



CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT THE RELIGION

BIBLE SURVEY

THE UN-DEVOTIONAL

2 SAMUEL

Week 2

Nice Guys

Finish First

2 Samuel 8:1-18

How do you react when things are going really well in your life? _____

1. Against whom did David move first (v. 1)? What was Methag Ammah better known as (1Ch 18:1)?
2. God promised Abraham that his descendants would expand to the Euphrates River (Ge 15:18). Whom did David have to fight before he could secure this strategic area (v. 3)?
3. Who is the real secret of David's success (vs. 6, 14)? How did David honor that invisible Ally (vs. 7-12)?
4. What action made David famous throughout the region (v. 13)? _____

1. David's allegiance to God was evident to his people. Is this true in your life?
2. Verses 15-18 tell of David's capable and willing helpers. Are you known for giving credit where credit is due? Do your family and co-workers see you this way? _____

The expansion of David's kingdom raises important issues of Middle Eastern geography and military history. David's execution of two thirds of the Moabite soldiers was cruel punishment and may indicate some treachery, since the Moabites had been friendly to David earlier (1Sa 22:3-4).

Zobah (v. 3) refers to an Aramean kingdom north of Damascus. The Syrians in Damascus (8:5) themselves became known in Old Testament history as Aram. **Hamath** was another Aramean city-state about 100 miles north of Damascus and was the first important city for tradesmen or armies headed south from Babylon and Assyria. This chapter shows Israelite control over the vital trade routes that flowed between Africa and the lands of the Fertile Crescent beyond. These military moves of David would lay the groundwork for the wealth that would flow into Jerusalem in the days of David's son and successor, Solomon. The fact that David **hamstrung** the horses of the king of Zobah indicates the Israelites were still not fond of fighting battles on the open plains. Hamstringing horses disabled them from military action by cutting the sinews of the legs. Only under Solomon and Ahab would Israel field armies that would utilize horses and chariots.

