

## STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF DAVID

Taught in Ambassador's Class of Peninsula Bible Church, Palo Alto, California

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by

Robert H. Roe, Pastor

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I know you all want to get to chapters 11 and 12, David and Bathsheba, but, theologically, David and Bathsheba doesn't start there. It starts here. How did David get so hardened that he could commit adultery with the wife of Uriah the Hittite, one of his most trusted friends, one of the top 30 out of 600,000 soldiers, a man who demonstrated his loyalty by sacrificing his life for his king, then try to hide his sin by murdering Uriah? On top of that, for at least a year he covered up the crime, went through the process of being king, led in the worship of Jehovah and supposedly led his people in righteousness and truth. It was probably at least a year because Bathsheba had to conceive a baby, bear that baby, and it had to become beloved of David, a man of war. So the child must have gotten big enough to be responsive to David, and you know most men don't go into rapture over things about so long that roll their eyes and wet their pants, but, when those eyes begin to focus on you, the heart is captured. So David's child, whom God took home as a disciplinary action, must have been big enough to capture David's heart. All this time David was a "hard" person. Now, how did he get that hard? The secrets are hidden in chapters 8, 9 and 10, in the victories of David. You are going to see a side of David that is not very nice. Failure in a Christian's life, as a famous theologian David Roper once said, is never a blow out; it is always a slow leak. It starts with some little thing you do not deal with when God puts your finger on it. Instead you rationalize it and rationalize it and rationalize it. Then all of a sudden that thing has you. You don't have it, it has you. Paul was terribly afraid of this himself. In I Corinthians 9, he made an interesting statement. The great apostle had a terrible fear of this very thing.

I Corinthians 9:24:

**Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. And everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things.** [They are put under 8 months of solid training, very strict diet, very strict regime, if you break one of the rules of that training, you are disqualified from the race. You don't even start.] **They then do it to receive a perishable wreath,** [either olive branches, or parsley or oak leaves, the "Stephanos" the crown of victory.] **but we an imperishable.** [crown] **Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; but I buffet my body** [the word literally is "bruise." The boxing gloves in those days were iron knuckles and leather thongs that when you hit a fellow you tore his face to ribbons. That is the word he uses here. He says, I rip my face to ribbons with a boxing glove] **and make it my slave,** [not me its slave] **lest possibly, after I have preached to others, I myself should be disqualified.**

I can go out and have a wonderful ministry, preaching to people, seeing people come to know the Lord, and yet I myself, even while being used of the Lord, can go right down the tube and be disqualified. In Philippians, starting with verse 12, Paul, writing to the Philippian church while a prisoner in Rome, says an interesting thing.

Philippians 1:12ff:

**Now I want you to know, brethren, [Philippians] that my circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel, so that my imprisonment in the cause of Christ has become well known throughout the whole praetorian guard and to everyone else, [He is a prisoner of Nero in Rome under the praetorian guard, which was the personal body guard of Caesar. So he is chained to a Roman soldier, and he cannot get out and evangelize] and that most of the brethren, trusting in the Lord because of my imprisonment, [Paul can't do it, so they've got to do it. As a result, they step out with fear and trembling and do it] have far more courage to speak the word of God without fear. Some, to be sure, are preaching Christ even from envy and strife, but some also from good will; the latter [the good will ones] do it out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel; the former [the envy and strife ones] proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition, rather than from pure motives, thinking to cause me distress in my imprisonment. [Paul is locked up and can't do it, so they go out and do a tremendous job of evangelizing to stick it to Paul, but the message is correct. The methodology is wrong, but the message is correct] What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and in this I rejoice.**

God can use a man who has terrible things in his life to reach people for Christ. He used Balaam the great prophet in Numbers to prophesy for Israel when Balaam wanted to take money from the king of Moab to curse Israel. Instead God made him prophesy blessings for Israel, which all came true by the way. In John 11 Caiaphas prophesied for God without realizing it. Jesus caused quite a stir by raising Lazarus from the dead just 2 miles out of Jerusalem. Many people came to believe in him. The chief priests and the Pharisees convened a council and said, "If we let this man (Jesus) go on like this the Romans will come and take not only our place but also our nation." Caiaphas a Sadducee [who hated the Pharisees] said, "You know nothing at all. Don't you know it is expedient that one man should die for the people and that the whole nation should not perish." In his hatred and his enmity and his sarcasm and his back biting and his fighting with the Pharisees, he was used of God as a prophet. Usefulness, apparent fruitfulness, is not necessarily a sign of spirituality. God used Balaam's ass, a donkey, to rebuke the prophet Balaam.

