, what just happened? _____

One thing led to the next. David attempted to cover-up his sin so he ordered Uriah back to Jerusalem assuming that having been gone for such a long time he would be eager to sleep with his wife. When that didn't happen David figured if Uriah was drunk he would abandon his convictions. But that didn't happen either. So David resorts to murder! He even has Uriah carry to Joab the message that contained his own death sentence. After Uriah's death and the time of mourning had passes David brings Bathsheba to the palace. She becomes his wife and gives birth to a son.

Part 3

TEACHING: Let's consider a parallel story. The first Bible study unit of the CrossConnect Series is entitled *God's Plan, Our Choice*. Genesis 1 and 2 tell the story of all that God created and then gave to Adam and Eve. He gave them the Garden of Eden and with all that He gave to them He commanded that the one thing they were not to eat was the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. But we know how the story ended. In spite of all that God had given they yielded to temptation and took the one thing that God had not given them, the one thing that He commanded them not to eat. Everything was perfect. Nothing could have been better. Everything that God had made was theirs to enjoy.

But we also know that immediately when they had sinner their cover-up story began. One blamed the other for what they had done. They tried to hide. They were naked and ashamed to they attempted to cover themselves with fig leaves. One thing after the next happened as consequences of their sin. But the One whom they tried to hide from was out looking for them. Sin keeps us distanced from God and from others. Sin keeps us from admitting to ourselves our own shame and corruption.

When God is out looking for us He's not out to punish us. What happens next is not God's punishment but God's declaration of the consequences of sin. God declared to Adam and Eve that the consequence of sin was death. The story doesn't end here. God also reassured them of His love. He gave them the promise of a Savior (Genesis 3:15) who would take upon Himself the death for their sin, a Savior who would save them from eternal death and give to them life everlasting with Him. As we return to the story of David and Bathsheba watch for the consequences of sin and the declaration of God's love that was brought to David through the prophet Nathan.

ASSIGNMENT: Read 2 Samuel 12:1-19.

EXERCISE:

1. In verses 1-4 Nathan tells David a story. In your own words, what was Nathan's story? _____

2. What was David's reaction to the story (verse 5)? _____
 3. What did David declare the consequences should be to the man (verses 5-6)? _____

 4. Then Nathan said to David, "_____!"
 5. Nathan told David what the Lord God of Israel said (verses 7b-8a):
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
 - d. _____
 6. And how does verse 8 end? _____
 7. What is the ultimate question in verse 9? _____
 8. It seems as though the Lord is saying, "David, let's review what you did." What is Nathan's word from the Lord in verse 9b? _____

 9. What is the consequence of David's acts of despising the Word of the Lord and doing what is evil in His eyes (verses 10)? _____
 10. Verses 11 and 12 are hard words to hear. God tells David what is going to happen. He is going to bring calamity on David. What is going to happen? _____

- Note:* We will learn the fulfillment of this prophesy later in this study.
11. What does David confess to Nathan (verse 13a)? _____
 12. What is Nathan's immediate response (verse 13b)? _____

 13. Finally, what is the last thing Nathan tells David before he leaves him (verse 14)? _____

 14. Verses 15-19 tell about the grief and pain that immediately follow:
 - a. To the child _____
 - b. To David _____
 - c. To the elders of his house _____
 - d. To the servants _____

REFLECTION: What a sad day. The king who had everything is stripped of his nobility and grandeur and now pleads with God for the life of his child. He refuses to eat and prostrates himself by lying on the ground rather than sleeping in his royal chambers. The elders of his household are unable to console him.

He won't listen to his servants and now these servants are afraid to tell him that the child is dead. But David knows in his heart that the Lord has done what he said he would do.

Our hearts ache for this father and mother and their loss. We can even feel as though the Lord was too harsh on them. We can think that God's forgiveness should have included sparing the life of this child. Nathan came to him and the Lord brought David to admit his sin. "You are the man!" David declared his own verdict and punishment. "He shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity." Nathan brought so much bad news:

1. The sword will never depart from your house.
2. Calamity will come on you by someone who is close to you.
3. The son born to you will die.

And the Lord brought David to confess: "I have sinned against the Lord." Of all the things we can see that David did wrong, the ultimate was the brokenness that his sin brought into his relationship with the Lord. What would have happened to their relationship had David never been confronted and never confessed that he had sinned against the Lord? The brokenness would have remained and kept them separated. The Lord, however, comes after David looking for him and confronts him with his sin, not to show him his worthlessness, but rather to remind David of his value to Him as His forgiven child.

Part 4

INTRODUCTION: In 2 Samuel 12:11-12 Nathan spoke of a calamity coming to David out of his own household. The story begins in 2 Samuel 13 and ends in 2 Samuel 18. We will not study the story in detail but you are encouraged to read each of these chapters to gain insight and understanding about what happened. The story begins with and involves three of David's children—David's firstborn son Amnon, Amnon's half-sister Tamar, and his half-brother Absalom.

ASSIGNMENT: Read 2 Samuel 13:1-22.

EXERCISE:

1. Verses 1-2 – What is the problem? _____
2. Verses 3-9a – Jonabab is David's nephew, Amnon's cousin. What is his advice that Amnon follows? _____

3. Verses 9b-19 – Amnon raped Tamar and cast her out. She left defiled and shamed.
4. Verses 20-22 – Absalom learns from his sister what has been done and what does he do for her? _____

5. Absalom never said anything to Amnon but what happened to Absalom? _____
6. David learned about what happened. We are told that he was furious. What did his lack of discipline toward Amnon stir up in Absalom? _____
7. Absalom let his hatred for Amnon obsess him. What happened in verses 23-29? _____

8. What was the message that David received (verse 30)? _____
9. Jonadab (see verses 3-5) reassured David (verses 32-33). _____

Absalom fled to his grandfather's house on his mother's side (1 Chronicles 3:2). During the three years he stayed at his grandfather's house, King David mourned for Amnon. After he was consoled David longed to see Absalom.

TEACHING: Joab, the commander of Israel's army, knew that David longed to see Absalom. He also knew that Absalom had killed his brother and that justice needed to be done. In Chapter 14 we learn that David did send Joab to Geshur to bring Absalom back to Jerusalem; however, Absalom was sent to his own house and not permitted to come into the King's presence.

