

2 Samuel

1. Opening the new era

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A. INTRODUCTION

1) King David remains among the brightest lights of the Bible except Jesus.

No question about it. King David remains among the brightest lights of the Bible except Jesus. So significant was he that God set aside an entire book of the Old Testament to cover his forty-year reign that contains His highest pinnacle of achievement down to his lowest valley of misery and defeat. Without sparing many details of either extreme, the Spirit of God records the things that made David great and the things that led to his agony of soul. The Book of 2 Samuel, tracing forty years of a colorful as well as a contrasting life, holds many lessons that we can learn from.

2) God picked out a young man who became so important

God picked out a young man named David who became so important that 62 chapters of the Bible mention some segment of his life. Furthermore, when the New Testament was written, he was referred to more than any other man or woman from the entire Old Testament. It's no wonder he was called "a man after God's own heart" two different times in 1 Samuel 13 and Acts 13.

3) David is in focus the entire book of 2 Samuel

David is in focus the entire book of 2 Samuel. This portion of Scripture portrays David's life during his highest delights to his lowest days. Stop and think of all the things connected with David's name: the City of David, the star of David, the lineage of David, the seed of David, the key of David, the house of David, the tower of David, the throne of David, the Offspring of David and the Root of David.

B. HISTORICAL SETTING

1) 1, 2, 3 and 4 Kings

You might find it interesting that when the Books of the Bible were originally put together, 1 and 2 Samuel and 1 and 2 Kings were first named "1, 2, 3 and 4 Kings" until the Septuagint which is the Greek version of the Hebrew Old Testament. These four books contain the history and story of the kings who led the Hebrew people in ancient times.

2) The Book of 1 Samuel records the stories of Samuel and Saul

The Book of 1 Samuel records the stories of Samuel and Saul. Woven into the account of Saul's life is the beginning of David's story. This young shepherd boy came on the scene as the anointed king-elect. However, David doesn't take the throne until we get to 2 Samuel. Remember, God had been preparing him for over 15 years. He had learned how to "take it" in the rugged, lonely hills of Judea as a young shepherd. Then, he had learned how to "king it" in the throne room of Saul. The death of Saul brought David out of hiding and paved the way for David's ascent to the throne.

3) God never employs useless afflictions

God never employs useless afflictions. He never wastes those training years. He never wastes a grief, a disappointment, a disillusionment, a sorrow or a series of pain. All of that is part of His training program. That was surely true for David. At last, after more than a decade and a half of training, David took the throne and began to reign. What a day that must have been!

C. A REPORT FROM THE BATTLE FIELD

2Sam. 1:1-10 Now it came to pass after the death of Saul, when David had returned from the slaughter of the Amalekites, and David had stayed two days in Ziklag, on the third day, behold, it happened that a man came from Saul's camp with his clothes torn and dust on his head. So it was, when he came to David, that he fell to the ground and prostrated himself. And David said to him, "Where have you come from?" So he said to him, "I have escaped from the camp of Israel." Then David said to him, "How did the matter go? Please tell me." And he answered, "The people have fled from the battle, many of the people are fallen and dead, and Saul and Jonathan his son are dead also." So David said to the young man who told him, "How do you know that Saul and Jonathan his son are dead?" Then the young man who told him said, "As I happened by chance to be on Mount Gilboa, there was Saul, leaning on his spear; and indeed the chariots and horsemen followed hard after him. Now when he looked behind him, he saw me and called to me. And I answered, 'Here I am.' And he said to me, 'Who are you?' So I answered him, 'I am an Amalekite.' He said to me again, 'Please stand over me and kill me, for anguish has come upon me, but my life still remains in me.' So I stood over him and killed him, because I was sure that he could not live after he had fallen. And I took the crown that was on his head and the bracelet that was on his arm, and have brought them here to my lord."

1) Saul was head and shoulder above the rest of the Israelites

King Saul and his three sons were killed in battle against the Philistines, dying on the slopes of Mount Gilboa in 1 Samuel 31:1-8. Saul had so much to offer. Physically, he was head and shoulder taller than the rest of the Israelites. He had charisma as their leader. He had anointing of God. He had God's prophet Samuel next to him to give him godly advices. Yet, he did what he want over what God's commands and forfeited himself out of the kingdom.

2) Living in Ziklag

Towards the end of 1 Samuel despairing David left the people of God and allied himself with the Philistines. God prevented a complete alliance, and brought David back through a rejection by the Philistine commanders. God had much mercy on David. If he stayed with the Philistine attack force, he and his troops would fight against their own people Israelites.

Strengthening himself in God, David defeated the Amalekites who had raided their camp and brought back everyone and everything. When David came back triumphantly to Ziklag, he knew that the Philistines and the Israelites just had a major battle. He must have been concerned as to the outcome of the battle.

3) The Amalekite's report of Saul's death is different

The Amalekite's report of Saul's death is different from the account in 1 Sam 31:4, which states that Saul died by falling on his sword. It seems that his story was fabricated for a reward from David. But if his story was true, he thought that would be justification of killing the king of Israel.

He was expecting that David would be pleased to see his enemy's crown and arm bracelet. Instead of a set of wonderful presents, a sharp edged sword fell on his neck. David finished what Saul didn't by killing this Amalekite.

D. DAVID'S GRIEF FOR THE FALLEN

2Sam. 1:11-16 Therefore David took hold of his own clothes and tore them, and so did all the men who were with him. And they mourned and wept and fasted until evening for Saul and for Jonathan his son, for the people of the LORD and for the house of Israel, because they had fallen by the sword. Then 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." So David said to him, "How was it you were not afraid to put forth your hand to destroy the LORD'S anointed?" Then David called one of the young men and said, "Go near, and execute him!" And he struck him so that he died. So David said to him, "Your blood is on your own head, for your own mouth has testified against you, saying, 'I have killed the LORD'S anointed.'"

