



Wednesday Bible Education
Biblical Theology
Lesson 11: 2 Samuel

REVIEW

Questions from last week's lesson:

1. What is in the book of 1 Samuel?
2. How does 1 Samuel help us today?

Answers:

1. Hannah praying for a son and the birth of Samuel. Samuel hearing God's voice in the night and mistaking it for Eli. Saul becoming king of Israel. David being anointed as king. David killing the lion and the bear and the giant Goliath.

1 Samuel is about God establishing the kingship in Israel in accordance with his prior promises and in anticipation of the coming kingdom and kingship of David's son, Jesus Christ.

2. Understanding 1 Samuel helps us understand God's sovereignty over all history to bring about his promises. It teaches us to trust in him to do all he has said he will do. We are particularly to look forward to the coming of the Messiah, which is his second coming, or return.

Understanding 1 Samuel teaches us from the three primary characters with positive and negative examples. Samuel and David heard God's word and obeyed. They waited patiently on the Lord, trusting him to keep his promises. Saul provides us a sobering warning against disobedience. We are like Saul often when we are not outright rejecting and rebelling against God's word, but rather we twist it and rework it to our own purposes and preferences. In the end, Saul was more concerned for his own honor and glory than he was the honor and glory of God.

Understanding 1 Samuel helps us to check our motives in what we ask for. Hannah wanted a son and here request was of faith (Chapter 2). Israel wanted a king, but it was not a request of faith. Rather, they were rejecting the rule of God (Chapter 8).

INTRODUCTION

What is in the book of 2 Samuel? 2 Samuel gives the account of David reigning as king. It tells of his sin with Bathsheba and the murder of Uriah. The book recounts Nathan confronting David with the parable about the rich man stealing the poor man's lamb. It also has numerous happenings that consequences of David's sin. 2 Samuel reveals the sovereignty of God in keeping his promises despite the failings of men and the fact that God's eternal purposes are not dependent upon men to succeed or fail.

This lesson covers the book of 2 Samuel. We will look at the structure and content of the book, along with major themes and practical applications to modern readers. We will consider what 2 Samuel reveals about Christ and his kingdom as it fits into the Bible's main story.

OBSERVATION

2 Samuel is the sixth book of history and continues immediately after the narrative from 1 Samuel. First and Second Samuel were originally one book in the Hebrew Bible, known simply as Samuel, or the Book of Samuel. The book covers the kingship of David and is mostly historical narrative. It does contain poetry in some of David's psalms, a census, some theological commentary, prophecy, etc.

2 Samuel begins after the death of Saul and Jonathan. David learns of their deaths from an Amalakite, who claims to have killed Saul. David has the man killed as judgment against him. David does not rejoice in the news of Saul's death. He laments and leads his men in lamenting for Saul and Jonathan.

David then journeys to Hebron and there the men of Judah anoint him as king. However, Saul's captain, Abner, made Saul's son Ishbosheth king over Israel. War ensues between the house of David and the house of Saul with the kingship of Israel in the balance. David's captain, Joab, kills Abner and then Ishbosheth is killed by his own men. By Chapter 5, David is anointed by the people as king over all Israel.

Later in Chapter 5, David captures Jerusalem from the Jebusites. He goes on to defeat the Philistines. By Chapter 6, the Ark of the Covenant is brought to Jerusalem, where the temple will ultimately be built. David's victories continue through the next few chapters and all seems well for the kingdom of Israel.

Chapter 11 marks a turn for David. His lust leads to adultery with Bathsheba. He lies about it and finally has Uriah murdered to cover it all up. In Chapter 12, the prophet Nathan confronts David with a parable about a rich man stealing a poor man's only lamb. David doesn't realize it's a parable and becomes angry about what the rich man did. Nathan then reveals the parable is about David and he rebukes him for despising God by despising His word. David repents but consequences will follow the rest of his life.

Those consequences run through the rest of the book. By the end of the book, David is a weak and regretful old man. He does take comfort in the promises of God being more sure than him or his house. The book ends with David taking a census and the judgment that followed because he sinned.

A brief outline of 2 Samuel:

1. Chapters 1-10 David's early reign marked by numerous victories
2. Chapters 11-20 David's sin and numerous consequences in his latter reign
3. Chapters 21-24 Conclusion of the book and David's last words

INTERPRETATION

2 Samuel portrays David as a psalmist (23:1). He sings a lament for Saul and Jonathan (1:17-27). He sings a song of praise to God for deliverance (22:1-30; cf Psalm 18:1-30). David wrote twelve psalms during the time covered from the last part of 1 Samuel through the first part of 2 Samuel (1 Samuel 16-2 Samuel 5). These psalms mainly focus on God's preservation and deliverance of David through extreme circumstances. It seems unlikely that David would make it to rule over all Israel from Jerusalem, but it's clearly shown that God's providence and sovereignty has fulfilled his purposes in his chosen one.