EXERCISE:

1. In verses 25-26 we are told about Absalom's appearance. What description is given? _____

2. In verse 27 what are we told about his family? _____

Absalom sent for Joab because he wanted to see his father. Joab refused to come. Finally, Absalom decided that the way to get Joab's attention was to burn his barley crop. Needless to say, he got Joab's attention and was brought before the King (verse 33).

OVERVIEW: Absalom began to develop a conspiracy against his father David. He used psychological tactics to attract people to him. He would hear the complaints of the people and undermine the rule of his father. He used his attractive appearance to steal the hearts of the men of Israel. His following grew. It grew to the point that David had to flee from Jerusalem to escape from Absalom. David left and Absalom and his followers came and occupied the city. Ahithophel, an advisor to Absalom, advised Absalom, to lie with his father's concubines which was done in a tent on the roof in the sight of all Israel (2 Samuel 16:20-22). In the course of events, the advice of Absalom's adviser Ahithophel was frustrated by the

advice of Hushai, one of David's undercover agents, if you will. 2 Samuel 17:14b says, "The Lord had determined to frustrate the good advice of Ahithophel in order to bring disaster on Absalom."

David and his men received word of Absalom's plans to attack so he sent out troops under the command of Joab, Abishai, and Ittai. As they departed for battle, David asked them to be gentle with young Absalom for his sake. But, Absalom's death was gruesome. 2 Samuel 18:9-17 tells the story. In verse 33 we hear the lament of David as he wept for his son Absalom.

LESSON FIVE

ISRAEL SINNED AGAINST THE LORD

2 SAMUEL 20–2 KINGS 17 – SOLOMON AND THE KINGS

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INTRODUCTION

David's reign was the pinnacle of Israel's history under its kings. Solomon succeeded his father David as king. Initially his reign followed the godly ways of David. He led the people with the wisdom given to him by God. Discover the disheartening downfall of Solomon's reign and the reign of the kings that followed him. It's a time in Israel's history of their rebellion and disobedience. Israel, divided into two kingdoms, Israel to the north and Judah to the south. Learn how God's people rejected Him and then how He rejected them, thrusting them from His sight.

Lest the nation be utterly consumed by the ungodly ways of the kings, God in His mercy delivered His people into the hands of those who enslaved them. So, God disciplines those whom He loves granting His salvation to all who call on His Name.

Part 1

INTRODUCTION: Other stories and situations are recorded in 2 Samuel 20-24. David returned to Jerusalem and reestablished himself as the king of Israel. People rebelled, a famine swept the land, blood was avenged and wars continued against the Philistines. But in the midst of all of this, David sang to the Lord who had delivered him from the hand of all his enemies (2 Samuel 22). The words were also written in Psalm 18.

The verses of this Psalm mean the most when we can identify the enemies that confront us. David's enemies included more than Saul or the Philistines who were out to kill him or strip him of his kingdom as his son Absalom attempted to do. His enemies included fear, the harassment of temptations, depression, and anxiety. His enemies were more than a physical force that he fought against. His enemies were the forces of the evil one, and the one who harangued David is the same evil one who harangues you and me.

ASSIGNMENT: Before going on to the Exercise, list in your notebook two or three enemies you can identify in your life. Enemies are violent men. Enemies are also those things that coil around you confront you, and swirl about you, the torrents of destruction that overwhelm you (Psalm 18:4-5).

EXERCISE:

1. David uses lots of picture language in this song of praise (2 Samuel 22). Identify the picture words he uses to convey what the Lord is for him. In verse 2 the Lord is my _____, _____, and _____. David goes on to say the He is my _____, _____, _____, and the _____ of my salvation, my _____ and my _____, my _____.
2. Identify the picture words David uses to describe his life and the relentless pursuit of his enemies. In the _____ of death, the _____ of destruction, the _____ of Sheol, the _____ of death.
3. Verses 4 and 7 use a form of the word call, called upon, or cry. Do you sense that when we call out to the Lord because we need to be saved from our enemies that the Lord responds? Read through verses 8-16.
 - a. Then the earth _____ and _____

- b. The foundations of the heavens _____ and _____ because He was _____.
 - c. Smoke, devouring fire, glowing coals _____
 - d. Thick darkness _____
 - e. (verse 14) The Lord _____ from heaven
 - f. (verse 15) _____
 - g. (verse 16) _____
- All of creation responds to His anger! He's coming to save us!
4. What a picture in verses 17-19! _____

 5. Why does He do all of His "search and rescue" according to verse 20? _____
 6. Verses 21-25 describe His relationship with us. He has made us righteous before Him. He has made us clean. He has enabled us to keep His ways, keeping us obedient to Him. He has kept us blameless, keeping us from sin. The Lord has rewarded us according to our righteousness. He is our Righteousness!

Part 2

TEACHING: We need to pause for a moment in our study of David's song of praise. We need to talk about righteousness, our righteousness. Are we righteous? Apart from God we are not. The Bible teaches that all have sinned and that there is no one who is *righteous* (Romans 3:10-12). But David believed in God's promise. The prophet Jeremiah says that the days are coming when He will raise up to David a *righteous* Branch...and this is the name by which He will be called: The Lord is Our *Righteousness* (Jeremiah 23:5-6). And then, St. Paul reminds us that it is because of [God] that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our *righteousness*, holiness, and redemption...therefore we boast in the Lord (1 Corinthians 1:30-31).

We are reminded that it is not what we have done that makes us righteous before God but what He has done for us in Christ Jesus, the One who is our Righteousness. Our relationship with Jesus makes us righteous before God the Father who delights in us! The Lord living in us and working through us enables us to be blameless before Him. His righteousness covers over us as if a robe of righteousness is put upon us. Our sinful self is still there but it's covered over by Christ's righteousness.

EXERCISE: Back to 2 Samuel 22...