1) David's compassion for his former enemy

David and his men mourned not only for the fallen king and prince, but also for those who had died from the ranks of Saul's army. This is surprising, because it was the same army that had been on their tail to capture and kill them. David didn't see them as enemies, but as members of God's family. What a heart he had!

David was legally bound to execute the Amalekite for two reasons:

First, if his story was true, Saul was killed by him after the battle, not during the battle. Second, the execution was also wise politically. It showed that no one who killed a king of Israel could expect a reward.

2) There is danger in interfering with God's work.

David asked this young man how it was that he was not afraid to touch the Lord's anointed. David, as you remember, would not take Saul's life even though he had opportunity. No one else had better touch him either, because God is the one who put the crown on his head, and God should be the one to take it off when the time comes.

There is danger in interfering with God's work. Anyone who attempts to interfere with God's work, God's program and God's man, God moves in and judges. He has always done it.

3) Sin will find you out at the worst place and worst time

Here is an Amalekite from the battlefield of Israelites and Philistines. Isn't it ironical for an Amalekite to bring the death notice of king Saul to David? What is a big deal about that? If you remember what king Saul was supposed to do with the tribe of Amalekites, you would understand it. In 1 Samuel 15:3, king Saul was told by God through prophet Samuel to completely destroy including infants and animals. Instead of following the order faithfully, Saul took king Agag alive as a victory trophy and choice animals for his own possession. To make the matter worse, he lied to Samuel and pretended to be spiritual.

If we don't take care of our sins by confessing to our God each time, they will find us out at the worst place and worst time.

Num 32:23 But if you do not do so, then take note, you have sinned against the Lord; and be sure your sin will find you out.

3) If we do take the Amalekite's story as true, this is a chilling statement

If we do take the Amalekite's story as true, this is a chilling statement.

Though the Bible, Amalek is commonly regarded as an illustration of our fleshly, carnal nature:

- Like our fleshly nature, Amalekites focuses its attack on the tired and weak. - Deuteronomy 25:17-18
- Like our fleshly nature, Amalekites does not fear God. - Deuteronomy 25:17-18
- Like our fleshly nature, God commanded a permanent state of war against Amalekites . - Exodus 17:16
- Like our fleshly nature, the battle against Amalekites is only won in the context of prayer and seeking God. - Exodus 17:11
- Like our fleshly nature, God promises to one day completely blot out the remembrance of Amalekites . - Exodus 17:14
- Like our fleshly nature, Amalekites allies itself with other enemies in battle against God's people . - Judges 3:13

Using this picture, we see that Saul's failure to deal with Amalekites when God told Saul to ended in ruin, with an Amalekite delivering the death-blow. In the same way, when we fail to deal with the flesh as God prompts us to, we can expect that area of the flesh to come back and deliver some deadly strikes.

2Sam. 1:17-27 Then David lamented with this lamentation over Saul and over Jonathan his son, and he told them to teach the children of Judah the Song of the Bow; indeed it is written in the Book of Jasher: "The beauty of Israel is slain on your high places! How the mighty have fallen! Tell it not in Gath, Proclaim it not in the streets of Ashkelon— Lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, Lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph. "O mountains of Gilboa, Let there be no dew nor rain upon you, Nor fields of offerings. For the shield of the mighty is cast away there! The shield of Saul, not anointed with oil. From the blood of the slain, From the fat of the mighty, The bow of Jonathan did not turn back, And the sword of Saul did not return empty. "Saul and Jonathan were beloved and pleasant in their lives, And in their death they were not divided; They were swifter than eagles, They were stronger than lions. "O daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, Who clothed you in scarlet, with luxury; Who put ornaments of gold on your apparel. "How the mighty have fallen in the midst of the battle! Jonathan was slain in your high places. I am distressed for you, my brother Jonathan; You have been very pleasant to me; Your love to me was wonderful, Surpassing the love of women. "How the mighty have fallen, and the weapons of war perished!"

1) David's sorrow was sincere

David's sorrow was sincere, and it was deeply felt. He crafted a song to express the depth of his feeling.

The book of Jasher is also mentioned in Joshua 10:13 and it evidently contained a collection of early Hebrew poetry. We shouldn't think that this is a "missing" book of the Bible. Because our Bibles are complete and completely inspired.

2) David kept his heart free from bitterness

All this is a powerful testimony of how David kept his heart free from bitterness, even when he was greatly wronged and sinned against. David fulfilled 1 Corinthians 13:5: "love thinks no evil."

3) Jonathan was David's best friend and partner in serving God

Jonathan was David's best friend and partner in serving God. There is not the slightest hint that David and Jonathan expressed their love in homosexual way. They had a deep, godly love for each other - but not a sexual love. Our present world has a hard time believing that love can be deep and real without it having a sexual aspect.

In a magazine cartoon, a thief was wearing one of those "Lone Ranger" masks. His gun was pointed toward his frightened victim as he yelled, "Okay, put all your valuables into my sack!" The victim began stuffing all his friends into the sack.

Jay Kesler said once, "One of my goals in life is to wind up with eight men who are willing to carry one of my casket handles."

E. APPLICATIONS

1) If we don't take care of our sins by confessing to our God each time, they will find us out at the worst place and worst time.

2) No man is an island. We all need friends who come along side of us to strengthen us in our walk with Christ.

Proverbs 27:6 Faithful are the wounds of a friend, But the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.

Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 Two are better than one, Because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him who is alone when he falls, For he has no one to help him up.