

## ENGAGING GOSPEL DOCTRINE 101.2

### **Lesson 24 (Study Notes):** [“Create in Me a Clean Heart”](#)

**Class Member Reading:** 2 Samuel 11, 12; Psalm 51

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#### **David Commits Adultery with Bathsheba**

**11** In the spring of the year, **the time when kings go out to battle**, These passages are literary masterpieces, so notice little details. There are different interpretations of this phrase, but it does seem to be a jab at David, suggesting he isn't where he ought to be. David sent Joab with his officers and all Israel with him; they ravaged the Ammonites, and besieged Rabbah. **But David remained at Jerusalem.** Again, explicit contrast “All of the leaders of Israel were out fighting a war, \*but\* David...” setting up the action that sets in motion David's fall (after the mistakes in these chapters David will be portrayed mostly as a passive, incompetent figure)

2 It happened, late one afternoon, when David rose from his couch and was walking about on the roof of the king's house, that he saw from the roof a woman bathing; the woman was very beautiful. <sup>3</sup>David sent someone to inquire about the woman. It was reported, ‘This is Bathsheba daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite.’ <sup>4</sup>So David sent messengers to fetch her, and she came to him, and he lay with her. (Now she was purifying herself after her period.) Then she returned to her house. <sup>5</sup>The woman conceived; and she sent and told David, ‘I am pregnant.’ (Explain each step of this pivotal passage.)

David ordered Bathsheba up like room service. “I'll take the hot one on the roof, thanks” He didn't care that she had a husband, had a father, both known to him (and the narrative makes crystal clear he knew, that is how she is introduced “Oh, that woman bathing? That is someone's wife—in fact, one of your loyal soldier's wife, the daughter of another soldier). He only cared about his own desires. He had power, and he used it. Though she is contextualized as a person, and we are given even intimate details (she just had her menstrual cycle, husband was away at war), she is an object for the rest of the story.

Note (and discuss) how the unfailingly loyal Uriah provides a condemning foil to King David.

6 So David sent word to Joab, 'Send me Uriah the Hittite.' And Joab sent Uriah to David. <sup>7</sup>When Uriah came to him, David asked how Joab and the people fared, and how the war was going. <sup>8</sup>Then David said to Uriah, 'Go down to your house, and wash your feet.' (Euphemism) Uriah went out of the king's house, and there followed him a present from the king. <sup>9</sup>But Uriah slept at the entrance of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and did not go down to his house. <sup>10</sup>When they told David, 'Uriah did not go down to his house', David said to Uriah, 'You have just come from a journey. Why did you not go down to your house?' <sup>11</sup>Uriah said to David, 'The ark and Israel and Judah remain in booths; and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are camping in the open field; shall I then go to my house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? As you live, and as your soul lives, I will not do such a thing.'<sup>12</sup>Then David said to Uriah, 'Remain here today also, and tomorrow I will send you back.' So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day. On the next day, <sup>13</sup>David invited him to eat and drink in his presence and made him drunk; and in the evening he went out to lie on his couch with the servants of his lord, but he did not go down to his house.

### David Has Uriah Killed

14 In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah. <sup>15</sup>In the letter he wrote, 'Set Uriah in the forefront of the hardest fighting, and then draw back from him, so that he may be struck down and die.'<sup>16</sup>As Joab was besieging the city, he assigned Uriah to the place where he knew there were valiant warriors. <sup>17</sup>The men of the city came out and fought with Joab; and some of the servants of David among the people fell. Uriah the Hittite was killed as well. <sup>18</sup>Then Joab sent and told David all the news about the fighting;<sup>19</sup>and he instructed the messenger, 'When you have finished telling the king all the news about the fighting, <sup>20</sup>then, if the king's anger rises, and if he says to you, "Why did you go so near the city to fight? Did you not know that they would shoot from the wall?"<sup>21</sup>Who killed Abimelech son of Jerubbaal? Did not a woman throw an upper millstone on him from the wall, so that he died at Thebez? Why did you go so near the wall?" then you shall say, "Your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead too."'

22 So the messenger went, and came and told David all that Joab had sent him to

tell. <sup>23</sup>The messenger said to David, 'The men gained an advantage over us, and came out against us in the field; but we drove them back to the entrance of the gate. <sup>24</sup>Then the archers shot at your servants from the wall; some of the king's servants are dead; and your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.' <sup>25</sup>David said to the messenger, 'Thus you shall say to Joab, "Do not let this matter trouble you, for the sword devours now one and now another; press your attack on the city, and overthrow it." And encourage him.'

26 When the wife of Uriah heard that her husband was dead, she made lamentation for him. <sup>27</sup>When the mourning was over, David sent and brought her to his house, and she became his wife, and bore him a son.

### **Nathan Condemns David**

But the thing that David had done displeased the LORD, **12**<sup>1</sup>and the LORD sent Nathan to David. He came to him, and said to him, 'There were two men in a certain city, one rich and the other poor. <sup>2</sup>The rich man had very many flocks and herds; <sup>3</sup>but the poor man had nothing but one little ewe lamb, which he had bought. He brought it up, and it grew up with him and with his children; it used to eat of his meagre fare, and drink from his cup, and lie in his bosom, and it was like a daughter to him. <sup>4</sup>Now there came a traveler to the rich man, and he was loath to take one of his own flock or herd to prepare for the wayfarer who had come to him, but he took the poor man's lamb, and prepared that for the guest who had come to him.' <sup>5</sup>Then David's anger was greatly kindled against the man. He said to Nathan, 'As the LORD lives, the man who has done this deserves to die; <sup>6</sup>he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.'

