

# Old Testament History

Lesson #15

2 Samuel 13:1-1 Kings 7:51

## Outline

- I. ***David's Sin And Its Consequences (2 Samuel 11:1-20:26)***
  - A. Trouble with David's sons (13:1-14:33).
    1. Amnon rapes and despises Tamar (13:1-19).
    2. Absalom murders Amnon and flees (13:20-39).
    3. Absalom is partially reconciled to David (14:1-33).
  - B. Absalom's rebellion (15:1-18:33).
    1. Absalom rebels and David flees (15:1-37).
    2. Shimei curses David as he flees (16:1-23).
    3. Hushai deceives Absalom with his counsel (17:1-29).
    4. Absalom is killed by Joab (18:1-33).
  - C. David is restored to the throne (19:1-20:26).
    1. David returns to Jerusalem (19:1-43).
    2. Sheba's rebellion put down (20:1-26).
- II. ***The Lord Is The Supreme King Over Israel (2 Samuel 21:1-24:25)***
  - A. The Lord sends a famine on Israel for Saul's sin (21:1-14).
  - B. David's heroes defeat the Philistines (21:15-22).
  - C. David praises the Lord for His victories (22:1-51).
  - D. David's final words (23:1-7).
  - E. David's mighty men (23:8-39).
  - F. The Lord sends a plague on Israel for David's sin (24:1-25).
- III. ***The Reign Of Solomon (1 Kings 1:1-11:43)***
  - A. The establishment of Solomon's reign (1:1-4:34).
    1. Solomon's succession to David's throne (1:1-2:12).
    2. Solomon consolidates his power (2:13-46).
    3. Solomon asks God for wisdom (3:1-15).
    4. The wisdom of Solomon's reign (3:16-4:34).
  - B. The glories of Solomon's reign (5:1-10:29).
    1. Construction of the temple (5:1-6:38).
    2. Construction of Solomon's palace (7:1-12).
    3. The temple furnishings (7:13-51).

## Notes

### ***2 Samuel 13:1-16:23***

- Although David was graciously forgiven, and received back into God's favor, neither he nor his government ever fully recovered from the moral shock of his sin. It is not just that his history from this point is

continually problematic, but his troubles were all connected with a weakness that was the consequence of his sin.

- It was probably the 20th year of his reign when the sin of his son Amnon signaled the beginning of a long series of domestic and public troubles. A doting father, plagued with moral weakness, might find an excuse for delay or even complete inaction when he remembered his own sins. It is difficult to wield a heavy sword with a maimed arm.
- Two years had passed since Tamar was raped by Amnon. The long delay of revenge shows a deep, evil passion in Absalom's heart. It was the time of sheep-shearing on Absalom's property -- a happy, festive season in the East. It was good that Absalom fled to his maternal grandfather at Geshur. All of his life, the king could not forgive the death of his firstborn, but the three years of banishment at Geshur allowed David's mind to stop dwelling on Amnon.
- Joab, using a wise woman from Tekoah, hatched a plot to get the king on the side of the woman. The king decided in principle what Joab wanted applied to the situation with Absalom. David understood the woman's true purpose and Joab obtained permission to bring back Absalom. Absalom and David seem to have reconciled, but Absalom had other plans in mind.
- There were consequences to David's moral weakness. His position as king was increasingly weakened in the public eye. Absalom had everything he needed to win over the people. He did not have any blemishes, and was therefore the finest-looking man in Israel. Even before his return from Geshur Absalom had been a kind of popular hero, and his banishment increased sympathy for him.
- Absalom's conspiracy was well-planned, and Ahithophel, one of David's advisors, left him to follow Absalom. The place for the uprising was Hebron. It offered a way of retreat in case of failure, and, in the case of David, it was where a new king had been crowned. It has also been suggested that there was discontent because of the transfer of the royal residence to Jerusalem. Absalom soon had 200 followers and David fled from the palace in Jerusalem. Several psalms were written during the plotting (41, 55), David's flight (3, 63), and the overthrow of the conspiracy (39, 61, 62).
- Ziba convinced David that Mephibosheth had decided to stay in Jerusalem in the belief that the house of Israel will return the kingdom to the house of Saul and therefore to Mephibosheth himself. For the moment at least, David chooses to believe Ziba. He punishes Mephibosheth by giving Ziba everything that formerly belonged to his master.
- Absalom probably knew that Solomon was to be David's successor as king, hence the effort to steal the throne from his father. Judging by the

space given to the account of Absalom, it must have been one of the most troublesome points of David's reign. It involved the defection of some of David's advisers and broke his heart. David certainly teaches us that if a forgiven sin is continually brooded over, it becomes a source, not of sanctification, but of moral weakness and a hindrance.

