



Daily Bible Study Questions

Study Procedure: Read the Scripture references before answering questions. Unless otherwise instructed, use the Bible only in answering questions. Some questions may be more difficult than others but try to answer as many as you can. Pray for God's wisdom and understanding as you study and don't be discouraged if some answers are not obvious at first.

Note: Along with examining the Scriptures of Second Samuel, the student will also be directed from time to time to read accounts of the same events as recorded in First Chronicles. First Chronicles was written as an editorial or commentary on the events of Second Samuel from a spiritual or priestly perspective. Sometimes the accounts in each are almost identical; while, at other times, interesting details can be discovered by comparing them.

FIRST DAY: Review of 1 Samuel 27-31

1. The years of being hunted by Saul had taken a toll on David. What did he finally do about it?
2. If you had been his counselor, what would you have suggested instead?
3. Saul was so desperate for help as he faced war with the Philistines that he foolishly did what?
4. What did you learn from last week's questions, lecture, or notes about the reality of Satan's power?

SECOND DAY: Read 2 Samuel 1

5. Read 2 Samuel 1:1-12. What did the Amalekite do to show the serious nature of the news he was bringing to David at Ziklag?
6. How do the details of his account compare and contrast with the account given in 1 Samuel 31:1-6 and 1 Chronicles 10:1-6?
 - (a) Similarities:
 - (b) Differences:

7. Read 2 Samuel 1:13-16. What had the Amalekite messenger not known about the character and history of David?
8. Read David's "Song of the Bow," a lament for Saul and Jonathan in 2 Samuel 1:17-27 and match the correct answers with the statements below:
- _____ (a) the thrice-repeated refrain
 - _____ (b) where David did not want the tale told
 - _____ (c) Since these had formed the scene for Saul's and Jonathan's deaths, David wished that they would never be fruitful again so as to be a continual reminder of the tragedy that had just occurred.
 - _____ (d) Like its owner, this had lost its protective anointing.
 - _____ (e) These respected animals reminded David of the good qualities of Saul and Jonathan.
 - _____ (f) These had often benefited from the spoils provided from the bravery of Saul and Jonathan in battle.
 - _____ (g) the particular one of the two whom David greatly mourned
1. eagles and lions
 2. the mountains of Gilboa
 3. *"How the mighty have fallen!"*
 4. daughters of Israel
 5. Jonathan
 6. the shield of Saul
 7. in Gath or Ashkelon, the cities of the Philistines, lest they rejoice at Israel's grief

THIRD DAY: Read 2 Samuel 2

9. Read 2 Samuel 2:1-3. Not wanting to make any false moves as he neared possession of the promised throne of Israel, David prayed for God to direct him. What was God's answer?
10. Read 2 Samuel 2:4-7. What action did David take toward the brave men of Jabesh Gilead, who had recovered the bodies of Saul and his sons?
11. Read 2 Samuel 2:8-11. Who opposed David's right to rule over all Israel and whom did he set up as a rival king?

12. Read 2 Samuel 2:12-32. Abner was the commander of the army of Saul's son and Joab was the commander of the army of David. Match the correct answer to each question below:
- ____(a) the initial idea for deciding their differences
 ____ (b) the nephews of David (sons of his sister Zeruiah), who served him as officers
 ____ (c) the man who killed Asahel
 ____ (d) Abner's appeal to Joab in his continued pursuit of Abner and his army
 ____ (e) the number dead in David's army
 ____ (f) the number dead in Abner's army
 ____ (g) where Asahel was buried by his brothers
1. twenty
 2. Abner
 3. Bethlehem
 4. three hundred and sixty
 5. a competition between twelve chosen soldiers from each army
 6. Joab, Abishai, and Asahel
 7. *"Shall the sword devour forever?...How long will it be then until you tell the people to return from pursuing their brethren?"*

FOURTH DAY: Read 2 Samuel 3

13. Although the civil war continued, David was gaining power.
- (a) How was David living in disobedience to God's will? (See Deuteronomy 17:17.)
- (b) Read 2 Samuel 3:1-5 and 1 Chronicles 3:1-9. How many wives and children did David have?
14. Read 2 Samuel 3:6-12. What made Abner remove his support from Ishbosheth?
15. What verses indicated that Abner had known that God had chosen David to be the rightful king?
16. (a) On what condition did David agree to make a covenant with Abner?
- (b) What advantage would the answering of this request give to David politically?