2 Samuel paints an honest and ugly picture of David's sins and the consequences of those sins. His sin with Bathsheba is the most well-known. David coveted his neighbor's wife, stole his neighbor's wife, lied to his neighbor, and finally murdered his neighbor (11). Nathan pointed out that David dishonored God, despised him, and rejected God's rule (12). The book also covers David's sin in having the men of Israel counted (24). The author doesn't tell us why David did this, or why it was wrong. It's clear that David was wrong because he has to suffer punishment for it. David was also passive in sin by doing nothing about Amnon's sin against Tamar (13), failing to forgive and restore Absalom (14), and when he mourned Absalom's death (19).

David's sins in 2 Samuel have at least two important theological implications:

1. First, his sins are contrasted with the sins of Saul in 1 Samuel. Saul sinned but did not repent. David sinned and repented. David is rebuked for his sins at different times in the book and responds with repentance (12:13; 14:21; 19:8; 24:10; & Psalm 51).
2. Second, though he was Israel's best king, he was not the Messiah of promise. His life pointed people to look beyond him to the coming One. 2 Samuel marks a crucial turning point and clarification in redemptive history. The rest of the Bible after this point will refer to David's seed/son/offspring as the one who will receive the promises God made to David and fulfill the righteous rule of God's kingdom on earth.

2 Samuel contributes to the expectation of the Messiah and his kingdom, most obviously with the Davidic covenant, which is also called the sure mercies of David. These promises were first given in 2 Samuel 7:8-17. David was promised:

1. A great name (7:9)
2. A place/land for Israel (7:10)
3. Rest from enemies (7:10-11)
4. Davidic dynasty (7:11)
5. A kingdom established through a son (7:12)
6. Solomon would build the temple (7:13)
7. Solomon's disobedience will be punished but will not nullify God's promise (7:14-15)
8. David's throne will be established forever (7:16)

The mention of sin in this covenant seems out of place if Messiah is intended (7:14-15). Sin did not nullify the covenant, but it did rule out David and any of his sons as the one who would receive the kingdom. Consider his sin with Bathsheba and the end of his life (23:1-7). David was not the true David, for he must be "just" (23:3). Solomon also sinned and even declared that no man doesn't sin (1 Kings 8:46; Ecclesiastes 7:20). Psalm 89 laments the failure of David's posterity and the seeming delay of the fulfillment of God's promises to David. Psalm 89:3-4 speaks of the covenant and the psalm also includes language that sin in the seed does not nullify God's promise (Psalm 89:27-52).

What do we make of this? David obviously failed and Solomon also failed after him, as did Rehoboam and on and on. David acknowledged this failure at the end of his life, yet he called the promises an everlasting covenant (23:5). Obviously, a son is promised and it won't be a sinful son. God has chosen Abraham and the nation of Israel to be a blessing to all the nations of the earth. That blessing will come through the Messiah and his kingdom. 2 Samuel clarifies that not only will the Messiah come from Judah, but he will be of the family of David.

APPLICATION

How does 2 Samuel help us as modern readers? Understanding David's life helps us understand the life of a child of God. David's salvation is not questioned though the book honestly presents his sins. David experiences tremendous blessings from God in deliverance from his enemies and many gifts he receives. David also sins and falls short of the everlasting righteousness of the true King. David shows us how to receive rebuke and correction, confess

sin, repent and take responsibility, and receive forgiveness and restoration.

Understanding the Davidic covenant helps us understand the coming of the Messiah. We are to look for his second coming, just as they were looking for his first coming. Later writers interpreted the Davidic covenant to include blessings to Gentiles as it is connected with the Abrahamic covenant (Amos 9:11-12). We have reason to rejoice in this revelation history.

CONCLUSION

2 Samuel shows the failure of the best king of Israel. His failures are set against the faithfulness of God. God doesn't fail though men do. God keeps his promises despite the falterings of men. God sovereignly works out his purpose and the book points us to look for the greater David.

ABOUT THIS STUDY

This series is a study in biblical theology going book by book through the entire Bible. Each lesson typically covers one book of the Bible, though occasionally covers more than one book when the books are short. This PDF is provided for personal study, small group study, or use in a church class. Unless otherwise noted, all lessons have been prepared by Jeff Short, the pastor of Harmony Baptist Church.

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