

For the second time, David was a man on the run from someone who had no right to rule as king. This time it was all the more bitter, because David was on the run from his own son!

Ironically, the long, flowing hair that Absalom took such pride in became his own downfall. It got caught in a tree, and as he hung there helplessly, Joab and his men slew him. Once the news came to David, the day turned from victory to a day of mourning. David wept, shaking with violent emotion over the loss of his son, as he realized it was another step in the penalty that his sin brought to him.

This is where we pick up our study this week.

DAY 1

From Mourning to Movement **2 SAMUEL 19:1-14**

Please read 2 Samuel 19:1-14 and answer the following questions.

[1] How was Joab by his harshness able to reach through David's grief and save his reign (verses 5-7)?

[2] What dispute was going on among the Israelites over David (verses 9-10)?

[3] How did David take initiative in reaching out to Judah, and what other change did he want accomplished (verses 11-13)? How did the people of Judah respond to this (verse 14)?

EXPANDED QUESTIONS

[1] As Warren Wiersbe well put it, Joab had to hurt David to help him get past his grief.¹ Sometimes a friend may be drowning in sorrow, or in self, or sin. It is our painful duty to demonstrate the right way to go and to try and help them restore their relationship with God and others. What do the following passages tell us about what a friend is willing to do for another?

Proverbs 27:5-6

Galatians 6:1–2

[2] It is interesting that Joab accused David of loving his enemies and hating his friends, and that his actions had disgraced, or more literally, withered and broken the spirits of his men;² *The Message* paraphrases it, "knocked the wind out of your loyal servants." Let's put some perspective into this. It was David's succumbing to grief that did this, not his having love for his enemies. After all, Jesus, upon the cross, in great pain and suffering, prayed: "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do" (Luke 23:34). What did He tell us about our enemies in Matthew 5:43–48?

Daily Life Point: David had all but let his grief destroy what was left of his life and kingship. It was the faithful wound of his friend that saved him from it. Consider how Charles Swindoll well said it:

Soon thereafter, David needed a friend. . . . He couldn't get past his grief. He was caught in an emotional vortex that paralyzed him. Sometimes grief does that to you. It's like you're in a dungeon and somebody locks the door from the outside, and you can't get out. . . . And all of a sudden, a friend finds a way to climb in. A friend like Joab.³

How can you be this sort of friend to another person stuck in such a horrid place in their life? Or, if this describes you, how can you turn to those in your group to help pull you out of your dungeon of despair and into a place of usefulness? Share some thoughts here and pray for one another that you may be freed from being crushed by life's circumstances to serve and live anew.

MEMORY PASSAGE

This week we will memorize Psalm 40:1–2. Review the passage several times throughout each day. By the end of the week, you should have it memorized.

I waited patiently for the Lord; and He inclined to me, and heard my cry. He also brought me up out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my steps. (Psalm 40:1–2 NKJV)

DAY 2

Grace Extended
2 SAMUEL 19:15-30

Please Read 2 Samuel 19:15-30 and answer the following questions.

[1] The people of Judah came, united in heart, and met David at Gilgal to escort him across the Jordan. Of all people, who was among the first to come out to meet David, and what did he do (verses 16-20)?

[2] What was Abishai's advice about this man, and what did David promise (verses 21-23)?

Note: On his deathbed, David ordered the execution of Shimei, but it was for a different reason ultimately (see 1 Kings 2:8-9, 36-46).

[3] In what condition was Mephibosheth, and what strange settlement did David offer (verses 24-29)? What humble and amazing response did Mephibosheth have (verse 30)?

EXPANDED QUESTIONS

[1] We too were a lot like Shimei before we knew the Lord—hopelessly lost in our sin and rebellion against God. What do 1 Corinthians 15:10 and Ephesians 2:8-10, 13-18 remind you about God's amazing grace toward you?

