



Finer Grounds Bible Study

2 Samuel

Lesson 4: 2 Samuel 5-6

If you had just become a queen (or in David's case king), what would you do first? What would your priorities be? Usually, a king's first step is to consolidate his power. This may include executing or exiling anyone with a legitimate claim to the throne, attacking enemy powers, or gaining the trust of your subjects. In the next couple of chapters, we will see what God's king prioritizes as David finally reigns as king of Israel.

Read 2 Samuel 5:1-5 and 1 Chronicles 11:1-3

Why did the elders of Israel ask David to be their king?

What did the elders do to officially make David king?

It is hard to say how long it was after Ish-Bosheth's death that the elders of Israel finally decided to ask David to become their king. There may have been a period of up to 5 years before they spoke to David. When the elders finally did come to him, they list three reasons for choosing David.

1. David is their kinsman. He is an Israelite.
2. David is qualified. He fought and won many battles for Israel while Saul was king.

3. David is God's choice. This really should have been the only reason. The elders of Israel knew that God had chosen David many years before to succeed Saul as king. However, they were unwilling to submit to God's will until it became their only option. All other possible candidates were dead or unable to reign. It was only then that they finally realized that God's choice was their best choice.

In what ways are you making your own choices instead of submitting to God's choices?

The elders anointed David as king and make a covenant with him. A covenant is an agreement between two parties. While we do not know the details, this covenant proclaimed that David would represent the people of Israel, finally fulfilling Samuel's words in 1 Samuel 16. David officially took his place as the Lord's anointed king. 2 Samuel 5:4-5 summarizes David's time as king. He reigned at least 2 years in Hebron as king of Judah before he became king of all Israel. He would reign a total of 7 years in the capital of Hebron before he would move his capital to Jerusalem. The next section tells how David came to make Jerusalem his capital.

Read 2 Samuel 5:6-10 and 1 Chronicles 11:4-9



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David decides to capture Jerusalem as his capital city. The reasons for this are two-fold. First, Jerusalem was centrally located, sitting on the border between Benjamin and Judah. Ruling from Hebron, a truly Judahite town, would highlight the separation of Judah from the rest of Israel. By moving his capital city to Jerusalem, David signaled that he wanted to unite God's people together under his rule. The second reason David captures Jerusalem is because of its inhabitants.

Read Judges 1:8-10, 19-21, and 2:1-4
Who lived in Jerusalem?

Were they supposed to be there?

When Israel first came into the promised land under Joshua, they were to drive out all the Canaanite inhabitants. While Judah had captured the city, the Israelites failed to drive out the Jebusites. The Jebusites continued to inhabit Jerusalem through the time of the judges all the way to David's reign. Because of their idolatrous practices, God had condemned them along with the other Canaanite nations. By allowing them to live among them, the Israelites allowed the Jebusites to influence their practices and beliefs (Judges 2:3). By capturing Jerusalem, David worked to complete the work that God ordered the Israelites to do hundreds of years earlier. Just as he had done when he killed the Amalekites in 1 Samuel 30, David worked as God's instrument to enact judgment on the nations that had rejected God.

What sinful influences are you allowing to reside in your life?

How was Jerusalem taken?

Who, besides David, was involved in the capture of the city?

The Jebusites were proud of their strategically placed city. Jerusalem sits on a mountain and was difficult to attack because of the natural barriers and the thick walls the fortified the city. The Jebusites, confident in their defenses, taunt David saying that even their weakest people, the blind and lame, could defend the protected city. David knows that there is a secret way into Jerusalem through an underground water tunnel. He tells his men that whoever conquers the Jebusites, who are "blind" to their weak point, will become commander of his army. Joab ends up completing the task, cementing his position in David's government.

The exact meaning of the saying that "the blind or the lame shall not come into the house" is unknown. It is doubtful that the literal blind and lame were banned from the city. The expression most likely means that the Jebusites, whom David referred to as blind and lame in 5:8, were exiled from ever re-entering Jerusalem (Tsumura 99).

Read 2 Samuel 5:11-16



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What does Hiram's gift help David to realize?

This passage is a summary of events that occurred over many years but are listed here to show how David's house is established in Jerusalem. David's legitimacy as ruler was recognized by another king, Hiram of Tyre. Hiram provided the materials for David to build his physical home in the new capital city. At the same time, David's dynastic house grew as he takes on more wives and has more children. Again, we see David accumulated wives in opposition to God's direction, a decision that would cause many issues for him later in his reign.

Read 2 Samuel 5:17-25 and 1 Chronicles 14:8-17

What did David do before he attacked the Philistines?

What did David do with the idols that the Philistines left behind?

