

1 & 2 SAMUEL READING GUIDE

Dear Providence,

We are preaching through the life of David this summer (1 Sam. 16 - 2 Sam. 22). David is one of the most familiar people in the whole Bible and really in all of human history. His rise to the throne and his reign as king is a story that is more riveting than anything you could ever read in a novel or see on Netflix. It's a story that has it all: courage, conspiracy, romance, friendship, heroism, betrayal, unlikely twists, deep lament, soaring worship, battle scenes, acts of compassion, and sacrificial love.

But the point of David's story is not to entertain us. The point is to instruct us about our own lives, to show us the importance of our character and our heart, to convince us of our need for a Savior-King, and ultimately to lead us to Jesus Christ, the Greater King David. How could God call David a man after his own heart, especially given David's deep flaws and grievous sin? We'll ask that question as we look at David's story together this summer.

We would love for you to read along as we go through this series, and we want to help you dig into each passage. This guide is a simple plan for reading, studying, and reflecting on the scriptures. Each week there will be three touch points that focus on the passages related to the upcoming sermon. Here's the flow for each week:

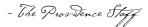
Day 1: Read the chapter. (That's it. Five minutes. You could probably read it twice).

Day 2: Read the chapter and answer a few questions designed to help you dig deeper in the text.

Day 3: Read the chapter and answer a few questions designed to help you reflect and apply what you are learning personally.

Following Sunday: Come to gathered worship on Sunday and hear the pastors teach on the chapter you have studied throughout the week.

We pray that this guide would help you meditate on God's word this summer and that God's covenant faithfulness in the life of David would speak to us in a fresh way.



MAY 13-19 // 1 SAMUEL 17

DAY ONE READ 1 SAMUEL 17

DAY TWO STUDY

1.	How is Goliath's appearance described? And how does Saul and Israel respond
	to his speech?

- 2. David comes to the scene bringing food for his older brothers from home. How does David respond to Goliath's speech and presence?
- 3. What is David's motivation to fight this battle?
- 4. How is David like Jesus in this battle?

- Saul and the Israelites were fearful because of Goliath's physical appearance. David was confident and assured because of God's previous deliverance is his own life. Where do you find yourself anxious in present circumstances? How would reflection on God's faithfulness in the past allow you to walk in obedience in the present?
- 2. Goliath depended on his own strength, weapons, and gods in order to defeat David. David depended on the Lord of hosts to deliver him. How do you see yourself depending on things other than God in your life?

MAY 20-26 // 1 SAMUEL 18-19

DAY ONE READ 1 SAMUEL 18-19

DAY TWO STUDY

- 1. What does Jonathan do after he makes a covenant with David? Why is that significant? How does that foreshadow the life of Jesus?
- 2. David continues to succeed in battle, so much so that it was "good in the sight of all people..." (v. 5). Saul eventually become jealous of the people's praise, and attempts to kill David multiple times. What does this reveal about Saul? Who is Saul fearful of?
- 3. How does David respond to Saul's offer of Michal in marriage? How does it highlight Saul and David's differences?
- 4. Compare and contrast the three different times David is saved from Saul in ch. 19. Who saves him? How is he saved?

- Saul's fear of David and the people of Israel shows the idolatry in Saul's heart.
 What fears do you see in your life? How are those fears symptomatic of a
 deeper idolatry?
- 2. Re-read 1 Samuel 18:1-4. Here Jonathan strips himself of his position as the son of the king because of his love for David. Reflect on Jesus, especially Philippians 2, who emptied himself of divine rights for our behalf. How does Jonathan's actions in these chapters compel us to live more like Christ?

MAY 27 - JUNE 2 // PSALM 34

DAY ONE READ PSALM 34

DAY TWO STUDY

- 1. What does David say God has done in verses 1-7? How does David respond?
- 2. What has God delivered David from? Give specific examples.
- 3. What does David affirm about God's character in verses 15-18?
- 4. Where else have you read, "He keeps all his bones; not one of them is broken?" Why is that significant?
- 5. What can you learn about trusting in God from this psalm?

- 6. David's fears about life (v. 4) are contrasted with David's fear, or reverence, for God (v.9). Spend a few moments thinking about your own fears or places where you have sought God's deliverance.
- 7. How can you trust God with the fears that you listed above? What does it mean for God to deliver you from them? What would that look like?
- 8. Even in the midst of fear David calls the reader to "taste and see that the Lord is good." What are ways you can practically taste and see that the Lord is good in your own life?

JUNE 3 - 9 // 1 SAMUEL 20-22

DAY ONE READ 1 SAMUEL 20-22

DAY TWO STUDY

- Ch. 20 is a lengthy narrative where Jonathan and David make plans on Saul's intention and David's safety. How is their relationship characterized in this chapter?
- 2. What does the covenant between Jonathan and David cost Jonathan? What do we learn about Jonathan's character?
- 3. David and his men are fleeing in ch. 21 when David asks for bread. Ahimelech eventually gives him "holy bread." Why is that significant? Even though God isn't mentioned in this passage, what does this reveal about God?
- 4. Saul sees the events leading up to ch. 22 as a conspiracy to overthrow his power. How does Saul handle this fear? What are his actions in ch. 22? And how do the other characters respond?