OPENING

up to the Word

DIGGING

into the Word

LIVING

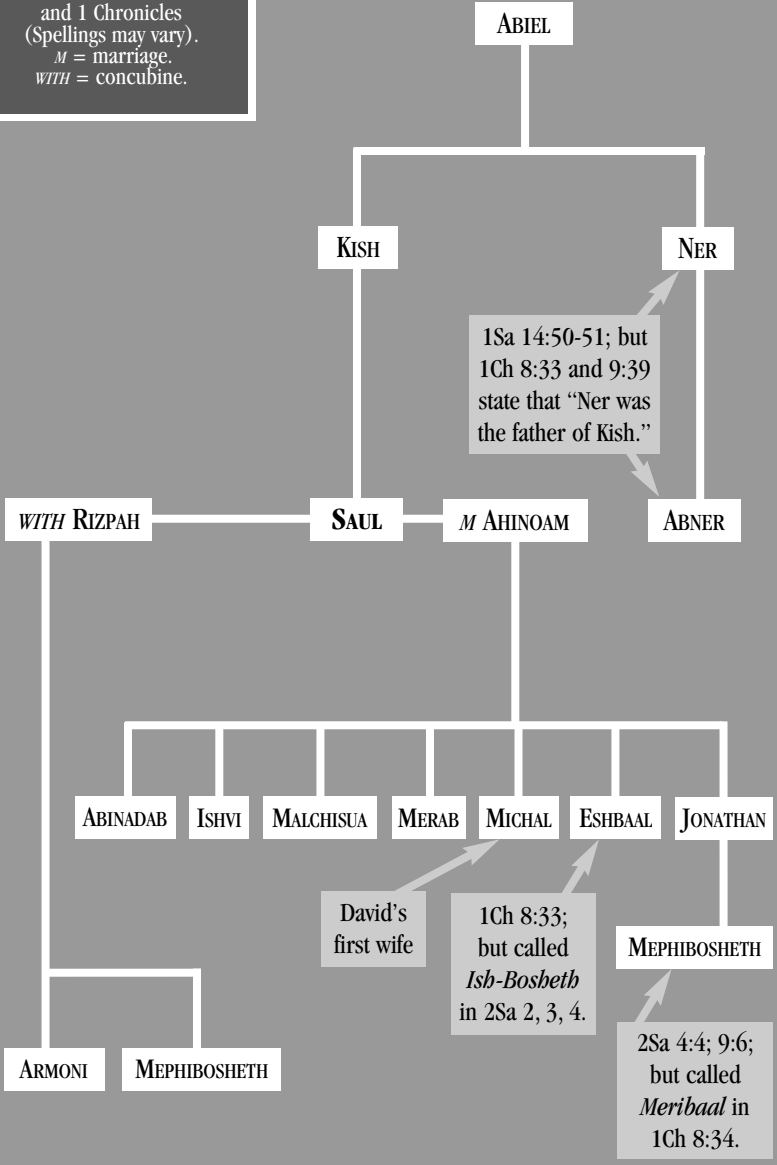
out the Word

WINDOW

on the Word

THE FAMILY OF SAUL

Based on 1 and 2 Samuel and 1 Chronicles
 (Spellings may vary).
M = marriage.
WITH = concubine.



A Gracious King

2 Samuel 9:1-13

Can you give an example of a generous and selfless action you have been involved with?

1. Who was Mephibosheth (vs. 6-8; 4:4)? What special challenge did he face?
2. Why did David want to show kindness to this young man (vs. 4-7)? What was this young man's opinion of himself (v. 8)?
3. How did David make generous provision for Jonathan's son (vs. 9-12)?

1. Some may think that the concept of grace is introduced for the first time in the New Testament. But doesn't it seem that David expressed a heart of grace toward Mephibosheth?

2. By honoring his covenant with Jonathan through befriending Mephibosheth, David was showing his desire to end conflict between his dynasty and any remaining loyalists to the house of Saul. Do you think that David was being politically wise here as well as being merciful?

*In 9:1 and 9:7 David uses one of the most beautiful and touching Hebrew words. It is translated "**kindness**" in our English Bibles, but behind this little word stands a long and honorable biblical tradition. The Hebrew word is **hesed** and is used nearly 250 times. It can mean "kindness" but also "lovingkindness," "goodness," "devotion," "grace," "solidarity." It is because of the hesed of God that Israel is not destroyed (Ps 89:28). Hesed is usually linked with God's covenant loyalty. Here we see David displaying that kind of covenant loyalty to his friend Jonathan by remembering his son. In ancient times and even in military coups today, the son of a former ruler was usually executed speedily when a new regime came to power. David was motivated by hesed in this instance.*

DAY 9

OPENING

up to the Word

DIGGING

into the Word

LIVING

out the Word

WINDOW

on the Word

Face-saving Gestures

2 Samuel 10:1-19

OPENING
up to the Word

Have you ever been deliberately embarrassed by someone? How did you react?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. How did the new king of the Ammonites display pride and recklessness (vs. 1-4)?
2. Proverbs 13:10 says “Pride only breeds quarrels.” Was this a factor in the coming events (vs. 5-6)?
3. Even today, shaving off a person’s beard is considered an offense in some Arab countries. Rulers find it hard to forgive a public slight. Did David’s lieutenants act shrewdly (vs. 7-16)?
4. Who led the final defeat of the enemy (vs. 17-19)? This is David’s military and personal peak. After this, some of his family problems began to cause him misery.

