



1 & 2 Samuel

May 26 - August 10, 2015

Mountain Brook Baptist Church

www.mbbc.org



1 & 2 Samuel

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Project 119 is a Bible reading initiative of Mountain Brook Baptist Church. Our hope is that every member of our church body would be encouraged in his or her relationship with Jesus Christ through the regular reading of God's Word. This reading plan covering the books of 1 & 2 Samuel is the next installment in the Project 119 series. The plan features a devotional thought for each week that will provide you with a framework for reading the assigned chapters. The plan will guide you through one chapter of 1 or 2 Samuel each day of the week and two chapters from the book of Psalms on the weekend. Since much of 1 & 2 Samuel focuses on the life of David, the psalms for the weekend are psalms composed by David. To learn more about Project 119 and to access previous plans, visit www.mbbc.org/project119.



1 Samuel 1-4
Psalm 34, 66
May 26-31, 2015
Dr. Doug Dortch

In the Hebrew Bible, 1 and 2 Samuel are bound together into one scroll and considered as a part of “The Former Prophets.” Much of these two books derive from long narratives of David’s rise from obscure shepherd boy to king of Israel, which was an ascent made possible by divine election.

The first section of 1 Samuel bridges the gap between the various judges who ruled Israel when she was a confederacy of tribes and the time when she was unified under Saul first and then David. Samuel (for whom the books are named) is the last of Israel’s judges, while also becoming the figure who introduces the era of prophecy among God’s people.

Samuel’s birth is a miraculous event in itself, which sets the stage for future victories that God will give His people, as long as they are obedient to him – a central theme in both 1 and 2 Samuel. In the beginning chapters of 1 Samuel, the primary enemy of Israel is the Philistines, a sea-faring people who have centralized leadership and technological superiority that Israel does not possess. But with Samuel’s leadership, God will enable Israel to overcome the Philistines, even when it seems that they have prevailed by capturing the Ark of God from the Israelite armies.

As you read this section, notice the importance of heeding God’s Word and the blessings that come when people then obey it. Notice also the consequences of rejecting that divine instruction. Then ask yourself, “How has God spoken to me in recent days and what evidence does my life give that I have been duly obedient?”

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

TUESDAY, MAY 26	1 SAMUEL 1
WEDNESDAY, MAY 27	1 SAMUEL 2
THURSDAY, MAY 28	1 SAMUEL 3
FRIDAY, MAY 29	1 SAMUEL 4
SATURDAY, MAY 30	PSALM 34
SUNDAY, MAY 31	PSALM 66



1 Samuel 5-9

Psalms 20, 23

June 1-7, 2015

Wayne Splawn

"Keep Austin Weird" is a phrase that you will find printed on billboards, t-shirts, hats and various other items all across the city of Austin, Texas. The slogan was originally adopted by the Austin Independent Business Alliance to promote local businesses. The idea is to highlight businesses that are unique to Austin and serve to set it apart from other cities across the nation.

When we read the Old Testament, we find that God calls his people to be set apart from all the other peoples of the earth. For example, in Leviticus 20:26, we read the following: "You shall be holy to me, for I the Lord am holy and have separated you from the peoples of the earth that you should be mine" (ESV). In a manner of speaking, you might say that the people of God are supposed to be weird when compared with those who do not know the Lord. However, you do not have to be a biblical scholar to know that much of the Old Testament contains the story of Israel's failure to be distinct from the nations around them. Rather than being holy and set apart, they repeatedly follow the religious and cultural norms of the peoples around them.

In 1 Samuel 8, we find one example of the Israelites' failure to be distinct. In verses 4-5, the Israelites ask Samuel to appoint for them a king. As you read these verses, pay careful attention to the motive behind their request.

Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah and said to him, "Behold, you are old and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now appoint for us a king to judge us like all the nations."

(1 Samuel 8:4-5 ESV)

Why do the Israelites want a king? They want to be like the other nations. Samuel is dismayed by the Israelites' request, but the Lord assures him that they have not rejected Samuel. Instead, they have rejected the Lord as king.