1. (Verses 26-27a) God shows himself to be _____, _____, and _____ to the merciful, blameless, and the pure.
2. How does He manifest Himself to the crooked (verse 27b)? _____
You save a _____ but your _____ are on the _____ to bring them down (verse 28).
3. How does David describe his God?
 - a. Verse 29 _____
 - b. Verse 30 _____
 - c. Verse 31b _____
4. It is God who arms me with armor. He arms me with strength. Battling the enemy demands strength. It is a war and I am ready with a _____ (verse 35) and a _____ (verse 36). You ready me for battle and give me victory. Your _____ has made me _____.
5. Because the Lord has equipped me with strength for the battle (verse 40) what happens to my adversaries, my enemies, my foes (verses 40b-43)? _____

6. In verses 44-46 do you hear the heart of a king? _____

7. And David praises the Lord! He lives! He is to be _____! He _____ me from men of _____.

APPLICATION QUESTION: God sets me free from my enemies. What difference might that fact make in the way I confront the “enemies” in my life? _____

PRAYER: I, too, want to praise You, O my God for the countless things You have done in my life. I want to sing Your praises by telling others. Stimulate my thoughts to recall the many times you have armed me with strength and have delivered me from the violence of the different enemies that would seek to discourage and even destroy me. You have rescued me and with thanksgiving I praise Your holy name for You are to be exalted. _____

Part 3

INTRODUCTION: David's reign as king was the best of times in Israel's history. David was a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22) and enjoyed God's favor (Acts 7:46) throughout his life. Now he is older and well advanced in years (1 Kings 1:1). The time has come for the next king to be anointed,

ASSIGNMENT: Read 1 Kings 1.

- Who sets himself up as king?
- What does this mean for Bathsheba and Solomon?
- What does David do?
- Who reigns on the throne as king over Israel?

TEACHING: From your reading of 1 Kings 1 you learned that Adonijah, David's fourth son (2 Samuel 3:4), has declared himself to be king. The prophet Nathan, however, told Bathsheba what this meant for her and Solomon and advised her how to save her life and Solomon's (1 Kings 1:11-14). In humility she went before King David and reminded him of his promise that Solomon would sit on the throne of his father David (verse 17). Zadok, the priest, anointed Solomon (verse 39). When Adonijah heard that his father had declared Solomon to be the next king and heard the rejoicing of all the people he feared Solomon and asked that Solomon would spare his life (verses 49-51). Solomon sent word to Adonijah (verses 52-53). "If he will show himself a worthy man, not one of his hairs shall fall to the earth, but if wickedness is found in him, he shall die."

DIGGING DEEPER: Before David died (1 Kings 2) he charged Solomon to be strong and observe all the laws and commands written in the Law of Moses. He also warned Solomon concerning Joab and Shimei but asked him to show kindness to the sons of Barzillai who remained faithful to him when he fled from Absalom.

Evil was found in Adonijah when he asked to be married to Abishag, the virgin who tended King David (1 King 1:1-4). Adonijah's request was another attempt to gain the throne. The one who owned the royal harem was the rightful successor to the throne. Adonijah was the fourth son of David to die—the baby conceived with Bathsheba, Amnon, Absalom, and now Adonijah. David had declared in 2 Samuel 12:6 that the payment for taking the lamb was to be four times over. The payment had been made in full.

Next to die was Joab (verses 28-34). Benaiah took over Joab's position as commander over the army. Zadok replaced Abiathar as priest. Finally, Shimei from the same clan as Saul's family was struck down

for all the wrongdoing he had done to David. Now the kingdom was firmly established in Solomon's hands (verse 46b).

So many names! So many unfamiliar names! To you they may not seem like common names like Tom, Dick, and Harry. Keeping these names straight gets more difficult with the transition from Saul's reign to David's and now from David's to Solomon's. Key names include:

1. The sons of David (Amnon, Absalom, and Adonijah),
2. The priests (Abiathar with David's reign and Zadok with Solomon's), and
3. The commanders of the army (Abner with Saul, Joab with David, and now Benaiah with Solomon).

Don't get discouraged. Don't get bogged down. Keep pressing on and begin to get-acquainted with King Solomon.

Part 4

ASSIGNMENT: For this next story we are going to turn to the Book of Second Chronicles. Many stories told in First and Second Kings are also recorded in First and Second Chronicles. Read 2 Chronicles 1:1-17. Note: You may choose to also read the account recorded in 1 Kings 3:4-15.

EXERCISE:

1. Solomon and all those assembled gathered at Gibeon. What was there (verse 3)? _____
2. Where was the Ark of the Covenant that David had brought from Kiriath Jearim (verse 4)?

3. The bronze altar was in front of the Tabernacle at Gibeon. What did Solomon do (verse 6)?

4. What happened that night? What did the Lord tell Solomon (verse 7)? _____

5. What was Solomon's reply (verses 8-10)? _____

6. What was God's response (verses 11-12)? _____

7. What is some of the wealth that Solomon accumulated during his reign as king over Israel (verses 14-17)? _____

APPLICATION: One can't help but admire a leader who puts his people before himself. Rather than ask for things for himself, Solomon asked for wisdom and knowledge that would enable him to govern God's people. Knowledge is information. Knowledge is learning and understanding God's Word. Wisdom is the ability to apply that knowledge of God and His Word to the situations of everyday life.

1. We can learn from Solomon. Solomon knew what he needed in order to do the work God had called him to do. In the New Testament, in the Book of James we are encouraged to ask for wisdom. Write James 1:5. _____

2. We are given the opportunity to ask for anything that we would like God to give us. Why ask for wisdom? _____
3. Are you in a position of leadership—within your home? At school? At work? In the community? At your church? What might be some situations in which God's wisdom will enable you to govern in a way that is pleasing to Him? _____

Part 5

INTRODUCTION: Our lesson on Solomon resumes again in 1 Kings. God gave Solomon great wisdom. As we read in James 1:5 God gives wisdom generously to all who ask.

ASSIGNMENT: Read 1 Kings 4:29-34.

EXERCISE:

1. What did God give to Solomon according to verse 29?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
2. Verses 30 and 31 tell us that Solomon was wiser than any other man. What are some of the things he did?
 - a. Verse 32: _____
 - b. Verse 32: _____
 - c. Verse 33: _____
 - d. Verse 33: _____
3. And, as a result, _____ (verse 34).

ASSIGNMENT: Read 1 Kings 3:16-28. This story is an example of Solomon’s wisdom used to administer justice.

