

MU SYDNEY BIBLE STUDIES

2014



KING DAVID

Responding to God

Wendy Mayer
November 2013

design by *Shebnik Designs*

Table of Contents

Suggestions for Using the Studies	1
Introduction	2
King David Study 1 – Forgiveness	3
Summary: King David Study 1 – Forgiveness	9
Psalm 103	10
King David Study 2 – Gratitude	11
Summary: King David Study 2 – Gratitude	15
Psalm 8	16
King David Study 3 – Repentance	17
Summary: King David Study 3 – Repentance	23
Psalm 51	24
King David Study 4 – Consequences	25
Summary: King David Study 4 – Consequences	30
Psalm 3	31
Suggested Hymns and Songs	32
Appendix - Presenting a Bible Study in the form of <i>1 to 1 in Action</i> at an MU Branch meeting .	33
Suggested Branch Program	34
<i>1 to 1 in Action</i> – Description	35
Instructions for Group Leaders	37
King David Study 1 – Forgiveness – Passage A	38
King David Study 1 – Forgiveness – Passage B	39
King David Study 2 – Gratitude – Passage A	41
King David Study 2 – Gratitude – Passage B	42
King David Study 3 – Repentance – Passage A	43
King David Study 3 – Repentance – Passage B	45
King David Study 4 – Consequences – Passage A	47
King David Study 4 – Consequences – Passage B	48
<i>1 to 1 in Action</i> Bookmarks	49

Suggestions for Using the Studies

1. Make sure that each person has a copy of the study booklet you are using. People have hearing problems and no-one concentrates all the time, so they need a written copy of the questions to take part in the discussions.
2. Copies of the studies can be bought from the MU Office for each person, or you may wish to buy one copy and use your church facilities to photocopy the number you need.
3. If possible it is good to hand out the studies a week or so before the day, so people have time to prepare in advance. If you do this it is wise to have some extra copies available on the day in case some people forget to bring theirs, or extra people join you.
4. It is essential that the leader has fully prepared the study beforehand. You will find that the summary is relevant to the answers of the questions.
5. You may need to choose a selection of questions to discuss if your group has limited time available for discussion. Choose your selection beforehand, don't simply end when you run out of time.
6. You can increase participation by asking several people to read the Bible passages aloud for the group. This also provides a variety of voices and helps to keep people engaged with the study. Make sure you ask your potential readers ahead of time, and also make sure they are comfortable doing this.
7. It is generally better for discussion to sit in a semi-circle than to sit in rows. It is hard to talk to the back of someone's head, and it is generally easier to hear when sitting in semicircles.
8. If you have a large group (twenty or more), consider breaking into smaller groups of about six to ten for the discussion time. The person leading the study could do an introduction, small groups could then discuss the questions with an assigned leader for each group (who has prepared beforehand), and then all could rejoin for a conclusion time directed by the leader.
9. Another alternative for a large group, is choosing several questions that don't just need factual answers but require discussion, and asking the members of the group to discuss that question with the person next to them. Then, if appropriate, ask if anyone would like to share their thoughts with the rest of the group
10. All Bible readings are taken from THE HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®, NIV® Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.
11. Note: A Psalm has been printed with every study. You can use this as personal reflection on the theme or as the Bible Reading if you are having a service before the study. You could also read it for reflection before the study starts if you are not having a service.

Introduction

When God commanded Abraham to leave his country, his people, and his father's household and go to the land God would show him, God also promised that he would make Abraham into a great nation (**Genesis 12:1-2**). The Jewish nation was the fulfilment of that promise and God gave the Jews the opportunity to show the world how to be a people ruled by God. But they wanted to have a king leading them like all the other nations (**1 Samuel 8:5**).

Saul was the one God gave to them in answer to their demand, but Saul turned from God and God rejected him as king choosing David in his place. When we first meet David in the Bible he is a young man living in his father Jesse's home caring for the sheep (**1 Samuel 16:11-13**). Samuel the prophet was sent by God to Jesse and told to anoint one of his sons as king. After rejecting all of David's older brothers God tells Samuel to anoint David as he is the one God has chosen to replace Saul and his family.

Because of his skill playing the lyre David first entered Saul's household to soothe him when Saul was tormented by an evil spirit. But after David killed Goliath Saul brought him into his household as a permanent member and gave him a high rank in the army. It was at this time that Jonathan, Saul's eldest son and heir apparent, made a covenant of friendship with David which lasted for the rest of Jonathan's life.

David's relationship with Saul deteriorated as David's military success increased his popularity with the people. Saul became jealous and attempted to kill David many times, such that David had to flee for his life. This continued for the rest of Saul's life but David refused opportunities to kill him, because Saul was the Lord's anointed. David left the future in God's hands and in time both Saul and Jonathan were killed fighting the Philistines. After that David was crowned king of Judah and finally Israel.

God's plans for David to replace Saul as king had finally come to be, in God's time, when David had been prepared by his life experiences.

Our studies this year follow David's life from the death of Saul and Jonathan until the end of David's own life. We follow the highs and the lows but we see that, even when he sinned and acted out of God's will, David was responsive to God when he was corrected. He never turned away from God or insisted on continuing on his own path.

Our four studies look at David's responsiveness to God at different points in his life.

Study 1	Forgiveness	Psalms 103
Study 2	Gratitude	Psalms 8
Study 3	Repentance	Psalms 51
Study 4	Consequences	Psalms 3

King David Study 1 – Forgiveness

David, Jonathan and Saul

Reading: 1 Samuel 18:1-4

¹After David had finished talking with Saul, Jonathan became one in spirit with David, and he loved him as himself. ²From that day Saul kept David with him and did not let him return home to his family. ³And Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself. ⁴Jonathan took off the robe he was wearing and gave it to David, along with his tunic, and even his sword, his bow and his belt.

Reading: 1 Samuel 19:1-4

¹Saul told his son Jonathan and all the attendants to kill David. But Jonathan had taken a great liking to David ²and warned him, “My father Saul is looking for a chance to kill you. Be on your guard tomorrow morning; go into hiding and stay there. ³I will go out and stand with my father in the field where you are. I’ll speak to him about you and will tell you what I find out.”

⁴Jonathan spoke well of David to Saul his father and said to him, “Let not the king do wrong to his servant David; he has not wronged you, and what he has done has benefited you greatly.

Reading: 1 Samuel 23:15-18

¹⁵While David was at Horesh in the Desert of Ziph, he learned that Saul had come out to take his life. ¹⁶And Saul’s son Jonathan went to David at Horesh and helped him find strength in God. ¹⁷“Don’t be afraid,” he said. “My father Saul will not lay a hand on you. You will be king over Israel, and I will be second to you. Even my father Saul knows this.” ¹⁸The two of them made a covenant before the LORD. Then Jonathan went home, but David remained at Horesh.

1. Compare David’s relationship with Saul and with Jonathan.

2.

a. What do you think is the significance of Jonathan giving David his robe, tunic, sword bow and belt?

b. What does this say about Jonathan?

3. How does God use Jonathan to strengthen David? How do we encourage others when they are faced with difficulties?

4. What did Jonathan recognise about his and David's future that Saul refused to accept?

5. What does this say about Saul? How do we cope with those who reject and oppose the Lordship of Jesus over the lives of others?

Both Saul and Jonathan were killed in a battle with the Philistines, the enemy that David had fought so successfully in the past. But because of Saul's determination to kill him, David and his forces were unable to join the battle and were off fighting the Amalekites who had raided David's home base in Ziklag.

David Hears of Saul's Death

Reading: 2 Samuel 1:1-16

¹After the death of Saul, David returned from striking down the Amalekites and stayed in Ziklag two days. ²On the third day a man arrived from Saul's camp with his clothes torn and dust on his head. When he came to David, he fell to the ground to pay him honour.

³"Where have you come from?" David asked him.

He answered, "I have escaped from the Israelite camp."

⁴"What happened?" David asked. "Tell me."

"The men fled from the battle," he replied. "Many of them fell and died. And Saul and his son Jonathan are dead."

⁵Then David said to the young man who brought him the report, "How do you know that Saul and his son Jonathan are dead?"

⁶"I happened to be on Mount Gilboa," the young man said, "and there was Saul, leaning on his spear, with the chariots and their drivers in hot pursuit. ⁷When he turned around and saw me, he called out to me, and I said, 'What can I do?'

⁸"He asked me, 'Who are you?'

"'An Amalekite,' I answered.

⁹"Then he said to me, 'Stand here by me and kill me! I'm in the throes of death, but I'm still alive.'

¹⁰"So I stood beside him and killed him, because I knew that after he had fallen he could not survive. And I took the crown that was on his head and the band on his arm and have brought them here to my lord."

¹¹Then David and all the men with him took hold of their clothes and tore them. ¹²They mourned and wept and fasted till evening for Saul and his son Jonathan, and for the army of the LORD and for the nation of Israel, because they had fallen by the sword.

¹³David said to the young man who brought him the report, "Where are you from?"

"I am the son of a foreigner, an Amalekite," he answered.

¹⁴David asked him, "Why weren't you afraid to lift your hand to destroy the LORD's anointed?"

¹⁵Then David called one of his men and said, "Go, strike him down!" So he struck him down, and he died. ¹⁶For David had said to him, "Your blood be on your own head. Your own mouth testified against you when you said, 'I killed the LORD's anointed.'"

6. Who brought David the news of Saul and Jonathan's death? What did he say happened?

7. What response would he be expecting from David? What was David's actual response?

8. Why did David respond that way?

The Amalekite was killed because he killed the Lord's anointed king. Many people today ignore Jesus, the Lord's anointed.