[2] As Ivor Powell pointed out, many of David's decisions at this time don't make a lot of sense, and it's almost as though he was on a course of unconscious self-destruction.⁴ Maybe Mephibosheth's humble reaction to this helped David grasp hold of an important truth: that there is nothing more important than the true King, just as nothing is more important in our lives than letting Christ "take it all." Anything else we have in our lives is a side benefit! What do the following passages tell us about this?

Matthew 6:31-34

Romans 14:8

James 4:10

Daily Life Point: God's grace is indeed an amazing thing, and we too should let Him reign as Lord of all areas of our lives. Mephibosheth learned that lesson. As Vance Havner once said, "We can never be blessed until we learn that we can bring nothing to Christ but our need;" and as an anonymous person well said, "God owes us nothing. Anything this side of hell is pure grace."⁵

What has been your personal reaction to these truths today? Is Christ truly Lord at home and in your heart? Have you realized the depths of the grace He has extended to you? Have you found freedom from your spiritual disabilities in surrender to Him as King, as Mephibosheth found freedom despite his physical limitations by allowing the true King to reign? Share some of the ways this has impacted you below and with your group.

MEMORY PASSAGE

Fill in the blanks by memory. Then review the passage several times throughout the week.

I waited _____ for the Lord; and He inclined to me, and heard my _____. He also brought me up out of a horrible _____, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a _____, and established my steps. (Psalm 40:1–2 NKJV)

DAY 3

Tensions Running High
2 SAMUEL 17:15–29

Please Read 2 Samuel 19:31–43 and answer the following questions.

[1] When David asked Barzillai to come back to Jerusalem with him, how did he respond, and what did he offer instead that David gladly accepted (verses 34–38)?

Note: Chimham was probably the son of Barzillai, and it's likely that David gave him a part of his own property in Bethlehem (see Jeremiah 41:17).⁶

[2] After a blessed parting with Barzillai, some strife arose. What conflict stirred up at this time (verses 41–42)?

[3] What was the outcome of this debate (verse 43)?

EXPANDED QUESTIONS

[1] Barzillai set an example as someone who kept on giving without expectation of return, even when he wasn't physically able to do so. What confidence did Paul find when he was at his lowest point physically in his spiritual race (2 Corinthians 12:9–10)? Where does the power to be another Barzillai come from (2 Corinthians 13:4)?

[2] Satan will always try to bring division and disrupt a work that God is doing to restore lives, because he wants to tarnish the glorification of God. How do we need to be on guard all the more against such things (Hebrews 12:12–15)?

Daily Life Point: One of Satan's favorite tactics is to divide and conquer. He whispered in the ears of the Israelites, telling them that David and the people of Judah were despising them. The people of Judah responded with harsh words.⁷

What are some of the experiences you have had in such circumstances? How can you be a godly person in the way you react to such situations, like Barzillai? What are some helpful things you can share with your group about avoiding such problems in the future?

MEMORY PASSAGE

Fill in the blanks by memory. Then review the passage several times throughout the week.

I waited _____ for the Lord; and He
_____ to me, and heard my _____. He also
brought me up out of a horrible _____, out of the miry _____,
and set my feet upon a _____, and established my steps. (Psalm
40:1–2 NKJV)

DAY 4

An Israeli Rebellion 2 SAMUEL 20:1–13

Please Read 2 Samuel 20:1–13 and answer the following questions.

[1] Another self-opportunist arose at this time when things started turning sour. What did this man do, and what was the result of this action (verses 1–2)?

[2] Upon David's return to Jerusalem, he took his ten violated concubines and kept them shut up in seclusion the rest of their lives like widows. Sadly, not only had David damaged one woman's life (Bathsheba), he now ruined the lives of these ten women!⁸ After this, David turned his attention to the rebel, Sheba. Amasa was sent on an errand but was late, so what did David order (verses 5–7)?

[3] What "greeting" did Joab have for Amasa, and how did he use it to more or less win back his job (verses 9–13)?