EXERCISE:

1. Two women are arguing before the king. What is the problem (verses 16-22)? _____

2. In verse 23 Solomon summarizes the argument. What does he command in verses 24-25?

3. What was the response of the two women in verse 26? _____

4. What was the king’s ruling (verse 27)? _____

REFLECTION: As you reflect on this story share some of your thoughts regarding this display of Solomon’s wisdom:

1. How does one acquire such wisdom? _____
2. Is wisdom something a person is born with? _____
3. When have I encountered wisdom? _____
4. Who are those people in my life I consider wise? _____

DIGGING DEEPER: Solomon himself speaks about wisdom in the Books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes. Learn what he has to say. These are a couple of references that will get you started: Proverbs 1-4 and Ecclesiastes 7:11-8:1. Enjoy your reading!

Part 6

TEACHING: Once again in this study we are faced with more material than we can cover in detail. To conclude our study of King Solomon we will look at large sections of Scripture that will give us an overview of his reign. You are strongly encouraged to read these chapters which underlining words and phrases, even verses that give insight into these years of Israel’s history. Keep in mind as you read that the Temple served as the treasury for Israel. The Temple displayed and contained the wealth of the nation.

1. What are two major construction projects in 1 Kings 5-7?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
2. What stands out in your mind as you read about the procession of bringing the Ark of the Covenant into the Temple (1 Kings 8)? _____

Consider verses 10-11 _____

3. Carefully read the words of prayer and praise as the people are blessed and the Temple is dedicated (1 Kings 8:14-66). Identify words and phrases that have special meaning for you.

4. What are the words of hope and warning the Lord gives to Solomon upon the completion and dedication of these great construction achievements (1 Kings 9:1-9)? _____

5. In 1 Kings 9:10 through Chapter 10 we get a sense of the amount of wealth Solomon had accumulated. God said He would give to Solomon wealth (1 Kings 3:13) for which he did not ask. And wealth he got! Chapter 11 gives us a sense that something isn't right. What is the clue in verse 1? _____

6. What was wrong (verses 1-3)? _____

7. Why did the Lord tell the Israelites not to intermarry with foreign women? _____

8. Verses 4-8 tell us of Solomon's disobedience to the Lord: _____

9. The Lord was angry. What was his judgment on Solomon (verses 9-13)? _____

EPILOGUE: God raised up adversaries against Solomon (1 Kings 11:14-40). Jeroboam, one of these adversaries, was told by the prophet Ahijah that Israel would be divided. He would become the king of ten of the tribes but for the sake of His servant David two tribes (Judah and Benjamin) would remain with Solomon's son. Then in verses 41-443 we are told that Solomon died and his son Rehoboam succeeded him as king.

Part 6

REFLECTION: Once again we have seen great success, great wisdom, great wealth, construction, honor, and prestige given to God's anointed king. What happened? What went wrong? Why did Solomon make choices that were contrary to God's law? He was told what would happen if he turned away from the Lord and worshipped other gods yet he disobeyed and caused God to become angry with him. Ultimately God tore the kingdom from him except for two tribes. What are some of your thoughts and questions? _____

TEACHING: The story doesn't get better. In chapters 12-14 the kingdoms of Israel to the north and Judah to the south were established. Each kingdom had its own king and all through the remainder of First and Second Kings we read about the reigns of these kings and the prophets who were sent to them with God's word of warning.

DIGGING DEEPER: You may choose to chart in your notebook these kings and with a word or two describe their reign. Please understand that remembering these kings, when they resigned, and the nature of their rule is not necessary or critical to your learning right now. What is important is to know that except for a few kings these men caused the people to sin. Among all the things they did they worshipped worthless idols, built forbidden altars in high places, stripped the treasuries of the Lord's temple, sold themselves to do evil in the eyes of the Lord and offered human sacrifices, and would not listen to the warnings of the prophets. Some they even killed.

TEACHING: So, how does the story end? In 2 Kings 17 we learn of the demise of the kingdom of Israel. The inhabitants of Israel, the northern kingdom, were taken captive by the king of Assyria who had them deported to Assyria. What does verse 18 say? _____

Verses 7-23 tell why their captivity and deportation took place. These people no longer lived as people who reflected the Lord but rather as people who rejected Him. List some of the things they did that are recorded in these verses:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

They rejected the Lord their God and now He rejected them. One gets the sense that things were not any different in the kingdom of Judah. Verses 18b and 19 tell us that "none was left but the tribe of Judah only. Judah also did not keep the commandments of the Lord their God..." What did they follow? _____

In 2 Kings 24 and 25 we learn that under the reign of Zedekiah, the king of Babylonia Nebuchadnezzar with his whole army marched against Jerusalem and kept the city under siege. In these verses we learn

about the death and destruction the Babylonians inflicted on the kingdom of Judah as they pillaged, destroyed, and burned Jerusalem, the Temple, the royal palace and all the houses and important buildings. The people of Judah were taken into Babylonian captivity.

REFLECTION: Admittedly, we took a look at these chapters in chunks; however, the purpose of this overview was to give in a nutshell what was going on during this time in Israel's history, the time of the kings. It's a depressing story for those of us who read about it; however, one can't help but wonder what it was like to live in those days. What would cause the kings to lead the people into such ruin? Why would the people be drawn into the idolatrous worship of the gods of the foreign nations whom the Lord had driven out of the land? How would they answer these questions? What would be their excuse? Any thoughts? _____

One can't help but ask this question: What would have been my position, my stance, regarding the worship of idols and rejection of the Lord? What would be my answer? What would be my excuse?

LESSON SIX

THE LORD IS GOD; FOLLOW HIM

1 KINGS 17-2 KINGS 5 – ELIJAH AND ELISHA

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INTRODUCTION

From the pinnacle of David's reign Israel falls to the deplorable pits of bondage! What a tragedy! Their demand for a king brought them to desperate times. The nation's leaders were corrupt and led the people to follow other gods, the gods of Baal and the Ashtoreth. Repeatedly, God sent prophets to call the people to repent of their evil ways and return to the Lord. Two prophets are introduced in Lesson 6—Elijah and Elisha.

This lesson is filled with stories of those who believe and know that the Lord is God and follow Him. Elijah's stories include the woman of Zarephath, the encounter with the false prophets, and the descent of the chariot of fire. Elisha's stories include the woman of Shumen and Naaman. See how the Lord responds to those who follow Him and obey the Word He sends through His prophets.

