

The Book of Samuel

Lesson 3

King David

Lesson Guide



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HOW TO USE THIS LESSON GUIDE

This lesson guide is designed for use in conjunction with the associated video. If you do not have access to the video, the lesson guide will also work with the audio and/or text versions of the lesson. Additionally, the video and lesson guide are intended to be used in a learning community, but they also can be used for individual study if necessary.

- **Before you watch the lesson**
 - **Prepare** — Complete any recommended readings.
 - **Schedule viewing** — The Notes section of the lesson guide has been divided into segments that correspond to the video. Using the time codes found in parentheses beside each major division, determine where to begin and end your viewing session. IIM lessons are densely packed with information, so you may also want to schedule breaks. Breaks should be scheduled at major divisions.
- **While you are watching the lesson**
 - **Take notes** — The Notes section of the lesson guide contains a basic outline of the lesson, including the time codes for the beginning of each segment and key notes to guide you through the information. Many of the main ideas are already summarized, but make sure to supplement these with your own notes. You should also add supporting details that will help you to remember, describe, and defend the main ideas.
 - **Record comments and questions** — As you watch the video, you may have comments and/or questions on what you are learning. Use the margins to record your comments and questions so that you can share these with the group following the viewing session.
 - **Pause/replay portions of the lesson** — You may find it helpful to pause or replay the video at certain points in order to write additional notes, review difficult concepts, or discuss points of interest.
- **After you watch the lesson**
 - **Complete Review Questions** — Review Questions are based on the basic content of the lesson. You should answer Review Questions in the space provided. These questions should be completed individually rather than in a group.
 - **Answer/discuss Application Questions** — Application Questions are questions relating the content of the lesson to Christian living, theology, and ministry. Application questions are appropriate for written assignments or as topics for group discussions. For written assignments, it is recommended that answers not exceed one page in length.

Notes

I. Introduction (0:19)

The author of Samuel explained how Israel's transition to kingship culminated in God's covenant with David so that Israel would put their hopes for the kingdom of God in the righteous rule of David's house.

II. Earlier Blessings, 2 Samuel 2:1–9:13 (4:32)

A. Structure and Content (5:25)

These chapters repeatedly draw attention to two main themes:

- God's kingdom

God promised to make David's house Israel's enduring royal dynasty.

- God's covenants

Hope for God's blessings depended on David and his descendants' loyalty and on the perfectly righteous son of David to come.

1. In Hebron, 2 Samuel 2:1–5:5 (9:12)

- Growing Support, 2 Samuel 2:1–4:12

David's loyalty to God resulted in God's blessings of increasing support for David's kingship.

- Judah, 2:1-4

The men of Judah anointed David king over the house of Judah.

- Jabesh-gilead, 2:5-7

God blessed David with support, even from a group of men who had been loyal to Saul.

- Abner and Ish-bosheth, 2:8–4:12

David's house grew while Abner (Saul's general) and Ish-bosheth (Saul's son) turned against each other.

God blessed David with growing support, even from Saul's supporters and family, because David was loyal.

- Full Support, 2 Samuel 5:1-5

All the tribes of Israel gathered at Hebron and anointed David as their king (5:3).

2. In Jerusalem, 2 Samuel 5:6–9:13 (15:29)

- Initial Accomplishments, 2 Samuel 5:6–6:23

- Loyalty to God, 5:6-16

God blessed David with victory over the Jebusite stronghold in Jerusalem (5:10).

- Defending Jerusalem, 5:17-25

David “inquired of the Lord” (5:19, 23) and obeyed what God commanded, and God blessed him with great victories.

- Securing Jerusalem, 6:1-23

David demonstrated his devotion to God by bringing the ark of God into the city.

Uzzah touched the ark and God struck him dead for violating the commands of Numbers 4:15.

David acknowledged the Levites’ sins and sent the ark to Obed-edom for three months.

When the ark finally reached Jerusalem, David showed his gratitude by offering burnt offerings and peace offerings.