7 Nathan said to David, '**You are the man!** Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: I anointed you king over Israel, and I rescued you from the hand of Saul; <sup>8</sup>I gave you your master's house, and your master's wives into your bosom, and gave you the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would have added as much more. <sup>9</sup>Why have you despised the word of the LORD, to do what is evil in his sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. <sup>10</sup>Now therefore the sword shall never depart from your house, for you have despised me, and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife. <sup>11</sup>Thus says the LORD: I will raise up trouble against you from within your own house; and I will take your

wives before your eyes, and give them to your neighbour, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this very sun. <sup>12</sup>For you did it secretly; but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun.’ <sup>13</sup>David said to Nathan, ‘I have sinned against the LORD.’ Nathan said to David, ‘Now the LORD has put away your sin; you shall not die. <sup>14</sup>Nevertheless, because by this deed you have utterly scorned the LORD, the child that is born to you shall die.’ <sup>15</sup>Then Nathan went to his house.

### **Bathsheba’s Child Dies**

The LORD struck the child that Uriah’s wife bore to David (note the emphasis on Bathsheba being Uriah’s wife, which underscores the adultery. God killing the child is a theological point we need to push back against), and it became very ill. <sup>16</sup>David therefore pleaded with God for the child; David fasted, and went in and lay all night on the ground. <sup>17</sup>The elders of his house stood beside him, urging him to rise from the ground; but he would not, nor did he eat food with them. <sup>18</sup>On the seventh day the child died. And the servants of David were afraid to tell him that the child was dead; for they said, ‘While the child was still alive, we spoke to him, and he did not listen to us; how then can we tell him the child is dead? He may do himself some harm.’ <sup>19</sup>But when David saw that his servants were whispering together, he perceived that the child was dead; and David said to his servants, ‘Is the child dead?’ They said, ‘He is dead.’

<sup>20</sup> Then David rose from the ground, washed, anointed himself, and changed his clothes. He went into the house of the LORD, and worshipped; he then went to his own house; and when he asked, they set food before him and he ate. <sup>21</sup>Then his servants said to him, ‘What is this thing that you have done? You fasted and wept for the child while it was alive; but when the child died, you rose and ate food.’ <sup>22</sup>He said, ‘While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, “Who knows? The LORD may be gracious to me, and the child may live.” <sup>23</sup>But now he is dead; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he will not return to me.’

### **Solomon Is Born**

<sup>24</sup> Then David consoled his wife Bathsheba, and went to her, and lay with her; and she bore a son, and he named him Solomon. The LORD loved him, <sup>25</sup>and sent a message by the prophet Nathan; so he named him Jedidiah, because of the LORD.

## The Ammonites Crushed

26 Now Joab fought against Rabbah of the Ammonites, and took the royal city. <sup>27</sup> Joab sent messengers to David, and said, 'I have fought against Rabbah; moreover, I have taken the water city. <sup>28</sup> Now, then, gather the rest of the people together, and encamp against the city, and take it; or I myself will take the city, and it will be called by my name.' <sup>29</sup> So David gathered all the people together and went to Rabbah, and fought against it and took it. <sup>30</sup> He took the crown of Milcom from his head; the weight of it was a talent of gold, and in it was a precious stone; and it was placed on David's head. He also brought forth the spoil of the city, a very great amount. <sup>31</sup> He brought out the people who were in it, and set them to work with saws and iron picks and iron axes, or sent them to the brickworks. Thus he did to all the cities of the Ammonites. Then David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.

## Prayer for Cleansing and Pardon

To the leader. A Psalm of David, when the prophet Nathan came to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba.

<sup>1</sup> Have mercy on me, O God,  
according to your steadfast love;  
according to your abundant mercy  
blot out my transgressions.

<sup>2</sup> Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,  
and cleanse me from my sin.

<sup>3</sup> For I know my transgressions,  
and my sin is ever before me.

<sup>4</sup> Against you, you alone, have I sinned,  
and done what is evil in your sight,  
so that you are justified in your sentence  
and blameless when you pass judgement.

<sup>5</sup> Indeed, I was born guilty,  
a sinner when my mother conceived me.

<sup>6</sup> You desire truth in the inward being;

therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.

<sup>7</sup> Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;  
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

<sup>8</sup> Let me hear joy and gladness;  
let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.

<sup>9</sup> Hide your face from my sins,  
and blot out all my iniquities.

<sup>10</sup> Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
and put a new and right spirit within me.

<sup>11</sup> Do not cast me away from your presence,  
and do not take your holy spirit from me.

<sup>12</sup> Restore to me the joy of your salvation,  
and sustain in me a willing spirit.

<sup>13</sup> Then I will teach transgressors your ways,  
and sinners will return to you.

<sup>14</sup> Deliver me from bloodshed, O God,  
O God of my salvation,  
and my tongue will sing aloud of your deliverance.

<sup>15</sup> O Lord, open my lips,  
and my mouth will declare your praise.

<sup>16</sup> For you have no delight in sacrifice;  
if I were to give a burnt-offering, you would not be pleased.

<sup>17</sup> The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit;  
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

<sup>18</sup> Do good to Zion in your good pleasure;  
rebuild the walls of Jerusalem,

<sup>19</sup> then you will delight in right sacrifices,  
in burnt-offerings and whole burnt-offerings;  
then bulls will be offered on your altar.

Additional Reading: 2 Samuel 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

2 Samuel 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

## **David Anointed King of Judah**

**2** After this David inquired of the LORD, 'Shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah?' The LORD said to him, 'Go up.' David said, 'To which shall I go up?' He said, 'To Hebron.'<sup>2</sup> So David went up there, along with his two wives, Ahinoam of Jezreel, and Abigail the widow of Nabal of Carmel.<sup>3</sup> David brought up the men who were with him, every one with his household; and they settled in the towns of Hebron.<sup>4</sup> Then the people of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah.