The declaration that the Lord is God is also our call to follow Him!

Part 1

INTRODUCTION: Lesson 6 backtracks through the Books of First and Second Kings. In this lesson you will be given an overview of two significant characters, Elijah and Elisha, and stories that surrounded their lives. These men lived in the time of history when both the Kingdom of Israel and the Kingdom of Judah were led by kings with evil and wicked intent. Their despicable acts of defiance against God’s law ultimately caused God to reject His people. The Assyrian and Babylonian kings captured and exiled the people of Israel and Judah, respectively, and made them their servants and slaves.

ASSIGNMENT: Read 1 Kings 17. This chapter tells three stories: 1) Verses 1-6, 2) Verses 7-16, and 3) Verses 17-24. During the reign of the kings God would send prophets with messages of warning. Elijah is the prophet and Ahab is the king of the Kingdom of Israel in the north.

- What was Elijah’s message to King Ahab?
- What did God provide for Elijah?
- Where did God send Elijah?
- What are the two stories of Elijah and the widow?
- What was the woman’s declaration?

EXERCISE:

1. What are we told in 1 Kings 16:33 about King Ahab? _____

2. Now Elijah comes to Ahab and what does he say (1 Kings 17:1)? _____

3. What are God’s instructions to Elijah (verses 2-4)? _____

Elijah obeys the Lord who protected and provided for him.

4. In verse 7 we are told that the brook dries up. There has been no dew or rain (verse 7). What are the Lord’s next instructions to Elijah (verses 8-9)? _____

Zarephath is a small town located along the Phoenician coastline between Tyre and Sidon.

5. Whom does Elijah meet when he arrives in Zarephath? _____
6. What two things does he ask her?
 - a. Verse 10: _____

- b. Verse 11: _____
7. What does she explain to him in verse 12? _____

8. What did Elijah ask her to do before she made a meal for herself and her son? _____

9. What was God's promise to her in verses 14-16? _____

APPLICATION: Elijah appears to be somewhat self-serving when he asks the woman to set aside her own hunger and her son's hunger and boldly asks her to prepare some bread for him with the only ingredients she had to prepare a last meal. Yet she obeys believing the promise of the Lord that neither the flour nor the oil would be used up. One can't help but admire the faith of this woman. It forces us to ask a couple of questions:

1. What do I have that I can either choose to withhold for myself or give away trusting that the Lord will provide sufficient for my need? _____

2. Am I afraid that my time will be used up?" Am I afraid that my financial resources will dry up? Am I afraid that the jug and jar that hold food, clothing and other necessities of life will be spent and left empty and I will be left without these things? What is it that frightens me? _____

EXERCISE:

1. Sometime later another incident occurred (verse 17). The widow's son became very ill and died. This same widow verbally attacks the prophet. What does she want to know (verse 18)? _____

2. She wants to know what Elijah has against her. Has he come to remind her of her sin and because of her sin to kill her son? Elijah took her dead son from her, brought him to his room and placed him on his own bed. He cries out to the Lord (verse 20): _____

3. What does Elijah do in verse 21? _____

4. What miraculously happens in verse 22? _____

TEACHING: The miracle is that life returned to the boy and he lived. But we dare not miss the grace and mercy of God. Verse 22 says that “the Lord heard Elijah’s cry...” The Lord heard. The Lord listens to the cries of his people and He hears. God Almighty, the Father of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob hears. The God who declared that “I will be your God and you will be My people” listens for the cries of those who call upon His Name. God chose to demonstrate His resurrection power through Elijah to the dead and lifeless body of this widow’s son.

Elijah picked up the child, carried him downstairs and presented him to his mother (verse 23). This son who was dead is now alive! In his own amazement we can overhear him saying to the boy’s mother, “Look, your son is alive!” Can you imagine the celebration and joy!

REFLECTION:

1. In verse 24 the woman makes a bold declaration of what she knows. What does she say?

2. Now she knows? During all of this time of the drought when flour and oil were always supplied did she not know that Elijah was a man of God? Was she living simply believing that what the prophet said was true? Now she *knows*! She gave him her dead son and the Lord upon hearing Elijah’s cry resurrects him. The Word of the Lord is truth. Do you believe this? What might have been your response? _____

3. Are there resurrections happening in your life? Is hope revived in family and friends? Are you experiencing God’s presence in your life, even in times of drought? _____

God’s Word is Truth.

Part 2

INTRODUCTION: Another significant story about Elijah is recorded in 1 Kings 18:16-40. In verse 16 Obadiah was the man in charge of King Ahab’s palace. He had been sent by the king to find grass for the animals since it was in the third year of the drought. Along the way Obadiah met Elijah (verse 7) who had been sent by the Lord to present himself to Ahab (verses 1-2). The story begins when Ahab went to meet Elijah (verse 16).

EXERCISE:

1. What was Ahab’s greeting (verse 17)? _____
2. Who did Elijah say were the troublemakers? _____

3. What had they done (verse 18)? _____
 Baal and Asherah were the false gods that King Ahab and his wife Jezebel worshipped. Not only did they worship them but they led the people to worship these false gods instead of Jehovah, the one true God, the God of Israel.
4. Elijah called for an audience. What were Elijah's instructions for Ahab (verse 19-21)? Who was to gather on Mt. Carmel?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
5. What was Elijah's appeal to the people who gathered (verse 21)? _____

6. What was the response of the people (verse 21b)? _____
 What was their problem? _____
7. What was Elijah's plan to get things settled (verses 22-24)? _____

8. All the people agreed so the prophets of Baal chose a bull, prepared it and then called on the name of their god. The one thing they could not do was to light the fire. They called on the name of _____.
9. What happened according to verses 26-29? _____

10. Elijah called the people together (verse 30). He repaired the broken altar of the Lord by taking 2 stones representing the 12 tribes of Israel and with the stones he built the altar of the Lord. What did he dig around the base of the altar (verse 32)? _____
11. He arranged the cut pieces of the bull on the wood. What do verses 33-35 tell us he had done?