As I have said before. I have a long nose, big ears and a stubborn will. God can even use an Irish ass. That does not in any way give me gold stars in heaven though it may bring people to Christ. I think I have mentioned that my first convert was somebody I was so anger with that I scared the living daylights out of her. I was a new Christian, and since my previous activities had been as "one of the boys," when I started to change, this little file clerk came waltzing up to me, "I'm a better Christian than you are, Naw, Naw, Naw." I got so made at her I wanted to punch her out. Instead I told her, "You know there is only one problem. You say you are a better Christian than I am, but I have been born again and you haven't. I have the Spirit of God in me and you don't. If I die tonight, I will go to heaven. If you die tonight, you are going to hell." There was a real delicious taste in that. She went home that night and couldn't sleep. She was even afraid to go in her house. She got up first thing in the morning and went to her brother, a believer who had been praying for her for years. She was really distraught from the way I had slapped it to her. It was true, and she knew it. Her brother took her to his pastor. and she received the Lord at about 7 AM that morning. She came back to work a believer, a sister in Christ. That is the only salvation that came out of that whole darn thing. My first conversion was done in the flesh. I did it by hatred. I would have enjoyed seeing her go to hell I was that angry. In the long run, of course, no, but my anger at that moment was "go to hell." I was angry, and the Lord used it. There will be no brownie points in heaven for that one I can tell you. David and I really identify.

I was discussing in a pastor's seminar the other day about a very fine Bible teacher whose name you would all know if I mentioned it. He is an excellent Bible teacher, has a tremendous following, but he has a horrible root of bitterness. It is eating him alive. He is still teaching the word of God and people are being changed by it, while he is being eaten alive by a root of bitterness.

We will see in David that it is possible to be used of God while spiritually going down the tube.

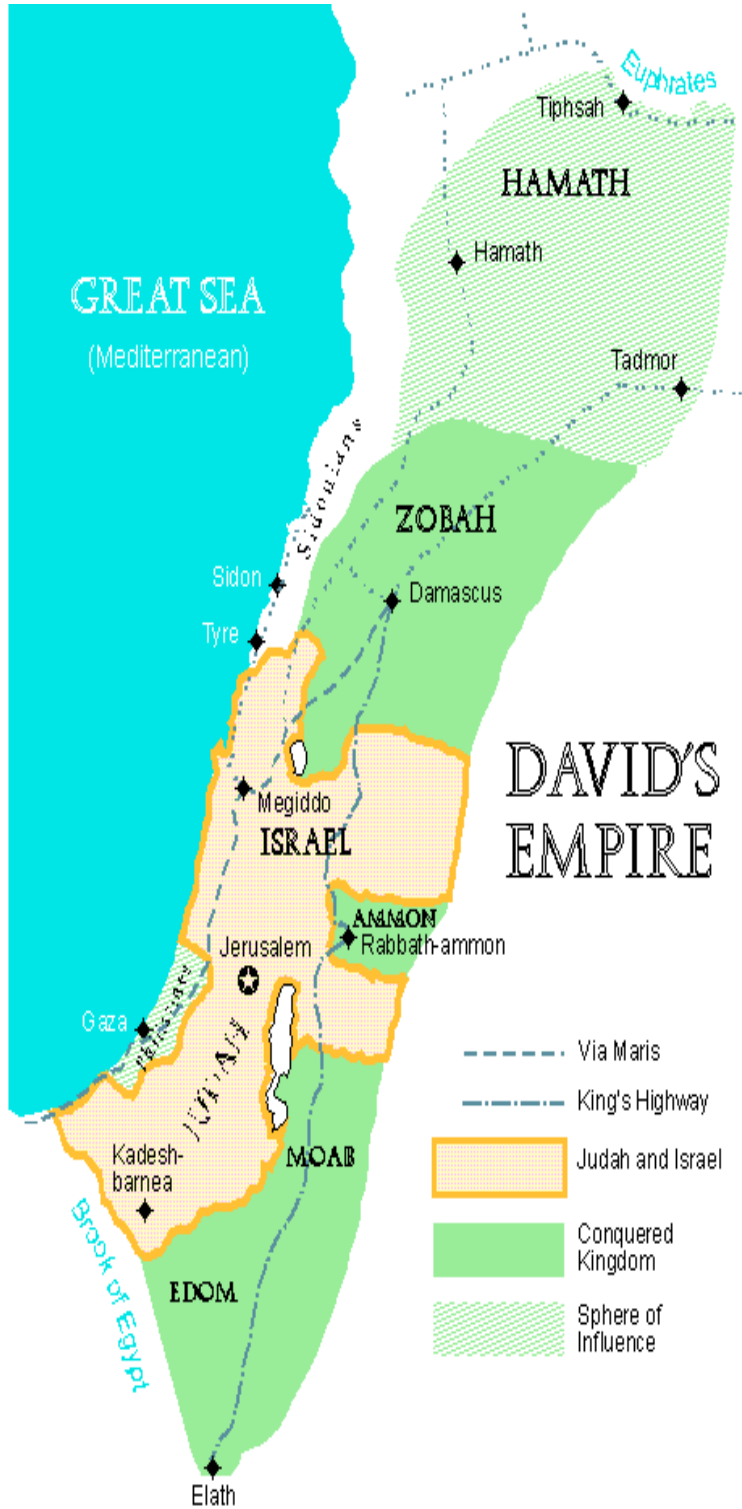
When David became king of both Judah and Israel, his kingdom extended from the Brook of Egypt in the South to just opposite the city of Tyre in the north. On the east he held some territory east of the Jordan except for Ammon, Moab & Edom, and his territory extended to the Mediterranean on the west with the exception of the land of the Philistines.

