



Finer Grounds Bible Study

2 Samuel

Lesson 6: 2 Samuel 8-9

At this point in our study of 2 Samuel, we have witnessed how God established the “man after his own heart” as king over his people. David was promoted from shepherd over his father’s sheep to shepherd over God’s people. Along with these great responsibilities, God chose to bless David with an everlasting covenant that his house and his kingdom would endure forever. The remainder of 2 Samuel should be read with these promises in mind:

1. God will make David famous and respected.
2. Israel will be established in the land that was promised to them.
3. Israel and David will have rest from their enemies.
4. God will raise a descendent who will build the temple
5. The house of David will endure forever.

How did God fulfill these great promises to David and to Israel? How did David live knowing that God had granted him these blessings unconditionally? Read on to find out!

Read 2 Samuel 8:1-14.

Look at a map of Israel in the time of David. Find Philistia (Gath, Ekron, Gaza), Moab, Zobah, Damascus, and Edom. What do you notice about the placement of these kingdoms in relationship to Israel?

Like most of 2 Samuel, the events recorded here are probably not chronological, but are instead a summary of David’s victories throughout his lifetime. The Philistines in the west were finally conquered. While we will read later in 2 Samuel about how this was accomplished, it is interesting to note that the Philistines are never a problem again for Israel until the time of Hezekiah, hundreds of years later (2 Kings 18:8).

I think the straightforward way in which the biblical writer describes the Philistine’s fall shows us God’s hand in the matter. Remember that the Philistines were involved in almost every part of Israel’s history from Sampson to David. They tormented the Israelites by taking their lands, killing their priests, stealing their crops, and even taking the Ark of the Covenant. It is amazing to me that the enemy that plagued Israel for hundreds of years becomes irrelevant to the Bible’s story in one simple verse. No one can stand against a king backed by God’s sovereign power.

Israel’s other enemies were similarly subdued. In the east, the Moabites became servants to David and Israel. Instead of



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wiping them out, David allowed some to live, but they lived as his servants and paid tribute to their conqueror.

In the north, David defeated Hadadezer of Zobah and his Aramean allies. Here it is noted that when David captured the soldiers and charioteers, he made the decision to hamstring the horses. This may seem an odd detail, but it was likely out of obedience to God's command for kings not to acquire many horses (see Deuteronomy 17:16). In the south, David conquered Israel's relatives, the Edomites. Just like the Moabites and Arameans, the Edomites became David's servants and David occupied the land.

What evidence from this passage indicates that it was God who was responsible for David's success?

The Lord helped David wherever he went, making David famous in the land, giving him the wealth required to build the temple, and providing rest from his enemies on every side. Through David, God neutralized every threat to his people Israel. When the time came, they would be able to live in peace under the reign of David's son.

Read 1 Chronicles 22:1-19. According to these verses, what did David do with wealth and servants he acquired from his conquests?

How does David's acquisition of wealth and conquering of these nations fulfill the promises God made to David in 2 Samuel 7? (See the list at the beginning of the lesson)

What does 1 Chronicles 22 tell us about David's motivation for these military campaigns?

I love how the inspired writers frame these two passages in slightly different ways. While 2 Samuel 8 shows God giving victory over his enemies and allowing him to gather much in terms of earthly blessing and fame, 1 Chronicles 22 tells us how David's heart was pursuing his original plan to build a temple for God. Everything that brought him fame he gave straight back to God.

Think About It: How can you use your earthly blessings to honor God?

Read 2 Samuel 8:15-18

How does 2 Samuel 8:15 describe David as a King?



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Compare this passage the prophecy about Jesus in Jeremiah 23:5-6.

After summarizing David's foreign conquests, the inspired writer summarizes his domestic reign. As one would expect from God's king, David administered justice and righteousness. We too live under the reign of a king who is righteous and administers perfect justice.

Why is it comforting to know that God is righteous and administers perfect justice? What does Romans 3:21-26 tell us about God's righteousness and justice.

What is it like to live under a king who administers justice and righteousness for all his people? The biblical author answers this question with the story of Mephibosheth.

Read 2 Samuel 9:1-13

Who was Mephibosheth? (Read 2 Samuel 4:4 for help).

Why did David want to show kindness to him? (Read 1 Samuel 20:12-16 for help).

How did David show kindness to Mephibosheth?

Reread 9:7. Why did Mephibosheth have cause to be afraid by David's summons?

Reread 9:9. Why was Mephibosheth so surprised by David's actions?

As we discussed in previous lessons, it was common practice that when a new king assumed the throne, he would execute the family of the previous king. Mephibosheth's nurse hid him when she heard that Saul and Jonathan had died and, in the process, crippled him. The boy had lived at least 7 years in hiding when he heard that King David was looking for him. I am sure that Mephibosheth thought his life was over when David found him. Instead of receiving a death sentence, Mephibosheth receives a new life. No longer does he have to hide at the house of Machir in fear for his life. Instead, the King gives him a large piece of land, servants to work the land, and a permanent place at the king's table.

Read 1 Chronicles 8:33-40

Mephibosheth (also called Merib-baal) has a son, Mica (or Micah) who becomes the father of a long line of warriors and archers. All the men listed in 1 Chronicles 8 would partake in the inheritance that David had restored to Mephibosheth. The Bible shows



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that David fulfilled his promise to show kindness to Jonathan's house forever.

What does it mean to show kindness to others? Why does God ask us to show kindness to others? Read Luke 6:35-36, Ephesians 4:22-24, and Philippians 2:1-11.

David's treatment of Mephibosheth exhibits his trust in God's promises. David believed God's word that he was to have a lasting kingdom. Even though Mephibosheth could have been viewed as a threat to David's position as king, David trusted God's promises enough to keep his own promise to Jonathan.

This story is not just an example of showing kindness to others. While showing kindness is something we should do, we need to be careful not to miss the greater point. Instead of only looking to David for a lesson of application, we need to identify with Mephibosheth's story of disgrace, redemption, and restoration. What David did for Mephibosheth foreshadows what God does for us through Jesus.

How does each event in Mephibosheth's story parallel the story of one who obeys the gospel? Consider the following scriptures: Ephesians 1:3-12, Ephesians 2:4-7, and 1 Peter 1:3-5.

What other stories in the Bible parallel the story of the gospel?

Just as David brought Mephibosheth out of hiding and set him in an honored place at his own table, God, through the sacrifice of Jesus, brings those who believe in him into a right relationship with Himself. Even though we are sinners, God's grace and mercy allows us to be called children of God.

Read 1 John 3:1. What does it mean to be children of God? Use other verses to support your answer.