One point of continuity between the Old and New Testaments is the challenge God's people face to be holy and set apart to the Lord. In Matthew 5:13-16, Jesus says that we are to be salt and light in our world. That is, we are to bear witness to the difference that Jesus makes in our lives. Unfortunately, we are often like the Israelites in our inability to be distinct from those around us. Rather than living according to the principles of the Kingdom of God, we are tempted to live according to the principles of the world. Rather than embracing our calling to be weird, we allow our desire to be accepted by others to influence our beliefs and behaviors. And, if we are not careful, the world will have a hard time seeing the difference that Jesus makes in our lives.
(continued on the next page)



1 Samuel 5-9

Psalm 20, 23

June 1-7, 2015

Wayne Splawn

How do we overcome our temptation to conform to the world? The answer is that we must focus on the condition of our hearts. In 1 Samuel 7:1-2, the Israelites lament their unfaithfulness to the Lord. How does Samuel respond to their words of repentance? In verses 3-4, Samuel tells them to focus on the condition of their hearts. They practice idolatry and conform to the standards of the world because their hearts are not fully surrendered to God. If they do not love God they will not live for him. Efforts at behavior modification always fall short. Our desire to be different and set apart to the Lord must flow from hearts that are full of love for God.

As you read 1 Samuel this week, take some time to reflect on your life. Are you set apart to the Lord and distinct from those around you who do not know God? If the Lord reveals areas of your life where you have conformed to the patterns of this world, repent and ask God to help you return to him with all of your heart. Ask the Lord to help you see the beauty and surpassing value of the salvation that you have received through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Ask God to help you love him more than anyone or anything else in this world so that you will seek to conform your life to his will.

This weekend you will be reading Psalm 20 and Psalm 23. In these passages of Scripture, David expresses his complete confidence in the Lord's ability to provide for his needs. One of the reasons we sometimes turn to idols is that we do not trust that God will meet our needs. As you read these psalms, ask God to remind you of his desire and ability to provide for your every need.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

MONDAY, JUNE 1	1 SAMUEL 5
TUESDAY, JUNE 2	1 SAMUEL 6
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3	1 SAMUEL 7
THURSDAY, JUNE 4	1 SAMUEL 8
FRIDAY, JUNE 5	1 SAMUEL 9
SATURDAY, JUNE 6	PSALM 20
SUNDAY, JUNE 7	PSALM 23



1 Samuel 10-14

Psalm 24, 139

June 8-14, 2015

Mary Splawn

Have you ever been sidelined in a game for some reason. Many times, athletes are sidelined because of their lack of performance or because of an injury. But sometimes, it's because they don't play by the rules of the game. They cheat or take performance enhancing drugs and when they are discovered, the punishment is the bench.

Being sidelined can happen in all areas of life, not just sports. Almost daily in the news, there are reports of someone who has been removed from the center of activity in business, government, or religious leadership. In many instances, leaders are sidelined because of some type of character issue or moral mistake.

In 1 Samuel 10-14, a lot happens, including the rise and fall of Saul as king. As you read, pay attention to why Saul is sidelined as king. As 1 Samuel 13:13-14 notes, Saul disobeyed the command of God (see also 10:8). Instead of submitting to the prophet Samuel's instructions to wait on him for 7 days before making a sacrifice to the Lord, Saul hastily sacrifices to God. Ultimately, it was an issue of the heart. Saul's heart was not fully devoted to God and so God would seek out someone else to be king.

As I first read chapter 13, I felt sorry for Saul. Indeed, he waited 7 days, just not 7 full days. The people had started to scatter and he got nervous that he wouldn't have any people to help him in battle with the Philistines. So, he panicked and tried to rely on religious ritual to gain God's favor.

But, as I reread the text, I was reminded of Samuel's words in chapter 12 warning Saul and the people to always obey the voice of the Lord. God wants our complete obedience, not only when convenient. He wants our trust, even when everything seems to be out of control. He wants us to "fear the Lord and serve him faithfully with all [of our] heart" (1 Samuel 12:24).

Saul was suspended from service in God's kingdom because of his disobedience. His actions should stand as a witness before us! Take time to reflect: How often have you acted in response to the opinions of those around you instead of being true to the commands of God? How often have you made hasty decisions instead of seeking the counsel of God through Scripture and prayer?

God wants full obedience to his commands. He wants us to have a heart that serves Him only. And, if we don't keep God's plan at the center of our life, we risk being sidelined like Saul from ministry opportunities to glorify God. (continued on the next page)



1 Samuel 10-14

Psalms 24, 139

June 8-14, 2015

Mary Splawn

The good news is that in Christ, we have freedom from sin, but not freedom to sin. As in the days of Samuel and Saul, God still desires a heart that is fully dedicated to him. And so, through Christ, may this be our prayer this week, "Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!" (Psalm 139:23-24).