When David finally established his kingdom, it reached from Egypt in the South to the Euphrates in the

north, to the Mediterranean on the west and encompassed Moab, Edom and Ammon on the east. To accomplish this he had to take on the Philistines, the Moabites, the Edomites and the Syrians. Zobah and Hamath were David's chief rivals in the north. This was a very massive empire with two kings who were constantly at war with each other.

The Sidonians were already friends of David's. Remember Hiram king of Tyre built David's palace. He also gave presents and acknowledged his feudal relationship with David, so there is no fighting there.

Then Geshur, which was a principality on the east of the Jordan adjoining the north border of Hebrew territory, was ruled over by Talmi father of David's wife so, through marriage, David already had friends there.



Now I have searched and I cannot find where David had any rights to Edom, Moab or Ammon. In Deuteronomy, chapter 2, Moses laid out some rules of the road. It was the law of God reiterated by Moses as he was about to depart and be with the Lord. As a final reminder to the Jewish nation before they crossed the Jordan River and entered the Land, he laid out the Second Law. This was to be what they were to obey. As you remember, Deuteronomy 17 admonished the king not to multiply horses to himself.

Deuteronomy 2:2

**And the Lord spoke to me saying,** [This was Moses speaking to the people of Israel] **"You have circled this mountain long enough. Now turn north,** [They has been running around down by Kadeshbarnea.] **and command the people saying, 'You will pass through the territory of your brothers the sons of Esau [Edom and Esau are the same] who live in Seir; and they will be afraid of you. So be very careful; do not provoke them, for I will not give you any of their land, even as little as a footstep because I have given Mount Seir to Esau as a possession.**

Esau and Edom were the same. The Jews were told they would never get even a footstep of Edom, and they were not even to attempt to provoke them into war. Edom belonged to Esau because Esau was the brother of Jacob who was the head of the 12 tribes of Israel. There was a family relationship.

