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# 2 SAMUEL; 1 CHRONICLES 1-22

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Lesson 16, Old Testament, Adult Religion Class, Tuesday, 13 December 2011

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## OUTLINE: 2 SAMUEL 1-24

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- I. David King Over Judah (1:1 – 3:5)
  - a. Saul and Jonathan die (1:1-27)
  - b. David anointed by Judah (2:1-7)
  - c. Battles with the house of Saul (2:8 – 3:1)
  - d. David in Hebron (3:2-5)
- II. David King Over Israel (3:6 – 5:16)
  - a. Abner and Ishbosheth die (3:6 – 4:12)
  - b. David anointed by Israel (5:1-5)
  - c. Conquest of Jerusalem (5:6-16)
- III. David's Victories (5:17 – 9:13)
  - a. Over Philistines (5:17-25)
  - b. Spiritual (6:1 – 7:29)
  - c. Other victories (8:1-18)
  - d. Kindness to Mephibosheth (9:1-13)
- IV. David's Troubles (10:1 – 20:26)
  - a. Defeat of Ammonites (10:1-19)
  - b. Adultery and murder (11:1 – 12:31)
  - c. Family problems (13:1 – 14:33)
  - d. Rebellions (15:1 – 20:26)
- V. Epilogue (21:1 – 24:25)
  - a. Israel under judgment (21:1-14)
  - b. David's heroes (21:15-22)
  - c. David's song of praise (22:1-51)
  - d. David's final words (23:1-7)
  - e. Mighty men (23:8-39)
  - f. The Lord's judgment (24:1-25)

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## OUTLINE: 1 CHRONICLES 1-22

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- I. Genealogies (1:1 – 9:34)
- II. David's Ascent (9:35 – 12:40)
  - a. Saul (9:35 – 10:14)
  - b. David anointed (11:1-3)
  - c. Conquest of Jerusalem (11:4-9)
  - d. David's men (11:10 – 12:40)
- III. David as king (13:1 – 22:19)
  - a. Ark of the covenant (13:1 – 16:43)
  - b. Davidic covenant (17:1-27)
  - c. Military history (18:1 – 21:30)
  - d. Temple preparations (22:1-19)

Comparison of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles (from MacArthur, 481):

1. Genealogies	----	1 Chr 1-9
2. Samuel	1 Sam 1-8	----
3. Saul	1 Sam 9-31	1 Chr 10
4 David	2 Sam 1-24	1 Chr 11-29
5 Solomon	1 Kings 1-11	2 Chr 1-9
6 To Assyrian exile	1 Kings 12 – 2 Kings 17	2 Chr 10-27
7 To Babylonian exile and return	2 Kings 18-25	2 Chr 28-36

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## INTRODUCTION

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In this lesson, we cover the establishment of the kingdom of David, Saul's successor and the first king of Israel to unite the entire nation. We will follow the outline in 2 Samuel, using material from 1 Chronicles to supplement the other text.

2 Samuel is the second half of the book of Samuel, anciently a single scroll but separated into two books for convenience later. 1 Chronicles is another perspective recorded by different scribes. In Hebrew, Samuel is part of the Prophets, while

Chronicles is included in the Writings with Psalms and Proverbs.

The Student Manual has an excellent introductory essay on the life of David, which is quoted here in part:

“Was David a good man?” Ask this question among Old Testament scholars, and you will likely be immediately embroiled in a vigorous debate....

Do we emphasize the David who killed Goliath, or the David who killed Uriah? Should we view him

as the servant who refused to lift his hand against the Lord’s anointed, or as the Lord’s anointed who lifted his hand against a faithful and loyal servant? Was his life a tragedy, or a triumph? (Student Manual 1:287).

David’s life poses that challenge to us. He is the model king, the one who united Israel, the pattern for the Messiah. But his sins also caused him to fall from his exaltation (D&C 132:39). David’s life can thus be a learning experience for us all, through the pages of 2 Samuel and 1 Chronicles.