9. What is our response to them?

a. Do we ignore them, do we argue, do we stay quiet, or do we put our viewpoint forward?

b. How does **1 Peter 3:15** help us?

1 Peter 3:15 - *But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.*

David's Lament for Saul and Jonathan

Reading: 2 Samuel 1:17-27

¹⁷David took up this lament concerning Saul and his son Jonathan, ¹⁸and he ordered that the people of Judah be taught this lament of the bow (it is written in the Book of Jashar):

¹⁹ "A gazelle lies slain on your heights, Israel.
How the mighty have fallen!

²⁰ "Tell it not in Gath,
proclaim it not in the streets of Ashkelon,
lest the daughters of the Philistines be glad,
lest the daughters of the uncircumcised rejoice.

²¹ "Mountains of Gilboa,
may you have neither dew nor rain,
may no showers fall on your terraced fields.
For there the shield of the mighty was despised,
the shield of Saul—no longer rubbed with oil.

22 *“From the blood of the slain,
 from the flesh of the mighty,
the bow of Jonathan did not turn back,
 the sword of Saul did not return unsatisfied.*

23 *Saul and Jonathan—
 in life they were loved and admired,
 and in death they were not parted.
They were swifter than eagles,
 they were stronger than lions.*

24 *“Daughters of Israel,
 weep for Saul,
who clothed you in scarlet and finery,
 who adorned your garments with ornaments of gold.*

25 *“How the mighty have fallen in battle!
 Jonathan lies slain on your heights.*

26 *I grieve for you, Jonathan my brother;
 you were very dear to me.
Your love for me was wonderful,
 more wonderful than that of women.*

27 *“How the mighty have fallen!
 The weapons of war have perished!”*

10. Considering that Jonathan was David’s best friend and Saul had been trying to kill him, what stands out to you in this lament?

11. When something bad happens to someone who has hurt us, what is a typical reaction?

12. How do you think David was able to express equal sorrow for Saul and Jonathan’s deaths? What does this say about David’s relationship with God?

13. How can we follow his example in our responses towards people who have hurt us?

Reading: Luke 6:27-31

²⁷“But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. ²⁹If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn to them the other also. If someone takes your coat, do not withhold your shirt from them. ³⁰Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. ³¹Do to others as you would have them do to you.

14. What does Jesus say about the way we should treat those who hurt us?

15. How can we put this principle into practice in our own situations?

Reading: Luke 23:33-38

³³When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left. ³⁴Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.

³⁵The people stood watching, and the rulers even sneered at him. They said, “He saved others; let him save himself if he is God’s Messiah, the Chosen One.”

³⁶The soldiers also came up and mocked him. They offered him wine vinegar ³⁷and said, “If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself.”

³⁸There was a written notice above him, which read: THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

16. What was Jesus’ reaction to those who crucified him?

We sometimes think that if we forgive someone we have to either accept what they’ve done or forget about it (which is usually impossible). Forgiving isn’t forgetting and it isn’t removing all consequences.

17. What is the difference between forgiving someone and condoning what they’ve done?

18. What can we do when we’ve tried to forgive someone, but resentment resurfaces?

19.

- a. Will there always be reconciliation when we forgive someone?

- b. What is the effect on us, if we hold onto unforgiveness and resentment?

There are times in this sinful world when people act in ways that seem unforgivable and their actions have affected people's lives in devastating ways. But on the cross Jesus paid the penalty for every sin, even those seemingly unforgivable acts. Forgiveness is a process which means it often takes time. When we are having trouble forgiving someone else, or even forgiving ourselves, we need to turn to God and ask for the Holy Spirit's help. He can and will help us to learn to forgive. Look at the way he has forgiven us!

Psalm 103:12 *as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.*

Summary: King David Study 1 – Forgiveness

David first came into King Saul's household after he had been anointed king by the prophet Samuel. At this time David knew his future status but he had no idea when or how this would come about. He also knew that Saul had been anointed King before God and in front of the people and David never did anything to try to remove Saul from that position. Not even when Saul was trying to kill him in disobedience to God.

God didn't leave David alone in his difficult situation. He provided David with Jonathan, Saul's son and the heir apparent. Jonathan loved David and recognised that David was God's choice as the next king of Israel. He showed this by giving David his own clothes and weapons. But unlike his father Jonathan accepted God's choice and pledged his full support to David. By contrast Saul not only rejected God's choice of David, he actively worked against God by trying to kill David.

Saul and Jonathan were both killed in a battle with the Philistines and an Amalekite decided to profit from this by taking the news to David and getting a reward by claiming to have killed Saul. David had the Amalekite put to death instead of rewarding him because he had dared to kill the Lord's anointed one. Then David mourned both Saul and Jonathan.

Many people today ignore Jesus, the Lord's anointed, and we can't compel anyone else to accept him as their Lord. However in **1 Peter 3:15** we are told to always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks us to give the reason for the hope that we have. But we are also told to do this with gentleness and respect. Our part is to be ready share our faith when God gives us opportunities; the rest is up to God.

David publically mourned both Saul and Jonathan, making sure no one could denigrate them when they were dead. We remember Jesus' words from the cross directed towards those who crucified him - "*Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.*" (**Luke 23:34**)

So often we are relieved and even pleased when someone who has harmed us is in trouble themselves. God's way is different. Jesus told us to love our enemies and do good to those who hate us (**Luke 6:27**). God calls us to forgive because he has forgiven us so much and he knows the damage that happens to us when we nurse unforgiveness. But forgiving isn't easy or simple and we need the help of the Holy Spirit to keep forgiving every time resentment resurfaces.

Forgiveness is also not forgetting about what has happened, or accepting the act that hurt us or others. It is about separating the person from the deed and accepting them, not what they did. Forgiveness doesn't always mean we will be reconciled with the other person because that depends on them as well as us and they won't always be prepared to reconcile. Our part is to forgive and to be ready to reconcile, if that is possible.

There will often be consequences from the action that cannot, and should not be removed. God didn't remove the consequence of sin and he didn't ignore it, he paid the penalty himself through Jesus' death on the cross.

Now we are able to say:

As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

Psalms 103:12

Let us ask for his help to forgive others as he has forgiven us.

Psalm 103

Of David.

¹ Praise the LORD, my soul;
all my inmost being, praise his holy name.

² Praise the LORD, my soul,
and forget not all his benefits—

³ who forgives all your sins
and heals all your diseases,

⁴ who redeems your life from the pit
and crowns you with love and compassion,

⁵ who satisfies your desires with good things
so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

⁶ The LORD works righteousness
and justice for all the oppressed.

⁷ He made known his ways to Moses,
his deeds to the people of Israel:

⁸ The LORD is compassionate and gracious,
slow to anger, abounding in love.

⁹ He will not always accuse,
nor will he harbor his anger forever;

¹⁰ he does not treat us as our sins deserve
or repay us according to our iniquities.

¹¹ For as high as the heavens are above the earth,
so great is his love for those who fear him;

¹² as far as the east is from the west,
so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

¹³ As a father has compassion on his children,
so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him;

¹⁴ for he knows how we are formed
he remembers that we are dust.

¹⁵ The life of mortals is like grass,
they flourish like a flower of the field;

¹⁶ the wind blows over it and it is gone,
and its place remembers it no more.

¹⁷ But from everlasting to everlasting
the LORD's love is with those who fear him,
and his righteousness with their children's children—

¹⁸ with those who keep his covenant
and remember to obey his precepts.

¹⁹ The LORD has established his throne in heaven,
and his kingdom rules over all.

²⁰ Praise the LORD, you his angels,
you mighty ones who do his bidding, who obey his word.

²¹ Praise the LORD, all his heavenly hosts,
you his servants who do his will.

²² Praise the LORD, all his works
everywhere in his dominion.

Praise the LORD, my soul.

King David Study 2 – Gratitude

Saul's death didn't mark the end of conflict for David. Although he was crowned king of Judah, it was another seven and a half years before of all Israel chose him as king. He then led the Israelites to victory over the Jebusites and the Philistines and brought the Ark of the Covenant into his new capital city, Jerusalem. All this activity was followed by a time of relative stability and David had time for reflection.

Reading: 2 Samuel 7:1-3 – Saul's Jealousy of David

¹After the king was settled in his palace and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, ²he said to Nathan the prophet, "Here I am, living in a house of cedar, while the ark of God remains in a tent."

³Nathan replied to the king, "Whatever you have in mind, go ahead and do it, for the LORD is with you."

1. What did David want to do once he was settled in Jerusalem? Why?

2. What significance did the Ark of the Covenant have for the Israelites?

Reading: 2 Samuel 7:4-17

⁴But that night the word of the LORD came to Nathan, saying:

⁵"Go and tell my servant David, 'This is what the LORD says: Are you the one to build me a house to dwell in? ⁶I have not dwelt in a house from the day I brought the Israelites up out of Egypt to this day. I have been moving from place to place with a tent as my dwelling. ⁷Wherever I have moved with all the Israelites, did I ever say to any of their rulers whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?"'"

⁸"Now then, tell my servant David, 'This is what the LORD Almighty says: I took you from the pasture, from tending the flock, and appointed you ruler over my people Israel. ⁹I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have cut off all your enemies from before you. Now I will make your name great, like the names of the greatest men on earth. ¹⁰And I will provide a place for my people Israel and will plant them so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed. Wicked people will not oppress them anymore, as they did at the beginning ¹¹and have done ever since the time I appointed leaders over my people Israel. I will also give you rest from all your enemies.