What did David gain from these battles?

The Philistines attempted to test the strength of the newly reunited Israel by attacking David and his forces. David knew much about the Philistines and their fighting techniques. He had gained fame in Israel by fighting the Philistines. He had even lived among the Philistines for over a year when he

was on the run from Saul. But the inspired writer does not say, "David used his knowledge and experience to fight the Philistines," or "David used his superior skill in battle tactics to devise a plan to attack the Philistines." Instead of relying on his own wisdom, David goes directly to God and asks for His guidance.

Think about it: How can God help you in a situation you are currently facing? Take time now to pray.

God guides David through two battles with the Philistines, giving David major victories over his enemies. In the second battle, God even directly intervenes to defeat the Philistines. The Philistines are pushed back to the edge of Israelite lands. While this builds David's fame in the minds of other nations, Israel knows who the true architect of their victory is: the one true God. By following God's instructions, David removes the sources of idolatrous influences from the kingdom of Israel. Now that the land is emptied of enemies, David turns his attention towards filling the land with devotion to God. He seeks to do this by restoring the Ark to its prescribed place in the heart of the Israelite community.

Read 2 Samuel 6:1-5 and 1 Chronicles 13:1-8

Read Exodus 25:10-22 and Numbers 4:4-6, 15. What was the purpose of the Ark of the Covenant?



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Summarize how the Ark was supposed to be transported.

Read 1 Samuel 6:13-16, 6:19-7:2

Summarize how the Ark was transported from Philistia to Israel and to the house of Abinidab.

With the blessing of the Israelite elders and of God himself, David prepares to move the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem. The Ark of the Covenant contained the tablets of the law that God gave Moses on Mount Sinai. God promised to meet his people on the mercy seat on top the Ark. God's literal presence would come there in the tabernacle to guide his people. At this point in Israel's history though, the Ark had been out of its proper place for decades.

You will remember from 1 Samuel 4-6 that the Ark was captured by the Philistines during the time of the High Priest Eli. The Philistines returned the Ark after God sent a plague on every city that housed it. The Philistines, not knowing any better, sent the Ark back to Israel on an unmanned cart, as they would have done for an idol of one of their own gods. When the Israelites saw the Ark, they rejoiced. Joy turned to sorrow when a few people decided to open the Ark and were struck down by God. Out of fear, the Ark was moved to the house of Abinidab and had been there ever since. Abinidab's son had been serving as a caretaker. It is difficult to say whether Abinidab's house became a place of worship since 1 Samuel 7:2 states that Israel lamented after the Lord. While the Ark

itself was protected, God's prescribed worship had not been restored since the Ark's departure. David sought to correct this. He united the Israelites around the cause of bringing back the Ark to a place of public worship.

What was wrong with David's transportation of the ark to Jerusalem?

In his earnestness to bring the Ark back, David made a mistake. He did not consult God directly as he did when he fought the Philistines. Instead, he moved the Ark on a brand-new cart; the same mode of transportation the Philistines used to return the Ark after they had captured it. The Philistines, however, did not know the law that God had handed down. David and the Levites should have known better than to carry the Ark on the cart. Following the precedence of tradition rather than following the precedence of God's word resulted in a disastrous outcome.

Read 2 Samuel 6:6-11 and 1 Chronicles 13:9-14

In reading the commentaries on this passage, I have found that many people struggle with God's swift judgment against Uzza in this passage. David too became angry that what he saw as honorable intentions led to death and judgment, not the blessing and praise as he had hoped.

According to Numbers 4:15, why did Uzza die?



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No one was to touch the Ark. Anyone who did would die. The people of Beth-Shemesh suffered the same fate as Uzza when they attempted to open the Ark (1 Samuel 6:19-21). What makes Uzza's death difficult to understand is that he was attempting to protect the Ark from damage. His intentions seemed good. No matter how much we want it to be so, we must remember that good intentions do not excuse disobedience.

How do you see "good" intentions being used to excuse sin today?

While Uzza was held responsible for his decision to touch the Ark, it was David's choice to use a cart to move the Ark that resulted in the disastrous outcome. Uzza would not have reached out to steady the Ark if it had been carried on poles by the Levites as God had commanded. David's neglect of God's word led to the death of his subject. This serves as good reminder to anyone who is a leader. A leader's ignorance to God's word leads their followers into sin.

Read James 3:1 and Titus 1:7-9. What advice do these verses offer concerning the leading of others?

Read 2 Samuel 6:12-19 and 1 Chronicles 15:16-3. How does David correct his errors?

What is the outcome?