When they told David, 'It was the people of Jabesh-gilead who buried Saul',<sup>5</sup> David sent messengers to the people of Jabesh-gilead, and said to them, 'May you be blessed by the LORD, because you showed this loyalty to Saul your lord, and buried him!<sup>6</sup> Now may the LORD show steadfast love and faithfulness to you! And I too will reward you because you have done this thing.<sup>7</sup> Therefore let your hands be strong, and be valiant; for Saul your lord is dead, and the house of Judah has anointed me king over them.'

## **Ishbaal King of Israel**

**8** But Abner son of Ner, commander of Saul's army, had taken Ishbaal son of Saul, and brought him over to Mahanaim.<sup>9</sup> He made him king over Gilead, the Ashurites, Jezreel, Ephraim, Benjamin, and over all Israel.<sup>10</sup> Ishbaal, Saul's son, was forty years old when he began to reign over Israel, and he reigned for two years. But the house of Judah followed David.<sup>11</sup> The time that David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months.

## **The Battle of Gibeon**

**12** Abner son of Ner, and the servants of Ishbaal son of Saul, went out from Mahanaim to Gibeon.<sup>13</sup> Joab son of Zeruiah, and the servants of David, went out and met them at the pool of Gibeon. One group sat on one side of the pool, while the

other sat on the other side of the pool.<sup>14</sup> Abner said to Joab, 'Let the young men come forward and have a contest before us.' Joab said, 'Let them come forward.'<sup>15</sup> So they came forward and were counted as they passed by, twelve for Benjamin and Ishbaal son of Saul, and twelve of the servants of David.<sup>16</sup> Each grasped his opponent by the head, and thrust his sword in his opponent's side; so they fell down together. Therefore that place was called Helkath-hazzurim, which is at Gibeon.<sup>17</sup> The battle was very fierce that day; and Abner and the men of Israel were beaten by the servants of David.

18 The three sons of Zeruiah were there, Joab, Abishai, and Asahel. Now Asahel was as swift of foot as a wild gazelle.<sup>19</sup> Asahel pursued Abner, turning neither to the right nor to the left as he followed him.<sup>20</sup> Then Abner looked back and said, 'Is it you, Asahel?' He answered, 'Yes, it is.'<sup>21</sup> Abner said to him, 'Turn to your right or to your left, and seize one of the young men, and take his spoil.' But Asahel would not turn away from following him.<sup>22</sup> Abner said again to Asahel, 'Turn away from following me; why should I strike you to the ground? How then could I show my face to your brother Joab?'<sup>23</sup> But he refused to turn away. So Abner struck him in the stomach with the butt of his spear, so that the spear came out at his back. He fell there, and died where he lay. And all those who came to the place where Asahel had fallen and died, stood still.

24 But Joab and Abishai pursued Abner. As the sun was going down they came to the hill of Ammah, which lies before Giah on the way to the wilderness of Gibeon.<sup>25</sup> The Benjaminites rallied around Abner and formed a single band; they took their stand on the top of a hill.<sup>26</sup> Then Abner called to Joab, 'Is the sword to keep devouring for ever? Do you not know that the end will be bitter? How long will it be before you order your people to turn from the pursuit of their kinsmen?'<sup>27</sup> Joab said, 'As God lives, if you had not spoken, the people would have continued to pursue their kinsmen, not stopping until morning.'<sup>28</sup> Joab sounded the trumpet and all the people stopped; they no longer pursued Israel or engaged in battle any further.

29 Abner and his men travelled all that night through the Arabah; they crossed the Jordan, and, marching the whole forenoon, they came to Mahanaim.<sup>30</sup> Joab returned from the pursuit of Abner; and when he had gathered all the people together, there were missing of David's servants nineteen men besides Asahel.<sup>31</sup> But the servants of David had killed of Benjamin three hundred and sixty of Abner's men.<sup>32</sup> They took up Asahel and buried him in the tomb of his father, which was at Bethlehem. Joab and

his men marched all night, and the day broke upon them at Hebron.

### **Abner Defects to David**

**3** There was a long war between the house of Saul and the house of David; David grew stronger and stronger, while the house of Saul became weaker and weaker.

**2** Sons were born to David at Hebron: his firstborn was Amnon, of Ahinoam of Jezreel; <sup>3</sup> his second, Chileab, of Abigail the widow of Nabal of Carmel; the third, Absalom son of Maacah, daughter of King Talmai of Geshur; <sup>4</sup> the fourth, Adonijah son of Haggith; the fifth, Shephatiah son of Abital; <sup>5</sup> and the sixth, Ithream, of David's wife Eglah. These were born to David in Hebron.

**6** While there was war between the house of Saul and the house of David, Abner was making himself strong in the house of Saul. <sup>7</sup> Now Saul had a concubine whose name was Rizpah daughter of Aiah. And Ishbaalsaid to Abner, 'Why have you gone in to my father's concubine?' <sup>8</sup> The words of Ishbaal made Abner very angry; he said, 'Am I a dog's head for Judah? Today I keep showing loyalty to the house of your father Saul, to his brothers, and to his friends, and have not given you into the hand of David; and yet you charge me now with a crime concerning this woman. <sup>9</sup> So may God do to Abner and so may he add to it! For just what the LORD has sworn to David, that will I accomplish for him, <sup>10</sup> to transfer the kingdom from the house of Saul, and set up the throne of David over Israel and over Judah, from Dan to Beer-sheba.' <sup>11</sup> And Ishbaal could not answer Abner another word, because he feared him.

