

2 Samuel



Introduction notes and prep questions

Wednesday evening small groups

Summer 2020

The purpose of this booklet

This booklet is to help us prepare for small group Bible studies, and therefore to get the most out of studying 2 Samuel. In light of the Covid-19 lockdown, small groups will be meeting online this term.

The questions in this booklet are more comprehensive than normal: we recognise that the online format is more difficult than face-to-face group discussions, so being *thoughtfully and prayerfully* prepared is more helpful than ever.

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Small Group Dates: April - July 2020

Date	Meeting
Wed 22 Apr	Introduction to 2 Samuel
Mon 27 Apr	Prayer Night
Wed 29 Apr	2 Samuel 1-4
Wed 6 May	2 Samuel 5-10
Wed 13 May	2 Samuel 11-13
Wed 20 May	2 Samuel 14-16
Wed 27 May	Half Term
Wed 3 Jun	2 Samuel 17-20
Wed 10 Jun	2 Samuel 21-24
Wed 17 Jun	2 Samuel review #1
Wed 24 Jun	2 Samuel review #2
Mon 6 Jul	Prayer Night

Illustrations

By Campbell Patterson

Introduction to 2 Samuel

NB: 1 & 2 Samuel were originally one book!

1. What is Samuel about?

God will establish his Messianic-King, who needs to be:



...humble, obedient and patient in suffering



...sinless, wise, competent and eternal



2. How does 2 Samuel say this?

Ch1-10 **Rise:** David's tough road to becoming king is enabled by God

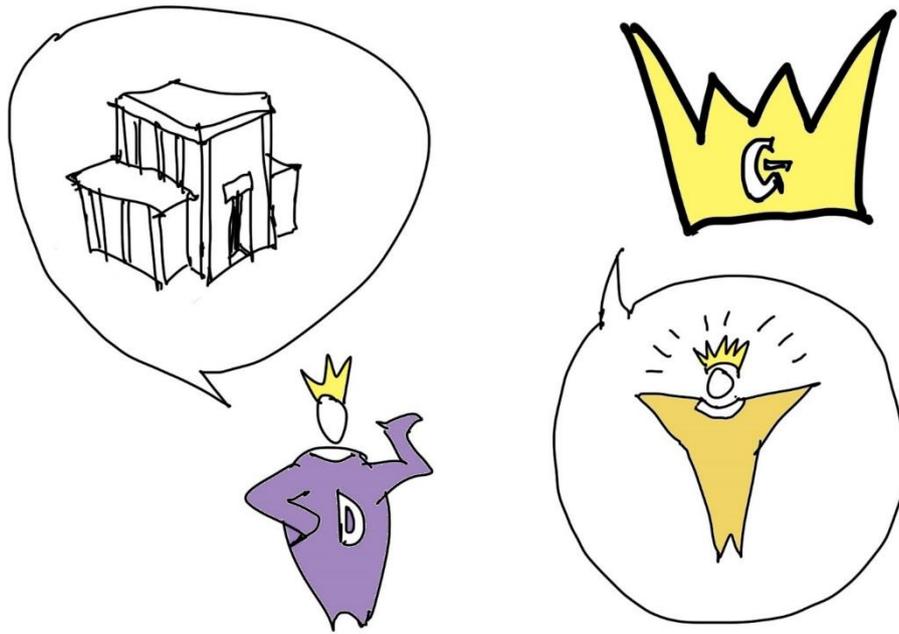
Ch11-20 **Fall:** David's sin leads to God cursing his reign