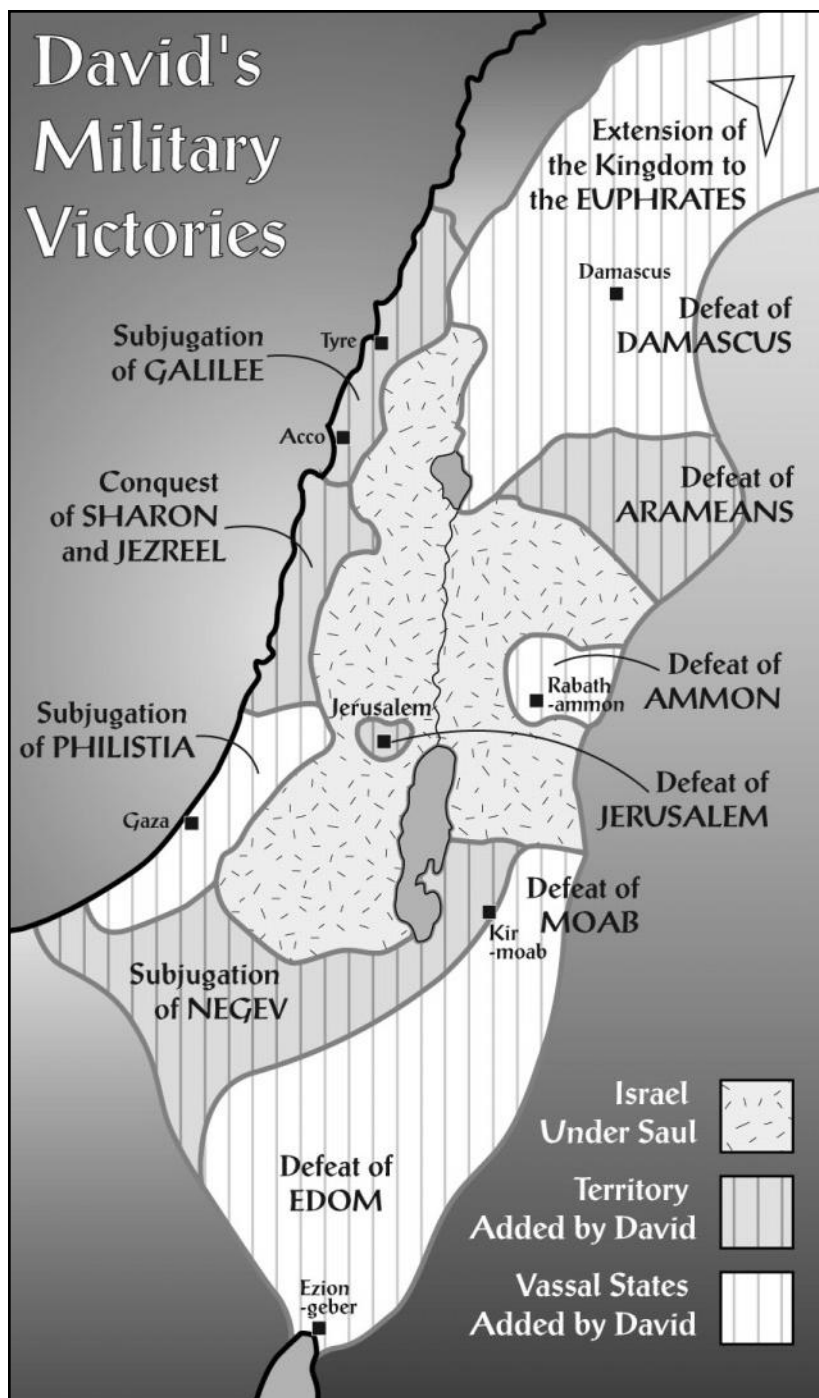
LIVING
out the Word

1. David had intended to show kindness to this new ruler, a son of Nahash the Ammonite who had been a threat in Saul’s day (1Sa 11:1-11). Have you experienced a time when your good intentions were misinterpreted? Did it lead to conflict?
2. David expressed covenant loyalty to the God of Israel (6-7), graciousness to a potentially weak opponent (9:1) and kindness to a gentile ruler (10:2). But David’s darkest days were ahead. Does 1 Corinthians 10:12 apply here?

WINDOW
on the Word

Ammon was a small kingdom in Transjordan, a brother-nation to the Moabites, descended from the patriarch Lot (Ge 19:36). The incident involving one of David’s best soldiers, **Uriah the Hittite**, took place during this Ammonite war. Note that the allies from the north, enlisted by the Ammonites—Beth Rehob and Zobah—are almost identical with the forces David defeated in chapter 8. This shows that the events in chapter 10 may have occurred before those of chapter 8. The author of 2 Samuel seems to have arranged the material to set up the tragic triangle of David, Uriah and Bathsheba. Chapters 9-20 form what has been called **the Succession Narrative**, showing how David’s successor came to the fore. These chapters are written from the perspective of an eyewitness inside David’s court—perhaps Nathan the prophet.

David's Military Victories



A He-Man With a She-Problem

2 Samuel 11:1-27

OPENING
up to the Word

When you were growing up, was there a “girl (or a guy) next door”? Were you romantically attracted to him or her?