The parallel passage in 1 Chronicles 15 provides in detail the second attempt to bring the Ark to Jerusalem. David specified, in accordance with God's commands, that the Ark was to be carried by the Levites. He prepared a tent, which implies that he rebuilt the tabernacle for the Ark. He appointed the Levites to carry out the tasks that God had given their clans. David put everything in order according to the Law of Moses. So, God allowed the Ark to enter the city in triumph and with celebration.

The people rejoiced by dancing before the Ark, blowing trumpets, offering peace offerings, and distributing food. Notice how David took part in the celebration. Even though he was the architect of the event, he was not the center of attention. In fact, he humbled himself by dressing in a simple ephod, not in his kingly garments. In this way, David recognized who truly ruled Israel, the Lord God. He knew he was only God's servant and so he rightfully showed his place before God by removing his kingly robes before the Ark.

Read 2 Samuel 6:20-23

How easily a great day can be soured by an unkind word. Michal witnessed her husband humbling himself before God but viewed his actions as disgraceful for a king. Michal was Saul's daughter and so was born as a princess of Israel. Now that she was a queen, she held a high view of her place. Seeing David humble himself by wearing common garments made her blood boil. David firmly corrected her.



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How did David explain his actions to Michal?

David's response reflected his correct view of his place in the world. David knew that he only reigned because God allowed it. He knows that it is God who chose him, appointed him, and established him. He willingly submitted himself to God. Michal never had children because of her words. The Bible is not clear as to whether it was because God struck her with barrenness or if it was because David was never intimate with her again. She never bore an heir to the throne of Israel. In a way, this fulfilled God's judgment on Saul.

Read 1 Samuel 13:13-14

What did Saul lose because of his sin?

God denied Saul a lasting kingdom, or dynasty, because of his sin. Saul would be the first and last king from his family. God promised to pass the kingdom to another man. If Michal had given birth to a potential heir, Saul's line would have continued. With Michal unable to have children, the final potential for Saul to have royal descendants was effectively ended. God's judgment was complete.

By the end of 2 Samuel 6, we have a picture of how God's king would rule. Let's recap the events in this chapter and determine what godly qualities are exhibited by David.

Action	Quality
David conquers Jerusalem, removes the Jebusites	
David asks for God's help with the Philistines	
David prepares a place for the Ark	
David corrects his mistake in moving the Ark	
David removes his kingly robes before the Ark	

From these chapters, we see how God's king works to protect, correct, and direct his people. David removed the pagan influence of the Jebusites and pushed out the Philistines. He worked to fix his errors surrounding the movement of the Ark. He directed the hearts of his people to serve their true king by restoring the worship of God and bringing the Ark into Jerusalem. David humbled himself before God and offered abundant sacrifices to God as the Ark moved safely into Jerusalem. He removed his kingly robes to acknowledge that God was the true king over Israel. Almost 1,000 years later, God would come to Earth in the form of a man and enter Jerusalem, greeted by a celebration like the one the Ark received.

Read John 12:12-16.

What are the parallels between the entry of the Ark and triumphant entry of Jesus?



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How does the depiction of Jesus draw comparison to both David and to the Ark?

After comparing these passages, I hope you are as overwhelmed as I am by the perfect unity of God's word. The parallels between the Ark's entry into Jerusalem and Jesus's entry into the same city perfectly reveal the need for Jesus in God's plan to save humanity. As the symbol of God's presence amongst his people, the entry of the Ark into Jerusalem was greatly celebrated by King David and the people. Similarly, Jesus, who was God in human form, entered the city to the shouts and praises of the people. But the Jews present for Jesus's entry praised his coming as just the coming of an earthly king, even saying things like "Blessed is the king of Israel!" However, they should have been praising him as their ancestors had praised the Ark, recognizing the presence of God in him.

Another parallel is that David brought the Ark to Jerusalem to restore the tabernacle, the place where God's presence resided amongst

his people. Similarly, Jesus came to restore the connection between God and man that had been lost to sin, but in a greater, more personal way. Instead of a golden box, God's presence came to earth as a person who met with his people face to face and "tabernacled" or "dwelled" among them (see John 1:14).

The one glaring contrast is the difference between the purposes for which Jesus and the Ark came to Jerusalem. David brought the Ark to Jerusalem to house it in the reconstructed tabernacle so that the system of animal sacrifice could be restored. Jesus came to Jerusalem as God and king, but not to receive sacrifices. Instead, he came to become the sacrifice for his people.

Read Hebrews 9:12.

While David did what he could to restore the worship of the true God of Israel, as a sinful human, he could never accomplish what Jesus accomplished on the cross. As we continue reading through 2 Samuel, we will be reminded throughout that while David was a great king, God's people still needed the perfect one.