 Needless to say, the altar, the wood, and the offering were drenched and the trench was filled!
12. To whom did Elijah address his prayer in verse 36? _____
13. What did Elijah ask of the Lord (verse 36-37)?
 - a. Verse 36: You are _____
 - b. Verse 36: I am _____
 - c. Verse 37: and that _____
 - d. Verse 37: so this people _____
 - e. Verse 37: and that _____

14. What was God's response to Elijah's prayer (verse 38)? _____

15. What was the response of the people (verse 39)? _____

16. What was Elijah's command and what did the people do (verse 40)? _____

REFLECTION: Well, that should have settled matters. Wouldn't you think? For a people who couldn't answer the question of who to follow, the Lord God or Baal, they fell on their faces and cried, "The Lord, He is God; the Lord, He is God." Or, were they scared? Were they afraid for their own lives? We can only go by what we are told in the story. They had seen with their own eyes the mighty act of God who demonstrated that He alone is the Lord God; He alone is the One they were to follow.

What does it take for me to believe that He is the Lord God? Does He have to miraculously heal someone near and dear to me? Does He need to give me the job I so desperately need or the pay raise that I want which will allow me to provide for my needs and the wants of my family? Does He need to show Himself to be the Lord God in such a dramatic way as He did with Elijah on Mt. Carmel? Or, like Elijah will I simply believe that He is who He says He is in His Word? Am I like the people who said nothing? What does He need to do in order for me to believe that He is the Lord God? My thoughts and response:

May my prayer be, Lord, turn my heart back to You.

Part 3

INTRODUCTION: In 2 Kings 2 we read about Elijah being taken into heaven. The only other person in Scripture who was taken into heaven without experiencing death was man named Enoch. The account in Genesis 5:21-24 simply says that "Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him." The story of Elijah is somewhat more dramatic. You will be introduced to a new character Elisha. Elisha was a ministry partner with Elijah. In 1 Kings 19:21 we are told that Elisha "went after Elijah and assisted him."

ASSIGNMENT: Read 2 Kings 2:1-18.

EXERCISE:

1. What is about to happen according to verse 1? _____
2. First, Elijah is going to visit the sons of the prophets (school) in Bethel (verse 3) and Jericho (verse 5) before heading to the Jordan. Although Elijah wanted Elisha to stay behind what did Elisha insist on doing in verses 2, 4, and 6? _____
Note: The “company of the prophets” or the “sons of the prophets” consisted of men who were scholars and had a close and intimate association with these great prophets. Their schools were located in towns within the northern kingdom of Israel.
3. What does Elisha say that lets us know that these good-byes were difficult for him? _____
4. Fifty men from the sons of the prophets came and stood at a distance. What did they witness in verse 8? _____
5. What did Elijah say to Elisha after they had crossed (verse 9)? _____
6. What was Elisha’s reply? _____
7. And how does Elijah respond (verse 10)? _____
8. These two men are spending some time together and what suddenly happens (verse 11)? _____
9. Elisha is overcome with what he sees. He cries out, “My father! My father! The chariots and horsemen of Israel!” And, just as suddenly as the chariots appear, they leave again with Elijah. His mentor, his friend, his ministry partner is gone. What does Elisha do? _____
10. What happens in verses 13-14? _____
11. What did those watching conclude (verse 15a)? _____

REFLECTION: This certainly wasn’t an everyday occurrence and it certainly wasn’t anything that would be forgotten any time soon by those who were watching. Elijah hits the Jordan River with his cloak and it separates. Then they cross over on dry ground. The next thing he knows he’s separated from Elijah by the chariot and horses of fire. It’s over. Elisha saw him no more.

Elisha had asked Elijah for a double portion of his spirit but what he asked for was something that only God could give. In essence, Elisha was making a bold request. He was asking to take over for Elijah.

Today it might be the request for a ministry as effective as Elijah's. Elijah, however, gave him the hope that if Elisha saw Elijah when he was taken from him that his request would be granted. Once he picked up Elijah's cloak and struck the water the prophets who were watching knew that the spirit of Elijah now rested on Elisha. They bowed before him acknowledging the honor that was due him. The mantle of leadership and responsibility had been passed.

APPLICATION: The conversation between these two prophets before they are separated is significant. Elijah asks, "Tell me, what can I do for you before I am taken from you?" When you think about it we can't help but wonder if Elijah thought he had some time left in order to be able to do something for Elisha. After all, it's only the two men talking. What could he possibly have done? What did Elijah anticipate Elisha's response would be?

Elisha, on the other hand, responds, "Let me inherit a double portion of your spirit." It turns out that what Elisha asks for was something that only God could give. It appears as though each asked questions that only God could answer.

Consider a time of separation from those you love and who love you. What might you ask them? Would you be inclined to ask the question Elijah asked, "What can I do for you?" Would a blessing be in order? Would words of encouragement and empowerment be appropriate? Consider what you might say in order to prepare for such a time? _____

Or maybe the circumstances are like Elisha's when someone is being taken from you. Would you be the one asking, "Please let me inherit a double portion of your spirit?" Inherit means receiving what has been left behind. Is this the inheritance you would ask from someone? If asked the question, what response would you want to be ready to share? _____

PRAYER: Lord God, You have blessed us with every blessing. You have made us rich in things above. You have poured out Your Spirit on us. May we be generous to pour out Your blessing on others whether it is in a temporary parting or in death. May Your blessing on others empower them for the responsibilities and opportunities You give to them and may they bless others with a double portion of Your Spirit that all may inherit eternal life through Your Son Jesus Christ who is our Double Portion.

Part 4

INTRODUCTION: The next story is another situation in which God provides for a widow and her sons. In the Law of Moses (Deuteronomy 14:29) we learn that the tithes and offerings of the people were to provide enough food so that the widows and orphans were satisfied. The promise of the Lord God was to bless His people in all the work of their hands as they gave.

ASSIGNMENT: Read 2 Kings 4:1-7.

- Who is this woman?
- What is the problem?
- What did God do for her and her two sons?

EXERCISE:

1. Retell the story in your own words: _____

2. The situation seemed impossible to the woman. What questions did Elisha asked her in verse 2?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____

APPLICATION:

1. God blessed the little oil that she had in order to give her sufficient to redeem the situation. Discover in this story an application for yourself: _____

2. What is the little you have that the Lord wants to increase and pour forth abundantly into the lives of others? What is the little you have that He wants to use in order to bless others with his goodness? _____

Remember, God’s promise to bless all the works of your hands!