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## DAVID KING OVER JUDAH (1:1 – 3:5)

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### INTRODUCTION

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Saul’s death gave David the opportunity to assert himself as the king he had been anointed by Samuel to be. But it wasn’t as easy as just stepping into the role—various tribes were not ready to support him, and Saul’s “house” continued to battle with him for several years. David was first anointed king just over his own tribe of Judah and affiliated southern tribes, while Saul’s family under his son Ish-bosheth, rallied more northern and eastern groups to their side. The resulting civil war was painful but typical of succession in kingdoms of that time. The text is careful to let us see David being graceful in persecution, magnanimous in victory, and firm when facing opposition.

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### SAUL AND JONATHAN DIE (1:1-27)

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At the end of 1 Samuel, the Philistines had gone to battle with Saul and the army of Israel. David had tried to accompany them but had been sent back because the Philistines didn’t trust him (surely a correct analysis of what he would have done in that battle). So while David waited back in his temporary home in Ziklag, a messenger came from the battle, sharing the news that Israel had been routed and that Saul and Jonathan had been killed. The messenger knew enough details of Saul’s demise to tell the story and was close enough to the action to get Saul’s crown and bracelet to affirm his story, but it disagrees with the account in 1 Samuel 31:3-5. The messenger was probably lying, taking credit for

killing Saul himself in the belief that David would reward him. Instead, David had one of his soldiers kill the messenger because he (by his own account) killed “the Lord’s anointed” (1:14). Even as Saul, the man trying to kill him, was dead, David showed his loyalty to the position of anointed king.

Following this account, David lamented Saul’s and Jonathan’s deaths in a psalm (1:19-27) that demonstrates why he had a reputation as a poet and musician.

#### **\* Read: 1:19-27 (David’s psalm of requim)**

1:18 **the book of Jasher**. A lost book of the Bible (see BD, “Lost Books”). The word “Jasher” has the meaning of ‘correct’ or ‘pleasing,’ leading some to believe that it is a book of songs extoling the virtues of righteous behavior, which fits the song of Saul and Jonathan.

1:19 **how are the mighty fallen!** Using this lamenting phrase three times (1:19, 25, 27) emphasizes David’s sadness and the contrasts between Saul’s and Jonathan’s courage and their tragic demise.

1:26 **thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women**. Some modern scholars have used this and other expressions of David’s love for Jonathan as an indication of a homosexual relationship between the two men, but that is not a reflection of the intent of the text. David’s expression means that the emotional bond and closeness he felt

with Jonathan was greater than David had experienced with his three wives, which is perhaps less of a surprise in his day and position, where marriages were political arrangements more than love affairs.

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**DAVID ANOINTED BY JUDAH (2:1-7)**

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Inquiring of the Lord what he should do next, David was told to go to Hebron, so he went there with his two wives and his men. There he was anointed king by representatives of his own tribe, Judah. He also heard the story of how the men of Jabesh-gilead had retrieved Saul's and Jonathan's bodies and buried them honorably. David sent messengers praising those men and inviting them to join him as the new king.

**\* Read: 2:18-23 (death of Asahel)**

**2:1 David enquired of the Lord.** The phrasing of the passage and the format of the questions and answers suggests the high priest using the Urim and Thummim.

**2:1 Hebron.** The principal city of Judah, David's tribe, at this time.

**2:4 there they anointed David king.** It's not stated who anointed him. Since Samuel had already anointed him as a youth, this was perhaps a symbolic gesture by tribal leaders to formally accept him after Saul's death.

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**BATTLES WITH THE HOUSE OF SAUL (2:8 – 3:1)**

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Not everyone agreed that David should be king. Abner ('my father is a lamp'), who had been Saul's captain (and had been embarrassed by David in 1 Samuel 26:13-16), promoted Saul's son, Ishbosheth ('man of shame'). Perhaps Ishbosheth received that name because though of age, he had not gone to war with Saul, his father, and his other brothers, who all died at the hands of the Philistines.

In one of the early battles, Abner killed Joab's younger brother, Asahel—the text expressing his regret in doing so and his attempts to convince Asahel not to fight him. Joab pursued him out of revenge, but Abner asked Joab what continued

vengeance would do, saying it could only end in "bitterness" (2:26). Joab let Abner go—for now. This desire on Joab's part for revenge for his brother's life plagued him for some time.