David was humble before God and grateful for the blessing of the security of Jerusalem (6:21).

- Establishment of Dynasty, 2 Samuel 7:1-29

- David and Nathan, 7:1-3

David sought and received Nathan's approval to build God's temple (7:3).

- God and Nathan, 7:4-16

God told Nathan David would not build God a "house" (*bayit*); God would build David a permanent royal dynasty.

God's words in 2 Samuel 7:14-15 contain all the elements of his covenant with David:

Divine benevolence – God established David's royal descendants as Israel's enduring dynasty.

Human loyalty – God required wholehearted obedience from the sons of David.

Consequences – They would receive blessings from God if they obeyed, but curses if they rebelled.

Israel's only hope for a glorious kingdom in the future was in the righteous rule of David's house.

- David and Nathan, 7:17-29

David was loyal to God, acknowledging his dynasty was a blessing for Israel and all mankind (7:19).

- Further Accomplishments, 8:1–9:13

- Victories, 8:1-14

God blessed David with victories and wealth, making his enemies his servants (8:2, 6-8, 11, 14).

- Administration, 8:15–9:13

David fulfilled Moses' commands for the exercise of royal authority (8:15-18).

David showed kindness to Saul and Jonathan in his treatment of Saul's grandson Mephibosheth (9:1-13).

B. Christian Application (36:35)

1. God's Covenants (37:34)

These chapters repeatedly draw attention to the dynamics of God's covenants at this stage in David's life.

We must apply the dynamics of God's covenant with David in the light of the New Testament:

- David's earlier years of blessing should turn our hearts toward God's benevolence in Christ.
- We should honor Christ for his perfect loyalty to God and the everlasting blessings he received for his faithfulness.
- In Christ, the Holy Spirit will bless us for our faithful service, according to God's wisdom.

2. God's Kingdom (40:14)

God drastically advanced his kingdom through David, unifying Israel, defeating their enemies, and expanding God's reign.

The New Testament points to Jesus as the perfectly righteous son of David who will bring David's accomplishments to their fullness.

- Inauguration

David's earlier years turn us toward the greater things Jesus accomplished in the inauguration of his kingdom.

- Continuation

We must consider how Christ has superseded David's accomplishments in the continuation of his kingdom.

- Consummation

David's accomplishments now turn our hearts toward what Christ will accomplish at the consummation of our age.

III. Later Curses, 2 Samuel 10:1–20:26 (46:00)

A. Structure and Content (47:37)

The author admitted that God's kingdom faced serious setbacks in these years of David's reign, but God mercifully sustained David's dynasty.

The mixed conditions of David's kingdom resulted from the dynamics of God's covenants (divine benevolence, human loyalty, curses and blessings).

1. Initial Troubles, 2 Samuel 10:1–12:31 (51:10)

The author purposely embedded his account of David and Bathsheba within the framework of a larger narrative.

- Initial Victory, 2 Samuel 10:1–11:1

David's general Joab soundly defeated an Ammonite-led coalition, and the Ammonites fled to Rabbah.

- Final Victory, 2 Samuel 12:26-31

When Joab captured Rabbah, David to joined him so that David could rightly claim the victory for himself.

- David and Bathsheba, 2 Samuel 11:2–12:25

- David's sin, 11:2-27

David had sent others into battle for him, just as Saul had done.

David saw Bathsheba, Uriah's wife, and commanded her to come and lay with him.

When Bathsheba became pregnant, David tried to cover his sin and ultimately had Uriah killed.

The author made it clear that “the thing that David had done displeased the Lord”(11:27).

- Nathan’s prophetic judgment, 12:1-14

Nathan confronted David with a parable of a rich man who took a poor man’s beloved lamb (12:1-7).

Nathan delivered God’s divine accusation that David had violated his covenant with God.

David immediately admitted his guilt, and God responded with mercy (12:13-14).

- Immediate fulfillment, 12:15-25

David’s son with Bathsheba died as judgment upon David’s sin.