17. Though always loyal to David, Joab often took matters into his own hands—not a good characteristic in David’s eyes. How did David react to the news that Joab had murdered Abner?

FIFTH DAY: Read 2 Samuel 4 and 5

18. Read 2 Samuel 4. What son of Jonathan’s was introduced here? Give his name and describe his physical condition. (This will be important later.)
19. How and by whose efforts did Ishbosheth die?
20. What did David do in response to receiving Ishbosheth’s head and why?
21. Read 2 Samuel 5:1-3 and 1 Chronicles 12:23-40 for the account of David’s being made king over all Israel. Write down some phrases from the Chronicles reference that describe the kind of men that came to support David.
22. Read 2 Samuel 5:4-25, 1 Chronicles 11:6-9, and 1 Chronicles 14. Circle the correct answers.
- (a) David’s age when he began to reign 1) 25 2) 30 3) 40
 - (b) Number of years that David reigned 1) 25 2) 30 3) 40
 - (c) The Philistines bragged that these would keep David out of Zion, later known as Jerusalem, the city of David. 1) giant warriors 2) horses and chariots
3) the blind and the lame
 - (d) The name of the man who took David’s challenge to climb up through Jerusalem’s waterway to conquer the city 1) Jebus 2) Joab 3) David himself
 - (e) God’s signal for David to move forward in the second battle against the Philistines
1) sound of marching in the tops of the mulberry trees 2) the voice of an angel
3) lightning from heaven
23. How would you characterize David’s fitness for leadership so far?

Notes

Uniting the Kingdom

Conflicting Stories (2 Samuel 1:1-16)

First Samuel had concluded with the seriously wounded Saul falling on his own sword to end his life. Saul had asked his armorbearer to do this last service for him to insure that the Philistines would not torture and shame him, but the armorbearer was afraid and refused. Second Samuel began with another version of this account. An Amalekite, having all the signs of great grief about him, had come from the battle and approached David. He told David that Saul and Jonathan were dead. The Amalekite explained that he had answered Saul's request for final relief from his deadly wounds and had killed Saul. He gave David Saul's crown and bracelet as proof. Expecting David to be grateful and hoping for a reward, the Amalekite must have certainly been shocked to see David go into a day-long period of mourning for Saul and Jonathan. When evening came, David asked the Amalekite how he had dared "*to destroy the LORD's anointed*"—an action David himself had refused twice to take. Instead of rewarding him, David ordered the Amalekite to be executed. David trusted only in God to make him king; he did not request or require the help of an **assassin**.

Whether the Amalekite's story was true or whether he came upon the scene of Saul's death, overheard Saul's plea to his armorbearer, and thought to change the account to **ingratiate** himself with David, we cannot be completely sure. The account in 1 Chronicles 10 **corroborated** the account of 1 Samuel 31 but contradicted the version given by the Amalekite. Unfortunately, it is still not unusual for people to alter reports to receive benefits for themselves. Like David, we need to be discerning in receiving information from people who have something to gain by our approval. Like David, too, we need to trust only in God to remove our enemies and raise us up for His service.

Song of the Bow: A Tribute to Saul and Jonathan (2 Samuel 1:17-27)

David was a musician and poet as well as a warrior and king. In this tribute to Saul and Jonathan, David generously made no reference to

the darker side of Saul's life, his insane hatred of David which had caused David to live as an exile and fugitive from the people over whom God had anointed him king. The refrain "*How the mighty have fallen*" was a mournful cry from the compassionate heart of David for the king and the covenant friend he grieved. In the poem he pleaded for the news to be kept from the Philistines, because they would rejoice over it, and for a curse to be placed on the "*mountains of Gilboa*" to emphasize perpetually the tragedy that had occurred there. He then called on the women of Israel to grieve for the leaders who had so richly blessed them. Finally, David finished the song by expressing his deep distress over losing Jonathan, whose loving friendship he had treasured above anyone else's. David ordered this "*Song of the Bow*" to be taught to the children of Judah so that they would always remember their first king and his righteous son.