DIGGING
into the Word

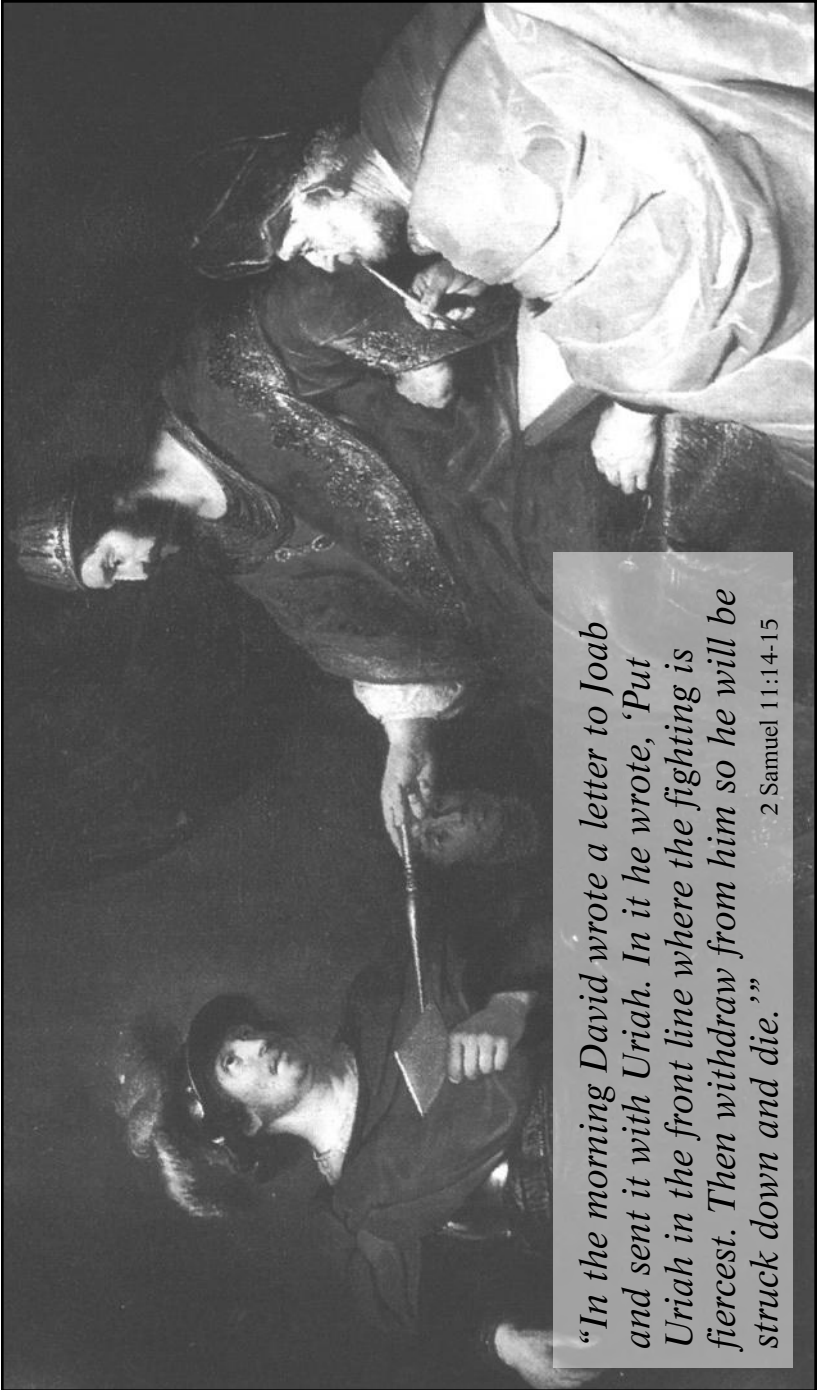
1. What was the background to David’s adultery with Bathsheba (vs. 1-2)?
2. Who was Bathsheba (v. 3)? Uriah’s name means “Yahweh is my light,” so he may have been a mercenary soldier from the land of the Hittites who had converted to the religion of Israel.
3. When Bathsheba became pregnant by David, what deception did the king use to attempt to cover his evil deed (vs. 6-13)? Did it work? What did David then do (vs. 14-17)?
4. The cover-up began (vs. 18-25). It seemed like David had gotten away with his foul deed—Bathsheba came to live with him (vs. 26-27).

LIVING
out the Word

1. This chapter concludes with an ominous last sentence (vs. 27). Have you ever felt uncomfortable reading about the sins and failings of otherwise admirable people? Does the expression, “There but for the grace of God go I” come to mind?
2. Bible commentator Irving Jensen wrote about David: “There had been other times in his history when he left his usual high plane of living and descended into the valley, yielding to such things as unbelief, fear, falsehood, deceit, pride and anger. But the sins of this day—adultery and murder—were all the more conspicuous because they were committed at the height of his reign.” Do you agree? Are we more apt to sin when at our highest, or at our lowest?

