

2 Samuel

Who, When, Where

Written by Samuel. Samuel was dedicated to God by his mother just after he was born and grew up to become the main prophet in Israel towards the end of the time of the Judges, around 1100BC. He appointed Saul and passed away during Saul's 40 year reign. Although Samuel died years before the events in this book. He is traditionally considered to be the author of the combined writing of 1 & 2 Samuel. (By the Jews). Perhaps he started it and others finished it.

2 Samuel covers the reign of David, so about 1010BC to 970BC.

This story is set mostly in and around Israel.

Summary

The continuing story of a king. A shepherd who became a warrior and was the first good king his people ever had.

A king who recognised that his success could only ever come from Yahweh.

A king who made a massive mistake, and who paid the consequence, but whom God still declared was a man after his own heart.

And in the end the story of how his sons competed and struggled for the kingdom after him, but only the one who had been chosen by Yahweh would become king.

Before You Read

What is your impression of someone who really has the heart of God? Some really holy, peaceful, quiet, calm person? A peacemaker?

How much of a child's behaviour is their own responsibility, and how much is due to their father's sin?

Key Verses

2 Samuel 5:19

David inquired of Yahweh, saying, "Shall I go up against the Philistines? Will you deliver them into my hand?"

Yahweh said to David, "Go up; for I will certainly deliver the Philistines into your hand."

David knew that the size of your army, or how well trained they are, or how good their weapons are, are not the things which determine victory in battle. The only one thing which determines victory is Yahweh himself. If he decides that you're going to win then you're going to win. If not then you're not. Period.

So if you're thinking of going into battle you need to ask him first. If you are, then off you go. If you're not, then you better start negotiating, or running.

How about you? Do you ask Yahweh whether you're going to win? Do you realise that he decides the outcome?

2 Samuel 7

David wants to build a house for Yahweh because he, (David), has a nice house but Yahweh lives in a tent.

Yahweh answers, "Did I ask you to build me a house?"

It is so easy to be influenced by what the world thinks when we are considering spiritual things. In the previous chapter Michal ended up childless for judging David's worship according to her worldly views of "what is proper".

Now David is getting the lecture from Yahweh for assuming he needs, or even wants, a house made by humans.

What would Saul have done? He would have justified why he wanted to build it. David went in and thanked Yahweh for blessing him.

2 Samuel 11:1

At the return of the year, at the time when kings go out, ... David stayed at Jerusalem.

David was king. He should have been going out to lead his soldiers. But he stayed home. Sin is like that. It will keep you from being where you should be so it can lead you to do what you shouldn't be doing. Sometimes, just being where you should be can keep you from sinning.

2 Samuel 12:9

Why have you despised Yahweh's word, to do that which is evil in his sight?

Yahweh reminded David that he had given him everything. And if that hadn't been enough he would have given him more. And yet David took something that wasn't his to take.

We could do well to be more content with what God has given us. We could do well to ask him for more before we go off and just take it.

Do you do that?

2 Samuel 15:28

... But the thing that David had done displeased Yahweh.

David might have tried to justify his actions. Sin usually tries to do that. He tried to cover them up, he tried to manipulate things to get his way.

But in the end, he had committed adultery with someone else's wife, even though as king he could have any single woman he wanted. And he had murdered her husband, an honourable man, one of his most trusted and valuable warriors.

When he had seen her bathing that first night he had no idea how far his sin would lead him and how dreadful the consequences would be.

It would be a great blessing for us if we could recognise sin early and learn to run away from it as fast as we can.

2 Samuel 16:8

Behold, you are caught by your own mischief, because you are a man of blood!

The Bible says this kind of thing many times. You will reap what you sow. It's guaranteed. How about you? Are you a person of blood, and violence, and backstabbing and betrayal? Or are you a person of peace, and forgiveness, and helping those in need?

What are you expecting to reap?

2 Samuel 17:14

Absalom and all the men of Israel said, "The counsel of Hushai the Archite is better than the counsel of Ahithophel." For Yahweh had ordained to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, to the intent that Yahweh might bring evil on Absalom.

So Absalom asked people he trusted for advice. The first gave him really good advice. The second gave him different advice. And he chose to go with the second.

Why?

Because Yahweh had decided that he would. Because Yahweh wanted to punish Absalom.

This is a powerful verse. Yahweh decides the outcomes of wars. Yahweh decides the fates of nations. Yahweh chooses kings.

2 Samuel 21:1

There was a famine in the days of David for three years, year after year; and David sought the face of Yahweh. Yahweh said, "It is for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he put the Gibeonites to death."

These Gibeonites were the descendants of the ones who had tricked Joshua into making a treaty with them by pretending to be struggling travellers.

Regardless of how they were tricked into it, Yahweh expected them to honour their word that they would not be killed.

About 300 years later Saul had wiped them out. But the consequence had not fallen on Israel until now. But now... three years of famine for the whole nation, and death for seven of Saul's descendants, and the grief that goes with that for their parents and families.

When God says there is a consequence, there **is** a consequence.

Kind of like us with our sinful rebellious lives. People think they are OK but after they die they **will** face judgement for their life choices. Even Christians - we might feel like we "got away with" some sin or other. But the consequences will come. Yeshua has dealt with the after death penalty, but sin has consequences.

2 Samuel 23:8

The list of David's mighty men. 30 of them. We think of David as a mighty warrior, and he was. But one mighty warrior does not win a battle any more than one great leader does not build a church.

It is very important to remember that we are all part of a team. We are not made to work alone.

2 Samuel 24:13

... Shall seven years of famine come to you in your land? Or will you flee three months before your foes while they pursue you? Or shall there be three days' pestilence in your land?...

Which would you choose as punishment? You sinned now your people must suffer the consequences.

David chose pestilence because he would rather suffer at the hand of Yahweh than at the hand of man.

2 Chronicles 3:1

Then Solomon began to build Yahweh's house at Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where Yahweh appeared to David his father, which he prepared in the place that David had appointed, on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.

At the end of 2 Samuel we read that David brought the threshing floor of Araunah to build an altar to Yahweh to stop the plague he was bringing on the people because David had sinned by counting them. This threshing floor was on Mt Moriah, Jerusalem.

Mt Moriah is centre stage in the drama that Yahweh is unfolding. It was where Abraham offered up Isaac. It was where the plague ended and the temple was built by Solomon.

And it was where Yeshua, son of Yahweh dealt with the penalty of the sin of all mankind.

Is anything else going to happen there?

After You Read

What verses really stood out to you?

How would you summarize this book in a sentence or two? What is it about? What is God trying to say to us?

This book has some very severe consequences for sin. Both personally for David, but also for the nation.

One of the most interesting to me is when Yahweh decided to punish Israel because Saul had attacked the Gibeonites, after Joshua had made a treaty with them hundreds of years before. Joshua was tricked into that treaty, but Yahweh still expected them to fulfil it.

The other interesting thing is that the consequences didn't come until about 500 years after Saul broke the treaty. Saul was dead. Most of the soldiers who carried out his command would have been dead. And the punishment was severe.

Do you think Yahweh should punish sin immediately?

Where would you be now if he had punished your sin as soon as you had done them? I'd be dead.