David, King of Judah (2 Samuel 2:1-7)

Wisely, David prayed to God for his next instructions. God told him to leave Ziklag, which was in Philistia, and go back up to Judah, specifically to the city of Hebron. David obeyed, taking his two wives, Ahinoam and Abigail, as well as the men and their families who had been with him in exile. They were met by the men of Judah, the tribe to which David's family belonged. These men anointed David as their recognized king over Judah.

David's first official action as king was in keeping with his godly character, even if it was unusual for someone who had just come to power after the death of a rival. He sent messengers to give his thanks to the men of Jabesh Gilead, east of the Jordan, who had recovered the bodies of Saul and his sons from their grisly place of display on the walls of Beth Shan (1 Samuel 31:10-13). David appreciated their efforts in giving their king and his sons a proper burial. Although Saul had counted David as his enemy for many years, David had no true **malice** toward Saul. David hoped that the men of Jabesh Gilead would accept him as their rightful

king and support him as he went about gaining the allegiance of the other tribes.

A Rival King (2 Samuel 2:8-11)

One son of Saul's had not been killed in the battle at Gilboa. His name was Ishbosheth (or Esh Baal according to 1 Chronicles 8:33 and 9:39). The commander of Saul's army was named Abner, who, in an effort to maintain his own position of authority, took Ishbosheth to Mahanaim, east of the Jordan, and made him king over that territory. The civil war continued between the armies of this son of Saul, king of Israel, and David, king of Judah.

The Sons of Zeruiah (2 Samuel 2:12-32)

David had a sister named Zeruiah, and her three sons, Joab, Abishai, and Asahel, were notorious men of war and loyal to David (1 Chronicles 2:16). Perhaps prophetic of the "sons of thunder" Jesus would deal with in James and John, these sons of Zeruiah would alternately bless and aggravate David with their undisciplined **zeal** on his behalf. At the first encounter with Abner's forces after the death of Saul, Asahel, "*as fleet of foot as a wild gazelle,*" pursued Abner. Abner, aware of the revenge that would surely come from Joab if he hurt Asahel, urged Asahel to stop chasing him. Asahel persisted and Abner "*struck him in the stomach with the blunt end of the spear,*" killing Asahel. Later, supported by the men of Benjamin, Abner appealed to Joab to stop the fighting. Joab agreed and allowed Abner to escape, with Abner's forces having sustained many more casualties than Joab's. The Lord seemed to be moving David closer and closer to his place as king over all Israel.

David's Growing Family (2 Samuel 3:1-5)

While headquartered at Hebron, David fathered six sons from six wives. The record of 1 Chronicles 3 added those born to him when he moved later to Jerusalem: four sons by Bathshua (i.e. Bathsheba) and nine more sons whose mothers were unnamed. He also had a daughter named Tamar and other sons from his concubines. This indulgence of his sexual appetite, though common for heathen kings and men of power, had been

specifically prohibited in God's instructions for Israel's future kings recorded in Deuteronomy 17:14-19 (emphasis added):

"When you come to the land which the LORD your God is giving you, and possess it and dwell in it, and say, 'I will set a king over me like all the nations that are around me,' you shall surely set a king over you whom the LORD your God chooses...But he shall not multiply horses for himself, ...Neither shall he multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away; nor shall he greatly multiply silver and gold for himself. Also it shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book, from the one before the priests, the Levites. And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes, that his heart may not be lifted above his brethren, that he may not turn aside from the commandment to the right hand or to the left, and that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children in the midst of Israel."

The jealousy and rivalry that would spring up among the sons of these multiple marriages would grieve and torment David in later years. Excellent service to God in some areas of life does not exempt one from obedience in other areas. Consequences always follow the disregarding of God's specific directions.

Abner Changes Sides (2 Samuel 3:6-21)

While the civil war continued, "*Abner was strengthening his hold on the house of Saul.*" In a **brazen** move normally taken only by succeeding kings, Abner went into one of Saul's concubines named Rizpah. Ishbosheth protested what he recognized to be an over-stepping of authority. Abner was furious at being challenged by the man he had made king and swore to change the allegiance of those he commanded over to David's

side. Abner even admitted knowing that the Lord intended David to be the next king of Israel and pledged to make it happen. Abner sent word to David about his plan, but David would only make covenant with Abner on the condition that Saul's daughter Michal, David's first wife, was returned to him. Saul had given her to another man while David was in exile. This marriage would strengthen David's right to the throne since it united the house of Saul with the house of David. The current husband of Michal mourned and followed her, but Abner ordered him to return to his own home.