- David had not left the capital a moment too soon. He had barely left the city when Absalom and his forces appeared, and took possession of it. Hushai the Archite was one of the first to welcome him with insincere allegiance. Ahithophel knew that, though David had fled, his cause was far from lost.
- The intent of Ahithophel was to make the division between father and son public and permanent. This was the purpose of the advice which Ahithophel gave Absalom (2 Samuel 16:21-22), although he would have convinced Absalom that it was public evidence that he had succeeded to the throne.

### **2 Samuel 17:1-20:26**

- Ahithophel wanted to send 12,000 troops to surprise David's followers, but God was not going to allow it to happen. The advice sounded good to Absalom and his followers. However, Hushai was summoned and convinced Absalom of a different strategy. Warning Absalom that David on the offensive would have the strategic advantage and would therefore draw first blood, Hushai points out that the exaggerated news of the initial defeat would cause uncontrollable panic among Absalom's troops. Absalom's bravest soldier is no match for David's brave men.
- Hushai's advice wins over Absalom, thus giving David and his troops time to escape across the Jordan and regroup. Absalom makes his fateful choice, and Hushai becomes the "point man" in the Lord's decision to frustrate Ahithophel's counsel.
- The messengers of Hushai, Jonathan and Ahimaaz, hide in a well from Absalom's men. They tell David to cross the Jordan River at once under the cover of darkness. When Ahithophel sees that Absalom is not going to win in a fight against David, he takes his own life. David's prayer of 2 Samuel 15:31 is now answered.
- David divided his men into three divisions and sent them out under the command of Joab, Abishai, and Ittai. The field, which was a thick forest near the Jordan, was very skillfully chosen for an engagement with undisciplined superior numbers. As David's generals went out to battle, David asked them to be gentle with Absalom.
- Absalom's head had become wedged, most likely through his thick hair, in the branches of an oak tree. One of David's men brought word to Joab. After Joab reproves him for not killing Absalom, Joab stabs him and lets his men finish the task. Absalom is the third son that David has

lost as a result of his sin against Bathsheba and her husband Uriah. When David finds out about Absalom's death, his mournful cry was filled with the pathos of a father's grieving heart.

- In his present frame of mind David would trade Absalom's life for those of everyone else. Joab speaks to David harshly and tells him that if he does not immediately go out and encourage his men by nightfall, no one will remain loyal to him. Reluctantly, David does so.
- David is invited back to Judah to reign in Jerusalem. Both Shimei, who had cursed David on his flight, and Ziba, who had deceived him about Mephibosheth, went over the Jordan to meet him. One thousand Benjamites met David and asked his forgiveness because of their hostility towards him. David responds to Mephibosheth by ordering him and Ziba to divide the land that he had originally restored to Mephibosheth but had later turned over to Ziba. Barzillai, who had supported David in all his troubles, came, despite his age, to escort the king over the Jordan. He did not seek any reward or acknowledgement.
- David's difficulties did not end with the crossing of the Jordan. They actually seemed to begin all over again. Sheba, a Benjamite, blew a trumpet as a rallying cry of rebellion against David. Despite the fact that David had been divinely anointed king over Israel, Sheba apparently suspects that David's loyalties basically lie in the south and therefore urges the representatives of the northern tribes to recommend secession. David sends Amasa, then Abishai, after Sheba. Joab is ignored and takes the opportunity to kill Amasa. Joab and Abishai then continue the pursuit of Sheba. They follow him to Abel where a wise woman rebukes Joab for his siege of the city. The men cut off Sheba's head and throw it over the wall to Joab.