**2:8 Mahanaim.** Abner and Ishbosheth came to Mahanaim, a Levitical town in the territory of Gad where anciently Jacob had divided his family before encountering Esau (see Genesis 32:2). Mahanaim means 'two hosts,' which was appropriate for Jacob but also for this day as well, because Abner and Ishbosheth were creating a division in Israel, claiming kingship over part of the land while David claimed it for the other part.

**2:15 went over by the number twelve.** Each side initially chose twelve champions in a representative battle. But the twenty-four all killed each other, "so they fell down together" (2:16), resulting in a draw and thus a fierce battle between the two armies.

**3:1 there was long war.** Sometimes we have the image of orderly and quick succession but after Saul's death, it took many years for David to consolidate power and gain the full support of all the tribes.

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**DAVID IN HEBRON (3:2-5)**

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The text already mentioned that David was in Hebron for seven and a half years (2:11). During that time he took four other wives (he was already married to Ahinoam and Abigail). Each of his six wives bore him a son mentioned in the text, many of whom figure prominently in later incidents in David's life and other activities after his death.

<b>Wife</b>	<b>Son</b>
Ahinoam ('my brother is delight')	Amnon ('faithful')
Abigail ('my father is joy')	Chileab ('like his father') called Daniel ('God is my judge') in 1 Chr 3:1
Maacah ('oppression')	Absalom ('my father is peace')
Haggith ('festive')	Adonijah ('my lord is YHWH')
Abital ('my father is dew')	Shephatiah ('YHWH has judged')

Eglah (‘heifer’)	Ithream (‘profit of the people’)
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Other sons and daughters were born, based on subsequent information; this list provides the firstborn from each of his six wives, in birth order—

the ones that would be in positions later to succeed their father.

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## DAVID KING OVER ISRAEL (3:6 – 5:16)

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### INTRODUCTION

After many years of tension and even battles, Saul’s son, Ishbosheth, was killed, opening the door for David to unite all the tribes under his leadership. He was anointed king over all Israel, and made several moves to consolidate and secure his authority, including getting his first wife back, Michal the daughter of Saul, and taking the city of the Jebusites to serve as his new capital—the city of David, Jerusalem (which means ‘possession of peace’ or ‘foundation of peace’).

Jonathan’s deaths, was mentioned here (4:4) but does not play a part in the story until later.

Two captains in Saul’s and thus Ishbosheth’s army determined to gain favor with David by killing Ishbosheth and bringing his head to David. Instead, David had them killed for their crime as he had done with the messenger of Saul’s death. He hung their bodies up as a humiliation to them and a clear indication that he was innocent of all wrongdoing toward Ishbosheth.

### ABNER AND ISHBOSHETH DIE (3:6 – 4:12)

About two years passed when Abner realized that the leadership of Ishbosheth was lacking, so he “made himself strong for the house of Saul” (3:6). Ishbosheth saw this and accused Abner of taking Saul’s concubine to wife—equivalent to declaring himself king. Abner’s reply of indignation probably demonstrates his innocence, but the accusation was the last straw in the relationship. Abner first sent word then went to David to propose an alliance that would unite all Israel under David. He began by persuading the tribe of Benjamin—Saul’s and Ishbosheth’s tribe, as well as his own—to follow David. Then he promised David in person to bring “all Israel” (3:21) to David. But before he could keep his promise, he was killed by Joab, seeking revenge for Abner’s killing of his brother Asahel (see 2:18-23). David greatly mourned Abner who had mostly been his enemy but in the end was an ally.

**\* Read 3:12-16 (Abner’s support/Michal’s return)**

**\* Read 4:9-12 (Men killed who slew Ishbosheth)**

3:8 ***Am I a dog’s head, which against Judah.*** Better translated: “Am I a dog’s head that belongs to Judah?” (NASB). To be called a dog was a great insult.

3:13 ***Michal Saul’s daughter.*** David had already been married to Michal but Saul had given her to another man to wife after David went into hiding. According to ancient law, David had the right to ask for her back. To have Michal as a wife again would tie David to Saul’s family and help cement his hold on the throne. But she seems to have had a happy marriage to Phaltiel—he weeps loudly at her departure (3:16). Michal’s emotions, however, are not mentioned, nor David’s; their former loving relationship had become a purely political alliance.