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

MONDAY, JUNE 8	1 SAMUEL 10
TUESDAY, JUNE 9	1 SAMUEL 11
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 10	1 SAMUEL 12
THURSDAY, JUNE 11	1 SAMUEL 13
FRIDAY, JUNE 12	1 SAMUEL 14
SATURDAY, JUNE 13	PSALM 24
SUNDAY, JUNE 14	PSALM 139



1 Samuel 15-19

Psalm 59,9

June 15-21, 2015

Hayden Walker

Our relationships to others are like a spider's web: different strands of life connect us to many different people. I suppose that is how only six degrees of separation are said to link any two people. We are not only linked to many people, but we also play a variety of roles in different relationships. For example, you might be an employee, a wife, a daughter, a boss, an aunt, a mother, an acquaintance, a sibling and a best friend all at once. We are connected to many people in many roles.

Relationships are like a spider's web in another way too: sometimes they are sticky. If you've ever walked through a big web, you know that the tickling feeling remains after the last sticky strand has been picked away. A complicated relationship can do the same thing to us, lingering with ebbs and flows of presence in our lives. It surely will not take six degrees of separation for you to think of a relationship in your own life with enduring challenges.

These chapters of 1 Samuel are some of the most loved stories of David, including his anointing as king and the defeat of David and Goliath. But the relationships in these stories have not been glossed over to be neat and nice in Scripture. The messiness of each relationship shows through in a way that communicates authenticity. The overarching thread that we can see in each of David's relationships displayed through these chapters is his trust in God above humans. What a lesson of freedom we would all learn if we found our identity in Christ alone!

Let's look at five different relationships highlighted in these chapters:

1. David and his father

Although his father Jesse left him out of the initial presentation before Samuel, it was David whom God had chosen (16:11-14). Why had Jesse not called for David with the rest of his sons? Maybe Jesse did not think David was fit for kingship. Later, David obeyed his father's instructions to check on his brothers at war (17:17-18).

2. David and his brothers

Perhaps some jealousy set in when Samuel anointed David as king. The brothers certainly did not want David around when Goliath was taunting Israel (17:28-30). We should be glad that David trusted God instead of the words of his brothers in this instance. If he had let Eliab's words discourage him, he might have never fought Goliath.

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1 Samuel 15-19

Psalm 59, 9

June 15-21, 2015

Hayden Walker

3. David and Jonathan

David had a special spiritual friendship with Jonathan, Saul's son. Jonathan recognized God's anointing for David to be king, a throne that would be Jonathan's by blood. Jonathan acknowledged this by giving David his robe and armor (18:4). This friendship reminds me of Paul and Timothy. Paul said in Philippians 2:20 that he had no one else like Timothy! David and Jonathan shared a similarly devoted friendship. May we be friends who sacrificially love one another!

4. David and Michal

While we do not know a plethora of information about David's marriage to Michal, we do know that she loved him (18:28). Michal even went to elaborate measures and put herself in danger by helping David to escape from her father, Saul, as he sought to kill David (19:11-17).

5. David and Saul

Finally, the relationship between David and Saul is quite complex. Saul was David's employer, father-in-law and king. There are times in these chapters when Saul is kind to David (16:22). Other times, Saul is overcome with jealousy and rage as he seeks to kill David (18:11, 19:11). David was able to live without fearing Saul, because he trusted God. Some of the psalms David wrote can be connected to specific events in his life; Psalm 59 is one such psalm. It is the glimpse into David's thoughts and prayers during the incidents recorded in I Samuel 19. David trusted in God's steadfast love and protection! Perhaps his praise after being delivered sounded like his words in Psalm 9!

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

MONDAY, JUNE 15	1 SAMUEL 15
TUESDAY, JUNE 16	1 SAMUEL 16
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17	1 SAMUEL 17
THURSDAY, JUNE 18	1 SAMUEL 18
FRIDAY, JUNE 19	1 SAMUEL 19
SATURDAY, JUNE 20	PSALM 59
SUNDAY, JUNE 21	PSALM 9



1 Samuel 20-24

Psalms 25, 101

June 22-28, 2015

Dr. Doug Dortch

By now we have been introduced to David, a man "after God's own heart." However, God's choice of David doesn't assure him an easy path to the throne of Israel. Israel already has a king in Saul, who is jealous of David and works to keep him from taking his rightful place. Nonetheless, David does nothing but prove his loyalty to both God and Saul, even when David has the chance to take Saul's life and escape his fugitive life.