## **2 Samuel 21:1-24:25; 1 Chronicles 21:1-27:34**

- With the suppression of Sheba's revolt, the political history of David closes. What follows in 2 Samuel is an appendix of an account of the famine which devastated Israel, probably in the earlier part of David's reign, and the pestilence, probably toward the close of David's reign. There are also some brief mentions of the Philistine wars and a detailed accounting of David's heroes. Finally, there is David's final psalm of thanksgiving and his last prophetic words. The account of the pestilence was probably placed last in the book because it introduces the preparations made for the building of the temple by Solomon.
- Saul was to blame for the famine because of his bloody rule (cf. Numbers 35:33; Deuteronomy 19:10). He had killed the Gibeonites and violated the treaty made with them by Joshua (Joshua 9:16), one of the provisions of which was that the Israelites would let them live (Joshua

9:15, 20-21). Wanting to rectify the situation, David asks the Gibeonites whether there is anything he can do to make amends.

- The Gibeonites requested that seven of Saul's male descendants be turned over to them -- suggesting full retribution (cf. 1 Samuel 2:5). Their bodies were publicly hung from the beginning of the barley harvest in April to the early rains of Fall. Saul's bloodstained house would now be completely avenged. They were to be killed and exposed before the Lord perhaps so that His blessing might be sought. Ironically, the act was to take place at Gibeah, the hometown of Saul.
- Second Samuel 22 was a song of praise, and the history of David appropriately closes with a grand hymn. Here, as in many psalms, David shows his unflinching trust in God and his immense gratitude for His constant care. The next chapter is David's last words. It shows what David's mind was focused on at the close of his glorious but troubled life: the justice of his reign as king, his creation of the psalms, his devotion to God's word, and God's covenant with him that promised an eternal dynasty.
- The narrative of the pestilence followed the enumeration of David's heroes and their accomplishments, suggesting that David wanted to number the people because of pride. Gad was sent to announce the punishment of the sin after David spent a night in confession and prayer. The census showed a population of about a million and a half fighting men, exclusive of Levi and Benjamin (1 Chronicles 21:5), which would mean a total population of about 6 to 8 million.
- David built an altar on the threshing floor of Araunah, and later Solomon built the temple there (2 Chronicles 3:1). Although Araunah wanted to give everything for the purpose of sacrifice, David refused. As if to publicly ratify what had taken place, fire from heaven fell upon the altar and consumed the sacrifices (1 Chronicles 21:26).

### ***1 Kings 1:1-2:46; 1 Chronicles 23:1; 28:1-29:30***

- First Chronicles closes with the public charge to Solomon concerning the preparations for and the building of the temple. First Kings takes up the thread of prophetic history. The birth of Solomon had been the beginning of the fulfillment of the glorious promise which gave spiritual meaning to the royal lineage of Israel.
- The first event recorded in 1 Kings is the formal coronation of Solomon as the God-appointed successor of David. Though not in line for the succession, Solomon was chosen by David, and approved to be David's successor (2 Samuel 7:12; 12:25; 1 Kings 1:30; 8:20; 1 Chronicles 22:9-10; 28:5-7). Adonijah, David's fourth son was apparently the heir expectant to the throne (1 Kings 2:15, 22; 2 Samuel 3:3-4), for the

three oldest sons (Amnon, Absalom, and probably Chiliab) were dead. Like Amnon and Absalom, he had been indulged all his life by David.

- While David was on his deathbed, and before Solomon was formally anointed king, Adonijah plotted to seize the throne. The prospect of gaining the crown was worth making an effort, and the quicker the better. But the plot was thwarted by Nathan the prophet. Solomon was generous in his treatment of Adonijah. But Adonijah persisted in his effort to steal the throne, and it was not long until he also was executed.
- David was 70 years old, but the consequences of his difficult life had left him confined to his room. The rebellion of Absalom failed because David was in the prime of his life at the time, and was well supported by Abiathar the priest and Joab the captain of the host. But Adonijah had gotten both of these men to come over to his side. For some time leading up to his attempt he had gotten the people to consider him as their future king by assuming a royal position (1 Kings 1:5).
- Nathan went to Bathsheba, and urged her to take immediate reaction. If Adonijah were proclaimed king, Solomon, Bathsheba, and all their adherents would immediately be put to death. With whatever weakness David may have been blamed, he always rose to the requirements of the situation when necessary. He directed that Solomon be immediately crowned as king over Judah and Israel with the sacred oil by the joint ministry of Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet. The crowd in Jerusalem was jubilant, and Adonijah and Joab heard the noise. The conspirators fled, and Adonijah and Joab ran to take hold of the horns of the altar. Solomon promised to spare Adonijah's life on the condition that he not rebel against him.
- David informed Solomon that his life's work would be to build the house of God. David had already prepared all the plans for the temple, and he dedicated all the vast sums of treasure which he had accumulated during his reign to this great purpose. When the assembled group joyfully promised their substance, David seemed to feel that the work of his life was over, and that God would now let "His servant depart in peace." Scripture tenderly records the final charge David gave to his son, which at this time he could not have been more than 20 years old.
- Many dangers lay ahead of Solomon: an unscrupulous military party headed by Joab, a dissatisfied priestly faction ready to plot and join any rebellious movement, and tribal jealousies which were ready to erupt at any moment.