"The LORD declares to you that the LORD himself will establish a house for you: ¹²When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. ¹⁴I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with a rod wielded by men, with floggings inflicted by human hands. ¹⁵But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. ¹⁶Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever.'"

¹⁷Nathan reported to David all the words of this entire revelation.

3. What does God say about himself as he answers David?

4. Why do you think God acts in this way and decides David is not to build the temple?

5. What does God say he has already done for David?

6. What extra promises does God make to David for the future?

7. Which do you think would be particularly reassuring to David? Which are particularly meaningful to you?

The passage in verses 12-16 describes the leadership succession after David dies. But God is referring to two parts of that succession. In the immediate future, David will be succeeded by his own son with all his human failings (v14). But the promise from God goes much further than David's son Solomon.

Reading: Matthew 1:1

<i>¹This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the son of David, the son of Abraham:</i>

Reading: Luke 1:32,33

<i>³²He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, ³³and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."</i>
--

8.

a. How has God fulfilled his promise to establish the throne of David's offspring forever?

b. How does that affect us?

9. How do we know what God wants us to do today?

Reading: 2 Samuel 7:18-21

¹⁸Then King David went in and sat before the LORD, and he said:
“Who am I, Sovereign LORD, and what is my family, that you have brought me this far? ¹⁹And as if this were not enough in your sight, Sovereign LORD, you have also spoken about the future of the house of your servant—and this decree, Sovereign LORD, is for a mere human!
²⁰*“What more can David say to you? For you know your servant, Sovereign LORD. ²¹For the sake of your word and according to your will, you have done this great thing and made it known to your servant.*

10. What was David’s reaction to God’s promises to him and his house?

11. What promise has God made to you, and what effect does this have on your family?

Reading: 2 Samuel 7:22-29

²²*“How great you are, Sovereign LORD! There is no one like you, and there is no God but you, as we have heard with our own ears. ²³And who is like your people Israel—the one nation on earth that God went out to redeem as a people for himself, and to make a name for himself, and to perform great and awesome wonders by driving out nations and their gods from before your people, whom you redeemed from Egypt? ²⁴You have established your people Israel as your very own forever, and you, LORD, have become their God.*
²⁵*“And now, LORD God, keep forever the promise you have made concerning your servant and his house. Do as you promised, ²⁶so that your name will be great forever. Then people will say, ‘The LORD Almighty is God over Israel!’ And the house of your servant David will be established in your sight.*
²⁷*“LORD Almighty, God of Israel, you have revealed this to your servant, saying, ‘I will build a house for you.’ So your servant has found courage to pray this prayer to you. ²⁸Sovereign LORD, you are God! Your covenant is trustworthy, and you have promised these good things to your servant. ²⁹Now be pleased to bless the house of your servant, that it may continue forever in your sight; for you, Sovereign LORD, have spoken, and with your blessing the house of your servant will be blessed forever.”*

12. What does David say is God's purpose in choosing Israel?

13. What is God's purpose today in choosing Christians?

14. What is David's first reason for asking God to keep his promise to David's house? (v25,26)

15. We all long for God's blessing on us and those we care about. How can we keep our focus on God and not on ourselves?

16. Although David doesn't know how God will keep the promises he has made, what do verses 28 and 29 say about David's understanding of who God is and what he has said?

Reading: Romans 1:1-4

¹Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God— ²the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures ³regarding his Son, who as to his earthly life was a descendant of David, ⁴and who through the Spirit of holiness was appointed the Son of God in power by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord.

17. How would you explain this passage in light of our study today?

18. How does this strengthen your understanding of who God is and what his purpose is for us in Jesus?

In his death on the cross Jesus removed the sin that separated us from God. There is nothing we can add to 'improve' our salvation; Jesus has done it all. Our part is to accept his gift and to seek to serve him all the days of our lives, in loving gratitude.

Summary: King David Study 2 – Gratitude

After Saul's death and David's coronation as king of Judah there was still much for David to do. It was another seven and a half years before he became king of all Israel and he led his troops to victory against the Jebusites and the Philistines.

Finally David was able to settle into his palace in Jerusalem which he had established as his capital city. As he reflected he realised that while he was living in a fine cedar palace the Ark of the Covenant, the symbol of God's presence with Israel, was still housed in a tent. So he decided to build a permanent house for God.

But God spoke to David through Nathan the prophet and told David that he was not the one to carry out this plan. It would be his descendant who would build God a house. At first appearance God seemed to be rebuking David for his plan. But he was reminding David that anything David is able to do for God is only possible because God has made it possible. God led the Israelites out of Egypt. God chose David to be king instead of Saul. It was God's work all along and although David's descendants would continue to rule Israel, it was because God chose them to do that just as he chose Israel as his own people.

When we are involved in working for God we can sometimes forget that everything we do is only possible because God enables us to do it. Our intentions can be very good but God may want the work done another way not the way we are planning. Like David we need to be open to God's guidance, and accept his direction which comes to us through his Holy Spirit as we read his word and pray. It will also sometimes come to us through the comments of other people.

David was humbled by God's promises to establish his family forever and although he would not have understood how God would do that he had no doubt that God would keep the promises he had made. We know that all those promises were fulfilled when Jesus was born as a descendant of David.

God has promised us his presence with us here on Earth and an eternal future with him in heaven when we accept Jesus as our Lord and Saviour. We can be sure that God will keep these promises to us and to everyone who trusts in Jesus.

Just as God chose Israel to be his people and to show the world what it is to be a nation ruled and directed by God, God has chosen Christians today to show the world what it is like to be people ruled and directed by him. We often fail but God doesn't give up on us.

When Paul introduces himself in his letter to the Romans as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, he is introducing God's good news because that's what 'gospel' means - 'good news'. The good news is that through Jesus' suffering and death he has paid the price for the sin that separated us from God. There is nothing we can do to add to what Jesus has done for us, we can only accept his gift and in love and gratitude seek to serve him all the days of our life.

What is your response to Jesus? What will you do today to respond to all he has done for you?

Psalm 8

For the director of music. A psalm of David.

¹ *LORD, our Lord,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!*

*You have set your glory
in the heavens.*

² *Through the praise of children and infants
you have established a stronghold against your enemies,
to silence the foe and the avenger.*

³ *When I consider your heavens,
the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars,
which you have set in place,*

⁴ *what is mankind that you are mindful of them,
human beings that you care for them?*

⁵ *You have made them a little lower than the angels
and crowned them with glory and honour.*

⁶ *You made them rulers over the works of your hands;
you put everything under their feet:*

⁷ *all flocks and herds,
and the animals of the wild,*

⁸ *the birds in the sky,
and the fish in the sea,
all that swim the paths of the seas.*

⁹ *LORD, our Lord,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!*

King David Study 3 – Repentance

Most of us will be familiar with the story of David and Bathsheba. To summarise and refresh our memories:

Bathsheba was married to one of David's soldiers but David committed adultery with her while her husband was away fighting and she became pregnant. David tried various ways to cover up the situation but when they failed he arranged for her husband to be killed in battle.

Reading: 2 Samuel 11:1-5

¹*In the spring, at the time when kings go off to war, David sent Joab out with the king's men and the whole Israelite army. They destroyed the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But David remained in Jerusalem.*

²*One evening David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof of the palace. From the roof he saw a woman bathing. The woman was very beautiful, ³and David sent someone to find out about her. The man said, "She is Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite." ⁴Then David sent messengers to get her. She came to him, and he slept with her. (Now she was purifying herself from her monthly uncleanness.) Then she went back home. ⁵The woman conceived and sent word to David, saying, "I am pregnant."*

1. What was the first step David made that led him into temptation and from there into a chain of sin?

2. Trace David's downward path from that first step along to adultery and murder.

3.
 - a. How do we avoid those first steps, and what can we do if we realise we are starting down a path away from God?

- b. What do we do if we see a Christian friend starting down a path away from God?

Reading: 1 Corinthians 10:13

¹³No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.

4. What do we learn from **1 Corinthians 10:13** about this issue?

For a while it appeared that David would suffer no repercussions from his sin. He married Bathsheba and she gave birth to a son. But God didn't forget or ignore David's sin and sent Nathan the Prophet to deliver a message to David. He confronted David by telling him a parable and trapped David into admitting his sin. He then spoke the word of the Lord to him.

Reading: 2 Samuel 12:11-24

¹¹"This is what the LORD says: 'Out of your own household I am going to bring calamity on you. Before your very eyes I will take your wives and give them to one who is close to you, and he will sleep with your wives in broad daylight. ¹²You did it in secret, but I will do this thing in broad daylight before all Israel.'"

¹³Then David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD."

Nathan replied, "The LORD has taken away your sin. You are not going to die. ¹⁴But because by doing this you have shown utter contempt for the LORD, the son born to you will die."

¹⁵After Nathan had gone home, the LORD struck the child that Uriah's wife had borne to David, and he became ill. ¹⁶David pleaded with God for the child. He fasted and spent the nights lying in sackcloth on the ground. ¹⁷The elders of his household stood beside him to get him up from the ground, but he refused, and he would not eat any food with them.

¹⁸On the seventh day the child died. David's attendants were afraid to tell him that the child was dead, for they thought, "While the child was still living, he wouldn't listen to us when we spoke to him. How can we now tell him the child is dead? He may do something desperate."

¹⁹David noticed that his attendants were whispering among themselves, and he realized the child was dead. "Is the child dead?" he asked.

"Yes," they replied, "he is dead."