As you read this section, ponder the source of David's confidence. Take note of how he trusts God instead of taking matters into his own hand. Then think about ways you can imitate David's faith in your own life so that you, too, might become a person "after God's own heart."

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

MONDAY, JUNE 22	1 SAMUEL 20
TUESDAY, JUNE 23	1 SAMUEL 21
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 24	1 SAMUEL 22
THURSDAY, JUNE 25	1 SAMUEL 23
FRIDAY, JUNE 26	1 SAMUEL 24
SATURDAY, JUNE 27	PSALM 25
SUNDAY, JUNE 28	PSALM 101



1 Samuel 25-29

Psalm 40,138

June 29-July 5, 2015

Wayne Splawn

We all know what is like for someone to wrong us. Maybe it is something relatively insignificant such as being cut off in traffic. Or, perhaps someone offends you in a much more significant way. Whether the offense is slight or great, our initial response is often the same: we want revenge.

In 1 Samuel 25, David struggles with the desire for revenge. He and his men have provided protection for the shepherds of a man named Nabal. Then, David receives word that Nabal is shearing his sheep and preparing for a feast. David sends some of his men to Nabal and requests that he send David and his men provisions. David reasons this is the least Nabal could do in return for David's kindness. However, Nabal does not respond in the way David expects. Nabal mocks David and denies his request.

When David receives word of Nabal's response, he is outraged. He immediately commands his men to strap on their swords. At this point, David has only one thing on his mind: revenge. David is so offended by Nabal's response that he decides to take matters into his own hands.

Meanwhile, one of Nabal's servants learns of David's plan and goes to Nabal's wife, Abigail, for help. Abigail goes behind her husband's back and sends David supplies in hopes that David will relent of his plan to seek revenge against Nabal's household. Abigail's plan works and Nabal's household is spared.

In 1 Samuel 25:32-34, David breaks out in a song of praise. If you read the verses carefully, you will find that David praises God for two things in particular. First, he praises God that Abigail's actions have kept him from incurring bloodguilt. Had David followed through on his plan, he would have been guilty of murder. Second, David praises the Lord because Abigail's gifts have kept him from seeking salvation by his own hand. One of the worst things about David's plan is that he stopped trusting the Lord and to meet his needs.

We have much to learn from this episode in David's life. First, when you are angry because someone has hurt you, take a moment to step back from the situation. In James 1:20, we read, "the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God" (ESV). The anger we feel when others wrong us will never lead to righteous actions.

Second, we learn that we are not qualified to be the judge and jury for someone who has hurt us. In his anger, David decided to kill every male in Nabal's household. David's plan for revenge goes far beyond any sensible notion of justice. In our anger, we simply are not capable of thinking clearly and reasonably.

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1 Samuel 25-29

Psalm 40,138

June 29-July 5, 2015

Wayne Splawn

Third, we see the importance of our belief in God's judgment. The Scriptures are clear that one day God will return and judge those who have opposed him and his purposes in this world. You and I can patiently suffer injustice and oppression from others because we are confident that one day the Lord will bring justice in his time.

Finally, we are reminded of the example of Jesus Christ. In 1 Peter 1:23-24, we read:

When [Jesus] was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. (ESV)

When Jesus was reviled on the cross, he did not seek to vindicate himself. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. Jesus believed that God the Father would vindicate him. What was the result of Jesus' response to his enemies? Jesus accomplished our salvation so that we might be healed.

When another person wrongs you, look to the example of Jesus. Remember that even while you were his enemy, Jesus laid down his life on the cross so that you might be saved. Ask God to give you great affection for Christ and to help you marvel at the forgiveness you have received through his sacrifice. Thank the Lord that he has not given you the punishment you deserve, but has instead, extended grace and mercy to you. Ask the Lord to empower you by the Holy Spirit to extend the same grace and mercy to others and to help you trust that God will bring justice in his time.