Abner rallied the people of Israel to David's side. Like a too-smooth politician, he quoted Scripture that suited his cause: *"For the LORD has spoken of David, saying, 'By the hand of My servant David, I will save My people Israel from the hand of the Philistines and the hand of all their enemies.'"* Abner and his men feasted with David and then left, promising to unite all Israel for David.

Joab Gets Revenge (2 Samuel 3:22-39)

Shortly after this event, Joab returned successfully from a military raid he had led. Having heard of Abner's offer, he was suspicious of Abner's true intentions and warned David of what might happen. Having failed to change David's mind about Abner, Joab took matters into his own hands. Joab waited for Abner to return to Hebron, took him aside as if to speak to him privately, and stabbed him to death. Disregarding what damage might be done to the efforts of uniting the nation, Joab was consumed with wanting revenge for the death of his brother Asahel. David was furious about Abner's murder and cursed Joab and his descendants. He forced Joab to join the public mourning for Abner, at which David sang a lament for the fallen leader. The people understood that David was not behind Abner's death and continued to be pleased with David. David expressed his frustration at being unable to control the sons of Zeruiah, who seemed to operate on their own authority. David did not punish Joab then but asked God to *"repay the evildoer according to his wickedness."* Though David would not live to see it, one day, by order of his son Solomon, that would happen (1 Kings 2:28-33).

Ishbosheth Is Murdered (2 Samuel 4)

After hearing of Abner's death, Ishbosheth *"lost heart"* because he knew his chances of withstanding David alone were small. Two of Ishbosheth's captains had the same feeling and decided to murder Ishbosheth, which they did while he was in his own bed. They took his head to David, hoping for his approval. Like the Amalekite of chapter one, they underestimated the righteousness of David. He was horrified that they had killed *"a righteous person in his own house on his bed!"* David had them executed immediately, had their hands and feet cut off, and, what remained, hanged by the pool in Hebron. He had Ishbosheth's head properly buried in Abner's tomb. David longed to trust and wait on God, but he seemed to be surrounded by people who would not.

King At Last (2 Samuel 5:1-16)

After the death of Ishbosheth, all the tribes of Israel came to Hebron to make David their king. He was anointed and he made a covenant with them. He was thirty when he was made king and reigned forty years, seven of them over Judah and thirty-three over a united Israel.

One of his first victories as king was over the fortified city of Jerusalem, also called Jebus, Zion, and the City of David. The inhabitants had boasted that the city was so secure that they would need only blind and lame people to keep David out. David issued a challenge for someone to go up the water shaft to take the city, and the always-bold Joab responded (1 Chronicles 11:6-9). David made Jerusalem his capital city and was helped in building himself a house by the generosity of a new ally, Hiram, king of Tyre.

The Philistines Attack Again (2 Samuel 5:17-25)

As was becoming his custom, David asked God what to do about the Philistines, who had come up to search for him. God told him to go to war and assured him of victory. David obeyed, and God broke through the Philistines, in David's words,

“like a breakthrough of water.” David prayed again when the Philistines reassembled in the Valley of Rephaim. This time the directions from God were different. Instead of facing them directly, they were to circle around and come up in front of some mulberry trees. David and his army were to stay put until they heard the sound of marching in the tops of the mulberry trees. At that sound, they were to move forward quickly, and the Lord would go before them to strike the Philistines.

The peculiar signal of the sound of marching in the trees perhaps was more than an echo of the nearby Philistine troops on the move. Some think that it was the sound of a heavenly army coming down to do battle for Israel. It would not be the only time God had sent angelic forces. Whatever the case, David’s trust in God was again rewarded, and his place as rightful king of Israel was established.

VOCABULARY

1. **assassin:** murderer, especially one who murders a politically important person
2. **brazen:** shameless, impudent
3. **corroborate:** to support a position or statement with evidence
4. **ingratiate:** to gain favor or confidence of others by deliberate effort or manipulation
5. **malice:** the direct intention or desire to harm others
6. **zeal:** great interest or eagerness

Notes