Ch21-24 **Verdict:** See the limitations of a human king compared to God

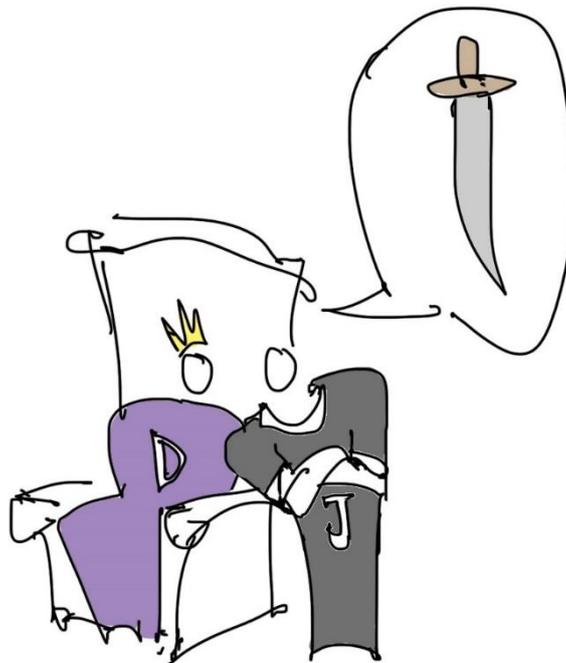


*Israel celebrate the ark of God finally coming to Jerusalem
(2 Samuel 6)*

Introduction to 2 Samuel

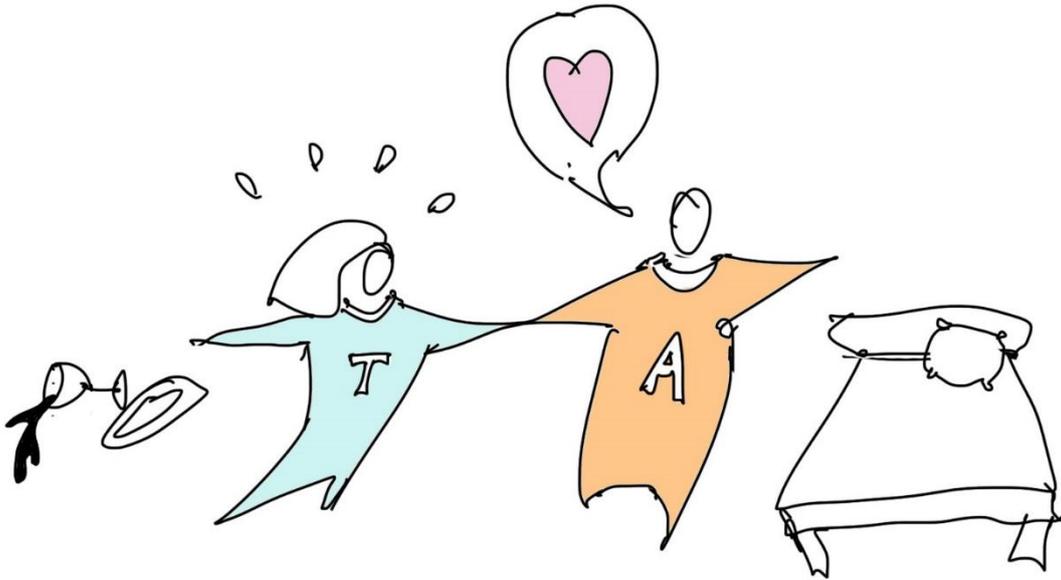


*David: "Let me build you a house"
God: "No, I'll build **you** a house"
(2 Samuel 7)*

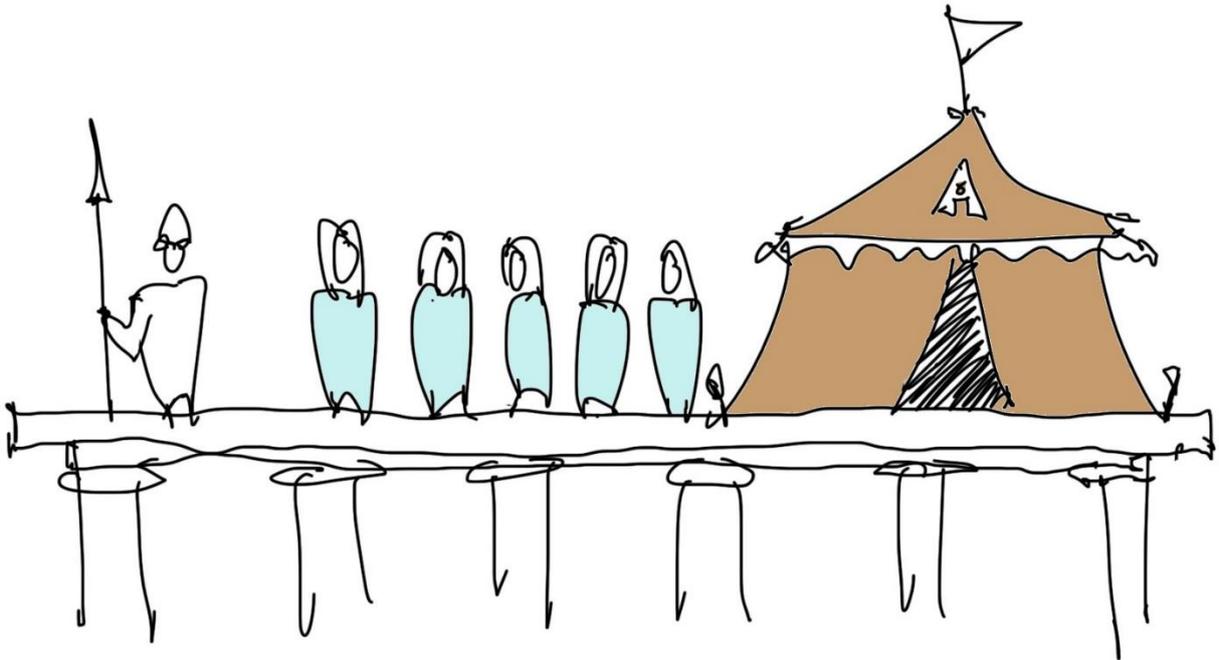


*"Joab, please **handle** the Uriah situation..."
(2 Samuel 11)*

Introduction to 2 Samuel



“No, my brother, do not violate me...!”
(2 Samuel 13)