This weekend you will be reading Psalm 40 and Psalm 138. Each of these psalms speaks of the importance of waiting upon the Lord and trusting that he will act on our behalf in his perfect time. Ask God to help you grow in your ability to wait for and trust in him.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

MONDAY, JUNE 29	1 SAMUEL 25
TUESDAY, JUNE 30	1 SAMUEL 26
WEDNESDAY, JULY 1	1 SAMUEL 27
THURSDAY, JULY 2	1 SAMUEL 28
FRIDAY, JULY 3	1 SAMUEL 29
SATURDAY, JULY 4	PSALM 40
SUNDAY, JULY 5	PSALM 138



1 Samuel 30 - 2 Samuel 3, Psalm 22, 32

July 6 – July 12

Mary Splawn

This week, we'll finish up 1 Samuel and begin reading 2 Samuel. We are also transitioning from Saul as leader to David as king. When you have a moment, take a look at the two charts at the end of this devotional which help break down 1 and 2 Samuel.

One theme that is always a speed bump for me in Old Testament passages is polygamy (see 1 Samuel 30:5 and 2 Samuel 3:2-5).

"Nowhere in the Bible did God ever command polygamy or tell anyone to marry more than one wife. Rather, God temporarily allowed polygamy to occur (he did not give any general prohibition against it) without giving it any explicit moral approval. Nevertheless, in the OT narratives, whenever a man has two or more wives, it seems to lead to trouble (see Genesis 16; 29–31; 1 Samuel 1)."¹

Monogamy is considered as the ideal for marriage in the first discussion of the subject in the Bible. Look at Genesis 2:24: "That is why a man [one man] leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife [not wives], and they become one flesh." The picture of monogamous marriage is also a metaphor for the relationship between Christ and the church [singular], his bride. In addition, the requirement that an elder be "husband of one wife" (1 Tim. 3:2) excludes polygamists from being elders in the New Testament church.

I have always struggled with reading about polygamy in the Old Testament, especially as it refers to David, who is said to be a man after God's heart (1 Samuel 13:14, Acts 13:22). How could this be when David was a polygamist, adulterer and murderer?

When referring to David as a man after God's heart, I think the main point is that David never practiced idolatry. David was loyal to God and didn't ever worship other Gods, unlike the kings after him. Consider 1 Kings 11:4, which discusses King Solomon's divided heart and idolatry: "For when Solomon was old his wives turned away his heart after other gods, and his heart was not wholly true to the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father." While David didn't pursue other gods and was wholeheartedly devoted to God, he was a sinful man, imperfect in many ways.

In the Bible and in Jewish tradition, David is a celebrated king who has many attributes that are honorable and praiseworthy. Indeed, we should learn from David the importance of following the first commandments of God: "You shall have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:3). Yet, ultimately, David's witness is lacking; leaving us wanting someone better to follow and praise. (continued on the next page)

¹ <http://www.esvbible.org/resources/esv-study-bible/article-ethics/#ethics-article-marriage-and-sexual-morality>. See also <http://www.gotquestions.org/polygamy.html#ixzz3amf4pVJT>.



1 Samuel 30- 2 Samuel 3, Psalm 22, 32

July 6 – July 12

Mary Splawn

That someone is Jesus. Jesus was the perfect king (John 18:37), a man fully devoted to God (John 6:38), totally sinless (Hebrews 7:26), anointed by God for the purpose of saving generations of sinners like David and us (Luke 4:18) and bringing a kingdom that is not of this world (John 18:36), and an inheritance that does not perish (1 Peter 1:4)!

Take some time to consider Jesus, our King and Savior. For a creative twist, write out the letters J – E – S – U – S vertically on a piece of paper. Take a moment to ask God to help you think of words that describe Jesus that start with each letter of his name and write them out to the side. For example:

J – Just

E – Everlasting Kingdom

S – Sinless Savior

U – Unchanging

S – Son of God

Then pray using the descriptive words you have written.

Lord, we thank you that you are perfect and just, bringing an everlasting kingdom that is not of this world. Thank you that you are sinless and you are our perfect sacrifice. You are unchanging even when we are wishy-washy and easily swayed by popular opinion. Help us to seek your ways. Thank you, Jesus, Son of God, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

MONDAY, JULY 6	1 SAMUEL 30
TUESDAY, JULY 7	1 SAMUEL 31
WEDNESDAY, JULY 8	2 SAMUEL 1
THURSDAY, JULY 9	2 SAMUEL 2
FRIDAY, JULY 10	2 SAMUEL 3
SATURDAY, JULY 11	PSALM 22
SUNDAY, JULY 12	PSALM 32



