

Survey of the Bible part 11

As we begin the second book of Samuel we see that David has been off defeating the Amalekites who had invaded his camp and taken into captivity the women and children. Saul has been killed in battle along with his sons.

And now we pick up with David hearing about the news of Saul's death and the messenger who brought that news. The messenger was an Amalekite who had seen the battle and how Saul had fallen on his spear to commit suicide so as not to be captured alive by the Philistines.

But evidently, Saul still had life in him when this Amalekite found him and Saul pleaded with him to kill him because of his suffering. He then proceeded to kill Saul.

2 Samuel 1:13-18 ¹³ David said to the young man who told him, "Where are you from?" And he answered, "I am the son of an alien, an Amalekite." ¹⁴ Then David said to him, "How is it you were not afraid to stretch out your hand to destroy the LORD'S anointed?" ¹⁵ And David called one of the young men and said, "Go, cut him down." So he struck him and he died. ¹⁶ David said to him, "Your blood is on your head, for your mouth has testified against you, saying, 'I have killed the LORD'S anointed.'" ¹⁷ Then David chanted with this lament over Saul and Jonathan his son, ¹⁸ and he told *them* to teach the sons of Judah *the song of* the bow; behold, it is written in the book of Jashar.

It's interesting that all throughout David's life as he served Saul, and even when he fled from Saul fearing for his life, that David still respected the position that God had placed Saul in, despite the fact that David knew that God had chosen him to replace Saul as King.

On at least two occasions David had the opportunity to kill Saul and yet he chose not to.

Does anyone know why?

Because he acknowledged that Saul was God's anointed. And this is precisely why David takes the life of this young Amalekite, who admitted killing Saul. And this, despite the fact that David knew that Saul could not have survived his fatal wound by falling on his spear.

After lamenting the death of Saul and Jonathan David inquired of the Lord because he knew that his time had come to be king over the house of Judah. And he was anointed king over Judah while Saul's son, Ish-bosheth, became king over Israel.

And so, we have the beginnings of the first division of the nation where two kings rule two peoples of the Jews.

2 Samuel 2:8-10 ⁸ But Abner the son of Ner, commander of Saul's army, had taken Ish-bosheth the son of Saul and brought him over to Mahanaim. ⁹ He made him king over Gilead, over the Ashurites, over Jezreel, over Ephraim, and over Benjamin, even over all Israel. ¹⁰ Ish-bosheth, Saul's son, was forty years old when he became king over Israel, and he was king for two years. The house of Judah, however, followed David.

2 Samuel 2:12-17 ¹² Now Abner the son of Ner, went out from Mahanaim to Gibeon with the servants of Ish-bosheth the son of Saul. ¹³ And Joab the son of Zeruiah and the servants of David went out and met them by the pool of Gibeon; and they sat down, one on the one side of the pool and the other on the other side of the pool. ¹⁴ Then Abner said to Joab, "Now let the young men arise and hold a contest before us." And Joab said, "Let them arise." ¹⁵ So they arose and went over by count, twelve for Benjamin and Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, and twelve of the servants of David. ¹⁶ Each one of them seized his opponent by the head and *thrust* his sword in his opponent's side; so they fell down together. Therefore that place was called Helkath-hazzurim, which is in Gibeon. ¹⁷ That day the battle was very severe, and Abner and the men of Israel were beaten before the servants of David.

2 Samuel 3:1 ^{NAU} Now there was a long war between the house of Saul and the house of David; and David grew steadily stronger, but the house of Saul grew weaker continually.

And so, war characterized the nation of Israel for a number of years until a covenant was made between the warring factions and David was finally made king over all of Israel.

2 Samuel 5:1-4 ^{NAU} Then all the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and said, "Behold, we are your bone and your flesh." ² "Previously, when Saul was king over us, you were the one who led Israel out and in. And the LORD said to you, 'You will shepherd My people Israel, and you will be a ruler over Israel.'" ³ So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, and King David made a covenant with them before the LORD at Hebron;

then they anointed David king over Israel. ⁴ David was thirty years old when he became king, *and* he reigned forty years.

David was now king but there was no central city where the kingdom of Israel would be ruled and so we have one more battle to determine where God will set up His kingdom city.