Absalom went in to his father’s concubines in the sight of all Israel
(2 Samuel 16)

Introduction to 2 Samuel

3. How do we apply 2 Samuel?

- Ch1-10 **Rise:** David's tough road to becoming king is enabled by God
- Ch11-20 **Fall:** David's sin leads to God cursing his reign
- Ch21-24 **Verdict:** See the limitations of a human king compared to God

From Ch21-24:

- Realise how difficult the role of King is for any human
- Look forward to an infinitely able, sinless, wise king who reigns justly, perfectly and powerfully (cf. Isaiah 9 & 11)

4. Helpful tips

a. Reading 2 Samuel

The way the narrative works is much less (i) asserting that we need a king, but much more (ii) describing in messy detail what our eternal king will not be like, thus creating a longing for Jesus' return to rule perfectly.

b. Applying 'King'

When Jesus returns, he will be king over a physical nation (the church) in a perfect new world. This is very unlike our experience now, so we ought to understand the category of king – the king has several roles:



1. Govern: to rule God's people with justice and equity (Isaiah 11)



2. Teach: to bring the word of God to God's people (Isaiah 30)



3. Protect: to ensure peace for God's people (Isaiah 9)

Ch1-4 prep questions

1:1-16

David executes the Amalekite who claims to have killed Saul. To what extent do you think this is a wise/foolish decision? Why?

1:17-27

David teaches Judah a lamentation for Saul and Jonathan. Given Saul was trying to kill him, what do you make of David's feelings towards Saul?

2:1-11

David is anointed king over Judah, and Ish-bosheth king over Israel. How do you feel about David not automatically becoming king over all Israel now that Saul has died?

2:12-32

There is blood spilled in the conflict between David's men (Joab, Abishai, Asahel) and Ish-bosheth's men (Abner). How do you feel about the way the battle plays out?

Ch1-4 prep questions

3:1-11

Ish-bosheth falls out with Abner, who was growing in influence. In terms of Abner's character, what do you make of him in these verses? (What do you think happened between Abner and Ish-bosheth's concubine?)

3:12-30

Abner offers to defect to David, and David accepts. Joab kills Abner. What do you make of David and Joab's choices in these verses?

3:31-39

David publicly laments Abner's death. In what ways does this seem a wise/foolish thing?

4:1-12

Ish-bosheth is assassinated by Rechab and Baanah, who David executes. Compared to 1:1-16, to what extent do you think this is a wise/foolish decision? Why?

Ch5-10 prep questions

5:1-25

David becomes king over all Israel, and 'became greater and greater, for the LORD, the God of hosts, was with him' (v10). What do you make of the various ways that God backs David in this chapter?

6:1-15

David plans to bring the ark of God to Jerusalem, but Uzzah is struck dead by God in the process. What do you make of David's attitude in these verses?

6:16-23

David celebrates the arrival of the ark of the LORD, but Michal despises him. Why do you think the author includes this tension in the story?

7:1-17

David asks to build God a house (a temple) but God escalates his response by promising to build David a house (an eternal King from David's line). Why do you think the author sets out the dialogue in this particular manner?

Ch5-10 prep questions

7:18-29

David prays to God in response. What do you make of David's prayer?

8:1-18

In these verses we have a montage of David's successes as King. How does the author emphasise the extent of David's achievements?

9:1-13

David shows kindness to Mephibosheth, Jonathan's son and Saul's grandson. How do you feel about David's actions in these verses?

10:1-19

David battles against Ammon and Syria and prevails. How does the author emphasise the extent of David's victory?

Ch11-13 prep questions

11:1-27

David sleeps with Bathsheba and arranges the assassination of her husband Uriah. To what extent do you think David's actions are a deliberate cover-up?

How do you feel about David's actions in this chapter?

How does Uriah's conduct make you feel about David?

12:1-31

David's sin is denounced by Nathan, and David receives God's curses. How does Nathan's parable condemn David?

How do you feel about David's response to Nathan?

How do we see God's curses and God's mercy play out in this chapter?

Ch11-13 prep questions

13:1-19

Amnon tricks his half-sister Tamar into his room and rapes her. How does the author highlight the sinister motives of Amnon?

How do you feel about reading this account?

13:20-39

Absalom takes in his sister Tamar, then murders his half-brother Amnon in retaliation. Absalom subsequently flees Jerusalem. How do you feel about the situation with Absalom, Tamar and Amnon?