²⁰Then David got up from the ground. After he had washed, put on lotions and changed his clothes, he went into the house of the LORD and worshiped. Then he went to his own house, and at his request they served him food, and he ate.

²¹His attendants asked him, "Why are you acting this way? While the child was alive, you fasted and wept, but now that the child is dead, you get up and eat!"

²²He answered, "While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept. I thought, 'Who knows? The LORD may be gracious to me and let the child live.' ²³But now that he is dead, why should I go on fasting? Can I bring him back again? I will go to him, but he will not return to me."

²⁴Then David comforted his wife Bathsheba, and he went to her and made love to her. She gave birth to a son, and they named him Solomon. The LORD loved him.

5. What was David's immediate response when Nathan told him of God's judgement on his sin?

6. What does verse 13 say is the consequence of sin?

7. David didn't try to justify himself to God. He accepted his guilt. What did he do in regard to his son?

8. What did David do when he learned the child had died, and why did he act that way?

9. What can we learn from David's example of true repentance and God's response to him? If you have time read Psalm 51.

David was successful in securing his kingdom from outside enemies but, as God had said, he experienced rebellion from within his own family.

Amnon, the crown prince, became obsessed with his half-sister, Tamar. He raped her and then discarded her. But her full brother, Absalom, killed Amnon in retribution and escaped to his mother's people where he stayed for three years.

Reading: 2 Samuel 13:37-14:3

³⁷*Absalom fled and went to Talmai son of Ammihud, the king of Geshur. But King David mourned many days for his son.*

³⁸*After Absalom fled and went to Geshur, he stayed there three years. ³⁹And King David longed to go to Absalom, for he was consoled concerning Amnon's death.*

14 ¹*Joab son of Zeruiah knew that the king's heart longed for Absalom. ²So Joab sent someone to Tekoa and had a wise woman brought from there. He said to her, "Pretend you are in mourning. Dress in mourning clothes, and don't use any cosmetic lotions. Act like a woman who has spent many days grieving for the dead. ³Then go to the king and speak these words to him." And Joab put the words in her mouth.*

10. How did time change David's attitude to Amnon's murder by Absalom?

Joab had the woman tell David that she was a widow with two sons, but one had killed the other. Now the clan were demanding that her second son be killed in retribution for the death of his brother. If this happened her dead husband would have no one to carry on his name, and she would be without support or protection.

When David agreed to protect her remaining son, she challenged him with his own behaviour towards Absalom. (read the story in **2 Samuel 14:4-20**)

11. Why did Joab devise a plan to bring Absalom back to Jerusalem? Do you think Joab was actually helping David by his actions? Why or why not?

Reading: 2 Samuel 14:21-33

²¹The king said to Joab, “Very well, I will do it. Go, bring back the young man Absalom.”

²²Joab fell with his face to the ground to pay him honor, and he blessed the king. Joab said, “Today your servant knows that he has found favor in your eyes, my lord the king, because the king has granted his servant’s request.”

²³Then Joab went to Geshur and brought Absalom back to Jerusalem. ²⁴But the king said, “He must go to his own house; he must not see my face.” So Absalom went to his own house and did not see the face of the king.

²⁵In all Israel there was not a man so highly praised for his handsome appearance as Absalom. From the top of his head to the sole of his foot there was no blemish in him. ²⁶Whenever he cut the hair of his head—he used to cut his hair once a year because it became too heavy for him—he would weigh it, and its weight was two hundred shekels by the royal standard.

²⁷Three sons and a daughter were born to Absalom. His daughter’s name was Tamar, and she became a beautiful woman.

²⁸Absalom lived two years in Jerusalem without seeing the king’s face. ²⁹Then Absalom sent for Joab in order to send him to the king, but Joab refused to come to him. So he sent a second time, but he refused to come. ³⁰Then he said to his servants, “Look, Joab’s field is next to mine, and he has barley there. Go and set it on fire.” So Absalom’s servants set the field on fire.

³¹Then Joab did go to Absalom’s house, and he said to him, “Why have your servants set my field on fire?”

³²Absalom said to Joab, “Look, I sent word to you and said, ‘Come here so I can send you to the king to ask, “Why have I come from Geshur? It would be better for me if I were still there!”’ Now then, I want to see the king’s face, and if I am guilty of anything, let him put me to death.”

³³So Joab went to the king and told him this. Then the king summoned Absalom, and he came in and bowed down with his face to the ground before the king. And the king kissed Absalom.

12. Why did David bring Absalom back to Jerusalem? What restriction did he place on Absalom, and how long did it last?

13. What did Absalom use the time to do? How did the restriction come to be lifted?

14. What was missing from Absalom's attitude as he went through the process of being restored to his former position?

15. Compare Absalom's attitude to his sin, with David's attitude to his sin in regard to Bathsheba and Uriah.

16. How do you think David's own sin affected the way he treated Absalom? What sort of a father was he?

17. What do we learn about sin in these chapters concerning David and his family?

Reading: Luke 23:32,39-43

³²Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with him to be executed.

³⁹One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!"

⁴⁰But the other criminal rebuked him. "Don't you fear God," he said, "since you are under the same sentence? ⁴¹We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong."

⁴²Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."⁴³Jesus answered him, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."

18. How did the thief on the cross show he was sorry for what he had done?

19. What did he recognise about Jesus?

20. Despite the fact that the man was unable to do anything to make up for his sins, what did Jesus do for him?

21. What do we have to do for Jesus to forgive our sins?

Repentance is more than just being sorry we've sinned. It's being determined not to repeat the sin and taking action to avoid being tempted. It's actually a change of heart. However, as we see from Jesus' forgiveness of the thief on the cross, forgiveness comes from God and is not dependent on us *putting things right*, because that is something we often can't do.

But that doesn't mean we can sin, say sorry, and turn around and repeat the sin. God looks at our hearts and knows whether our repentance is genuine. Sometimes we may not even feel sorry and we know we should be, but God is always ready to help us show true repentance with our hearts as well as our mouths.

Absalom could have asked God for forgiveness and help, but he seems to have been determined to do things his way, not God's. Let's not follow his example.

22. How do we show we really are sorry for our sins?

Summary: King David Study 3 – Repentance

The story of David and Bathsheba reminds us that no one is above giving in to temptation and that one sin leads to more. David's downward spiral from an obedient servant of God began with an apparently small and insignificant step.

Part of the reason the Israelites had wanted a king was so they would have someone to lead them into battle, but instead of going himself, David stayed in Jerusalem and sent Joab in his place (**2 Samuel 11:1**). This resulted in David seeing Bathsheba bathing then sending for her, committing adultery with her, and killing her husband to cover up when she became pregnant to David. All that happened because David was in the wrong place at the wrong time and when temptation came his way he gave in.

We can find ourselves in the wrong place but God has promised that with every temptation he allows there will always be a way we can bear it without sinning (**1 Corinthians 10:13**).

When David was faced with his sin he immediately accepted his guilt and realised he had not just sinned against Uriah and Bathsheba, he had sinned against God. His repentance was genuine and he accepted the punishment that God sent. However when the son born to him and Bathsheba became sick he pleaded with God to save the child's life.

We should never be afraid to take our hearts' desires to God in prayer. In Gethsemane Jesus pleaded to let the cup of suffering pass if that were possible but he added "nevertheless not my will, but yours be done." David also accepted God's judgement when his child died and comforted his wife. We need to be prepared to trust God and accept that his answer is best even if it isn't what we wanted.

The consequences of David's sin didn't end there. Amnon, the crown prince, became obsessed with his half-sister Tamar. He raped her and then discarded her. But her full brother, Absalom, killed Amnon in retribution and escaped to his mother's people staying for three years.

After that time David's longing for Absalom overcame his sorrow at Amnon's death and Joab, noticing this, decided to do something about it. David detected Joab's hand in the plan but still agreed to allow Absalom to come back to Jerusalem, although he was not allowed back to the king's court to see David. Joab thought he was helping David because he did what David wanted but there are times, as in this case, when what we want is not the best thing for us. After two years, which Absalom used to establish himself as a favourite with the people, he virtually demanded reinstatement as the crown prince. David agreed without requiring any sign of repentance from Absalom for the murder of his brother. We don't know how much David's leniency with Absalom was influenced by his own sin of murder but it had disastrous consequences for them both in the future.

We expect repentance to be reflected in a change of attitude and behaviour but Jesus' dealing with the repentant thief on the cross reminds us that God's forgiveness isn't dependent on us *putting things right*. God looks at our hearts and knows whether our repentance is genuine. Sometimes we may not even feel sorry and we know we should be, but God is always ready to help us show true repentance with our hearts as well as our mouths.

Absalom could have asked God for forgiveness and help, but he seems to have been determined to do things his way, not God's. Let's make sure we don't follow his example.

Psalm 51

For the director of music. A psalm of David. When the prophet Nathan came to him after David had committed adultery with Bathsheba.