1 Samuel 30- 2 Samuel 3, Psalm 22, 32

July 6 – July 12

Mary Splawn

The Book of 1 Samuel

Focus	Samuel			Saul			Saul & David									
Divisions	Samuel's Birth & Call		Samuel's Rebuilding of the Nation	Saul, First King of Israel		Saul, Disobedient & Rejected		David in the Court of Saul		David's Escape & Flight from Saul		David's Encounters With Saul	Saul's Final Downfall & Death			
	1	3	4	8	9	12	13	15	16	19	20	23	24	26	27	31
Topics	Leadership in Transition						A Newly Anointed Leader in Exile									
	From Judges to Kings						From King Saul to King David									
Place	Israel in Canaan															
Time	Approximately 60 Years															
Author	Samuel															

<http://www.swartzentover.com/cotor/bible/Bible/Bible%20Charts/1%20Samuel.htm>

The Book of 2 Samuel

Focus	David's Rise						David's Fall							
Divisions	David's Reign over a Divided Kingdom		David's Reign over a United Kingdom		David's Reign over an Enlarging Kingdom		David's Sin & God's Judgment		Absalom's Attempt to Overthrow David		David's Restoration to the throne		David's Final Words & Works	
	1	4	5	7	8	10	11	14	15	18	19	20	21	24
Topics	Triumph						Transgression		Trouble					
	Conflict in the Country						Conflict in the Court							
Place	David in Hebron		David in Jerusalem											
Time	7 ½ Years		33 Years											
Author	Samuel													

<http://www.swartzentover.com/cotor/bible/Bible/Bible%20Charts/>



2 Samuel 4-8

Psalm 29, 2

July 13-19, 2015

Hayden Walker

Puns have made a comeback among young people. For many, an important part of posting a picture on social media is coming up with a caption that creates a play on words. In II Samuel 7, we see a play on words that outshines them all!

David was at rest from war, living in a very nice house. He had the house built with the finest materials the land offered. It was in this house that David remembered that the Ark of the Covenant, which represented the presence of God, was housed only in a tent. David lived in the Ritz while God was camping. Wouldn't that prick your conscience a little? It is easy for us to look at David here and scold him. But if we take a closer look at our lives, how often do we give God the leftovers? How often do we work hard after our own pursuits, only to give God a glance after we are already dwelling in the comfort of our achievements?

David resolved that he would build a house for God, where the Ark could dwell. God, however, had a different plan. The Lord spoke to the prophet Nathan and said David would not build him a house, because he does not need one. Many Psalms express the glory of God in the earth, as you will read in Psalm 29 this week. The fullness of splendor in heaven and on earth belongs to God; he did not need David to build him a house as an afterthought. God gently reminded David that everything he had, including his kingship, was because God had given it to him.

God would not allow David to build him a house. Instead, God promised that he would build David a house (II Sam. 7:11). This would not be a structure with walls and a ceiling, David already had one of those! The house that God promised to build for David would be an eternal royal house, a dynasty. For a bit of perspective, the House of Windsor has only ruled over the United Kingdom for 98 years!

An eternal royal house must have an unbroken line of successors...or one who lives eternally. When Jesus Christ, who was from the lineage of David, ascended to heaven, he rightfully assumed his place as the eternal King, as prophesied in the coronation Psalm 2.

This has serious implications for us. For we who are in Christ have become co-heirs with him in his eternal kingdom. The house that God built for David is the house that shelters us with salvation.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

MONDAY, JULY 13	2 SAMUEL 4
TUESDAY, JULY 14	2 SAMUEL 5
WEDNESDAY, JULY 15	2 SAMUEL 6
THURSDAY, JULY 16	2 SAMUEL 7
FRIDAY, JULY 17	2 SAMUEL 8
SATURDAY, JULY 18	PSALM 29
SUNDAY, JULY 19	PSALM 2



2 Samuel 9-13

Psalms 51, 130

July 20-26, 2015

Dr. Doug Dortch

The book of 2 Samuel deals more explicitly with the reign of David, who assumed the throne of Israel upon the death of Saul and his son Jonathan. Though a man “after God’s own heart,” David is not a perfect person by any stretch of the imagination. On one hand, he shows kindness to the sole survivor of his predecessor Saul, a crippled grandson whom David protects and for whom he provides, as if he were his own. But on the other hand, David takes as his own a woman who belongs to another, and in so doing incurs the wrath of God’s prophet and is confronted with his need for God’s forgiveness, in spite of his high standing in the land.