How do you feel about David's role in all of this?

Ch14-16 prep questions

14:1-24

Joab gets a woman from Tekoa to tell David a parable, persuading David to bring Absalom back to Jerusalem. What does Joab's decision to use the woman from Tekoa suggest about David's way of ruling the country?

What does David's response in v19 suggest about the working dynamics between David and Joab?

14:25-33

Absalom does not talk to David until two years after returning. What do you make of David's dealings with Absalom once he returns to Jerusalem?

15:1-12

Absalom starts a conspiracy to take over David's throne, and after four years he launches his coup at Hebron. Ahithophel, David's counsellor, defects to Absalom. What does Absalom's coup suggest about the strength of David's hold on the throne?

15:13-23

David flees Jerusalem quickly with his servants to escape Absalom. How do you feel about seeing David leave in this particular way?

Ch14-16 prep questions

15:24-37

When the ark of God is brought out to David, he returns it to Jerusalem. David then sends Hushai as a rival advisor to Ahithophel. To what extent do you feel David has turned a corner in his attitude since assassinating Uriah?

16:1-4

Ziba claims that Mephibosheth, Jonathan's son and Saul's grandson, intends to reclaim the throne. David gives Mephibosheth's estate to Ziba. How would it have felt for David to hear that Mephibosheth, who was crippled in his feet, has launched a coup against him?

16:5-14

In Bahurim, Shimei curses David and David doesn't retaliate. To what extent do you think David's actions in these verses are right/wrong?

16:15-23

Hushai, David's spy, has successfully joined Absalom's team of advisors. Ahithophel, David's ex-advisor, suggests Absalom lies with David's ten concubines in the sight of all Israel, in fulfilment of God's curses (12:11). What does Ahithophel's advice achieve?

How are we left feeling about David's reign by the end of Ch16?

Ch17-20 prep questions

17:1-14

Ahithophel and Hushai give Absalom differing advice about how to fight David. From David's point of view, what are the pros and cons of Ahithophel and Hushai's advice?

17:15-23

In Bahurim, David's spies are close to being caught as they give David vital information from Hushai. How strong/weak do you consider David's grasp of his throne at this point? Why?

17:24-29

When Ahithophel sees his advice was not heeded, he hangs himself. Shobi, Machir and Barzillai provide generously for David and his people. How do we see both God's curses (12:10-11) and God's mercy in these events?

18:1-18

David commands Joab, Abishai and Ittai to lead his army. Many Israelites die, and Absalom is killed by Joab. What do you make of the manner in which David's army wins?

18:19-33

Ahimaaz and a Cushite bring news to David that Absalom is dead. David grieves publicly. What do you make of the way that Joab, Ahimaaz and the Cushite handle telling David of Absalom's death?

How much sympathy do you have for David in these verses?

Ch17-20 prep questions

19:1-10

Joab rebukes David harshly for mourning the death of Absalom, whom David's men has fought against. Israel do not yet recognise David as king. How right/wrong is Joab to speak to David like this?

19:11-15

David replaces Joab with Amasa, the former head of Absalom's army and Joab's nephew. How wise/foolish do you consider this decision?

19:16-40

David encounters Shimei, Mephibosheth and Barzillai on his way back to Jerusalem. How do you feel about each encounter?

Shimei:

Mephibosheth:

Barzillai:

19:41-20:2

Israel are angry with the way they perceive Judah to be taken away from them, and then Sheba launches a coup against David, taking Israel away with him. How secure do we feel David's grasp of his throne is from these verses?

20:3-13

David returns to Jerusalem to his ten concubines, and commands Amasa to battle against Sheba. Joab stealthily assassinates Amasa. How are we left feeling about the situations of the concubines, Joab and Amasa?

20:14-26

Sheba hides in Abel, and Joab sieges it. A woman then throws Sheba's head over the wall in exchange for Joab's withdrawal. How glorious/victorious does this victory feel for David?

Ch21-24 prep questions

Bible scholars are fairly unanimous that there is a clear ABCCBA structure to these chapters. Fill in the table below:

		Summary of text	Lesson learnt
A	21:1-14		
B	21:15-22		
C	22:1-51		
C	23:1-7		
B	23:8-39		
A	24:1-25		

Review #1 prep questions

Try to summarise the events of each passage we've studied over the past term

Passage	Summary	Lesson
Ch 1-4		Rise: David's tough road to becoming king is enabled by God
Ch 5-10		
Ch 11-13		Fall: David's sin leads to God cursing his reign
Ch 14-16		
Ch 17-20		
Ch 21-24		Verdict: See the limitations of a human king compared to God

What have you personally learned about God's King after having studied 2 Samuel?