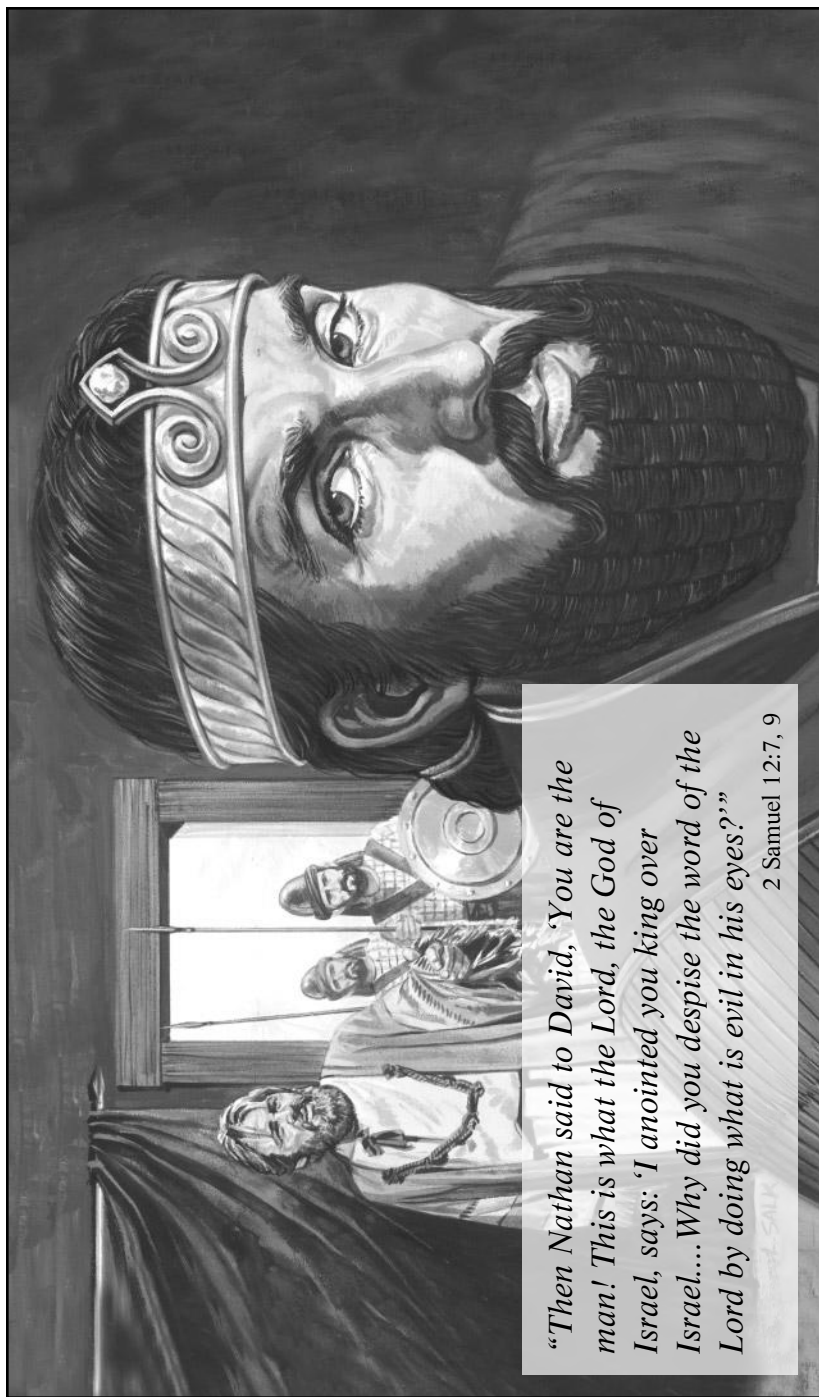
WINDOW
on the Word

*Spring was an ideal time for **military campaigns**. There was good weather and the roads were dry. Another element in the story of David’s adultery with Bathsheba was the fact that David stayed in Jerusalem while the army went to war.*



“In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it with Uriah. In it he wrote, ‘Put Uriah in the front line where the fighting is fiercest. Then withdraw from him so he will be struck down and die.’”