Read this section and consider ways in which God’s mercy flows through you. Consider as well the places where you need God’s mercy because of how you are not always the person God needs you to be. Then trust God’s promise of forgiveness through Jesus Christ for those who confess and repent, and be restored to the place where God can work in you and through you in order to bring His kingdom purposes to pass.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

MONDAY, JULY 20	2 SAMUEL 9
TUESDAY, JULY 21	2 SAMUEL 10
WEDNESDAY, JULY 22	2 SAMUEL 11
THURSDAY, JULY 23	2 SAMUEL 12
FRIDAY, JULY 24	2 SAMUEL 13
SATURDAY, JULY 25	PSALM 51
SUNDAY, JULY 26	PSALM 130



2 Samuel 14-18

Psalm 3, 63

July 27- August 2, 2015

Wayne Splawn

David endured many difficulties and hardships over the course of his life. It would be hard to know which of these events was the most challenging for David, but David's relationship with Absalom has to be near the top of the list.

In 2 Samuel 14-18, we read of Absalom's attempt to overthrow his father. Absalom seeks to win the hearts of the people by calling David's love for the people into question and assuring them that he would be a more benevolent king. When he thinks that he has secured enough support, Absalom assembles an army and marches on Jerusalem. David learns of Absalom's plan and flees Jerusalem. Absalom then marches his forces out to defeat his father on the battlefield.

How would David respond to Absalom's attempts to take his throne? David seeks to defend his kingdom, but not at the expense of his son's life. He gives his men strict orders to not harm Absalom. David never gives up hope that one day Absalom will be restored to a right relationship with him. Unfortunately, one of David's men disobeys David's request and kills Absalom at a point when he is defenseless.

In 2 Samuel 18:31-33, David receives the news of his sons' death. David is deeply grieved and weeps when he hears the report. He says that he wishes he had died rather than his son. His desire for his son's restoration is so great that he would have paid any price to see it come to pass.

When I read these chapters, I am reminded of the truth that God the Father has these same feelings for those who rebel against him. The Lord longs for people to be restored to a right relationship with him and shows his deep concern for people by giving his Son so that they might be saved.

God's desire to see sinners reconciled with him is clearly seen in the story of another father and son in Luke 15. In this very familiar passage, the father never gives up hope that one day his wayward son will return home. Even though the son has disgraced his father and squandered his inheritance, the father longs for reconciliation. When the father sees his son approaching home, he is so overjoyed that he runs out to welcome him. Then, in his joy he throws a party to celebrate!

There are at least two important truths that we can take away from the story of David and Absalom. First, we are reminded of the fact that God desires for people to be restored to a right relationship with him. If you have wandered far from the Lord and rebelled against his will for you, then know that God wants to you to be reconciled to him through Christ. No matter what you have done or where you have been, God wants you to come home.

(continued on the next page)



2 Samuel 14-18

Psalm 3, 63

July 27- August 2, 2015

Wayne Splawn

Second, we are reminded that we, like our Heavenly Father, should be eager for sinners to repent and experience reconciliation. One of the most tragic parts of the parable in Luke 15 is the response of the older brother. He is mad when he learns that this father is throwing a party for his younger brother. The older brother wants justice. He wants his brother to pay for what he's done. His own self-righteousness has blinded him to the fact that he, like his brother, can only experience the blessings of his father because of mercy and grace. You and I may feel as if we have been good enough to earn God's blessings, but that is simply not the case. We are all sinners in need of grace and we should rejoice at every lost child who returns.

As you read 2 Samuel 14-18 this week, ask God to remind you of the truth of the gospel in a fresh way. Ask God to help you see that you deserve only justice and punishment, but because of Jesus Christ, you receive grace and mercy. Ask God to give you a heart that longs for all people to be restored to a right relationship with God through faith in Christ.