EXPANDED QUESTIONS

[1] Sheba was described as a "rebel" in the NKJV. This term literally means "man of Belial," someone worthless, wicked, or a destroyer; in fact, this actually would later become a proper name for Satan!⁹ He was an opportunist who sought a name for himself. We have the choice to walk in foolishness and promote ourselves, or we can be loyal to the King and try to defend the church against such things, starting with our own lives. How do the following passages direct us?

Romans 12:10–18

2 Corinthians 10:3–5

Ephesians 4:30–32

Philippians 2:1–4

Daily Life Point: A great tragedy in churches today is that too many people are dividing the whole into camps of rebels instead of faithfully trying to serve and glorify God. We have too many who want to get rid of an opponent by assassinating his or her character, and seeking to promote themselves! Read the two following quotations and list some things you gleaned from the passages about standing strong against such disunity that only brings a blot on the church:

"Worldliness is rampant in the church. The devil is not fighting churches, he is joining them! He isn't persecuting Christianity, he is professing it."

"The existence of over 9,000 Christian denominations throughout the world is an insult to Christ and a hindrance to the spread of the kingdom of God."¹⁰

MEMORY PASSAGE

Fill in the blanks by memory. Then review the passage several times throughout the week.

**I waited _____ for the Lord; and He
_____ to me, and heard my _____. He also
brought me up out of a horrible _____, out of the miry _____,
and set my _____ upon a _____, and established my
_____.** (Psalm 40:1–2 NKJV)

DAY 5

The Death of a Rebel
2 SAMUEL 20:14-26

Please Read 2 Samuel 20:14-26 and answer the following questions.

[1] Joab and his men finally tracked down Sheba to the town of Abel and sought to batter the city gate down to attack him. However, who intervened, and what did this person have to say to the angry Joab (verses 16-19)?

[2] What did Joab request of them, and how was the issue resolved (verses 20-22)?

[3] What are some of the details we are given about those serving in David's "cabinet" after his restoration to the kingship (verses 23-26)?

EXPANDED QUESTIONS

[1] This woman who intervened for her people was described as wise. Indeed she was for her brave actions spared many from death and destruction when the one they wanted would be handed over to Joab and his men. A truly wise person will be a peacemaker, seeking to deliver God's people and bring Him glory. How did wise thinking and actions serve her in such a time like this (Proverbs 31:26; Ecclesiastes 7:19)?

[2] Furthermore, what do these passages tell us about being a peacemaker like this woman?

Psalm 34:14

Proverbs 12:20

Matthew 5:5-9

Romans 14:19

Galatians 5:22-23

Daily Life Point: We need to be peacemakers, but we also need to cut out of our midst anything that would bring disaster. What are some things from the study that will allow you to be a peacemaker as well as take drastic action to deal with the flesh, the pride of life, and anything else that would keep you from walking in peaceful victory? Please record some thoughts here to share with your group.

MEMORY PASSAGE

Write out this week's passage by memory. Then review the passage throughout the week.

Psalm 40:1-2 NKJV

DAY 6

Pursuing God's Heart

[1] As was pointed out, and as Warren Wiersbe also confirmed, "The one thing that's missing in the entire Absalom experience is David seeking the mind of the Lord as he made decisions."¹¹ What are some of the things that you personally learned about handling such situations, or how you can be used in the life of a friend who is allowing emotions to dominate their life rather than walking in victory? Please record some thoughts here to share with your group; they may be life saving, like Joab's were to David.

[2] We saw this week that God is with us and helps us through all that we face. We also saw that God can use us to provide for those who are in need!

What are some ways that God spoke to you about these things this week? What have you realized that you need to do differently? Please record your thoughts here.

[3] Lastly, please record here any special way that the Lord encouraged or helped you personally this week as you studied. Please share it with others in your group so they can benefit too.

MEMORY PASSAGE

From memory, write out this week's passage below. Then review the passage throughout the day. Be prepared to share the verse with your group.