Bathsheba later gave birth to a second son, Solomon (12:24-25).

Solomon became the ancestor of every royal son of David, and “the Lord loved him” (12:24).

2. Extended Troubles, 2 Samuel 13:1–20:26 (1:05:56)

David's firstborn son, Amnon was the heir apparent to David's throne; Absalom was second in line.

- Amnon's Rape of Tamar, 2 Samuel 13:1-22

Amnon raped Tamar, Absalom's sister, so Absalom hated Amnon (13:22).

- Absalom's Revenge and Flight, 2 Samuel 13:23-37

Absalom deceitfully arranged for Amnon to come away with him and had him murdered; Absalom fled for his life.

- Absalom's Return, 2 Samuel 13:38–14:27

After three years, David longed to see Absalom, so Joab fooled David into allowing Absalom to return to Jerusalem.

When Absalom returned, he wasn't allowed to enter the king's presence, so Absalom's frustration grew.

- Absalom's Rise in Jerusalem, 2 Samuel 14:28–15:6

Absalom feigned humility, and David foolishly offered reconciliation and acknowledged Absalom as his rightful heir.

Absalom gained many loyal followers by unjustly granting them favors (15:6).

- Absalom's Rebellion and Defeat, 2 Samuel 15:7–20:26

When the people of Hebron declared Absalom king over Israel, David fled from Jerusalem.

Absalom claimed David's throne and took David's concubines to himself.

After fierce fighting, David's army prevailed over Absalom's forces, and Joab killed Absalom (18:33).

David's kingdom continued, but he never again experienced the blessings of the early years of his reign.

B. Christian Application (1:18:20)**1. God's Covenants (1:19:15)**

These chapters focus less on God's benevolence to David and more on how David failed to remain loyal to God.

God disciplined David with curses, but still responded to David's humility and repentance with blessings.

As followers of Christ, we have to be careful to apply these covenant dynamics properly by drawing from the New Testament:

- David and his sons failed to remain loyal to God, but Jesus was, is, and will always be perfectly loyal to God.
- We are to avoid the failures of David and his sons and, when we fail, turn to God in humble repentance.
- As God mercifully sustained David's inheritance, he will mercifully sustain the inheritance of true believers as well.

2. God's Kingdom (1:22:38)

In the last days, Christ accomplishes his work in three stages:

- Inauguration

Christ's righteous service culminated in his death on the cross where he paid for the failures of every true believer.

- Continuation

Jesus reigns at the right hand of the Father carrying out the will of the Father from heaven.

- Consummation

When Christ returns he will defeat God's enemies, perfect his followers, and pour out blessings on his kingdom.

IV. Ongoing Benefits, 2 Samuel 21:1–24:25 (1:25:40)

A. Structure and Content (1:26:54)

The closing chapters illustrate and reiterate ways that God's kingdom advanced at different times during David's reign.

The author explained the ongoing benefits of David and his dynasty in terms of the dynamics of God's covenants.

The author arranged these chapters topically (not chronologically) as a chiasm, so that later sections parallel or echo the topics of earlier sections:

- First and last sections – suggest relief from the curses God had placed on Israel
- Second and fifth sections – draw attention to the blessings of victory over Israel's enemies
- Third and fourth sections – indicate that God's tremendous favor toward David extended to his dynasty

1. Dynastic Song, 2 Samuel 22:1-51 (1:34:36)

David's dynastic song is a version of Psalm 18 that celebrates David's deliverance from Saul.

The postscript echoes Hannah's song of confidence (1 Samuel 2:10) in what God would do through Israel's future king (22:51).

2. Dynastic Last Words, 2 Samuel 23:1-7 (1:38:06)

David's speech bore divine authority (23:1, 2).

David indicated that when his royal house ruled justly and in the fear of God, it would bring tremendous blessings to Israel (23:3-5).

David warned those who doubted God's covenant with him not to lose hope in his house (23:6-7).