Jonathan’s son Mephibosheth (‘from my mouth is shame,’ though he is called Meribbaal in 1 Chronicles 8:34, meaning ‘ba’al [or lord] is my advocate’), who had been seriously injured and paralyzed at five years of age when his nurse dropped him while fleeing from the Philistines after Saul’s and

3:21 ***he went in peace.*** Three times we are explicitly told that Abner left David in peace (3:21-23), demonstrating that David had nothing to do with Abner’s death at Joab’s hand. David’s sincere mourning at Abner’s burial also convinced people that he was innocent of any wrongdoing in this incident.

3:31 **David said to Joab.** Though he had killed Abner, Joab was forced by David to mourn the dead, tearing his clothing and putting on a course goat-hair garment (sackcloth).

4:5 **lay on a bed at noon.** This could be a symbol of his laziness or just him avoiding the heat of the day.

4:8 **brought the head of Ishbosheth unto David.** These two men apparently had not heard what happened to the messenger who brought the news of Saul's death to David. They brought the head because that was the proof of Ishbosheth's death, but their grisly package proved their undoing as David did not tolerate the murder of Saul's family, even if they were his enemies.

4:12 **slew them, and cut off their hands and their feet, and hanged them up.** Not only were the men killed for their crime but their extremities were cut off and their bodies hung in a public place (by the pool where everyone would come for water) as a symbol of the greatest humiliation. David wanted no mistake that he did not condone this murder.

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#### DAVID ANOINTED BY ISRAEL (5:1-5)

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With the death of the last of the sons of Saul, the record states that "all the tribes of Israel" (5:1) came to David to declare their allegiance to him and anoint him king over Israel. It says that David was 30 years old at this time and that his total reign was 40 years, 7-1/2 years in Hebron and 33 years in Jerusalem (which transitions us to the next account).

#### **\* Read 5:1-4 (David made king)**

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#### CONQUEST OF JERUSALEM (5:6-16)

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After a period of time in Hebron, David appears to have determined that a capital in a neutral land would be advantageous to uniting all the tribes under his rule. Jebus, the city of the Jebusites, fit the bill. In the middle of the territory of Judah but never conquered by Israel, it was a small (10-15 acres) city on a well-fortified hill. When David approached with his army, the Jebus mocked him, basically saying that "the blind and the lame" (5:6) could fend off his attack (an alternative interpretation is that they were saying David and his army would become blind

and lame if they attacked). So David issued a challenge for someone to figure out how to break into the city, promising command of the armies to that person. Joab did so, leading the way for the conquest of the city, and was rewarded accordingly.

With the conquest, the city was renamed to "the city of David" (5:9). It was also called Zion according to 1 Chronicles 11:5, which probably has the meaning of 'defense' or 'fortress' but could harken back to the previous inhabitants' practices under Melchizedek, who followed the covenant of Enoch's Zion.



FIGURE 1: FROM [HTTP://WWW.GENERATIONWORD.COM/JERUSALEM101/19-CITY-OF-DAVID.HTML](http://www.generationword.com/jerusalem101/19-city-of-david.html)

The city of David was not the Jerusalem of today but rather a small area on the ridge south of today's temple mount. At the northern end of this ridge, just below where the temple was later built, Hiram king of Tyre built a palace for David. Meanwhile, David married yet more wives and concubines and had more children, though the list in 5:14-16 include sons born much later (after the story of Bathsheba in chapters 10-12).

#### **\* Read 5:8-9 (Conquest of Jebus)**

5:8 **Whosoever getteth up the gutter.** The Hebrew word there is *šinnôr*, of uncertain meaning but usually translated 'water channel' or something similar. This is typically identified with an ancient shaft going up from the Gihon spring into the city, today called Warren's Shaft after the archaeologist who first discovered it. Some have argued that Warren's Shaft is too hard to climb but several have

proved that it is quite possible, though certainly difficult. This is probably the “gutter” that Joab climbed with great determination—he was motivated by the prize of becoming the leader of the armies and probably by his own desire to get back in David’s good graces after the revenge-murder of Abner.

5:11 **they built David an house.** Recent archaeological investigations have discovered what is probably David’s ancient palace right where it should be—at the north end of the ancient Jebusite city. See <http://www.bib-arch.org/e-features/king-davids-palace.asp>.