- 1. What does the relationship of David and Jonathan teach us about the nature or gspel friendship?
- 2. Jonathan's commitment and covenant to David is a foreshadowing of Christ's commitment and covenant to the church. How is God's character displayed in Jonathan?
- 3. God provided in so many ways in David's life, especially in times of desperation for David. How has God provided for you in times of desperation? Spend a few moments in prayer, praising God for his sustenance in your life.

JUNE 10 - 16 // 1 SAMUEL 23-24

DAY ONE READ 1 SAMUEL 23-24

DAY TWO STUDY

- 1. David saves the city of Keilah from the Philistines. He then asks God whether or not he should stay in Keilah, which leads him and his men out of the city and into the wilderness. How does this episode relate to broader themes in David's life?
- 2. Even though David has been anointed as king of Israel, he ends up hiding in the wilderness. What does this remind you of in the storyline of the Bible? How does this reflect the story of humanity? Jesus?
- 3. David gets the chance to end this time in the wilderness by killing Saul, but he doesn't. Why does David spare Saul?

- 1. David was very successful in battle, as noted again when he saved the city of Keilah, but that success led him into the wilderness. In fact it was God's faithfulness that led David into the wilderness, how do you reconcile exile and desperation with God's faithfulness? Why is that hard for us to understand?
- 2. Where have you experienced the mercy of someone else in your life? How does that impact the way you see God and others?
- 3. How have you experienced a nearness to God in hard seasons?

JUNE 17 - 23 // 1 SAMUEL 25-26, PSALM 15

DAY ONE READ 1 SAMUEL 25-26, PSALM 15

DAY TWO STUDY

- How does David's restraint in ch. 24 with Saul contrast with his posture in ch. 25? Why is this different?
- 2. How does the Lord act in this narrative? Why is his providence important?
- 3. Once again David spares Saul's life. The exchange at the end of ch. 26 records their last words to one another. What do they say to one another? Why does David not return? Why are Saul's final words to David significant?
- 4. What themes stand out to you in Psalm 15?
- 5. David starts Psalm 15 with a question, which he answers in verses 2-5. How does this psalm connect to the narrative in 1 Samuel? Why is this significant?

- 1. How have you experienced the importance of integrity in others or yourself? Where have you seen integrity in others?
- 2. Why is integrity important in the Christian walk? How can we connect this story to our discipleship to Jesus?
- 3. How does Jesus both exemplify and enable the kind of character found in Psalm 15?

JUNE 24 - JUNE 30 // 1 SAMUEL 27-31

DAY ONE READ 1 SAMUEL 27-31

DAY TWO STUDY

- 1. David flees to Philistia in fear. Why does David think he will perish by the hand of Saul (27:1) even though God has promised he will be king?
- 2. Commentators often refer to ch. 28 as the darkest moment of Saul's life, where he consults a medium about the coming Philistines. What about this chapter reveals Saul's current state?
- 3. Chs. 29 -30 narrate David's falling out with King Achish and the Philistines. Here the author seems to be drawing some connections between Achish and David with Saul and David. Make a list of similarities and differences. What does this reveal about Saul? Is he what the Israelites wanted in a king?
- 4. How does David deal with the sever trial he faces in 30:1-6?
- 5. Though David just conquered the Amalekites, 1 Samuel concludes in tragedy. What happens? And how does that set up 2 Samuel?

- 1. What can we learn about humanity from the life of Saul? What is our natural tendency when our life is upended?
- 2. What circumstances make you doubt God's Word?
- 3. Saul turns out to look like the other nations kings, rather than the king of Israel. How do we tend to look like our wider culture? How is God calling you into a greater obedience to him?

JULY 1 - 7 // 2 SAMUEL 1-6

DAY ONE READ 2 SAMUEL 1-6

DAY TWO STUDY

- 1. David mourns and laments after he hears of Jonathan and Saul's deaths. What do you observe about his lamentation in 1:19-27?
- 2. Chs. 2-4 narrate David's rise of power from the king of Judah to the king of Israel. What do you notice about David's character in this section? How does he differ from Saul's rise to power?
- 3. Once David is anointed King of Israel and defeats the Philistines, he names Jerusalem the City of God by placing the Ark there. What is the ark of God? And why does Uzzah die when he touches it?
- 4. The dwelling place of God is a very important theme in the Old Testament. Where else does the presence of God dwell in the Old Testament?

- 1. David laments after Saul, who betrayed him and dealt with him dishonestly. How do you tend to respond when "enemies" of your life are hurt?
- 2. In Luke 6:27, Jesus says "But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you..." How does David emulate this call? Why do we find this call challenging? How can you bless those who curse you?
- 3. Uzzah either had a low view of God's presence, or presumed on his own ability to dwell with God. How do you view the presence of God in gathered worship? How does this story compel us to view God's holiness and mercy?