Deuteronomy 2:9:

**Then the Lord said to me, "Do not harass Moab, nor provoke them to war, for I will not give you any of their land as a possession, because I have given Ar to the sons of Lot as a possession.**

Deuteronomy 2:17:

**...that the Lord spoke to me, saying, "You shall cross over Ar, the border of Moab, today. And when you come opposite the sons of Ammon, do not harass them nor provoke them, for I will not give you any of the land of the sons of Ammon as a possession, because I have given it to the sons of Lot as a possession.**

Lot, a righteous man according to II Peter 2, was the nephew of Abraham. He had two sons by incestuous relations with his daughters. One was Ben-ammi, father of the children of Ammon. and the other one was Moab. To the son of Lot, a righteous man related to God by the new birth and to Abraham by physical birth. God gave Moab and Ammon and the Israelites were to have no part of their land.

I have never been able to track down anywhere in the Scriptures a time when God revoked those words. So the last order to Israel before they went into the land to possess it was they could not have Edom, Moab or Ammon. Now, Edom, Moab and Ammon were enemies of Israel much of the time so I don't quite know whether David was sinning or not when he took over these nations.

**Class question:** "How about Genesis 15 where God says to Abraham, "From the river of Egypt to the Euphrates?"

**Bob:** That is true, he did. But remember the Promised Land was west of the Jordan River. They were to cross over the Jordan from Moab. Moab, Edom and Ammon were on the east side of the Jordan what we call Transjordan.

Reuben, Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh had great flocks and herds and, because of the gorgeous pasture land on the east side of the Jordan, requested their share on that side. Moses said, "O.K. you can have your share over there providing you cross over the Jordan and help fight for the side which God has given us." They did, but by remaining on the east of Jordan, they took second best. Over there they were surrounded by paganism and were the first to fall into idolatry. Ammon worshipped Molech in the form of a huge metal idol. They would sacrifice their babies on his outstretched red hot hands. Moab worshipped the God of sex Baal.

We are talking here, though, about the last orders God gave to Israel regarding Moab, Edom and Ammon; the last orders that I can find. There may be an override hidden somewhere in Scripture so I am not saying this is the word of God. I am saying I cannot find a change in these orders. To me it is very important. Ammon, Moab and Edom were all related to David which is kind of critical too.

Now, beginning with II Samuel 8, let's watch God give David the kingdom and watch how David acts. I am not going to read all of the passage; I just want to go through rather quickly and generalize for you.

II Samuel 8:1:

**Now after this it came about that David defeated the Philistines and subdued them; and David took control of the chief city [That is Gath] from the hand of the Philistines.**

The first thing David did was strike the enemies of God, the Philistines. He took their chief city and brought them into subjugation thus securing his coastal flank. He also gained control of the Via Maris, one of the two international trade routes between the Fertile Crescent and Egypt, which ran down the west side of Palestine. Incidentally before he was through, he also controlled the King's Highway, the other international trade route which ran through Damascus down the eastern side of the Jordan to the Gulf of Elath which was the right hand finger of the Red Sea.

II Samuel 8:2:

**And he defeated Moab, [Which as far as we know was never given it to him] and measured them with the line making them lie down on the ground; and he measured two lines to put to death and one full line to keep alive. And the Moabites became servants to David, bringing tribute.**

In order to secure his eastern flank also, he attacked the Moabite nation whose land he had not been given. After he conquered them, he laid the people, at least the warriors, in three lines and butchered the people in two of the lines. He left the third line alive to pay tribute. God allowed him to take the land, but God certainly didn't advocate the little butcher job.

II Samuel 8:3:

**Then David defeated Hadadezer, the son of Rehob king of Zobah, as he went to restore his rule at the River.**

With his coastal flank and his inland flank secured and the Ammonites friendly to him [Apparently there was a family migration from the Ammonites into Judah, and David's mother apparently married Nahash an Ammonite] David headed directly north to face up to Zobah, the great kingdom facing him up there, and God delivered them into David's hands.

II Samuel 8:4:

**And David captured from him 1,700 horsemen and 20,000 foot soldiers, and David hamstrung the chariot horses, but reserved enough of them for 100 chariots.**

He needed 2 horses per chariot plus relief. Remember one of the things God said the kings of Israel could not do? Multiply horses! Chariots were the Sherman tanks of that day, and God always wanted the Jews to be at the disadvantage of the enemy so that God would get the victory. God would get the glory. Intriguing enough David says in the 20th Psalm, which he writes about this time:

Psalm 20:7:

**Some boast in chariots, and some in horses; but we will boast in the name of the Lord, our God.**

Except for my hundred chariots just in case You don't show up. He violated the word of God again by keeping those chariots, just in case. A little bit of flesh, just in case.