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## DAVID’S VICTORIES (5:17 – 9:13)

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### INTRODUCTION

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It had been told to Abraham that the kingdom of his descendants would one day include land from Egypt to the Euphrates. David’s conquest of the lands around his mountain kingdom of Israel was the closest they ever came to fulfilling that promise. In the midst of these conquests, he also took efforts to build a new Tabernacle for the Ark of the Covenant and brought it to Jerusalem. David angered Saul’s daughter and his wife, Michal, but his kindness to Saul’s grandson and Jonathan’s son showed his good heart. This was a period when David loved the Lord and strove to honor him and keep his commandments.

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### OVER PHILISTINES (5:17-25)

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Saul was not able to defeat the Philistines—in fact, they killed him trying. But David was successful, subjugating them as described in summary fashion in these verses. Seeking counsel from the Lord (from the Urim and Thummim), he boldly attacked and then waited for the right time to attack. In each case, he was successful, putting down Israel’s long-time enemy.

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### SPIRITUAL (6:1 – 7:29)

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With Jerusalem established and his palace built, David determined to bring the Ark of the Covenant and probably other remaining temple items to his new capital. Though one of the transporters, Uzzah, inappropriately steadied the ark and lost his life, the journey finally concluded by placing the ark in the new Tabernacle David had caused to be built. His first wife, Michal, mocked him for celebrating like a peasant, but David taught her that it was all about thanking the Lord.

David determined to build a temple for the ark, reasoning that he should not live in a nice palace while the ark was in a tent. But Nathan the prophet instructed him that it was not the Lord’s will that he should build such a temple, but one of his sons. More importantly, Nathan prophesied of an eternal King who would come from David’s line. David’s humble response was to praise the Lord in a lengthy and beautiful psalm (7:18-29).

### **\* Read 6:2-15 (bringing the Ark to Jerusalem)**

6:2 **set the ark of God upon a new cart.** The first mistake was in the method of transportation, though the mistake might be attributed to the last time the ark was transported (see 1 Samuel 6). Numbers 4 explains clearly how the ark was to be carried—covered in the fabric of the Tabernacle itself, carried on staves, with no one touching it.

6:3-4 **brought it out.** A phrase is repeated in verses 3 and 4. This is called dittography, a type of scribal error resulting from copying the same phrase twice. The error has been dutifully preserved over many years and copies.

6:6 **took hold of it.** Uzzah’s action is the original of the proverbial phrase ‘steading the ark,’ meaning to do something that you should not do. The text doesn’t say how Uzzah died, just that it was attributed to the Lord. It could be that the ark fell on him or the cart crushed him or something similar.

6:13 **gone six paces.** Just to be safe, they only walked six steps, then stopped and offered multiple sacrifices. It should be noted that they were carrying the ark this time and those men were probably priests—they had studied the requirements after Uzzah’s death. Seeing nothing else bad happened,

the journey continued with dancing, singing, and rejoicing, including David himself.

6:14 ***girded with a linen ephod***. This was a garment worn by priests when officiating in their office. David was not a Levite but held the priesthood (required for him to be sealed to his wives, per D&C 132:38-39) and thus acted as both king and priest during this experience.

6:17 ***in the midst of the tabernacle***. The original Tabernacle had been destroyed by the Philistines many years before. David caused a new one to be built to hold the ark when it finally came to Jerusalem.

6:20 ***How glorious was the king of Israel to day***. Michal's sarcasm comes down through the years. Though we weren't given a view into her emotions when she first returned to David, this encounter lets us know how she probably felt about the whole affair.

6:23 ***had no child***. Because of her insult to David, he never came to her again and thus Michal never had any more children of David.

7:3 ***Go, do all that is in thine heart***. Nathan's first response was the logical one but it was the wrong one. The Lord had to chastise and correct him that night, sending him back to David with the right message that his son, not he, would build the temple.

7:12-16 ***I will set up thy seed after thee***. Though David wasn't permitted to build the temple, he was promised that his seed would "be established for ever" (7:16). This promise was fulfilled through the long dynasty that came from David but ultimately through the coming of Jesus Christ, the son of David and King of Kings, who will rule forever over Israel.