- ¹ *Have mercy on me, O God
according to your unfailing love;
according to your great compassion
blot out my transgressions.*
- ² *Wash away all my iniquity
and cleanse me from my sin.*
- ³ *For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is always before me.*
- ⁴ *Against you, you only, have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight;
so you are right in your verdict
and justified when you judge.*
- ⁵ *Surely I was sinful at birth,
sinful from the time my mother conceived me.*
- ⁶ *Yet you desired faithfulness even in the womb;
you taught me wisdom in that secret place.*
- ⁷ *Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean;
wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.*
- ⁸ *Let me hear joy and gladness;
let the bones you have crushed rejoice.*
- ⁹ *Hide your face from my sins
and blot out all my iniquity.*
- ¹⁰ *Create in me a pure heart, O God,
and renew a steadfast spirit within me.*
- ¹¹ *Do not cast me from your presence
or take your Holy Spirit from me.*
- ¹² *Restore to me the joy of your salvation
and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.*
- ¹³ *Then I will teach transgressors your ways,
so that sinners will turn back to you.*
- ¹⁴ *Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God,
you who are God my Saviour,
and my tongue will sing of your righteousness.*
- ¹⁵ *Open my lips, Lord,
and my mouth will declare your praise.*
- ¹⁶ *You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it;
you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings.*
- ¹⁷ *My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart
you, God, will not despise.*
- ¹⁸ *May it please you to prosper Zion,
to build up the walls of Jerusalem.*
- ¹⁹ *Then you will delight in the sacrifices of the righteous,
in burnt offerings offered whole;
then bulls will be offered on your altar.*

King David Study 4 – Consequences

David's son Absalom had killed his older half-brother Amnon in retribution for Amnon's rape of Absalom's sister, Tamar. Absalom escaped punishment by fleeing to his mother's people. As time passed David allowed him to return and be reinstated as the crown prince, without ever showing repentance for the murder of his brother. This was because David missed Absalom and wanted him near.

Reading: 2 Samuel 15 :1-6

¹In the course of time, Absalom provided himself with a chariot and horses and with fifty men to run ahead of him. ²He would get up early and stand by the side of the road leading to the city gate. Whenever anyone came with a complaint to be placed before the king for a decision, Absalom would call out to him, "What town are you from?" He would answer, "Your servant is from one of the tribes of Israel." ³Then Absalom would say to him, "Look, your claims are valid and proper, but there is no representative of the king to hear you." ⁴And Absalom would add, "If only I were appointed judge in the land! Then everyone who has a complaint or case could come to me and I would see that they receive justice."

⁵Also, whenever anyone approached him to bow down before him, Absalom would reach out his hand, take hold of him and kiss him. ⁶Absalom behaved in this way toward all the Israelites who came to the king asking for justice, and so he stole the hearts of the people of Israel.

1. What did Absalom do and what do you think was his aim?

2. What was the result of these actions? How would this affect his father, David?

Reading: 2 Samuel 15:7-17

⁷At the end of four years, Absalom said to the king, "Let me go to Hebron and fulfill a vow I made to the LORD. ⁸While your servant was living at Geshur in Aram, I made this vow: 'If the LORD takes me back to Jerusalem, I will worship the LORD in Hebron.'"

⁹The king said to him, "Go in peace." So he went to Hebron.

¹⁰Then Absalom sent secret messengers throughout the tribes of Israel to say, "As soon as you hear the sound of the trumpets, then say, 'Absalom is king in Hebron.'"¹¹Two hundred men from Jerusalem had accompanied Absalom. They had been invited as guests and went quite innocently, knowing nothing about the matter. ¹²While Absalom was offering sacrifices, he also sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor, to come from Giloh, his hometown. And so the conspiracy gained strength, and Absalom's following kept on increasing.

¹³A messenger came and told David, "The hearts of the people of Israel are with Absalom."

¹⁴Then David said to all his officials who were with him in Jerusalem, "Come! We must flee, or none of us will escape from Absalom. We must leave immediately, or he will move quickly to overtake us and bring ruin on us and put the city to the sword."

¹⁵The king's officials answered him, "Your servants are ready to do whatever our lord the king chooses."

¹⁶The king set out, with his entire household following him; but he left ten concubines to take care of the palace. ¹⁷So the king set out, with all the people following him, and they halted at the edge of the city.

3. Having ingratiated himself with the people, what did Absalom do next?

4. How did David react?

5. How had David's previous behaviour contributed to bringing about this current situation?

David's former advisor, Ahithophel, had joined Absalom and advised him to immediately pursue David, while he was weary and weak. However David had sent another of his advisors, Hushai, back to join Absalom and give him false advice.

Reading: 2 Samuel 15:30,31

³⁰But David continued up the Mount of Olives, weeping as he went; his head was covered and he was barefoot. All the people with him covered their heads too and were weeping as they went up. ³¹Now David had been told, "Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom." So David prayed, "LORD, turn Ahithophel's counsel into foolishness."

Reading: 2 Samuel 17:14-16,23

¹⁴Absalom and all the men of Israel said, "The advice of Hushai the Arkite is better than that of Ahithophel." For the LORD had determined to frustrate the good advice of Ahithophel in order to bring disaster on Absalom.

¹⁵Hushai told Zadok and Abiathar, the priests, "Ahithophel has advised Absalom and the elders of Israel to do such and such, but I have advised them to do so and so. ¹⁶Now send a message at once and tell David, 'Do not spend the night at the fords in the wilderness; cross over without fail, or the king and all the people with him will be swallowed up.'"

²³When Ahithophel saw that his advice had not been followed, he saddled his donkey and set out for his house in his hometown. He put his house in order and then hanged himself. So he died and was buried in his father's tomb.

6. How did Ahithophel stop being a resource for Absalom? Why would he act this way?

7. How did God answer David's prayer in **2 Samuel 15:31**?

God didn't answer David's prayer in the way David asked it, but God's answer was more effective than David's original request.

8. Can you think of a time when God has answered your prayer in an unexpected way?

9. What can we do to avoid overlooking God's answers to our prayers when they come in ways we weren't expecting?

Although David wanted to lead his troops out in battle against Absalom's forces his men persuaded him to stay in safety in the city.

Reading: 2 Samuel 18:4b-17

^{4b}So the king stood beside the gate while all his men marched out in units of hundreds and of thousands. ⁵The king commanded Joab, Abishai and Ittai, "Be gentle with the young man Absalom for my sake." And all the troops heard the king giving orders concerning Absalom to each of the commanders.

⁶David's army marched out of the city to fight Israel, and the battle took place in the forest of Ephraim. ⁷There Israel's troops were routed by David's men, and the casualties that day were great—twenty thousand men. ⁸The battle spread out over the whole countryside, and the forest swallowed up more men that day than the sword.

⁹Now Absalom happened to meet David's men. He was riding his mule, and as the mule went under the thick branches of a large oak, Absalom's hair got caught in the tree. He was left hanging in midair, while the mule he was riding kept on going.

¹⁰When one of the men saw what had happened, he told Joab, "I just saw Absalom hanging in an oak tree."

¹¹Joab said to the man who had told him this, "What! You saw him? Why didn't you strike him to the ground right there? Then I would have had to give you ten shekels of silver and a warrior's belt."

¹²But the man replied, "Even if a thousand shekels were weighed out into my hands, I would not lay a hand on the king's son. In our hearing the king commanded you and Abishai and Ittai, 'Protect the young man Absalom for my sake.' ¹³And if I had put my life in jeopardy—and nothing is hidden from the king—you would have kept your distance from me."

¹⁴Joab said, "I'm not going to wait like this for you." So he took three javelins in his hand and plunged them into Absalom's heart while Absalom was still alive in the oak tree. ¹⁵And ten of Joab's armor-bearers surrounded Absalom, struck him and killed him.

¹⁶Then Joab sounded the trumpet, and the troops stopped pursuing Israel, for Joab halted them.

¹⁷They took Absalom, threw him into a big pit in the forest and piled up a large heap of rocks over him. Meanwhile, all the Israelites fled to their homes.

10. What was the outcome of Absalom's rebellion:

a. For Israel?

b. For Himself?

c. For David?

11. Since Joab had previously helped Absalom return to Jerusalem, why do you think he went against David's orders this time? What do you think of his action?

12. In what sort of situations might we act against another person's expressed wishes?

Reading: 2 Samuel 19: 1-8

¹Joab was told, "The king is weeping and mourning for Absalom." ²And for the whole army the victory that day was turned into mourning, because on that day the troops heard it said, "The king is grieving for his son." ³The men stole into the city that day as men steal in who are ashamed when they flee from battle. ⁴The king covered his face and cried aloud, "O my son Absalom! O Absalom, my son, my son!"

⁵Then Joab went into the house to the king and said, "Today you have humiliated all your men, who have just saved your life and the lives of your sons and daughters and the lives of your wives and concubines. ⁶You love those who hate you and hate those who love you. You have made it clear today that the commanders and their men mean nothing to you. I see that you would be pleased if Absalom were alive today and all of us were dead. ⁷Now go out and encourage your men. I swear by the LORD that if you don't go out, not a man will be left with you by nightfall. This will be worse for you than all the calamities that have come on you from your youth till now."

⁸So the king got up and took his seat in the gateway. When the men were told, "The king is sitting in the gateway," they all came before him.

13. What was David's reaction to the death of his traitorous son? What do you think of that reaction?

14. Do you think Absalom would have reacted that way if David had been the one to die? Why?

15. What effect did David's actions have on his troops, and what could that have led to?

16. David's leniency with Absalom resulted in David losing Absalom forever. How could David have acted earlier to prevent this outcome?

17. Why do you think David acted as he did with Absalom?

Reading: Romans 6:23

²³*For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

18. What is the consequence of sin, but what has Jesus done for us?

19. *(For personal consideration)* Where, like David, do you need to take a firmer stand to prevent bad consequences occurring?

David's leniency with Absalom resulted in disaster for everyone: David, Absalom, and the people of Israel. However David was a man who learned from his mistakes and when his son Adonijah, decided to take the kingship for himself instead of allowing Solomon to succeed David acted decisively. He commanded Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet to anoint Solomon king over Israel while David was still alive so there could be no confusion over his choice of successor (read the story in **1 Kings 1**).