ASSIGNMENT: Read Kings 4:8-17.

EXERCISE:

1. What were the provisions that this Shunammite woman and her husband made available to Elisha in verses 8-10? _____

2. Elisha wanted to thank them for their generous provisions when he came to Shunem. He asked his servant Gehazi to call the woman and what did Elisha offer her (verse 13)? _____

3. What did she reply? _____
4. Elisha is still not satisfied so he asks Gehazi what can be done for her (verse 14). What is his answer? _____
5. What did Elisha tell the woman (verse 16)? _____
6. Obviously, this woman had given up hope of ever being a mother and didn't want to be disappointed in hope again. But the prophecy became a reality according to verse 17: _____

ASSIGNMENT: Read verses 18-37. The story continues.

EXERCISE:

1. Suddenly the boy becomes ill. The servants carry him to his mother who holds him and by noon he is dead (verses 18-20). What does this mother do next (verses 21-25a)? _____

2. She has told her husband that everything is all right. Now she tells Gehazi that everything is all right. But what does she tell Elisha (verse 28)? _____

3. What are his orders to Gehazi (verse 29)? _____
4. The boy's mother refused to leave Elisha so he followed her to her home. On the way Gehazi meets up with Elisha and the woman. What does he report (verse 31)? _____
5. What did Elisha do when he reached the house (verses 32-35)? _____

6. The dead child was given life. In verses 36-37 Elisha presents this child to his mother. Apparently she said nothing but she _____,
_____, _____ and went out.

TEACHING: It is interesting that during this time in Israel's history God chose to speak to the people through his prophets. He came to David through the prophet Nathan, to the kings through a myriad of prophets, and he came to the people through prophets like Elijah and Elisha. The prophets also brought life and hope to those who sought to obey His Word and worship only Him.

Tucked away in 2 Kings we read this story of God's mercy that was shown to this woman and her husband. Tucked away we find a woman who knows that her help comes from the Lord through His servant, the prophet Elisha. Tucked away we see God's salvation brought to this son whom He brings from death to life! Amid all the rejection and defiance of Israel and Judah's kings God brings to this family His intimate love and compassion. His mercy rescues them and brings deliverance.

In some respects this story is the story of Israel. God came to His people and they received Him as their Deliverer. He provided for the desires of their heart promising that they would be brought into the Promised Land. And after many years their hope was fulfilled as they lived in the safe keeping of their God. But, death came. They rejected God and demanded a king so they could be like other nations. Eventually these kings led them farther and farther from him. Finally, He thrust His people from His presence. The Law, the staff of the prophet, was not able to save them as the staff was not able to give life. The Law did nothing but condemn them. The staff did nothing but confirm the boy's death...neither sound nor response. As the prophet needed to come and lay on the child mouth to mouth, eye to eye, and hands to hands and thus enter into this lifeless body, so the same God who at creation breathed into man the breath of life, sent Jesus who came as a man and entered into our world to bring us life through His suffering, death, and resurrection.

2 Corinthians 5:21(NIV) tells us exactly what God did. "God made Him (Jesus) who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God." Jesus, God's Son, was sinless. He was the Righteous One. He was the only one who could make us right with God but in order to do that He had to become one of us. He had to enter into our world of sin. Like a sponge He had to take into Himself all of our wrong and die because of it. God in His mercy gave us our salvation in this act because Jesus made us righteous and gave us Life! This is a great verse to add to your library of index cards.

MEMORIZATION: Psalm 130 seems to be the cry of the heart as the kingdoms of Israel and Judah persist in doing things their own way. Can you hear the cry of those who have not turned their hearts against God? Can you hear the cry of the widow of Zarephath and the Shunammite woman and her husband? Can you hear them? "Out of the depths I cry to You, O Lord; O Lord, hear my voice. Let Your ears be attentive to the voice of my pleas for mercy."

Maybe this is your cry. Maybe you are in the depths of despair not knowing where to turn, not knowing where to receive God's mercy and His forgiveness. Maybe your life is one that needs to be redeemed and

saved from all of your wrongdoings. Wait for the Lord and put your hope in His Word. Put your hope in the Lord for with Him is unfailing love, with Him is full deliverance.

Take time to write out the verses of this Psalm. Put them to memory and write on the back of your index card all that has you in the depths. Ask to be released, delivered, and rescued from the depths. May the Lord constantly remind you of His unfailing love and mercy for you. Put your hope in Him and in His Word. He is your redemption, your salvation.

PRAYER: O my God, even I call to You from out of the depths. My soul is desperate for your love and forgiveness. I cry out to You for mercy. Reach down and grab hold of me. Deliver me from all that keeps me stuck in the muck and mire of life. My sins are always before me. Release me from their bondage for the sake of Jesus, my Savior, my Rock and my Salvation. Pull me out, wash me off in Your blood and righteousness, and enable me once again to sing praises of thanksgiving to You. As the woman's son was dead and You gave him life again, with Your resurrection power grant me life again that I might praise Your holy name. _____

Part 5

TEACHING: One gets a sense that God is withdrawing Himself from His people. Those whom He has called, those whom He has chosen to be His children no longer reflect His image but rather the image of the arch enemy, the evil one himself. They commit heinous acts of defiance against God, acts of evil and wickedness. They bow down to gods of wood and stone, the Baals and Asherah. The Lord doesn't seem to want to stick around. He doesn't seem to want to be associated with those who are disobedient and corrupt. He seems to have turned His back on these people who are blown about by every whim that comes their way. They don't act as wise but as foolish people. They do not love and trust in Him above all things. They do not love with all their heart, soul, and mind. What is He to do when they have obviously rejected Him as the Lord their God? Do you think He should have acted differently? What would you expect Him to do? _____

Tough love sometimes demands removing ourselves from those we love. Such love even allows the one rejecting love to wallow in the muck and mire of sin. It's a sad day when a mother and father have to come to grips with the defiant child and let the child turn from them to go his/her own way.

INTRODUCTION: The last story we will study in this lesson is the story of a man named Naaman who came to the prophet Elisha to be healed of his disease.

ASSIGNMENT: Read 2 Kings 5:1-19a.

- Who was Naaman?
- What did the servant girl tell her mistress?
- What instruction did Elisha give Naaman?
- What was Naaman's response?
- How does the story end?

