

Read the Whole Bible with Pastor

Monday (July 17) – 2 Samuel 7

God is pleased with David's plan to build him a house (temple), even though God had never asked for or commanded this to be built. He tells David that He Himself will build David's house, that is, establish his lineage and throne forever. This is a promise of Christ, the Son of David, who is the King of kings and Lord of lords.

Tuesday (July 18) – 2 Samuel 8, 9

God continues to bless David and gives him victory over all the surrounding nations, including Moab and Edom, two nations that had also descended from the family of Abraham. (Moab was the son/grandson of Lot, Abraham's nephew, and Edom was the nation of Esau, grandson of Abraham and brother of Jacob/Israel.)

In 1 Samuel 20, David and Jonathan had made a covenant to protect one another's posterity. Jonathan knew that David would become king in place of his father Saul. Therefore, he asked David to promise not to destroy his lineage as kings often did to the relatives of the previous king. In chapter 9, now that David is firmly established on the throne of Israel and Judah, he seeks to honor his covenant with Jonathan, who has been dead for some years. David finds Mephibosheth, the single surviving son of Jonathan, and arranges to provide for him, giving him the land of his grandfather Saul and a place at his table for life.

Wednesday (July 19) – 2 Samuel 10, 11

The new king of Ammon, assuming that David's ambassadors of goodwill are actually spies, treats them shamefully, cutting off their robes at the waist and shaving off half of their beards. Curiously, the greater shame was the loss of their beards, not their clothing. They would not even return home to their wives without full beards! The Ammonites make a pact with the Syrians against Israel, but Joab leads the Israelites to victory in the name of the Lord. Note that even though Joab does many wicked deeds in his lifetime, he does seem to be a believer in the Lord (10:12).

Chapter 11 begins with a statement that sets the stage for what follows: "at the time of year when kings go out to battle, David sent Joab..." David is about to fall into very serious sin, and it begins because he is idle at home, having abdicated his place at the front of the battle. Let this be an example to all of us. We are more likely to fall into great temptation and gross sin when we are idle. There is a reason that acedia (sloth) has long been considered one of the seven deadly sins—it can lead to a host of other, more deadly and destructive sins.

If you read backwards through the Ten Commandments, you can see how David breaks every single one of them, beginning with the last. Coveting leads to the loss of Bathsheba's reputation and honor, which in turn leads to theft. Theft leads to adultery. Adultery leads to murder. David also dishonors the teaching of his father, despises God's word, misuses God's name by whose authority he had been made king, and becomes an idolater, seeking pleasure

above faithfulness to God. David tries to cover his sin by bringing Uriah home so that he'll sleep with his wife, Bathsheba, and assume that the child she is carrying is his. But Uriah is too faithful to David and to the Lord. Instead of being shamed by Uriah's faithfulness, David arranges to have Uriah murdered in battle, even having him carry his own death warrant back to Joab. It is nearly impossible to recognize the man after God's own heart. What David does here is far worse than anything that Saul did at the beginning of his descent into sin. Had David not been brought to repentance by the Word of God, he would have been lost eternally.

Thursday (July 20) – 2 Samuel 12

God in His mercy sends His word to David through the prophet Nathan. Imagine how easy it would have been for David to kill Nathan or confine him to the dungeon. Instead, David repents. May God grant this same repentance to every one of us when we are confronted with our own sins! God removes the eternal consequences from David (he will not go to hell), but there will still be temporal consequences throughout his life. Read Psalm 51 and pay careful attention to the heading. This is David's psalm of repentance for his sin with Bathsheba, part of which is sung in our liturgy. As a further example of David's repentant heart, he will name his second surviving son with Bathsheba after the prophet Nathan. This Nathan will be the ancestor of Mary, the mother of God.

Friday (July 21) – 2 Samuel 13

The evil fruit of David's sin wreaks havoc in his own family. David's oldest son and heir, rapes his half-sister Tamar. Her full-brother Absalom, David's second-oldest son, kills his older brother and flees the country. This is but the beginning of the destruction that God told David would come upon his family because of his sin. We should understand that all sins are not equal. Yes, all sins are equally damning. But all sins are *not* equally damaging. Unrepentant pencil stealing can lead a man to hell. But it will not cause the same destruction in his family as the sin of adultery. May God protect us from great shame and vice!

Saturday (July 22) – 2 Samuel 14

Joab, always a schemer, devises a plan to force David to forgive his son Absalom for the murder of his older brother.

Sunday (July 23) – 2 Samuel 15

Absalom, now David's heir, makes plans to seize the throne. He begins in a sneaky way, apprehending supplicants to his father and subtly poisoning them against David. "Oh, that I were made judge of Israel...then I would give justice!" (v. 4). When David learns that Absalom is marching toward Jerusalem with a large army, he is forced to flee from his own son. Here again we see David's heart toward the Lord: he will not use the ark of the covenant as a political bargaining chip. Instead, he sends the ark back into the city, saying, "If I find favor in the eyes of the Lord, He will bring me back to His dwelling place" (v. 25).