**12** Abner sent messengers to David at Hebron, saying, 'To whom does the land belong? Make your covenant with me, and I will give you my support to bring all Israel over to you.' <sup>13</sup> He said, 'Good; I will make a covenant with you. But one thing I require of you: you shall never appear in my presence unless you bring Saul's daughter Michal when you come to see me.' <sup>14</sup> Then David sent messengers to Saul's son Ishbaal, saying, 'Give me my wife Michal, to whom I became engaged at the price of one hundred foreskins of the Philistines.' <sup>15</sup> Ishbaal sent and took her from her husband Paltiel the son of Laish. <sup>16</sup> But her husband went with her, weeping as he walked behind her all the way to Bahurim. Then Abner said to him, 'Go back home!' So he went back.

**17** Abner sent word to the elders of Israel, saying, 'For some time past you have been

seeking David as king over you. <sup>18</sup> Now then bring it about; for the LORD has promised David: Through my servant David I will save my people Israel from the hand of the Philistines, and from all their enemies.' <sup>19</sup> Abner also spoke directly to the Benjaminites; then Abner went to tell David at Hebron all that Israel and the whole house of Benjamin were ready to do.

20 When Abner came with twenty men to David at Hebron, David made a feast for Abner and the men who were with him. <sup>21</sup> Abner said to David, 'Let me go and rally all Israel to my lord the king, in order that they may make a covenant with you, and that you may reign over all that your heart desires.' So David dismissed Abner, and he went away in peace.

### **Abner Is Killed by Joab**

22 Just then the servants of David arrived with Joab from a raid, bringing much spoil with them. But Abner was not with David at Hebron, for David had dismissed him, and he had gone away in peace. <sup>23</sup> When Joab and all the army that was with him came, it was told Joab, 'Abner son of Ner came to the king, and he has dismissed him, and he has gone away in peace.' <sup>24</sup> Then Joab went to the king and said, 'What have you done? Abner came to you; why did you dismiss him, so that he got away? <sup>25</sup> You know that Abner son of Ner came to deceive you, and to learn your comings and goings and to learn all that you are doing.'

26 When Joab came out from David's presence, he sent messengers after Abner, and they brought him back from the cistern of Sirah; but David did not know about it. <sup>27</sup> When Abner returned to Hebron, Joab took him aside in the gateway to speak with him privately, and there he stabbed him in the stomach. So he died for shedding the blood of Asahel, Joab's brother. <sup>28</sup> Afterwards, when David heard of it, he said, 'I and my kingdom are for ever guiltless before the LORD for the blood of Abner son of Ner. <sup>29</sup> May the guilt fall on the head of Joab, and on all his father's house; and may the house of Joab never be without one who has a discharge, or who is leprous, or who holds a spindle, or who falls by the sword, or who lacks food!' <sup>30</sup> So Joab and his brother Abishai murdered Abner because he had killed their brother Asahel in the battle at Gibeon.

31 Then David said to Joab and to all the people who were with him, 'Tear your clothes, and put on sackcloth, and mourn over Abner.' And King David followed the bier. <sup>32</sup> They buried Abner at Hebron. The king lifted up his voice and wept at the

grave of Abner, and all the people wept. <sup>33</sup>The king lamented for Abner, saying, 'Should Abner die as a fool dies?

<sup>34</sup>Your hands were not bound,  
your feet were not fettered;  
as one falls before the wicked  
you have fallen.'

And all the people wept over him again. <sup>35</sup>Then all the people came to persuade David to eat something while it was still day; but David swore, saying, 'So may God do to me, and more, if I taste bread or anything else before the sun goes down!' <sup>36</sup>All the people took notice of it, and it pleased them; just as everything the king did pleased all the people. <sup>37</sup>So all the people and all Israel understood that day that the king had no part in the killing of Abner son of Ner. <sup>38</sup>And the king said to his servants, 'Do you not know that a prince and a great man has fallen this day in Israel? <sup>39</sup>Today I am powerless, even though anointed king; these men, the sons of Zeruah, are too violent for me. The LORD pay back the one who does wickedly in accordance with his wickedness!'

### **Ishbaal Assassinated**

**4**When Saul's son Ishbaal heard that Abner had died at Hebron, his courage failed, and all Israel was dismayed. <sup>2</sup>Saul's son had two captains of raiding bands; the name of one was Baanah, and the name of the other Rechab. They were sons of Rimmon, a Benjaminite from Beeroth—for Beeroth is considered to belong to Benjamin. <sup>3</sup>(Now the people of Beeroth had fled to Gittaim and are there as resident aliens to this day).

**4** Saul's son Jonathan had a son who was crippled in his feet. He was five years old when the news about Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel. His nurse picked him up and fled; and, in her haste to flee, it happened that he fell and became lame. His name was Mephibosheth.

**5** Now the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, Rechab and Baanah, set out, and about the heat of the day they came to the house of Ishbaal, while he was taking his noonday rest. <sup>6</sup>They came inside the house as though to take wheat, and they struck him in the stomach; then Rechab and his brother Baanah escaped. <sup>7</sup>Now they had come into the house while he was lying on his couch in his bedchamber; they attacked him, killed him, and beheaded him. Then they took his head and travelled

by way of the Arabah all night long.<sup>8</sup> They brought the head of Ishbaal to David at Hebron and said to the king, 'Here is the head of Ishbaal, son of Saul your enemy who sought your life; the LORD has avenged my lord the king this day on Saul and on his offspring.'