2 Samuel 11:14-15



“Then Nathan said to David, ‘You are the man! This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: ‘I anointed you king over Israel.... Why did you despise the word of the Lord by doing what is evil in his eyes?’”

2 Samuel 12:7, 9

“You Are the Man!”

DAY 12

2 Samuel 12:1-14

What was the most painful personal encounter you have ever had? What did you learn from it?

1. What tactic did Nathan the prophet use to get David to see the enormity of his sins (vs. 1-6)? The word *parable* is from a Greek word that literally means, “putting things side by side.” It is a form of teaching which presents the listener with illustrations from which can be drawn a moral or a religious truth. It was a common method of teaching in ancient times (Jdg 9:1-21). Its attractiveness was in the indirect approach, a wise approach for Nathan to take since he was not sure how David would react.

2. What were the three punishments God pronounced on David for his sin (vs.7-14)?

3. What was David’s reaction (v. 13)?

1. David’s reaction was commendable—he realized his sin had been against God first of all. Why did Nathan review God’s working with David throughout the years (vs. 7-8)? When we are hardened by sin we need to be jolted out of it—did Nathan do that (v. 9)?

2. This chapter contains one of the most dramatic records of genuine repentance in the Bible. Psalm 51 details David’s repentance. Note Psalm 51:10-12. Have you ever sensed even in the grief of repentance that God is still there, full of hope for us?

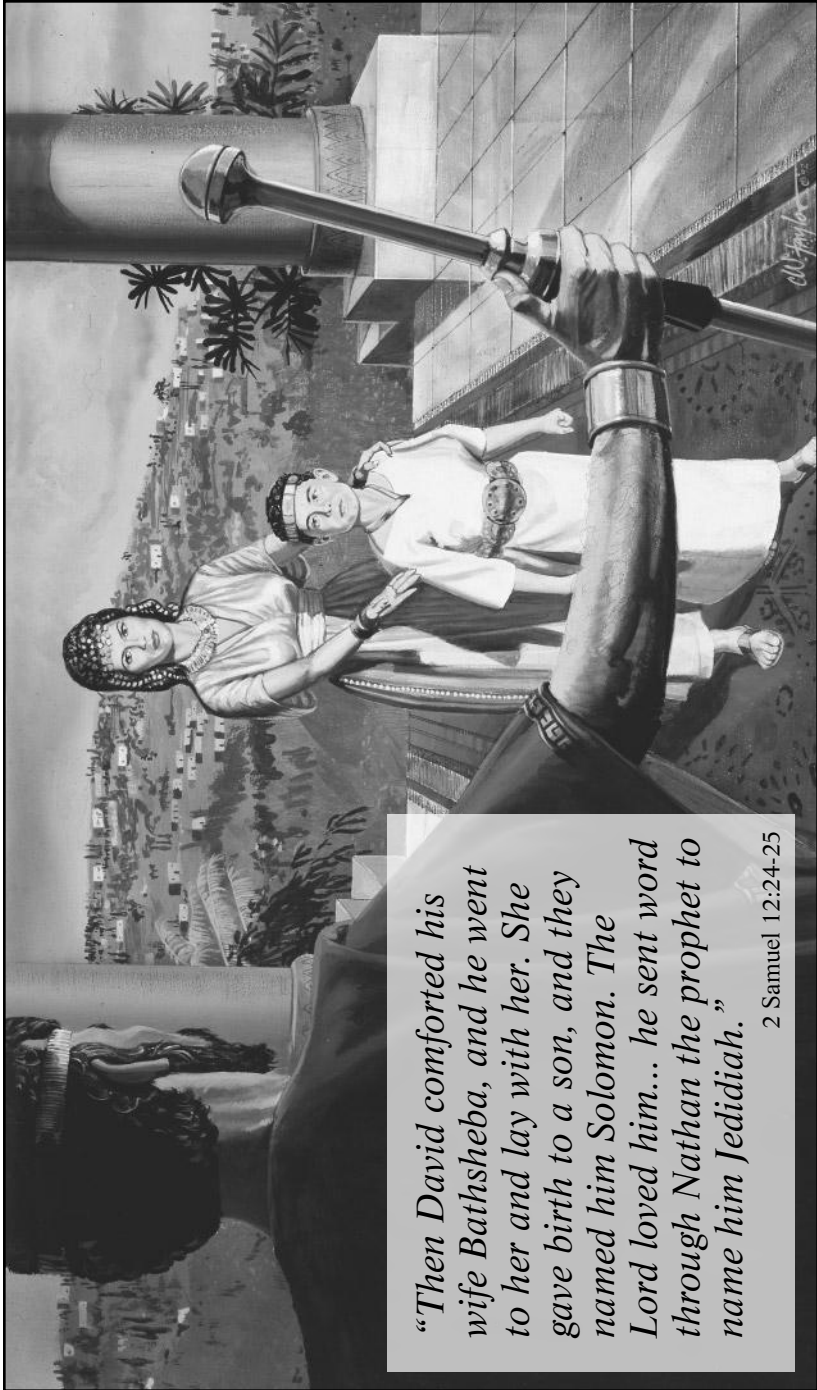
*This chapter offers us a reminder of one thing that made Israel different from all the nations about her—Israel’s King was **Yahweh**, the Lord God (see 1Sa 2:2, 10). 2 Samuel 1-10 gives us David’s triumphs, while chapters 11-12 present David’s sin. Chapters 13-20 show us David’s troubles. This arrangement emphasizes that sin never pays.*