3. Victorious Warriors, 2 Samuel 21:15-22 (1:40:25)

God had blessed Israel with victories in four different battles against the Philistines.

Even when David himself “grew weary,” God’s kingdom did not fail.

4. Victorious Warriors, 2 Samuel 23:8-38 (1:42:32)

The author named thirty-six warriors who fought alongside and for David, listing their heroic deeds and great feats of battle.

These records of David’s great warriors were to give the original audience hope in God’s favor toward the house of David.

5. Relief from God’s Curse, 2 Samuel 24:1-25 (1:44:13)

God sent a famine to Israel because Saul had killed the Gibeonites despite Israel’s treaty to protect them (Joshua 9:15-18).

David sought to make atonement, and as a result of David’s just and honorable actions, the famine came to an end (24:14).

6. Relief from God's Curse, 2 Samuel 24:1-25 (1:47:44)

David ordered a census to assess the strength of his army, indicating he was not relying fully on God for Israel's protection.

David acknowledged his guilt and, after 70,000 people died, called for God to turn his judgment from the people to David and his family (24:10-17).

David faithfully offered sacrifices, "So the Lord responded to the plea for the land, and the plague was averted from Israel" (24:25).

The original audience was to acknowledge that forgiveness and relief from God's judgment would come only through David's house.

B. Christian Application (1:51:52)

1. God's Covenants (1:52:58)

We must follow the teachings of the New Testament as we apply these chapters' perspectives on the dynamics of God's covenants.

We are also to apply the ongoing benefits of David's reign to our own lives:

- Like David, we must turn in humble repentance and faith in Christ.
- Like the victories of David's warriors, we're granted confidence in the struggles against evil.
- David affirmed God's ongoing favor toward him despite his own failures, and we too can have confidence in God.

2. God's Kingdom (1:57:08)

Jesus, the perfectly righteous son of David, fulfills all that God promised to David, so God's kingdom will not fail.

- Inauguration

Jesus defeated evil in his death, resurrection and ascension, and rescued his followers from God's eternal curses.

- Continuation

Christ is expanding God's kingdom, securing victory over God's enemies and interceding on our behalf before the throne of God.

- Continuation

Christ will defeat all of God's enemies, pour out blessings on his people, and deliver creation from God's curses.

V. Conclusion (2:00:06)

7. How does the period of David's later curses apply to us today in view of God's covenants and kingdom?

8. Sketch out and explain the chiastic structure our author used to highlight the topics of David's ongoing benefits.

9. How should we apply the chapters related to David's ongoing benefits in light of the teachings of the New Testament?

10. How does Christ fulfill God's promise to David of a permanent dynasty in each of the three stages of his kingdom?

Application Questions

1. God visibly blessed David in his earlier years of faithfulness. Do you believe God always blesses us when we're faithful and disciplines us when we're unfaithful? Explain.
2. Do you hold a position of authority in a church, ministry or family situation? In what ways might David's experiences as king help you develop in your abilities to lead in a godly manner?
3. What would you say to a congregant who was very troubled by God's actions after Uzzah touched the ark?
4. David committed terrible sins with regard to Bathsheba and Uriah. How could it be that God still called him "a man after my own heart" (Acts 13:22)?
5. Does David's failure to remain faithful to God discourage you or encourage you in your own life? Explain your answer.
6. David repeatedly responded with repentance and humility following his sin. How difficult do you think it was for David to repent of his sin? How difficult is it for you?
7. David humbled himself and repented of his sin after Nathan rebuked him. Do you have someone in your life who can lovingly confront you? How do you respond when you are lovingly confronted? Why is it crucial for us as Christians to have accountability partners?
8. Reflect on the story of David and Mephibosheth. What application do you believe David's faithfulness to his oath to Jonathan has for us today?
9. David grieved deeply over the death of his son, Absalom, even though Absalom had tried to kill him. What does this teach us about David's love and compassion? What example might this set for you when you are going through relational conflicts?
10. Christ is superior to David in that he was perfectly obedient to God's law as the righteous Son of David. How does Christ's obedience as our covenant representative (Romans 5) impact our status before God? How might this affect the way we live every day?
11. What is the most significant insight you have learned from this study? Why?