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#### OTHER VICTORIES (8:1-18)

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Besides vanquishing the Philistines, David also overcame Moab, Zobah, Syria, Hamath, Ammon, Amalek, and Edom, effectively making the boundaries of his kingdom nearly equal to those promised to Abraham in Genesis 15:18-21.

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#### KINDNESS TO MEPHIBOSHETH (9:1-13)

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David asked Ziba, a former servant of Saul, if there were any remaining members of Saul's family. The servant revealed that one son of Jonathan remained, Mephibosheth, who was lame. David brought him to Jerusalem and restored Saul's ancestral lands to him to provide income, soliciting Ziba and his sons to work the lands for Mephibosheth, who stayed with David in Jerusalem as a guest at his personal table the remainder of his life.

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## DAVID'S TROUBLES (10:1 – 20:26)

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### INTRODUCTION

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David's decline started with him waging a war over a misunderstanding, which he could have resolved instead of resorting to bloodshed. Then staying home from the war he began, he committed the dual sins of adultery and murder. His punishment for these sins included the pronouncement that evil would come out of his own house, which was exactly what followed. The sinful David watched as his children replicated his own misdeeds and stood by helplessly as he was unable to condemn them for the very things he had done. This finally led to civil war and death among his family, to David's great sadness.

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### DEFEAT OF AMMONITES (10:1-19)

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David attempted to make peace with Ammon when the new king, Hanun, took over. But his overtures were rejected and his messengers humiliated, so David sent his army against Hanun led by Joab and his brother, Abishai. The brothers split the army against the two enemies—Syrians (Arameans) and Ammonites—determining that whichever army prevailed would help the other. The strategy worked and the battle was won.

10:2 ***as his father shewed kindness unto me***. Hanun's father was Nahash, who cut out the right eyes of those who opposed him (1 Samuel 11). There

is no record of any kindness he showed to David but perhaps it was while David was in hiding.

10:4 **cut off their garments.** Cutting off half their beards would have been an insult to their manhood but cutting their clothing off to display everything below the waist was a great insult.

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### ADULTERY AND MURDER (11:1 – 12:31)

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The war in chapter 10 continued, but David stayed home, safe in Jerusalem, when he should have been in the field with his soldiers. That first mistake led to others, as he spotted a beautiful woman, Bathsheba, bathing one night, learned more about her, rationalized a relationship, and finally brought her to him where they committed adultery together. David's attempt to cover his sin and her pregnancy resulted in a greater one, the murder of the Bathsheba's husband, Uriah, by his orders. Thinking he had got away with murder, David discovered he was wrong when Nathan the prophet came and told him a parable that turned out to be a story about David. He condemned himself unknowingly, then repented, but he had already lost his exaltation.

**\* Read 11:1-9, 15, 26-27 (David, Bathsheba, and Uriah)**

**\* Read 12:1-14 (Nathan confronts David)**

11:1 **David tarried still at Jerusalem.** David starts by being in the wrong place at the wrong time. When his army was out fighting the battle that he had started, he was home in safety and comfort.

11:2 **he saw a woman washing herself.** David's second mistake was not to look away when he saw something he should not have seen. She may have been bathing as a purification rite following menstruation, as dictated in Leviticus 15:19-24 (so 11:4 would indicate).

11:3 **David sent and enquired.** Perhaps it was mere curiosity at her beauty, perhaps it was more lust, but either way his third mistake was to seek her out. He learned her name was Bathsheba ('daughter of the oath' or 'covenant'), probably an Israelite woman married to a Hittite convert to Judaism named Uriah ('YHWH is my light').

11:4 **David sent messengers, and took her.** Once David learned she was married, all efforts should have stopped, but instead he eventually called for her (nothing in the text says this happened in one day, giving him plenty of time to rationalize his behavior). Did they sleep together on the first encounter? Did it only happen once? Perhaps not—the verb forms used of David's actions can have the sense of an ongoing action, not just a one-time event. The sin of adultery was David's fourth error, escalating his situation dramatically.

11:5 **I am with child.** Finally come the consequences of their sins—Bathsheba became pregnant.