9 David answered Rechab and his brother Baanah, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, 'As the LORD lives, who has redeemed my life out of every adversity,<sup>10</sup> when the one who told me, "See, Saul is dead", thought he was bringing good news, I seized him and killed him at Ziklag—this was the reward I gave him for his news.<sup>11</sup> How much more then, when wicked men have killed a righteous man on his bed in his own house! And now shall I not require his blood at your hand, and destroy you from the earth?'<sup>12</sup> So David commanded the young men, and they killed them; they cut off their hands and feet, and hung their bodies beside the pool at Hebron. But the head of Ishbaal they took and buried in the tomb of Abner at Hebron.

### **David Anointed King of All Israel**

5 Then all the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron, and said, 'Look, we are your bone and flesh.'<sup>2</sup> For some time, while Saul was king over us, it was you who led out Israel and brought it in. The LORDSaid to you: It is you who shall be shepherd of my people Israel, you who shall be ruler over Israel.'<sup>3</sup> So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron; and King David made a covenant with them at Hebron before the LORD, and they anointed David king over Israel.<sup>4</sup> David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned for forty years.<sup>5</sup> At Hebron he reigned over Judah for seven years and six months; and at Jerusalem he reigned over all Israel and Judah for thirty-three years.

### **Jerusalem Made Capital of the Combined Kingdom**

6 The king and his men marched to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, who said to David, 'You will not come in here, even the blind and the lame will turn you back'—thinking, 'David cannot come in here.'<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, David took the stronghold of Zion, which is now the city of David.<sup>8</sup> David had said on that day, 'Whoever wishes to strike down the Jebusites, let him get up the water shaft to attack the lame and the blind, those whom David hates.' Therefore it is said, 'The

blind and the lame shall not come into the house.’<sup>9</sup> David occupied the stronghold, and named it the city of David. David built the city all around from the Millo inwards.<sup>10</sup> And David became greater and greater, for the LORD, the God of hosts, was with him.

11 King Hiram of Tyre sent messengers to David, along with cedar trees, and carpenters and masons who built David a house.<sup>12</sup> David then perceived that the LORD had established him king over Israel, and that he had exalted his kingdom for the sake of his people Israel.

13 In Jerusalem, after he came from Hebron, David took more concubines and wives; and more sons and daughters were born to David.<sup>14</sup> These are the names of those who were born to him in Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon,<sup>15</sup> Ibhar, Elishua, Nepheg, Japhia,<sup>16</sup> Elishama, Eliada, and Eliphelet.

### **Philistine Attack Repulsed**

17 When the Philistines heard that David had been anointed king over Israel, all the Philistines went up in search of David; but David heard about it and went down to the stronghold.<sup>18</sup> Now the Philistines had come and spread out in the valley of Rephaim.<sup>19</sup> David inquired of the LORD, ‘Shall I go up against the Philistines? Will you give them into my hand?’ The LORD said to David, ‘Go up; for I will certainly give the Philistines into your hand.’<sup>20</sup> So David came to Baal-perazim, and David defeated them there. He said, ‘The LORD has burst forth against my enemies before me, like a bursting flood.’ Therefore that place is called Baal-perazim.<sup>21</sup> The Philistines abandoned their idols there, and David and his men carried them away.

22 Once again the Philistines came up, and were spread out in the valley of Rephaim.<sup>23</sup> When David inquired of the LORD, he said, ‘You shall not go up; go round to their rear, and come upon them opposite the balsam trees.’<sup>24</sup> When you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees, then be on the alert; for then the LORD has gone out before you to strike down the army of the Philistines.’<sup>25</sup> David did just as the LORD had commanded him; and he struck down the Philistines from Geba all the way to Gezer.

### **David Brings the Ark to Jerusalem**

**6** David again gathered all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand.<sup>2</sup> David and all the people with him set out and went from Baale-judah, to bring up from there the ark of God, which is called by the name of the LORD of hosts who is enthroned on the cherubim.<sup>3</sup> They carried the ark of God on a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill. Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, were driving the new cart<sup>4</sup> with the ark of God; and Ahio went in front of the ark.<sup>5</sup> David and all the house of Israel were dancing before the LORD with all their might, with songs and lyres and harps and tambourines and castanets and cymbals.

**6** When they came to the threshing-floor of Nacon, Uzzah reached out his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen shook it.<sup>7</sup> The anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah; and God struck him there because he reached out his hand to the ark; and he died there beside the ark of God.<sup>8</sup> David was angry because the LORD had burst forth with an outburst upon Uzzah; so that place is called Perez-uzzahto this day.<sup>9</sup> David was afraid of the LORD that day; he said, 'How can the ark of the LORD come into my care?'<sup>10</sup> So David was unwilling to take the ark of the LORD into his care in the city of David; instead David took it to the house of Obed-edom the Gittite.<sup>11</sup> The ark of the LORD remained in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite for three months; and the LORD blessed Obed-edom and all his household.

**12** It was told King David, 'The LORD has blessed the household of Obed-edom and all that belongs to him, because of the ark of God.' So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom to the city of David with rejoicing;<sup>13</sup> and when those who bore the ark of the LORD had gone six paces, he sacrificed an ox and a fatling.<sup>14</sup> David danced before the LORD with all his might; David was girded with a linen ephod.<sup>15</sup> So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet.

**16** As the ark of the LORD came into the city of David, Michal daughter of Saul looked out of the window, and saw King David leaping and dancing before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart.