This weekend you will be reading Psalm 3 and Psalm 63. David most likely wrote these psalms when he was fleeing from Absalom. In the midst of his darkest moments, David looked to God for his strength and hope. Ask God to help you trust his provision in your life even in the most difficult of situations.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

MONDAY, JULY 27	2 SAMUEL 14
TUESDAY, JULY 28	2 SAMUEL 15
WEDNESDAY, JULY 29	2 SAMUEL 16
THURSDAY, JULY 30	2 SAMUEL 17
FRIDAY, JULY 31	2 SAMUEL 18
SATURDAY, AUGUST 1	PSALM 3
SUNDAY, AUGUST 2	PSALM 63



2 Samuel 19-24

Psalm 18, 103

August 3-10, 2015

Mary Splawn

A pastor friend of mine once gave me this advice, "Always begin your times with the Lord with a song of praise." He would say, "Because the Lord inhabits the praise of his people!" I believe he based his thoughts on Psalm 22:3, which in the King James Version says, "But you [God] are holy, O you that *inhabit* the praises of Israel." Another version interprets this verse a little differently by saying, "You [God] are holy, *enthroned* on the praises of Israel."

Although I don't think that singing a song of praise at the beginning of prayer is an always necessary, guaranteed formula for acquiring God's presence, I do think that singing praises to God is a wonderful way to affirm our belief and trust in Him. When we praise God, we remember that He is *enthroned* in heaven and in our hearts. And, as I have found time and again, a song of praise helps me find strength and hope in God!

Singing is recorded as a way to praise the Lord throughout the Bible. After the Exodus, Moses and Miriam sing a song of praise (Exodus 15:1-21). Also, Mary sings a song of praise to God at the conception of Jesus (Luke 1:46-55). Paul and Silas sing hymns of praise in prison (Acts 16:25), and when they are set free, the jailer and his family come to faith in Christ!

David is probably the best known singer in the Bible. He sings to the Lord as a way of reminding himself that there is a king greater than he, who is seated on the heavenly throne, to whom all rulers must bow! As David sings to God in 2 Samuel 22, he reminds himself and us of many awesome truths about God.

In this song, David says, "The Lord is my ...": Rock, Fortress, Deliverer, Refuge, Shield, Horn of Salvation, Stronghold, Savior, Lamp.

He also names many characteristics of God: Saving, Worthy of praise, Hearing, Angry (against enemies), Rescuing, Rewarding, Seeing, Faithful, Showing (revealing) himself, Shrewd, Powerful, Strong, Perfect, Pure, Flawless, Shielding (us from enemies), Giving, Gentle, Preserving, Living.¹

As you read through 2 Samuel 22 and Psalm 18, which is almost identical to 2 Samuel 22, ask God to reveal personal ways that He has shown himself to be faithful to you! In response, take time to praise Him and "tell of his excellent greatness."² Maybe you can create your own song ... or perhaps, you can sing along with someone else who has experienced the faithfulness of our God and King. (continued on the next page)

¹ Adapted from the *Life Application Study Bible*, NIV study notes concerning 2 Samuel 22 on page 485.

² Hymn lyrics from "Praise Him, Praise Him, Jesus, Our Blessed Redeemer" by Fannie Crosby. For an interesting article on Fannie Crosby, see "2015 Marks 100th Anniversary of Famous Hymn Writer's Death" in the *Alabama Baptist*, May 21, 2015, Vol 180, No. 21.



2 Samuel 19-24

Psalm 18, 103

August 3-10, 2015

Mary Splawn

Maybe you can create your own song ... or perhaps, you can sing along with someone else who has experienced the faithfulness of our God and King.

For fun: Here is a playlist with some favorite songs of praise from the staff at Mountain Brook Baptist Church. Perhaps you could play these songs and ask God to remind you of his praiseworthiness through them.

Stephen Fryrear: "No One Higher" by Aaron Schust

Kely Hatley: "God of Creation, All-Powerful" - Words by Margaret Clarkson and Music by David Allen

Joyce Johnson: "O Master Let Me Walk With Thee" - Words by Washington Gladden and Music by Calvin Hampton

Sharon Howard: "How Great thou Art" by Stuart Hine

Mary Splawn: "The Broken Beautiful" by Ellie Holcomb

Wayne Splawn: "Almighty" by Chris Tomlin

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

MONDAY, AUGUST 3	2 SAMUEL 19
TUESDAY, AUGUST 4	2 SAMUEL 20
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 5	2 SAMUEL 21
THURSDAY, AUGUST 6	2 SAMUEL 22
FRIDAY, AUGUST 7	2 SAMUEL 23
SATURDAY, AUGUST 8	PSALM 18
SUNDAY, AUGUST 9	PSALM 103
MONDAY, AUGUST 10	2 SAMUEL 24