2 Samuel 5:6-9 ⁶ Now the king and his men went to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, and they said to David, "You shall not come in here, but the blind and lame will turn you away"; thinking, "David cannot enter here." ⁷ Nevertheless, David captured the stronghold of Zion, that is the city of David. ⁸ David said on that day, "Whoever would strike the Jebusites, let him reach the lame and the blind, who are hated by David's soul, through the water tunnel." Therefore they say, "The blind or the lame shall not come into the house." ⁹ So David lived in the stronghold and called it the city of David. And David built all around from the Millo and inward.

And so, now there is a united kingdom where the capital city is Jerusalem.

Over the next few chapters we see the exploits of David and the wars that he was engaged in. And in those days wars were fought when the weather was good. And so, traditionally most wars were not fought in the winter. They usually started during the springtime.

2 Samuel 11:1-11 ^{NAU} Then it happened in the spring, at the time when kings go out *to battle*, that David sent Joab and his servants with him and all Israel, and they destroyed the sons of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. But David stayed at Jerusalem. ² Now when evening came David arose from his bed and walked around on the roof of the king's house, and from the roof he saw a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful in appearance. ³ So David sent and inquired about the woman. And one said, "Is this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?" ⁴ David sent messengers and took her, and when she came to him, he lay with her; and when she had purified herself from her uncleanness, she returned to her house. ⁵ The woman conceived; and she sent and told David, and said, "I am pregnant." ⁶ Then David sent to Joab, *saying*, "Send me Uriah the Hittite." So Joab sent Uriah to David. ⁷ When Uriah came to him, David asked concerning the welfare of Joab and the people and the state of the war. ⁸ Then David said to Uriah, "Go down to your house, and wash your feet." And Uriah went out of the king's house, and a

present from the king was sent out after him. ⁹ But Uriah slept at the door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and did not go down to his house. ¹⁰ Now when they told David, saying, "Uriah did not go down to his house," David said to Uriah, "Have you not come from a journey? Why did you not go down to your house?" ¹¹ Uriah said to David, "The ark and Israel and Judah are staying in temporary shelters, and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are camping in the open field. Shall I then go to my house to eat and to drink and to lie with my wife? By your life and the life of your soul, I will not do this thing."

So, what was David trying to do here by encouraging Uriah to spend time with his wife?

He was trying to cover up his own sin by making it look like Uriah got his wife pregnant. But it didn't work because of Uriah's faithfulness to David.

And so, he plots the death of Uriah by sending him to the front of the next battle, knowing that he would be killed in that battle.

And so, as far as David is concerned, his sin has been covered and he can take Bathsheba as his wife and no one knows what he has done, right?

2 Samuel 12:1-13 ^{NAU} Then the LORD sent Nathan to David. And he came to him and said, "There were two men in one city, the one rich and the other poor. ² "The rich man had a great many flocks and herds. ³ "But the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb Which he bought and nourished; And it grew up together with him and his children. It would eat of his bread and drink of his cup and lie in his bosom, And was like a daughter to him. ⁴ "Now a traveler came to the rich man, And he was unwilling to take from his own flock or his own herd, To prepare for the wayfarer who had come to him; Rather he took the poor man's ewe lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him." ⁵ Then David's anger burned greatly against the man, and he said to Nathan, "As the LORD lives, surely the man who has done this deserves to die. ⁶ "He must make restitution for the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing and had no compassion." ⁷ Nathan then said to David, "You are the man! Thus says the LORD God of Israel, 'It is I who anointed you king over Israel and it is I who delivered you from the hand of Saul. ⁸ 'I also gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your care, and I gave you the house of Israel and Judah; and if *that had been* too little, I would have added to you many more things like these! ⁹ 'Why

have you despised the word of the LORD by doing evil in His sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword, have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the sons of Ammon. ¹⁰ 'Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.' ¹¹ "Thus says the LORD, 'Behold, I will raise up evil against you from your own household; I will even take your wives before your eyes and give *them* to your companion, and he will lie with your wives in broad daylight. ¹² 'Indeed you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, and under the sun.'" ¹³ Then David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." And Nathan said to David, "The LORD also has taken away your sin; you shall not die.