**17** They brought in the ark of the LORD, and set it in its place, inside the tent that David had pitched for it; and David offered burnt-offerings and offerings of well-being before the LORD.<sup>18</sup> When David had finished offering the burnt-offerings and the offerings of well-being, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of

hosts,<sup>19</sup> and distributed food among all the people, the whole multitude of Israel, both men and women, to each a cake of bread, a portion of meat, and a cake of raisins. Then all the people went back to their homes.

20 David returned to bless his household. But Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, 'How the king of Israel honoured himself today, uncovering himself today before the eyes of his servants' maids, as any vulgar fellow might shamelessly uncover himself!' <sup>21</sup>David said to Michal, 'It was before the LORD, who chose me in place of your father and all his household, to appoint me as prince over Israel, the people of the LORD, that I have danced before the LORD.<sup>22</sup> I will make myself yet more contemptible than this, and I will be abased in my own eyes; but by the maids of whom you have spoken, by them I shall be held in honour.'<sup>23</sup> And Michal the daughter of Saul had no child to the day of her death.

### **God's Covenant with David**

**7** Now when the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, <sup>2</sup>the king said to the prophet Nathan, 'See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent.'<sup>3</sup> Nathan said to the king, 'Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you.'

4 But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan: <sup>5</sup>Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? <sup>6</sup>I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. <sup>7</sup>Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, 'Why have you not built me a house of cedar?' <sup>8</sup>Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; <sup>9</sup>and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. <sup>10</sup>And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, <sup>11</sup>from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. <sup>12</sup>When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with

your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come forth from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. <sup>13</sup>He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever. <sup>14</sup>I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me. When he commits iniquity, I will punish him with a rod such as mortals use, with blows inflicted by human beings. <sup>15</sup>But I will not take my steadfast love from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you. <sup>16</sup>Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure for ever before me; your throne shall be established for ever. <sup>17</sup>In accordance with all these words and with all this vision, Nathan spoke to David.

### **David's Prayer**

18 Then King David went in and sat before the LORD, and said, 'Who am I, O Lord GOD, and what is my house, that you have brought me thus far? <sup>19</sup>And yet this was a small thing in your eyes, O Lord GOD; you have spoken also of your servant's house for a great while to come. May this be instruction for the people, O Lord GOD! <sup>20</sup>And what more can David say to you? For you know your servant, O Lord GOD! <sup>21</sup>Because of your promise, and according to your own heart, you have wrought all this greatness, so that your servant may know it. <sup>22</sup>Therefore you are great, O LORD God; for there is no one like you, and there is no God besides you, according to all that we have heard with our ears. <sup>23</sup>Who is like your people, like Israel? Is there another nation on earth whose God went to redeem it as a people, and to make a name for himself, doing great and awesome things for them, by driving out before his people nations and their gods? <sup>24</sup>And you established your people Israel for yourself to be your people for ever; and you, O LORD, became their God. <sup>25</sup>And now, O LORD God, as for the word that you have spoken concerning your servant and concerning his house, confirm it for ever; do as you have promised. <sup>26</sup>Thus your name will be magnified for ever in the saying, "The LORD of hosts is God over Israel"; and the house of your servant David will be established before you. <sup>27</sup>For you, O LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, have made this revelation to your servant, saying, "I will build you a house"; therefore your servant has found courage to pray this prayer to you. <sup>28</sup>And now, O Lord GOD, you are God, and your words are true, and you have promised this good thing to your servant; <sup>29</sup>now therefore may it please you to bless the house of your servant, so that it may continue for ever before you; for you, O Lord GOD, have spoken, and with your blessing shall the house of your servant be blessed for ever.'

## David's Wars

**8** Some time afterwards, David attacked the Philistines and subdued them; David took Metheg-ammah out of the hand of the Philistines.

**2** He also defeated the Moabites and, making them lie down on the ground, measured them off with a cord; he measured two lengths of cord for those who were to be put to death, and one length for those who were to be spared. And the Moabites became servants to David and brought tribute.

**3** David also struck down King Hadadezer son of Rehob of Zobah, as he went to restore his monument at the river Euphrates. <sup>4</sup>David took from him one thousand seven hundred horsemen, and twenty thousand foot-soldiers. David hamstringed all the chariot horses, but left enough for a hundred chariots. <sup>5</sup>When the Arameans of Damascus came to help King Hadadezer of Zobah, David killed twenty-two thousand men of the Arameans. <sup>6</sup>Then David put garrisons among the Arameans of Damascus; and the Arameans became servants to David and brought tribute. The LORD gave victory to David wherever he went. <sup>7</sup>David took the gold shields that were carried by the servants of Hadadezer, and brought them to Jerusalem. <sup>8</sup>From Betah and from Berothai, towns of Hadadezer, King David took a great amount of bronze.

**9** When King Toi of Hamath heard that David had defeated the whole army of Hadadezer, <sup>10</sup>Toi sent his son Joram to King David, to greet him and to congratulate him because he had fought against Hadadezer and defeated him. Now Hadadezer had often been at war with Toi. Joram brought with him articles of silver, gold, and bronze; <sup>11</sup>these also King David dedicated to the LORD, together with the silver and gold that he dedicated from all the nations he subdued, <sup>12</sup>from Edom, Moab, the Ammonites, the Philistines, Amalek, and from the spoil of King Hadadezer son of Rehob of Zobah.

**13** David won a name for himself. When he returned, he killed eighteen thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt. <sup>14</sup>He put garrisons in Edom; throughout all Edom he put garrisons, and all the Edomites became David's servants. And the LORD gave victory to David wherever he went.