11:8 **Go down to thy house.** Soldiers made a covenant of loyalty to the king and to God that excluded sexual relations while at war. David's invitation for Uriah to go spend time with his wife was overtly inviting to break that covenant. Faithful Uriah did not, but twice resisted David's prodding and instead "slept at the door of the king's house" (11:9), as a true servant of the king—who had busy betraying him. He even told David, "I will not do this thing" while his brothers were out sleeping in tents on the battlefield. David even attempted to get him drunk, but still Uriah slept near the king.

11:15 **Set ye Uriah in the forefront.** In a final attempt to cover up his own sin, David told Joab to put Uriah in the front and withdraw the other troops in order that Uriah would be killed. Joab followed the spirit of the order and put Uriah at the front attacking the city. Fearing the news that others had died attacking the city would anger David, he simply told the messenger to deliver the bad news, concluding with the word that "Uriah the Hittite is dead also" (11:21).

11:27 **she became his wife.** After a suitable period of mourning, David called for Bathsheba to come be his wife, which she did, eventually having a son as a result of their illicit affair.

12:1 **There were two men.** The Lord sent Nathan to ask David for judgment in a certain case. The case was a parable but David thought he was being asked to judge a true event where a rich man stole the only lamb of a poor man for a dinner guest.



12:5 **the man...shall surely die.** David's harsh punishment showed his anger at the injustice of the situation and how hardened he had become as a result of his own sin.

12:7 **Thou art the man.** The famous utterance of Nathan struck deeply into David's soul. His only reaction was to declare, "I have sinned" (12:13), different from Saul who when confronted, typically first justified his deeds.

12:13 **The Lord also hath put away thy sin.** The JST adds an important single word: "...hath **not** put away they sin." The Hebrew word translated "put away" can have many meanings, including pass over, do away, cross, sweep by, and more. The sense is that the Lord is not putting the specific punishment of death on David ("thou shalt not die") but on his young son ("the child...shall surely die," 12:14). The child fell sick for seven days, during which David fasted and pleaded with God. When the child died, David quit fasting and went back to his normal life. Amazed, the servants wondered why he was not mourning. "Can I bring him back again?" David asked.

12:24 **he called his name Solomon.** Bathsheba's second son by David was called by them 'peace,' perhaps reflective of David's kingdom, the city in which they lived, or their hope for his life. But Nathan the prophet came and gave him a different name: "Jedidiah" (12:25), meaning 'beloved of YHWH,' a longer version of David's own name.

12:28 **lest I take the city.** Joab showed great loyalty to David, otherwise preoccupied with his own affairs, by having him come and take the city of Rabbah. Joab feared that if he took the city, the fame might come to him and he wanted David to be the only one people feared and respected.

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#### FAMILY PROBLEMS (13:1 - 14:33)

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With many wives, there were many half-brothers and half-sisters in David's family. Absalom and his sister, Tamar, however, were from the same mother. But David's oldest son, Amnon, took a strong liking to Tamar, his half-sister. One of his friends—his cousin, actually—Jonadab, counseled him to fake illness and ask his father to send Tamar to make him

some food. Normally, women would not be allowed in the rooms of a man, especially unmarried women. So Amnon pretended to be ill and asked for Tamar, which David granted. When she came, he tried to force her to be intimate. She resisted, reasoning that they would both face serious social consequences and that if he really wanted her, all he had to do was ask their father, and he'd likely agreed. But Amnon "forced her, and lay with her" (13:14). But after the deed was done, instead of loving her, he "hated her exceedingly" (13:14) and sent her away. She went into mourning and her brother, Absalom found out what had happened.

Though he counseled her to forget about it and move on, it was an appeasement—he did not forget but secretly waited for two years for the right opportunity. It came with the harvest. Absalom asked permission from David to bring all his brothers together. David was reluctant but finally agreed. After Amnon had plenty to drink, Absalom's servants killed him. All the brothers fled on mule to their father, except Absalom, who fled to Geshur, a rival king to David, where he stayed for three years.

Finally Joab asked David to let Absalom come home, but David refused. Taking a page from David's own history, Joab hired an actress and gave her the lines. She pretended to tell a story that required David's judgment but it was a setup—she was talking about David and Absalom. Catching on to her ruse, David asked if Joab was behind it all, received an affirmative response. This softened David and he let Absalom come to Jerusalem but didn't see him for two more years. Absalom complained but no one listened, so he burnt some of Joab's crops to get his attention, and finally got an audience with his father. The meeting must have been stiff or even judgmental because Absalom's next acts were betrayals.