Do you accept God's correction like David did? And do you learn from your past mistakes like David? When we genuinely repent and turn to God for forgiveness he will forgive, and he will also help us avoid future failures if we are prepared to follow his guidance.

Summary: King David Study 4 – Consequences

When David's son Absalom fled after killing his older brother Amnon in retaliation for Amnon raping his sister Tamar, David allowed Absalom to return to Jerusalem after only three years. Absalom used this time to ingratiate himself with the people of Jerusalem and after another two years initiated action to have himself reinstated as Crown Prince. At no time did David ask Absalom to show repentance for Amnon's murder. We don't know how much David's attitude was influenced by his own sin of adultery and murder, but we do know the consequences for David, Absalom, and the people of Israel were calamitous.

After deliberately setting out to win the people of Israel's hearts away from his father Absalom set out to depose David as King. He went to Hebron, pretending he was going to sacrifice to God there and instead declared himself King. When David heard he fled from Jerusalem with Joab, his General, and the people who remained loyal to him.

Absalom had recruited Ahitophel, a wise advisor of David's, to help him so David sent Hushai, another of his advisors, to Absalom to pretend to advise him and to counter Ahitophel's advice. Then David prayed that God would turn Ahitophel's advice to foolishness. Ahitophel continued to give Absalom good advice but Absalom ignored him and listened to Hushai instead. When he saw his advice wasn't going to be followed, Ahitophel realised Absalom would fail in his attempt to replace David as king so he went home, put his affairs in order, and killed himself.

God doesn't always answer our prayers in the way we expect. Ahitophel's death removed him permanently from giving Absalom advice. God's solution was more effective and we see that in our own lives. There are times when we may even think God isn't answering our prayers at all but when we stop and look for his answer, we find it has come but we didn't recognise it at the time. Let's keep our eyes open for answers to prayer in ways we weren't expecting.

David had been lenient with Absalom and ended up at war with his own son, and the people of Israel suffered the consequences. In the battle that followed David's forces routed Absalom's forces and 20,000 men died. Absalom was riding in the forest and got caught in a tree by his hair, which had been a great source of pride for him. Joab was told about this and contrary to David's express instructions to be "*gentle with ... Absalom*", Joab killed him and buried him under a pile of rocks.

When he heard that Absalom was dead David mourned for his son instead of celebrating his troops' victory, and Joab warned him that he would lose the loyalty of the people if he continued to act that way. So David took Joab's advice and sat at the gateway where his people could come to him.

David was a man who accepted correction and learnt from his mistakes. At the end of his life his son Adonijah attempted to rebel and install himself as the next king, instead of Solomon, David's chosen successor. David acted decisively, anointing Solomon while David was still alive so the people knew who was to succeed. How well do you learn from your past mistakes, like David, and with God's help avoid repeating them?

On the cross Jesus was cut off from God the Father, when the sins of the world were laid on him. He was separated from God so that we never need be. But we need to accept his sacrifice in our place if we are to experience the forgiveness Jesus' death bought for us. The consequence of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through faith in Jesus. Have you accepted that free gift?

Psalm 3

A psalm of David. When he fled from his son Absalom.

- ¹ *LORD, how many are my foes!
How many rise up against me!*
- ² *Many are saying of me,
“God will not deliver him.”*
- ³ *But you, LORD, are a shield around me,
my glory, the One who lifts my head high.*
- ⁴ *I call out to the LORD,
and he answers me from his holy mountain.*
- ⁵ *I lie down and sleep;
I wake again, because the LORD sustains me.*
- ⁶ *I will not fear though tens of thousands
assail me on every side.*
- ⁷ *Arise, LORD!
Deliver me, my God!
Strike all my enemies on the jaw;
break the teeth of the wicked.*
- ⁸ *From the LORD comes deliverance.
May your blessing be on your people.*

Suggested Hymns and Songs

Theme: Speak Lord in the Stillness
May the Mind of Christ my Saviour

Study 1 – Forgiveness

Search me, O God, and Know my Heart Today

Speak Lord in the Stillness

It is Well with my Soul

May the Mind of Christ my Saviour

How Deep the Father's Love for Us

Study 2 – Gratitude

What a friend we have in Jesus

God is our Strength and Refuge

Breath on me Breath of God

Father I Thank You for all that You've Done

And Can it be

Study 3 – Repentance

Dear Lord and Father of Mankind

Change my Heart O God

I am weak but Thou art strong
(Just a closer walk with Thee)

Just as I am without one plea

I lift my eyes to the quiet hills

Study 4 – Consequences

Our God our Help in Ages Past

Through All the Changing Scenes of Life

Blessed is the Man (Psalm 1)

Great is Your Faithfulness

In Christ Alone my Hope is Found

Appendix

Presenting a Bible Study in the form of *1 to 1 in Action* at an MU Branch meeting

As an alternative to presenting all the Bible Studies as a series of questions, we are presenting an alternative which you could use at one meeting to allow you to share this very useful method of Bible Study with your branch members. Once your members have experienced this method at a branch meeting they have a tool to use in other situations as well. So you are not just studying the Bible on one day but equipping them for the future as well.

I have provided an overall plan for a branch meeting which would last around one and a half hours. However you can change the plan to suit your members' preferences and needs. The meeting plan is just a suggestion.

I have also printed out two passages for each Bible Study of the King David series so you have a choice of which study to use this method.

Passage A is to be used first as a larger group (up to 8-10 people per group) so the members can practice and see how it works. Then **Passage B** is to be used in pairs by the branch members so they experience sharing with one other person. These two experiences are essential for the members to develop confidence in the method and in their ability to use it. Please don't try to just describe the process without having everyone try it themselves.

The page with the description of *1 to 1 in Action* is designed to be read out to describe what the program is about and how to do it. Alternatively you can use your own words if you are familiar with the method already.

The sheets with the Bible passages on them also have the *1 to 1 in Action* symbols printed. This is to allow room for people to write down the ideas that they have as they read the passages, ready for sharing. It is helpful if people write the verse numbers down next to their comments. This makes it easier to refer back to the passages during the sharing time.

I have also included a sheet of bookmarks which can be printed off on light card or on paper and laminated. These are for distribution to the participants as a future reminder.

My prayer is that this method will be used by MU branches and that members will then use it with others so the blessing received will spread.

With my love and prayers,

Wendy Mayer

Suggested Branch Program

- Welcome and Announcements (10 mins)
- Service (if desired) and Wave of Prayer (15 mins)
- Description of what *I to I in Action* is, why it is worthwhile, and how to use it. (You can use the Description provided on the next page of this appendix) (5 mins)
- **Large Group discussion time** (30 mins)
 - Divide the members into groups of 8-10 if this is possible. It's probably best not to make the groups less than 6, so small branches may prefer to stay in one group for this part.
 - Make sure everyone has a pen and paper and a copy of the Bible Passage the group will be discussing. This is also a good time to hand out the bookmarks.

Note: *Line up leaders of the large groups ahead of time and give them a copy of the Instructions to Group Leaders (below) in plenty of time for them to read through and prepare.*

- The Meeting Leader prays asking for God's guidance as the groups look at his word.
- **Passage A** is read out by one person. Use a microphone if needed.
- The Meeting Leader needs to act as a timekeeper so if possible it is best if she doesn't also lead a group. However, if she needs to be a group leader she will have to also announce the changes in activities.
- Allow up to 10 minutes for group members to write notes and questions from the passage. Encourage them to note the verse numbers so they can easily refer to the passage during discussion. If everyone seems to be finished early check with them and move onto the discussion.
- Ask the groups to discuss the ideas that people came up with, starting at the beginning of the passage and working through. Allow around 15 minutes for this.
- Give the members another 5 minutes to think about and write down one thing they have learnt from the passage. Has God shown them a truth they hadn't understood before, or is God prompting them to take some action? Whatever that is, it is between them and God so they don't need to share it with others.
- The meeting leader closes this time with prayer.
- **Pairs Discussion time**
 - Help the members to form into pairs. If there is an odd number of people the Meeting Leader could sit out or one group of 3 could form.
 - Have **Passage B** read out by one person for the group.
 - Ask the pairs to spend 10 minutes writing their comments on Passage B
 - Allow them 10-15 minutes to discuss their comments and questions.
 - Give 5 minutes for them to decide on their action from the passage.
- Close the meeting in prayer from the front of the room.
 - You may want to hand out a copy of the printed MU Bible Study and Summary for them to take home with them. This is optional depending on whether you think your members would like a copy so they have a complete set. This is obviously not necessary if members have their own bound copies of the studies.

1 to 1 in Action - Description (can be read out at the meeting)

• The What of One to One

The first thing to explain is what do we mean by *1 to 1 in Action*?

1 to 1 is a method of reading the Bible. As its name suggests it is aimed at reading the Bible with one other person, but it also works very well in a larger group or just for one person reading the Bible themselves.

• The Why of One to One

The next question is “Why should we read the Bible with another person?”

We get answers to this from the Bible itself

○ It's a delight

And **Psalm 119** expresses this in a number of ways:

v14 *I rejoice in following your statutes as one rejoices in great riches.*

v16 *I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word.*

v72 *The law from your mouth is more precious to me than thousands of pieces of silver and gold.*

○ It supports me in difficult times

Psalm 119 again:

v92 *If your law had not been my delight, I would have perished in my affliction*

v93 *I will never forget your precepts, for by them you have preserved my life.*

v174 *I long for your salvation, LORD, and your law gives me delight.*

○ God's word is powerful to achieve its purpose

Isaiah 55:10,11 - ¹⁰*As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, ¹¹so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.*

Is this your experience when you read God's word? If so, don't you want to share that with others? If not, wouldn't you like to find a way to study the Bible so it does become your experience?