## David's Officers

15 So David reigned over all Israel; and David administered justice and equity to all his people. <sup>16</sup>Joab son of Zeruiah was over the army; Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was recorder; <sup>17</sup>Zadok son of Ahitub and Ahimelech son of Abiathar were priests; Seraiah was secretary; <sup>18</sup>Benaiah son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and the Pelethites; and David's sons were priests.

### **David's Kindness to Mephibosheth**

**9** David asked, 'Is there still anyone left of the house of Saul to whom I may show kindness for Jonathan's sake?' <sup>2</sup>Now there was a servant of the house of Saul whose name was Ziba, and he was summoned to David. The king said to him, 'Are you Ziba?' And he said, 'At your service!' <sup>3</sup>The king said, 'Is there anyone remaining of the house of Saul to whom I may show the kindness of God?' Ziba said to the king, 'There remains a son of Jonathan; he is crippled in his feet.' <sup>4</sup>The king said to him, 'Where is he?' Ziba said to the king, 'He is in the house of Machir son of Ammiel, at Lo-debar.' <sup>5</sup>Then King David sent and brought him from the house of Machir son of Ammiel, at Lo-debar. <sup>6</sup>Mephibosheth son of Jonathan son of Saul came to David, and fell on his face and did obeisance. David said, 'Mephibosheth!' He answered, 'I am your servant.' <sup>7</sup>David said to him, 'Do not be afraid, for I will show you kindness for the sake of your father Jonathan; I will restore to you all the land of your grandfather Saul, and you yourself shall eat at my table always.' <sup>8</sup>He did obeisance and said, 'What is your servant, that you should look upon a dead dog such as I am?'

**9** Then the king summoned Saul's servant Ziba, and said to him, 'All that belonged to Saul and to all his house I have given to your master's grandson. <sup>10</sup>You and your sons and your servants shall till the land for him, and shall bring in the produce, so that your master's grandson may have food to eat; but your master's grandson Mephibosheth shall always eat at my table.' Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants. <sup>11</sup>Then Ziba said to the king, 'According to all that my lord the king commands his servant, so your servant will do.' Mephibosheth ate at David's table, like one of the king's sons. <sup>12</sup>Mephibosheth had a young son whose name was Mica. And all who lived in Ziba's house became Mephibosheth's servants. <sup>13</sup>Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem, for he always ate at the king's table. Now he was lame in both his feet.

## The Ammonites and Arameans Are Defeated

**10** Some time afterwards the king of the Ammonites died, and his son Hanun succeeded him. <sup>2</sup>David said, 'I will deal loyally with Hanun son of Nahash, just as his father dealt loyally with me.' So David sent envoys to console him concerning his father. When David's envoys came into the land of the Ammonites, <sup>3</sup>the princes of the Ammonites said to their lord Hanun, 'Do you really think that David is honouring your father just because he has sent messengers with condolences to you? Has not David sent his envoys to you to search the city, to spy it out, and to overthrow it?' <sup>4</sup>So Hanun seized David's envoys, shaved off half the beard of each, cut off their garments in the middle at their hips, and sent them away. <sup>5</sup>When David was told, he sent to meet them, for the men were greatly ashamed. The king said, 'Remain at Jericho until your beards have grown, and then return.'

**6** When the Ammonites saw that they had become odious to David, the Ammonites sent and hired the Arameans of Beth-rehob and the Arameans of Zobah, twenty thousand foot-soldiers, as well as the king of Maacah, one thousand men, and the men of Tob, twelve thousand men. <sup>7</sup>When David heard of it, he sent Joab and all the army with the warriors. <sup>8</sup>The Ammonites came out and drew up in battle array at the entrance of the gate; but the Arameans of Zobah and of Rehob, and the men of Tob and Maacah, were by themselves in the open country.

**9** When Joab saw that the battle was set against him both in front and in the rear, he chose some of the picked men of Israel, and arrayed them against the Arameans; <sup>10</sup>the rest of his men he put in charge of his brother Abishai, and he arrayed them against the Ammonites. <sup>11</sup>He said, 'If the Arameans are too strong for me, then you shall help me; but if the Ammonites are too strong for you, then I will come and help you. <sup>12</sup>Be strong, and let us be courageous for the sake of our people, and for the cities of our God; and may the LORD do what seems good to him.' <sup>13</sup>So Joab and the people who were with him moved forward into battle against the Arameans; and they fled before him. <sup>14</sup>When the Ammonites saw that the Arameans fled, they likewise fled before Abishai, and entered the city. Then Joab returned from fighting against the Ammonites, and came to Jerusalem.

**15** But when the Arameans saw that they had been defeated by Israel, they gathered themselves together. <sup>16</sup>Hadadezer sent and brought out the Arameans who were beyond the Euphrates; and they came to Helam, with Shobach the commander of

the army of Hadadezer at their head. <sup>17</sup>When it was told to David, he gathered all Israel together, and crossed the Jordan, and came to Helam. The Arameans arrayed themselves against David and fought with him. <sup>18</sup>The Arameans fled before Israel; and David killed of the Arameans seven hundred chariot teams and forty thousand horsemen, and wounded Shobach the commander of their army, so that he died there. <sup>19</sup>When all the kings who were servants of Hadadezer saw that they had been defeated by Israel, they made peace with Israel, and became subject to them. So the Arameans were afraid to help the Ammonites any more.