### **1 Kings 3:1-4:34; 2 Chronicles 1:1-17**

- A chronological arrangement was not intended, since the list of Solomon's officers, given in 1 Kings 4, contains the names of at least

two of the king's sons-in-law, whose appointment must date from a period much later than the beginning of his reign.

- The first event of national interest that occurred was the marriage of Solomon to the daughter of Pharaoh. This took place in the first years of his reign, although some time after the building of the temple. According to Jewish tradition, the daughter of Pharaoh actually became a Jewish proselyte. As we contrast the relations in the past and in the time of Solomon, we realize how marvelously God had fulfilled His promises to His people. The time of the judges had been one of struggle and disorganization; the time of David one of war and conflicts. But with Solomon a true period of peace had begun.
- God told Solomon to ask whatever he wanted at Gibeon, about six miles northwest of Jerusalem, where at the time the tabernacle and the bronze altar were located (1 Chronicles 21:29). This request searched the deepest feelings of his heart. When God granted him wisdom, he also added to it the promise of longevity and prosperity, but only on the condition of continued observances of God's commandments and statutes. He demonstrated his great God-given wisdom in many ways, but none more well-known than his decision with the child and two mothers.
- The land was divided, not according to the geographical boundaries of the tribes, but according to population and resources, into twelve provinces, over each of which a governor was appointed. No direct taxes were levied, and this system worked as long as the country was prosperous. However, it could easily become an instrument of oppression and a source of discontent (cf. 1 Kings 12:4).
- Solomon had inherited the throne of the most powerful kingdom then in existence. It was an era of peace and prosperity. Solomon had vast business enterprises and was famous for his literary attainments. He wrote 3,000 proverbs, more than 1,000 songs, and scientific works on botany and zoology.

***1 Kings 5:1-7:51; 8:6-9; 2 Chronicles 2:1-5:10***

- Building the temple was the focus of Solomon's grand reign. As a nation, Israel was never intended to attain preeminence in the fields of art and science. The guardianship of spiritual truth was primarily entrusted to Israel, which would finally develop and become the common property of the whole world. The Jews and the Gentiles came together in the building of the temple, prefiguring the great union that they would share in the "spiritual house" of "lively stones."
- The temple was started in the fourth year of Solomon's reign, which was the 480th year after the children of Israel came out of Egyptian captivity. This would make the year 966 B.C. While the temple was

being built, there was no sound of axe, hammer, or chisel on Mt. Moriah. An undertaking of such magnitude would require a very large number of workers. There were 160,000 workers in all, of which 30,000 were Israelites. The total number employed might seem large, but it was not excessive when one considers that it took 360,000 workers 20 years to build one pyramid.

- Hiram was a friend and ally of David who helped Solomon enormously in the construction of the temple. He had already furnished a large portion of the materials, and the Phoenicians -- especially the Sidonians -- were world-renowned for their extraordinary mechanical skill.
- The temple was finished in seven years. It was roughly twice the proportions of the tabernacle and was built of great stones, cedar beams and boards, overlaid on the inside with gold (1 Kings 6:14-22; 7:9-12). The gold and silver and other materials used in building the temple weighed about 370 tons, making it, without doubt, the most costly and glorious building on earth at the time (1 Chronicles 22:14-16; 29:2-9). The pomp and grandeur of the temple may have served a purpose, but its gold became an object of greed to other kings.