EXERCISE:

1. What are we told about Naaman in verse 1? _____

- Aram can be located on your map. It is the land of Syria found to the northeast of Israel.
Damascus is one of the towns in Aram.
2. A young Israelite girl was taken captive and served Naaman's wife. What did this girl tell her mistress (verses 3-4)? _____
3. So Naaman went to his master the king. He told him what the girl had said and asked for permission to go. What was the king's response and what did the king do for him? _____

4. Naaman took along gifts and the letter. What did the letter say (verse 6)? _____

5. How did the king of Israel respond to the king of Aram's letter (verse 7)? _____

6. What was the message Elisha sent to the king when he heard what the king had done? _____

7. So Naaman and his entourage arrived at the house of Elisha only to be greeted by a messenger. What was Naaman told to do (verse 10)? _____

8. Rather than do what Elisha told him to do he went away angry, in a rage. What did Naaman expect would happen (verses 11-12)? _____
9. In your own words, what was Naaman really saying? _____

He was a commander of the army of the king. Acting like a commander he now wants to give the commands regarding his healing. He thought he was someone significant that the prophet would at least have the decency to “come out to me and stand and call upon the name of the Lord his God and wave his hand over the place and cure the leper.” Naaman had it all figured out. Instead, he is sent to a river in Israel, the Jordan River, and told to go and wash seven times.

10. What does Naaman ask in verse 12?

a. _____

b. _____

In essence he was saying, “I came all this way to be told to go and wash in the Jordan River. Couldn’t I have done that back home?”

11. What happens in verses 13-14? _____

12. Naaman returns to the home of the prophet. What did he profess to Elisha? _____

13. He offered gifts to Elisha (verse 15) that the prophet refused (verse 16). Naaman had a concern when he returned to his duties back home. What does he ask for in verse 18? _____

14. What were Elisha’s parting words? _____

APPLICATION:

1. Recall a time when you would have liked to tell the Lord how to handle a situation: _____

2. Have you asked the Lord for something in prayer and in your mind had it all figured out what the acceptable answer would be? _____

TEACHING: Naaman came to Elisha with his preconceived ideas of how this whole healing process was going to work. It was going to be grand and dramatic. He was going to look good as the prophet called on the Lord and waved his hands over him. But Elisha’s “treatment” was anything but grand. His orders were: Go and wash and do it seven times. This treatment insinuated that Naaman was dirty! This skin disease could be fatal. He saw himself as sick, not dirty. His servants and attendants encouraged him to set aside his preconceived ideas of what was to happen and to just do what the prophet said, “Wash and be clean!”

Naaman had more than a skin disease that needed attention. He had a relationship problem. He had a sin disease. The antidote for both his skin and sin diseases was the water. We can visualize him going down

into the water and dipping himself into the solution of H2O for cleansing. But a deeper cleansing was happening. It's what happens to all of us when we are baptized with water and the Word. In the simple act of passing through the waters of baptism we are forgiven and forever healed of our sin disease. In baptism the broken relationship caused by sin is restored. The sin disease no longer keeps us separated from God. One of the most difficult things about being a leper was that they were separated from others because of the disease. In the same way, our sin makes us unclean and keeps us separated from our Heavenly Father. But, because of Jesus, we are forgiven and made clean. Just as the waters healed Naaman from his skin disease so also the waters of baptism heal us from our sin disease. We are forgiven and brought into a living relationship through Jesus Christ.

PRAYER: O give thanks unto the Lord for He is good... _____

UNIT REVIEW

GOD'S MERCY, OUR SALVATION

REVIEW

Congratulations! You have completed the study *God's Mercy, Our Salvation*. You have become acquainted with several new Bible stories and characters. Now it's time to review. Remember, this is not a test, only an opportunity to affirm you and your progress as you continue this exciting journey that is shaping your life. As you study you are learning the *facts* of the stories and the *truths* about God and humankind. You are also discovering how to *apply* the facts and truths to your life lived in this 21st Century.

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

1. Who was the man described as a man after God's own heart? _____ See Acts 13:22.
2. Where is the story of David and Goliath found? _____
3. Describe Saul's relationship with David: _____

4. Describe David's regard for Saul: _____
See 2 Samuel 26:9-11.
5. David asked to build the Lord's Temple; however, the Lord denied his request. What was the promise God made to him? See 2 Samuel 7:12-13. _____

6. Where is the story of David and Bathsheba found? _____
7. What were three consequences of David's sin?
 - a. 2 Samuel 12:10 _____
 - b. 2 Samuel 12:11-12 _____
 - c. 2 Samuel 12:14 _____
8. Briefly summarize the story of Absalom (2 Samuel 13:20-18:33): _____

9. What did King Solomon ask of the Lord (1 Kings 3:9)? _____

10. Where is the story of the two prostitutes found? _____
11. What two major building projects did Solomon initiate?
 - a. 1 Kings 6 _____

- b. 1 Kings 7 _____
12. What was the outcome of Solomon's rule (1 Kings 11:1-13)? _____

13. Who was the prophet during the reign of King Ahab (1 Kings 17:1)? _____
14. Summarize the story of the woman of Zarephath (1 Kings 17:7-24): _____

15. Describe the encounter of Elijah and the Baal prophets on Mt. Carmel (1 Kings 18:16-40): _____

16. Who was Elijah's successor (2 Kings 2:1-12): _____
17. What two memorable stories are told about Elisha?
- a. 2 Kings 4:1-7 _____
- b. 2 Kings 5 _____
18. What was the result of the Lord's anger in 2 Kings 24:20? _____

19. Who was the king of Babylon (2 Kings 25:1)? _____
20. What is one truth you learn about God and His mercy from these stories of the kings? _____

DISCUSSION QUESTION: If someone would ask you what difference God's mercy has made on your life, how would you respond? _____

PRAYER: O Lord, I stand in awe of You as I consider that Your mercy has so abundantly touched my life. Your mercy has given to me life and salvation. Your mercy is love I have never earned or deserved. I thank you for Your mercy given to me through Jesus who took my place, who was holy and yet became sin for me, who took upon Himself my wretched condition and bled and died in my place. Thank You. For all of Your grace and mercy to me may I ever praise Your most holy Name. _____

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