Other Reading: 2 Samuel 13-20 (Consequences of David's personal failings)

The story of Amnon and Tamar in 2 Samuel 13 proves especially difficult:

### **Amnon and Tamar**

**13** Some time passed. David's son Absalom had a beautiful sister whose name was Tamar; and David's son Amnon fell in love with her. <sup>2</sup>Amnon was so tormented that he made himself ill because of his sister Tamar, for she was a virgin and it seemed impossible to Amnon to do anything to her. <sup>3</sup>But Amnon had a friend whose name was Jonadab, the son of David's brother Shimeah; and Jonadab was a very crafty man. <sup>4</sup>He said to him, 'O son of the king, why are you so haggard morning after morning? Will you not tell me?' Amnon said to him, 'I love Tamar, my brother Absalom's sister.' <sup>5</sup>Jonadab said to him, 'Lie down on your bed, and pretend to be ill; and when your father comes to see you, say to him, "Let my sister Tamar come and give me something to eat, and prepare the food in my sight, so that I may see it and eat it from her hand."' <sup>6</sup>So Amnon lay down, and pretended to be ill; and when the king came to see him, Amnon said to the king, 'Please let my sister Tamar come and make a couple of cakes in my sight, so that I may eat from her hand.'

<sup>7</sup> Then David sent home to Tamar, saying, 'Go to your brother Amnon's house, and prepare food for him.' <sup>8</sup>So Tamar went to her brother Amnon's house, where he was lying down. She took dough, kneaded it, made cakes in his sight, and baked the cakes. <sup>9</sup>Then she took the pan and set them out before him, but he refused to eat. Amnon said, 'Send out everyone from me.' So everyone went out from him. <sup>10</sup>Then

Amnon said to Tamar, 'Bring the food into the chamber, so that I may eat from your hand.' So Tamar took the cakes she had made, and brought them into the chamber to Amnon her brother. <sup>11</sup>But when she brought them near him to eat, he took hold of her, and said to her, 'Come, lie with me, my sister.' <sup>12</sup>She answered him, 'No, my brother, do not force me; for such a thing is not done in Israel; do not do anything so vile! <sup>13</sup>As for me, where could I carry my shame? And as for you, you would be as one of the scoundrels in Israel. Now therefore, I beg you, speak to the king; for he will not withhold me from you.' <sup>14</sup>But he would not listen to her; and being stronger than she was, he forced her and lay with her.

<sup>15</sup>Then Amnon was seized with a very great loathing for her; indeed, his loathing was even greater than the lust he had felt for her. Amnon said to her, 'Get out!' <sup>16</sup>But she said to him, 'No, my brother; for this wrong in sending me away is greater than the other that you did to me.' But he would not listen to her. <sup>17</sup>He called the young man who served him and said, 'Put this woman out of my presence, and bolt the door after her.' <sup>18</sup>(Now she was wearing a long robe with sleeves; for this is how the virgin daughters of the king were clothed in earlier times.) So his servant put her out, and bolted the door after her. <sup>19</sup>But Tamar put ashes on her head, and tore the long robe that she was wearing; she put her hand on her head, and went away, crying aloud as she went.

[So much of that story remains tragically relatable to modern parallels](#)

<sup>20</sup>Her brother Absalom said to her, 'Has Amnon your brother been with you? Be quiet for now, my sister; he is your brother; do not take this to heart.' So Tamar remained, a desolate woman, in her brother Absalom's house. <sup>21</sup>When King David heard of all these things, he became very angry, but he would not punish his son Amnon, because he loved him, for he was his firstborn. <sup>22</sup>But Absalom spoke to Amnon neither good nor bad; for Absalom hated Amnon, because he had raped his sister Tamar.

### **Absalom Avenges the Violation of His Sister**

<sup>23</sup>After two full years Absalom had sheepshearers at Baal-hazor, which is near Ephraim, and Absalom invited all the king's sons. <sup>24</sup>Absalom came to the king, and said, 'Your servant has sheepshearers; will the king and his servants please go with your servant?' <sup>25</sup>But the king said to Absalom, 'No, my son, let us not all go, or else we will be burdensome to you.' He pressed him, but he would not go but gave him

his blessing.<sup>26</sup> Then Absalom said, 'If not, please let my brother Amnon go with us.' The king said to him, 'Why should he go with you?'<sup>27</sup> But Absalom pressed him until he let Amnon and all the king's sons go with him. Absalom made a feast like a king's feast.<sup>28</sup> Then Absalom commanded his servants, 'Watch when Amnon's heart is merry with wine, and when I say to you, "Strike Amnon", then kill him. Do not be afraid; have I not myself commanded you? Be courageous and valiant.'<sup>29</sup> So the servants of Absalom did to Amnon as Absalom had commanded. Then all the king's sons rose, and each mounted his mule and fled.

30 While they were on the way, the report came to David that Absalom had killed all the king's sons, and not one of them was left.<sup>31</sup> The king rose, tore his garments, and lay on the ground; and all his servants who were standing by tore their garments.<sup>32</sup> But Jonadab, the son of David's brother Shimeah, said, 'Let not my lord suppose that they have killed all the young men the king's sons; Amnon alone is dead. This has been determined by Absalom from the day Amnon raped his sister Tamar.'<sup>33</sup> Now therefore, do not let my lord the king take it to heart, as if all the king's sons were dead; for Amnon alone is dead.'

34 But Absalom fled. When the young man who kept watch looked up, he saw many people coming from the Horonaim road by the side of the mountain.<sup>35</sup> Jonadab said to the king, 'See, the king's sons have come; as your servant said, so it has come about.'<sup>36</sup> As soon as he had finished speaking, the king's sons arrived, and raised their voices and wept; and the king and all his servants also wept very bitterly.

37 But Absalom fled, and went to Talmai son of Ammihud, king of Geshur. David mourned for his son day after day.<sup>38</sup> Absalom, having fled to Geshur, stayed there for three years.<sup>39</sup> And the heart of the king went out, yearning for Absalom; for he was now consoled over the death of Amnon.