In verse 13 we see that even the sin of adultery, the sin of lust, the sin of murder is forgiven by God and David's life is spared, but does his sin not have any consequences?

The consequences of his sin will follow him the rest of his life and it will not only affect him but his entire household starting with his child to Bathsheba.

2 Samuel 12:14-23 ¹⁴ "However, because by this deed you have given occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born to you shall surely die." ¹⁵ So Nathan went to his house. Then the LORD struck the child that Uriah's widow bore to David, so that he was *very* sick. ¹⁶ David therefore inquired of God for the child; and David fasted and went and lay all night on the ground. ¹⁷ The elders of his household stood beside him in order to raise him up from the ground, but he was unwilling and would not eat food with them. ¹⁸ Then it happened on the seventh day that the child died. And the servants of David were afraid to tell him that the child was dead, for they said, "Behold, while the child was *still* alive, we spoke to him and he did not listen to our voice. How then can we tell him that the child is dead, since he might do *himself* harm!" ¹⁹ But when David saw that his servants were whispering together, David perceived that the child was dead; so David said to his servants, "Is the child dead?" And they said, "He is dead." ²⁰ So David arose from the ground, washed, anointed *himself*, and changed his clothes; and he came into the house of the LORD and worshiped. Then he came to his own house, and when he requested, they set food before him and he ate. ²¹ Then his servants said to him, "What is this thing that you have done? While the child was alive, you fasted and wept; but when the child died, you arose and ate food." ²² He said,

"While the child was *still* alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, 'Who knows, the LORD may be gracious to me, that the child may live.'
²³ "But now he has died; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I will go to him, but he will not return to me."

The question has got to be asked why should a new born have to suffer the consequences of David's sin?

Is there anything that doesn't belong to God, including human beings?

Numbers 3:13 ¹³ "For all the firstborn are Mine; on the day that I struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, I sanctified to Myself all the firstborn in Israel, from man to beast. They shall be Mine; I am the LORD."

Isaiah 43:1 ^{NAU} But now, thus says the LORD, your Creator, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel, "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are Mine!

Ezekiel 18:4 ⁴ "Behold, all souls are Mine; the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is Mine. The soul who sins will die.

Psalms 50:10-12 ¹⁰ "For every beast of the forest is Mine, The cattle on a thousand hills. ¹¹ "I know every bird of the mountains, And everything that moves in the field is Mine. ¹² "If I were hungry I would not tell you, For the world is Mine, and all it contains.

^{NAU} **Psalms 24:1** A Psalm of David. The earth is the LORD'S, and all it contains, The world, and those who dwell in it.

Since God is creator everything belongs to Him, and since He is the potter He can form anything and anyone for His good pleasure to bring honor to Himself.

So, how does taking the life of David's infant son bring honor and glory to God?

It demonstrates His power, His authority, His Creatorship, His mercy and kindness.

How does taking the life of this infant show God's mercy and kindness?

By bringing that child into His own presence. David acknowledges that when the child died that the child would go to be with the Lord.

2 Samuel 12:22-23 ²² He said, "While the child was *still* alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, 'Who knows, the LORD may be gracious to me, that the child may live.' ²³ "But now he has died; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I will go to him, but he will not return to me."

Some suggest that what David meant here was that David would someday join his child in death to be buried in the ground, and that concept is certainly viable, but David understood what life in the Creator was all about. He understood righteousness which allows a human being to one day stand before God's presence forever.

Psalms 11:4-7 ⁴ The LORD is in His holy temple; the LORD'S throne is in heaven; His eyes behold, His eyelids test the sons of men. ⁵ The LORD tests the righteous and the wicked, And the one who loves violence His soul hates. ⁶ Upon the wicked He will rain snares; Fire and brimstone and burning wind will be the portion of their cup. ⁷ For the LORD is righteous, He loves righteousness; The upright will behold His face.

To be face to face with the Creator is to be alive in His presence forever more. The grave was not David's longing. The grave was not the end for him or for his child. To join his child in the grave was not a comfort for David. Life in God's presence was.

Psalms 115:15-18 ¹⁵ May you be blessed of the LORD, Maker of heaven and earth. ¹⁶ The heavens are the heavens of the LORD, But the earth He has given to the sons of men. ¹⁷ The dead do not praise the LORD, Nor *do* any who go down into silence; ¹⁸ But as for us, we will bless the LORD From this time forth and forever. Praise the LORD!