Here are:

Ten practical reasons for using *1 to 1 in Action*

1. Focussed on the Bible, *not on someone else's interpretation.*
2. Anybody can do it, *no theological training is necessary.*
3. It doesn't require a structure, *you don't have special questions to answer, just three little symbols to remember.*
4. It's flexible, *you can make it take whatever time you have available.*
5. The authority stays with the Bible, *not with another person's views.*
6. Models being a humble learner, *you aren't the leader, you're both doing this together, which means you're:*
7. Sharing lives *with the person you're reading with.*
8. It's educationally superior *because it encourages discovering for ourselves.*
9. It equips us for independent learning; *we can do it alone as well.*
10. It's a joy!

But once we know how to do it, who could we read with?

Answer: there are Many options!

Firstly, pray that God will lead you to someone

Then start by considering:

- Female to female - *recommended, unless it's your spouse or a family member*
- A Young Christian in your church
- An Established Christian who can encourage you and be encouraged
- A Non-Christian who wants to find out more about the Bible
- People who have done Evangelistic courses
- A Neighbour who might be prepared to share over a cup of tea or coffee
- An Individual in a Bible Study group
- A Family member: Husband, Children, Grand-children
- Sunday School teachers, Youth Group leaders, anyone in a church leadership position who would appreciate encouragement

Write down three names:

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____

So let's get started with *1 to 1 in Action*

What do we do when we meet?

- Chat
- Pray
- Read
- Write
- Share
- Pray
- Chat

You can do it!



Instructions for Group Leaders

- Read the passage before the day yourself so you are familiar with it.
- On the day the members will be divided into groups then the Meeting Leader prays for all the groups. Next the passage should be read aloud by one person at the microphone (if needed).
- Everyone will then be given around 10 minutes to go through the passage and write down things that occurred to them as they read, as well as any questions they had. If they all seem to be finished in less time move onto the next step.
- Just before the allotted time runs out the Meeting Leader, who is also the timekeeper, needs to announce a **time remaining** and then asks the groups to discuss the ideas that people came up with, starting at the beginning of the passage and working through.
- Be prepared to start off the discussion in your group by talking about something from the first half of the passage that interested you or made you think or puzzled you. If the group is large people might be reluctant to start talking at the beginning, but discussion usually follows if you give an idea for others to comment on. But if someone else really wants to start off the discussion, let them!
- Again, when time for this (about 10 minutes) runs out, the Meeting Leader asks the groups to finish discussions. It doesn't matter if the group hasn't finished the entire passage; this is a practice of techniques as well as a Bible Study.
- Then there will be another 5 minutes for people to decide and write down one thing they have learnt from the passage. Has God shown them a truth they hadn't understood before, or is God prompting them to take some action? Whatever that is, it is between them and God, so they don't need to share it with others.
- Finally the group leaders will close in prayer for their groups.
- The Meeting Leader then asks everyone to get into pairs to repeat the exercise with the next passage. Please help the people in your group find a pair and make sure that if anyone is unpaired you find a partner for them from another group.
- The passage for the pairs to discuss is best read out by one person for the entire group, and then the pairs are given 10 minutes to write down their ideas and questions. The Meeting Leader again needs to be the timekeeper and call out the times when changes need to be made.
- As there will be a number of pairs it is best for the Meeting Leader to close the session in prayer rather than asking each pair to pray.

King David Study 1 - Forgiveness

Passage A: 2 Samuel 1:1-16

¹After the death of Saul, David returned from striking down the Amalekites and stayed in Ziklag two days. ²On the third day a man arrived from Saul's camp with his clothes torn and dust on his head. When he came to David, he fell to the ground to pay him honour.

³"Where have you come from?" David asked him.

He answered, "I have escaped from the Israelite camp."

⁴"What happened?" David asked. "Tell me."

"The men fled from the battle," he replied. "Many of them fell and died. And Saul and his son Jonathan are dead."

⁵Then David said to the young man who brought him the report, "How do you know that Saul and his son Jonathan are dead?"

⁶"I happened to be on Mount Gilboa," the young man said, "and there was Saul, leaning on his spear, with the chariots and their drivers in hot pursuit. ⁷When he turned around and saw me, he called out to me, and I said, 'What can I do?'

⁸"He asked me, 'Who are you?'

"An Amalekite," I answered.

⁹"Then he said to me, 'Stand here by me and kill me! I'm in the throes of death, but I'm still alive.'

¹⁰"So I stood beside him and killed him, because I knew that after he had fallen he could not survive. And I took the crown that was on his head and the band on his arm and have brought them here to my lord."

¹¹Then David and all the men with him took hold of their clothes and tore them. ¹²They mourned and wept and fasted till evening for Saul and his son Jonathan, and for the army of the LORD and for the nation of Israel, because they had fallen by the sword.

¹³David said to the young man who brought him the report, "Where are you from?"

"I am the son of a foreigner, an Amalekite," he answered.

¹⁴David asked him, "Why weren't you afraid to lift your hand to destroy the LORD's anointed?"

¹⁵Then David called one of his men and said, "Go, strike him down!" So he struck him down, and he died. ¹⁶For David had said to him, "Your blood be on your own head. Your own mouth testified against you when you said, 'I killed the LORD's anointed.'"



King David Study 1 - Forgiveness

Passage B: 2 Samuel 1:17-27

¹⁷David took up this lament concerning Saul and his son Jonathan, ¹⁸and he ordered that the people of Judah be taught this lament of the bow (it is written in the Book of Jashar):

- ¹⁹ “A gazelle lies slain on your heights, Israel.
How the mighty have fallen!
- ²⁰ “Tell it not in Gath,
proclaim it not in the streets of Ashkelon,
lest the daughters of the Philistines be glad,
lest the daughters of the uncircumcised rejoice.
- ²¹ “Mountains of Gilboa,
may you have neither dew nor rain,
may no showers fall on your terraced fields.
For there the shield of the mighty was despised,
the shield of Saul—no longer rubbed with oil.
- ²² “From the blood of the slain,
from the flesh of the mighty,
the bow of Jonathan did not turn back,
the sword of Saul did not return unsatisfied.
- ²³ Saul and Jonathan—
in life they were loved and admired,
and in death they were not parted.
They were swifter than eagles,
they were stronger than lions.
- ²⁴ “Daughters of Israel,
weep for Saul,
who clothed you in scarlet and finery,
who adorned your garments with ornaments of gold.
- ²⁵ “How the mighty have fallen in battle!
Jonathan lies slain on your heights.
- ²⁶ I grieve for you, Jonathan my brother;
you were very dear to me.
Your love for me was wonderful,
more wonderful than that of women.
- ²⁷ “How the mighty have fallen!
The weapons of war have perished!”





King David Study 2 - Gratitude

Passage A: 2 Samuel 7:4-17

⁴But that night the word of the LORD came to Nathan, saying:

⁵“Go and tell my servant David, ‘This is what the LORD says: Are you the one to build me a house to dwell in? ⁶I have not dwelt in a house from the day I brought the Israelites up out of Egypt to this day. I have been moving from place to place with a tent as my dwelling. ⁷Wherever I have moved with all the Israelites, did I ever say to any of their rulers whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, “Why have you not built me a house of cedar?”’

⁸“Now then, tell my servant David, ‘This is what the LORD Almighty says: I took you from the pasture, from tending the flock, and appointed you ruler over my people Israel. ⁹I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have cut off all your enemies from before you. Now I will make your name great, like the names of the greatest men on earth. ¹⁰And I will provide a place for my people Israel and will plant them so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed. Wicked people will not oppress them anymore, as they did at the beginning ¹¹and have done ever since the time I appointed leaders over my people Israel. I will also give you rest from all your enemies.

“The LORD declares to you that the LORD himself will establish a house for you: ¹²When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. ¹⁴I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with a rod wielded by men, with floggings inflicted by human hands. ¹⁵But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. ¹⁶Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever.’”

¹⁷Nathan reported to David all the words of this entire revelation.



King David Study 2 - Gratitude

Passage B: 2 Samuel 7:18-29

¹⁸Then King David went in and sat before the LORD, and he said:

“Who am I, Sovereign LORD, and what is my family, that you have brought me this far? ¹⁹And as if this were not enough in your sight, Sovereign LORD, you have also spoken about the future of the house of your servant—and this decree, Sovereign LORD, is for a mere human!

²⁰*“What more can David say to you? For you know your servant, Sovereign LORD. ²¹For the sake of your word and according to your will, you have done this great thing and made it known to your servant.*

²²*“How great you are, Sovereign LORD! There is no one like you, and there is no God but you, as we have heard with our own ears. ²³And who is like your people Israel—the one nation on earth that God went out to redeem as a people for himself, and to make a name for himself, and to perform great and awesome wonders by driving out nations and their gods from before your people, whom you redeemed from Egypt? ²⁴You have established your people Israel as your very own forever, and you, LORD, have become their God.*

²⁵*“And now, LORD God, keep forever the promise you have made concerning your servant and his house. Do as you promised, ²⁶so that your name will be great forever. Then people will say, ‘The LORD Almighty is God over Israel!’ And the house of your servant David will be established in your sight.*

²⁷*“LORD Almighty, God of Israel, you have revealed this to your servant, saying, ‘I will build a house for you.’ So your servant has found courage to pray this prayer to you. ²⁸Sovereign LORD, you are God! Your covenant is trustworthy, and you have promised these good things to your servant. ²⁹Now be pleased to bless the house of your servant, that it may continue forever in your sight; for you, Sovereign LORD, have spoken, and with your blessing the house of your servant will be blessed forever.”*



King David Study 3 - Repentance

Passage A: 2 Samuel 12:11-24

The message Nathan, the prophet, brought to David after his adultery with Bathsheba and his murder of her husband Uriah.