The text prefigures his later death by noting how attractive Absalom was and especially how thick and long his hair was.

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#### REBELLIONS (15:1 - 20:26)

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The fulfillment of the prophesy of Nathan that David's house would experience the sword is described in detail in these chapters.

First, David's son, Absalom, lured people away with flattery and promises of favorable judgments. Going to Hebron under false pretenses, he rallied men to his side and raised a large enough army that David and his loyal followers were forced to flee Jerusalem. Absalom took over the city, declared himself king, and under the advice of Ahithophel (apparently Bathsheba's grandfather, according to 2 Samuel 11:3 and 23:34, which might explain his animosity toward David) raped all of David's concubines to demonstrate his new authority. David left a few people behind to act as spies, one of whom (Hushai) feigned loyalty to Absalom that he might know the new king's plans and even influence them. When Absalom planned an immediate attack, Hushai talked him out of it and advised another plan, then alerted David through the high priest's messenger so David's army could be prepared. Though David told his leaders, including Joab, not to harm Absalom, in

the battle Absalom got caught by his hair in a tree, and Joab had him killed. Cleverly sending two messengers to break the news to David in stages, Joab still had to reprimand David who openly mourned Absalom's death but ignored the sacrifices of his loyal forces. David did get hold of himself and was able to maintain the support of the troops. He magnanimously forgave those who had wronged or even betrayed him, and returned to Jerusalem to re-establish his throne.

But another threat quickly arose in a man of the northern tribes named Sheba. Offended that David had not called on them during his exile and return, Sheba tried to gather an army to take David out. But Joab and the armies of Judah quickly surrounded the city where Sheba was and made a deal with "a wise woman" (20:16) who got people in the city to capture and cut off Sheba's head and throw it over the wall to Joab, thus ending the siege.

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## EPILOGUE (21:1 – 24:25)

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### INTRODUCTION

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The last four chapters of 2 Samuel appear to be later additions, miscellaneous stories added to the end of the book that are different in character and outlook from the rest of the book. They are short accounts and poems arranged chiastically (narrative, heroes, poem, poem, heroes, narrative), going back early in David's reign and extending past it to Solomon's.

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### ISRAEL UNDER JUDGMENT (21:1-14)

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The incident where Saul killed the Gibeonites is not known, but they had been promised protection by Joshua (Joshua 9:15). David and the people attribute the famine to Saul's prior actions against the Gibeonites and give them some of Saul's descendents to hang for his crimes to end the famine.

As a kindness to Saul and Jonathan, David collects their bones from Jabesh-gilead where they were buried and brings them to their ancestral tomb at Gibeah.

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### DAVID'S HEROES (21:15-22)

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The third incident in this chapter appears to relate to another giant among the Philistines named Goliath being killed by an Israelite named Elhanan. Here the parallel account in 1 Chronicles 20:5 clarifies that the man was no Goliath but Lahmi, Goliath's brother (also indicated by the italic phrase in 21:19, which was added based on 1 Chronicles).

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### DAVID'S SONG OF PRAISE (22:1-51)

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Characterized as a song composed at the time of David's delivery from Saul, chapter 22 is a beautiful song praising the Lord as David's rock, salvation, and strength.

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### DAVID'S FINAL WORDS (23:1-7)

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Jumping to the end of David's life, these verses are said to be "the last words of David" (23:1).

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### MIGHTY MEN (23:8-39)

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Chapter 23 ends with a list of those who served and were loyal to David. Notably, the last name mentioned is "Uriah the Hittite" (23:39).

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### THE LORD'S JUDGMENT (24:1-25)

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The final chapter of 2 Samuel records a sin committed by David when he numbered the house of Israel, presumably to prepare an army. David's sin was not trusting in the Lord but in the arm of flesh. Gad the prophet offered him the choice of three

punishments and David selected the one that put him in the hands of the Lord—pestilence. Thousands died as a result and the pestilence was only stayed when David purchased the threshing floor of Araunah (where the future temple was built) and offered sacrifice there.

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