OPENING
up to the Word

DIGGING
into the Word

LIVING
out the Word

WINDOW
on the Word



“Then David comforted his wife Bathsheba, and he went to her and lay with her. She gave birth to a son, and they named him Solomon. The Lord loved him... he sent word through Nathan the prophet to name him Jedidiah.”

2 Samuel 12:24-25

The Comeback Trail

DAY 13

2 Samuel 12:15-31

Shakespeare wrote: "Sweet are the uses of adversity." What does this mean? Do you agree?

1. What did David do when he learned that the child born to Bathsheba was ill (vs. 15-17)?
2. How did David react when he found out the child was dead (vs. 18-24)?
3. We may have a hard time forgetting our sins, but God truly puts them behind us. What is the next thing that happened to David and Bathsheba (vs. 24-25)?
4. Victories came pouring in, in spite of David's sin (vs. 26-31). Does this restoration show that God had heard David's agonizing prayers in the depth of his grief and shame over Bathsheba and Uriah (Ps 51:18-19)?

1. Some think God was too easy on David. But how often have national or military leaders prostrated themselves in heartfelt grief and real repentance before God?
2. It has been said that where there are great peaks there are also great valleys. Do you agree?
3. How do you react to correction or criticism—from your boss, your spouse, your friend—or even your pastor?

OPENING

up to the Word

DIGGING

into the Word

LIVING

out the Word

2 Samuel 13:1-22

OPENING
up to the Word

Have you heard people argue that public morals and private morals should be separated? Should military leaders have spotless morals? What about professional athletes? Newscasters? Elected officials? Police?

DIGGING
into the Word

- 1.** Some men have very short biographies in Scripture. Amnon was one of them. Who was he and what was his problem (vs. 1-2)?
- 2.** Here is where David pays the consequences for his polygamy (see chart with day 3). Who was Amnon's mother (3:2)? Who was Absalom's mother (3:3)? Tamar was Amnon's half-sister. Was such a marriage prohibited in Israel (Lev 18:11; 20:17; Dt 27:22)?
- 3.** What was Jonadab's subtle suggestion (vs. 3-9)? Why did he offer this advice?
- 4.** How did Amnon react after the incestuous rape and abuse of Tamar (vs. 10-19)?
- 5.** Note David's reaction (vs. 21). How would you describe Absalom's reaction? (a) embarrassment, (b) anger, (c) rage (d) cold-blooded desire for revenge (vs. 20-22)?

LIVING
out the Word

- 1.** Was David's reaction in verse 21 sufficient discipline for the sin of his son? Do you think David might have found it hard to correct his children for sexual sin? Or, was it appropriate for David to forgive, considering God had forgiven him? When confronted with his sin, did Amnon behave the same way David did?
- 2.** David's firstborn son and heir to the throne was a rapist—lustful, deceitful and brutal. David's troubles were beginning to intensify. Have you ever seen the snowball effects of sin in your own life or the lives of others?

“Tamar put ashes on her head and tore the ornamented robe she was wearing. She put her hand on her head and went away, weeping aloud as she went.”

2 Samuel 13:19