¹¹“This is what the LORD says: ‘Out of your own household I am going to bring calamity on you. Before your very eyes I will take your wives and give them to one who is close to you, and he will sleep with your wives in broad daylight. ¹²You did it in secret, but I will do this thing in broad daylight before all Israel.’”

¹³Then David said to Nathan, “I have sinned against the LORD.”

Nathan replied, “The LORD has taken away your sin. You are not going to die. ¹⁴But because by doing this you have shown utter contempt for the LORD, the son born to you will die.”

¹⁵After Nathan had gone home, the LORD struck the child that Uriah’s wife had borne to David, and he became ill. ¹⁶David pleaded with God for the child. He fasted and spent the nights lying in sackcloth on the ground. ¹⁷The elders of his household stood beside him to get him up from the ground, but he refused, and he would not eat any food with them.

¹⁸On the seventh day the child died. David’s attendants were afraid to tell him that the child was dead, for they thought, “While the child was still living, he wouldn’t listen to us when we spoke to him. How can we now tell him the child is dead? He may do something desperate.”

¹⁹David noticed that his attendants were whispering among themselves, and he realized the child was dead. “Is the child dead?” he asked.

“Yes,” they replied, “he is dead.”

²⁰Then David got up from the ground. After he had washed, put on lotions and changed his clothes, he went into the house of the LORD and worshiped. Then he went to his own house, and at his request they served him food, and he ate.

²¹His attendants asked him, “Why are you acting this way? While the child was alive, you fasted and wept, but now that the child is dead, you get up and eat!”

²²He answered, “While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept. I thought, ‘Who knows? The LORD may be gracious to me and let the child live.’ ²³But now that he is dead, why should I go on fasting? Can I bring him back again? I will go to him, but he will not return to me.”

²⁴Then David comforted his wife Bathsheba, and he went to her and made love to her. She gave birth to a son, and they named him Solomon. The LORD loved him.





King David Study 3 - Repentance

Passage B: 2 Samuel 14:21-33

David's son, Absalom had killed his older half-brother Amnon in retribution for Amnon's rape of Tamar, Absalom's sister. Absalom then escaped to his mother's people and stayed there for three years until Joab, David's general, seeing how much David longed for Absalom, came up with a successful plan to bring Absalom back to Jerusalem. Absalom's story is notable for his lack of repentance.

²¹The king said to Joab, "Very well, I will do it. Go, bring back the young man Absalom."

²²Joab fell with his face to the ground to pay him honor, and he blessed the king. Joab said, "Today your servant knows that he has found favor in your eyes, my lord the king, because the king has granted his servant's request."

²³Then Joab went to Geshur and brought Absalom back to Jerusalem. ²⁴But the king said, "He must go to his own house; he must not see my face." So Absalom went to his own house and did not see the face of the king.

²⁵In all Israel there was not a man so highly praised for his handsome appearance as Absalom. From the top of his head to the sole of his foot there was no blemish in him. ²⁶Whenever he cut the hair of his head—he used to cut his hair once a year because it became too heavy for him—he would weigh it, and its weight was two hundred shekels by the royal standard.

²⁷Three sons and a daughter were born to Absalom. His daughter's name was Tamar, and she became a beautiful woman.

²⁸Absalom lived two years in Jerusalem without seeing the king's face. ²⁹Then Absalom sent for Joab in order to send him to the king, but Joab refused to come to him. So he sent a second time, but he refused to come. ³⁰Then he said to his servants, "Look, Joab's field is next to mine, and he has barley there. Go and set it on fire." So Absalom's servants set the field on fire.

³¹Then Joab did go to Absalom's house, and he said to him, "Why have your servants set my field on fire?"

³²Absalom said to Joab, "Look, I sent word to you and said, 'Come here so I can send you to the king to ask, "Why have I come from Geshur? It would be better for me if I were still there!"' Now then, I want to see the king's face, and if I am guilty of anything, let him put me to death."

³³So Joab went to the king and told him this. Then the king summoned Absalom, and he came in and bowed down with his face to the ground before the king. And the king kissed Absalom.





King David Study 4 - Consequences

Passage A: 2 Samuel 15:7-17

Absalom had been reinstated as Crown Prince without showing any repentance for his crime of murdering his brother. David, Absalom, and all Israel came to pay the penalty for that.

⁷At the end of four years, Absalom said to the king, “Let me go to Hebron and fulfill a vow I made to the LORD. ⁸While your servant was living at Geshur in Aram, I made this vow: ‘If the LORD takes me back to Jerusalem, I will worship the LORD in Hebron.’”

⁹The king said to him, “Go in peace.” So he went to Hebron.

¹⁰Then Absalom sent secret messengers throughout the tribes of Israel to say, “As soon as you hear the sound of the trumpets, then say, ‘Absalom is king in Hebron.’” ¹¹Two hundred men from Jerusalem had accompanied Absalom. They had been invited as guests and went quite innocently, knowing nothing about the matter. ¹²While Absalom was offering sacrifices, he also sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David’s counselor, to come from Giloh, his hometown. And so the conspiracy gained strength, and Absalom’s following kept on increasing.

¹³A messenger came and told David, “The hearts of the people of Israel are with Absalom.”

¹⁴Then David said to all his officials who were with him in Jerusalem, “Come! We must flee, or none of us will escape from Absalom. We must leave immediately, or he will move quickly to overtake us and bring ruin on us and put the city to the sword.”

¹⁵The king’s officials answered him, “Your servants are ready to do whatever our lord the king chooses.”

¹⁶The king set out, with his entire household following him; but he left ten concubines to take care of the palace. ¹⁷So the king set out, with all the people following him, and they halted at the edge of the city.



King David Study 4 - Consequences

Passage B: 2 Samuel 18:4b-17

^{4b}So the king stood beside the gate while all his men marched out in units of hundreds and of thousands. ⁵The king commanded Joab, Abishai and Ittai, “Be gentle with the young man Absalom for my sake.” And all the troops heard the king giving orders concerning Absalom to each of the commanders.

⁶David’s army marched out of the city to fight Israel, and the battle took place in the forest of Ephraim. ⁷There Israel’s troops were routed by David’s men, and the casualties that day were great—twenty thousand men. ⁸The battle spread out over the whole countryside, and the forest swallowed up more men that day than the sword.

⁹Now Absalom happened to meet David’s men. He was riding his mule, and as the mule went under the thick branches of a large oak, Absalom’s hair got caught in the tree. He was left hanging in midair, while the mule he was riding kept on going.

¹⁰When one of the men saw what had happened, he told Joab, “I just saw Absalom hanging in an oak tree.”

¹¹Joab said to the man who had told him this, “What! You saw him? Why didn’t you strike him to the ground right there? Then I would have had to give you ten shekels of silver and a warrior’s belt.”

¹²But the man replied, “Even if a thousand shekels were weighed out into my hands, I would not lay a hand on the king’s son. In our hearing the king commanded you and Abishai and Ittai, ‘Protect the young man Absalom for my sake.’” ¹³And if I had put my life in jeopardy—and nothing is hidden from the king—you would have kept your distance from me.”

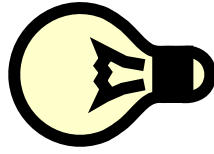
¹⁴Joab said, “I’m not going to wait like this for you.” So he took three javelins in his hand and plunged them into Absalom’s heart while Absalom was still alive in the oak tree. ¹⁵And ten of Joab’s armor-bearers surrounded Absalom, struck him and killed him.

¹⁶Then Joab sounded the trumpet, and the troops stopped pursuing Israel, for Joab halted them.

¹⁷They took Absalom, threw him into a big pit in the forest and piled up a large heap of rocks over him. Meanwhile, all the Israelites fled to their homes.



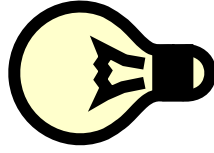
1 to 1
in Action



“Let the word of
Christ dwell in you
richly as you teach
and admonish one
another with all
wisdom”

Colossians 3:16

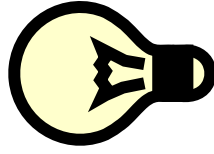
1 to 1
in Action



“Let the word of
Christ dwell in you
richly as you teach
and admonish one
another with all
wisdom”

Colossians 3:16

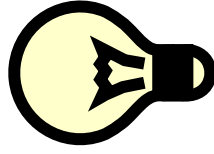
1 to 1
in Action



“Let the word of
Christ dwell in you
richly as you teach
and admonish one
another with all
wisdom”

Colossians 3:16

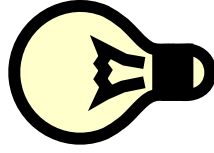
1 to 1
in Action



“Let the word of
Christ dwell in you
richly as you teach
and admonish one
another with all
wisdom”

Colossians 3:16

1 to 1
in Action



“Let the word of
Christ dwell in you
richly as you teach
and admonish one
another with all
wisdom”

Colossians 3:16