Psalm 40:1-2:

PARTING THOUGHTS

Charles Swindoll indicated that Psalm 40 was quite possibly written by David to record the experiences he went through in all these things.¹² The fact that David indeed could fail and falter so and get back on track is an encouragement to us all. As James Boice well said, "muddy times may be the experience of the greatest saints and slimy pits the lot even of kings and preachers."¹³ C. H. Spurgeon also well pointed out that this psalm parallels what Christ endured for us,¹⁴ and it is in fact quoted as referring to Christ and His suffering for us in Hebrews 10:5-10. Let's close by meditating on this wonderful psalm and draw renewed strength as we do so.

Psalm 40

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

I waited patiently for the Lord;
And He inclined to me,
And heard my cry.
He also brought me up out of a horrible pit,
Out of the miry clay,
And set my feet upon a rock,
And established my steps.
He has put a new song in my mouth—
Praise to our God;
Many will see it and fear,
And will trust in the Lord.

Blessed is that man who makes the Lord his trust,
And does not respect the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies.
Many, O Lord my God, are Your wonderful works
Which You have done;
And Your thoughts toward us
Cannot be recounted to You in order;
If I would declare and speak of them,
They are more than can be numbered.

Sacrifice and offering You did not desire;
My ears You have opened;
Burnt offering and sin offering You did not require.
Then I said, "Behold, I come;
In the scroll of the book it is written of me.
I delight to do Your will, O my God,
And Your law is within my heart."

I have proclaimed the good news of righteousness
In the great assembly;
Indeed, I do not restrain my lips,
O Lord, You Yourself know.
I have not hidden Your righteousness within my heart;
I have declared Your faithfulness and Your salvation;
I have not concealed Your lovingkindness and Your truth
From the great assembly.

Do not withhold Your tender mercies from me, O Lord;
Let Your lovingkindness and Your truth continually preserve me.
For innumerable evils have surrounded me;
My iniquities have overtaken me, so that I am not able to look up;
They are more than the hairs of my head;
Therefore my heart fails me.

Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me;
O Lord, make haste to help me!
Let them be ashamed and brought to mutual confusion
Who seek to destroy my life;
Let them be driven backward and brought to dishonor
Who wish me evil.
Let them be confounded because of their shame,

Who say to me, "Aha, aha!"

Let all those who seek You rejoice and be glad in You;
Let such as love Your salvation say continually,
"The Lord be magnified!"
But I am poor and needy;
Yet the Lord thinks upon me.
You are my help and my deliverer;
Do not delay, O my God.

NOTES

- 1 Warren W. Wiersbe, *With the Word Bible Commentary* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1993), p. 408.
- 2 Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Old Testament* (Chattanooga, Tenn.: AMG, 1994), p. 2321.
- 3 Charles R. Swindoll, *David, a Man of Passion and Destiny* (Dallas: Word Publishing, 1997), p. 248.
- 4 Ivor Powell, *David, His Life and Times* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Kregel, 1990), p. 306.
- 5 Quoted in John Blanchard, *Sifted Silver* (Darlington, England: Evangelical Press, 1995), p. 129.
- 6 John MacArthur, ed., *The MacArthur Study Bible* (Nashville: Word, 1997), p. 456.
- 7 James Strong, "A Concise Dictionary of the Words in the Hebrew Bible with Their Renderings in the Authorized English Version," in *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1890 Reprint), p. 105.
- 8 Robert D. Bergen, *1, 2 Samuel*. The New American Commentary, vol. 7 (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1996), p. 435.
- 9 Zodhiates *The Complete Word Study*, p. 2305.
- 10 Blanchard, *Sifted Silver*, p. 35, 39.
- 11 Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Restored* (Colorado Springs: Victor Books, 2002), p. 118.
- 12 Swindoll, *David*, p. 254.
- 13 James M. Boice, *Psalms*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 1994), p. 347.
- 14 C. H. Spurgeon, *The Treasury of David*, vol. 1 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, Undated Reprint), p. 235.