Glossary

Abiathar – Priest and son of Ahimelech who escaped the murder of the priests at Nob and joined David and his men; remained loyal to David throughout his reign

Abner – Saul’s general who helped lead a rebellion against David and was killed by Joab

Absalom – David’s third son who took revenge on Amnon for raping his sister; later attempted to take the throne from David; killed by Joab after getting his hair caught in a tree

Ahithophel – David’s trusted counselor who later tried to help Absalom overthrow David

Ammonites – Descendants of Ben-ammi (the son of Abraham’s nephew Lot and Lot’s daughter) who were often at war with Israel

Amnon – David’s firstborn son who raped his half-sister Tamar and was murdered by Absalom

ark of the covenant – A box made (as per God’s command to Moses) of acacia wood and overlaid with gold where the stone tablets of the Ten Commandments were kept; also called the ark of God

Babylonian exile – Deportation and exile of ancient Israelites to Babylon from approx. 586 B.C. to 538/9 B.C.

Bathsheba – Wife of Uriah the Hittite and later King David’s wife; mother of Solomon (by David)

bayit – Hebrew term (transliteration) meaning “house”

chiasm – Literary structure in which sections before and after a centerpiece parallel or balance each other

Chileab – David’s second son who most likely died at a young age

consummation – Third and final stage of inaugurated eschatology when Christ will return and fulfill God’s ultimate purpose for all of history

continuation – Second or middle stage of inaugurated eschatology; the period of the kingdom of God after Christ’s first advent but before the final victory

covenant – A binding legal agreement made between two people or groups of people, or between God and a person or group of people

David – Second Old Testament king of Israel who received the promise that his descendant would sit on the throne and reign forever

Gibeonites – Inhabitants of the Canaanite city of Gibeon who tricked the Israelites into making a treaty with them

Hebron – City in Canaan (later in the territory of Judah) where Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Sarah were buried and where David was anointed king over Judah

Hushai – David’s faithful counselor and confidant

inauguration – First stage in inaugurated eschatology; refers to Christ’s first coming and the ministries of his apostles and prophets

Ish-bosheth – (“man of shame”) Saul’s son who helped lead a rebellion against David and was killed by two men; also called Ishbaal

Jabesh-gilead – Town east of the Jordan in the territory of Manasseh whose people were so devoted to Saul that they risked their lives to give Saul and his sons honorable burials

Jerusalem – City where David established his throne and Solomon built the temple during the united monarchy; capital of the southern kingdom of Judah that was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 B.C.; city where the early church began

Joab – David’s loyal general who led successful campaigns against David’s enemies and killed David’s son Absalom after Absalom tried to usurp David’s throne

Jonathan – King Saul’s eldest son and David’s close friend who died in a battle with the Philistines; father of Mephibosheth

kingdom of God – God’s sovereign and unchanging rule over all of creation

Levites – Those from the tribe of Levi; served as priests for the nation of Israel

Lord of Hosts – Divine title honoring God as the head of heaven’s armies

Mephibosheth – Jonathan’s disabled son who was given a place of honor in David’s palace in keeping with David’s oath to Jonathan

Nathan – Prophet and trusted advisor to King David

Obed-edom – Gittite whom David entrusted with the ark of God for three months after Uzzah was struck dead

Philistines – A non-Semitic, warlike people, possibly from Crete, who were often at war with the Israelites in the Old Testament

Saul – First king anointed by God to rule over the nation of Israel

Solomon – Son of King David and third king of Israel who was known for his wisdom and wealth; expanded Israel’s borders and built the first temple in Jerusalem

Uriah the Hittite – Faithful soldier and husband of Bathsheba who was sent to his death to cover up David’s sin with Bathsheba

Uzzah – Levite who touched the ark of God and was struck dead

Ziklag – Town given to David by the Philistine king Achish