JULY 15 - 21 // 2 SAMUEL 7-9

DAY ONE READ 2 SAMUEL 7-9

DAY TWO STUDY

- 1. The Lord makes a covenant with David in ch. 7. What are some general observations about this covenant? How does it relate to God's covenant with Abraham? How is this covenant fulfilled in Christ?
- 2. How does David respond to God's covenant with him?
- 3. 2 Samuel 8:15 says that David "administered justice and equity to all his people." In what ways does David foreshadow Jesus as our King?
- 4. Ch. 9 recounts David's mercy and kindness towards Mephibosheth. Why does David show Mephibosheth kindness? Why does this go against cultural expectations?

- 1. This passage is a reminder of God's covenant faithfulness in the face of a people's fickle commitment to Him. How have you experienced the faithfulness of God over the past year? Why is the faithfulness of God important in your life?
- 2. The whole story of David and Mephibosheth is a beautiful image of kindness and grace. How do you identify with Mephibosheth in this story? What are ways you've experienced the covenant kindness of God?

JULY 22 - 28 // 2 SAMUEL 10-11

DAY ONE READ 2 SAMUEL 10-11

DAY TWO STUDY

- David extends kindness towards Hanun because of David's relationship with Hanun's father. What theme does that exemplify? How does Hanun respond?
- 2. How would you characterize David up to this point? Does ch. 11 change your view of him?
- 3. How does David abuse his power to hurt people and to dishonor God?
- 4. Compare the actions of David in this story with Saul. How does David resemble Saul in this passage?

- 1. Where have you experienced the compounding effects of sin?
- 2. David keeps his sin hidden, partly because he fears that confession will lead to his defamation in Israel. How has the fear of man led you to keep sin hidden? Where have you found freedom in confession?
- 3. Is there any idolatry in your life that you need to confess? Or any deep, unrepentant sin that you need to turn to God with?
- 4. Spend some time confessing any idolatry or hidden sin in your life.

JULY 29 - AUGUST 4 // 2 SAMUEL 12, PSALM 51

DAY ONE READ 2 SAMUEL 12 AND PSALM 51

DAY TWO STUDY

- 1. 2 Samuel 11-12 is the narrative context for Psalm 51. What do you observe in the story of David and Bathsheba? How is the nature of sin and human brokenness revealed?
- 2. Psalm 51 is a psalm of personal lament and confession. After reading, what do you observe about David's word choice? How does David describe his state before God?
- 3. What does David appeal to God for? How does he express his need for God?
- 4. What promises of God are revealed in this psalm?

- 1. David is very honest to God, about his state before God and his actions. Do you find honesty in prayer difficult? Why? What about Psalm 51 pushes you to be more honest in prayer?
- 2. It's likely that months separated David's sin and his confession. Why do we tend to hold onto sin, rather than confessing to God in the moment? How can you make confession and lament a regular part of your prayer life?
- 3. How does confession lead you into deeper devotion to God?

AUGUST 5 - 11 // 2 SAMUEL 15-18

DAY ONE READ 2 SAMUEL 15-18

DAY TWO STUDY

- Absalom, a son of David, "stole the hearts of the men of Israel". How did
 he conspire to usurp his father? What are the similarities and differences to
 David's rise to power?
- 2. This leads to a familiar occasion for David: he flees to the wilderness in hiding and someone close to him is hunting him down. How is David described while he's in the wilderness? What are his actions focused around?
- 3. In ch. 16 Shimei curses David, which David receives. From this account, why is David cursed? How does David respond?
- 4. This tragic story ends in Absalom's death. How do David's followers respond to his death? How does that contrast to David's response?

- 1. David has many of his most intimate moments with God in the wilderness. How have you experienced the intimacy of God in season of hardship? Why do we tend to ignore that in seasons of abundance?
- 2. Even after David's sin was forgiven he had to deal with later consequences. Where have you experienced the long-term consequences of sin in your life? How do you experience God's faithfulness in those moments?
- 3. How do these stories change our view of David as a "hero of the faith"? What does it mean for us to be obedient in the midst of our broken humanity?

AUGUST 12 - 18 // 2 SAMUEL 19-22

DAY ONE READ 2 SAMUEL 19-22

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1.	Why does Joab rebuke David in ch. 19?

- 2. Three people appear to David to ask for forgiveness and pardon after the failed rebellion. Who are they? Why do they seek forgiveness? What is David's response?
- 3. There remains more bloodshed and rebellion in these chapters. What does this reveal about David's sin? What point is the author trying to get across? How does David respond?
- 4. Ch. 22 is a song that summarizes David's life. What stands out to you? What are the major themes of the song? And how do those relate to David's life?

- Spend some time meditating on the song in 2 Samuel 22. Then take a few moments to pray, thanking God for steadfast love for his people in the midst of our sin and pain.
- 2. How are you led in confession by the life of David? How are you led to praise God for His justice, mercy and grace by the life of David?