It was David's desire to praise the Lord forever. He knew that the dead do not praise the Lord. And the context in which that verse is written strongly suggests that the dead are those whose physical bodies are not in a position to physically praise God.

But what are we told about those who are absent from the body, which is to say dead in the ground?

2 Corinthians 5:6-8 ⁶ Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent

from the Lord-- ⁷ for we walk by faith, not by sight-- ⁸ we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord.

But David along with Paul also knew that the physical body is where human beings are at home, because that is how God created human beings. And so, for David, he knew that his son was with the Lord even though his physical body was in the ground. He could rest from his mourning, not because his son was dead and buried, but because his son was with the Lord and he would join him one day in the presence of God.

Shortly after the death of David's son, who by the way we are not told his name, David's wife Bathsheba has another son.

Anyone remember his name?

Solomon.

Now keep in mind that David had a number of wives and concubines prior to this and he had sons and daughters. One son was named Absalom whom David loved dearly.

But because of an incident with one of Absalom's half-brothers, who violated one of his sisters by the name of Tamar, Absalom kills him and the sons of David. And because of this Absalom flees and goes into hiding. But after some time David receives him back again.

It would be years later but Absalom would usurp the throne of his father David by force.

2 Samuel 15:13-16 ¹³ Then a messenger came to David, saying, "The hearts of the men of Israel are with Absalom." ¹⁴ David said to all his servants who were with him at Jerusalem, "Arise and let us flee, for *otherwise* none of us will escape from Absalom. Go in haste, or he will overtake us quickly and bring down calamity on us and strike the city with the edge of the sword." ¹⁵ Then the king's servants said to the king, "Behold, your servants *are ready to do* whatever my lord the king chooses." ¹⁶ So the king went out and all his household with him. But the king left ten concubines to keep the house.

It was after this time that Absalom and David are fighting against each other with their respective armies. And as sin so often does, there is destruction in its path.

2 Samuel 18:9-15 ⁹ Now Absalom happened to meet the servants of David. For Absalom was riding on *his* mule, and the mule went under the thick branches of a great oak. And his head caught fast in the oak, so he was left hanging between heaven and earth, while the mule that was under him kept going. ¹⁰ When a certain man saw *it*, he told Joab and said, "Behold, I saw Absalom hanging in an oak." ¹¹ Then Joab said to the man who had told him, "Now behold, you saw *him*! Why then did you not strike him there to the ground? And I would have given you ten *pieces* of silver and a belt." ¹² The man said to Joab, "Even if I should receive a thousand *pieces of silver* in my hand, I would not put out my hand against the king's son; for in our hearing the king charged you and Abishai and Ittai, saying, 'Protect for me the young man Absalom!' ¹³ "Otherwise, if I had dealt treacherously against his life (and there is nothing hidden from the king), then you yourself would have stood aloof." ¹⁴ Then Joab said, "I will not waste time here with you." So he took three spears in his hand and thrust them through the heart of Absalom while he was yet alive in the midst of the oak. ¹⁵ And ten young men who carried Joab's armor gathered around and struck Absalom and killed him.

Despite the fact that Absalom had humiliated his father and took his throne by force David still loved his son and when he hears of his death this is how he responds.

2 Samuel 18:29-33 ²⁹ The king said, "Is it well with the young man Absalom?" And Ahimaaz answered, "When Joab sent the king's servant, and your servant, I saw a great tumult, but I did not know what *it was*." ³⁰ Then the king said, "Turn aside and stand here." So he turned aside and stood still. ³¹ Behold, the Cushite arrived, and the Cushite said, "Let my lord the king receive good news, for the LORD has freed you this day from the hand of all those who rose up against you." ³² Then the king said to the Cushite, "Is it well with the young man Absalom?" And the Cushite answered, "Let the enemies of my lord the king, and all who rise up against you for evil, be as that young man!" ³³ The king was deeply moved and went up to the chamber over the gate and wept. And thus he said as he walked, "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would I had died instead of you, O Absalom, my son, my son!"

David's sin continues to haunt him. We'll pick up here next week.