When the Syrians of Damascus came to help, he beat them and pretty soon had all of Zobah and Syrian under his power. The little king of Geshur was already under his domain.

Now, it is a wonderful thing, he took all of the spoils [verse 7 through verse 12] from all these kings over to Jerusalem and dedicated them to the Lord, the gold, the silver and the bronze; the things they would need to build that temple. So he had moments of really walking with the Lord and thankfulness in the Lord and then he had those villainous moments of viciousness. His lack of trust and his brutality are unbelievable.

**Class comment:** Isn't that a lot like today. People sometimes go along doing what they want and then on Sunday give offerings to the Lord to kind of placate Him?

**Bob:** Well, I'm not sure David was doing that here. I think David was really giving gifts to the Lord in a great spirit of thanks. David was a pendulum. He went all this way either killing people like nothing you ever saw before, or he was out there worshipping the Lord like nothing you ever saw. He was the sweet Psalmist of Israel. I don't believe he was trying to buy off his God here. His prayer in the previous chapter was one of total grace, "Who am I, Lord, that you should do this thing for me. What is my lineage that you do it for me. You are doing this out of your purpose and your greatness, and, because you are the kind of God that you are, I am encouraged to pray this prayer. Confirm your covenant with me and bless me with all these blessing because of You." In chapter 7 his prior experience was of the total grace of God, so I think these are really thank offerings.

But what happens when you allow the flesh to live in your life? What happens to your spiritual acumen, your spiritual insight, your spiritual vision? You get blinded. A veil beings to come over your face. You begin to be blind to things as they really are. So here David lovingly and graciously, in a sense of rejoicing, brings to God the things of offering for his temple, things that he took by some very vicious methodology, and according to verse 12, things that he got from Syria, Moab and the sons of Ammon. Sadly he doesn't see the conflict. When Saul refused to get off the throne when God said, "No," and began to focus on killing God's anointed successor, these very nations sprang up in power. Again what does that say about the flesh and your victories over it? What happens when you have victories over the things of the flesh and

then walk away and get your eyes off Jesus Christ? You fall right on your face. Your victories over the flesh last just as long as you are walking with Jesus Christ and no longer. Don't ever kid yourself that, once having conquered the habitual thing that has gripped your soul, you can walk around in your own strength and continue to have victory over it. No you won't! It will grow like a cancer that wasn't completely eradicated and before long you will not only be back in the same condition but you will be worse off. Christ told the man at the Pool of Bethesda, "Go and sin no more lest a worse thing befall you." You allow the habits of the flesh to come back by taking your eyes off Jesus, and they will come back with a vengeance; and they did here.

Zobah is no mean critter and the tragedy is that this had all been done before, but when Saul departed from Jesus Christ, it all grew back up again. Now all this slaughter, all this killing, had to go on again.

Apparently while David was up north, Edom attacked in the Valley of Salt, which is the bottom of the Dead Sea, but out of their territory.

II Samuel 8:13:

**So David made a name for himself when he returned from killing 18,000 Arameans in the Valley of Salt. And he put garrisons in Edom. In all Edom he put garrisons, and all the Edomites became servants to David. And the Lord helped David wherever he went.**

There is that phrase again, "And the Lord helped David wherever he went." God used that phrase in verse 6 and now again in verse 14. Why do you think God used that phrase the second time? When the Hebrew wants to emphasize something it is always repeated. What may be beginning to slip into David's mind concerning his ability as a general, a ruler, a conqueror and a warrior as he begins to knock off these kingdoms? What generally happens when we have tremendous victory? Yeah! We begin to think, "Gee, the Lord is kind of lucky that I am on his side, isn't he?" When God begins to really use you, pray like the dickens and get your friends to pray, because the first thing that happens is we slip into this old self-assurance routine, "Hey, I am really useable. I am really a vessel. I am really something." God says, "No, you're not. I am really something. I can take an ass and make it prophesy. I can take an ass and rebuke my prophet with him. I can make sons of Abraham out of stones. I am something."

God said Edom was a much closer relative [than Moab or Ammon] for he and Jacob were brothers, twin brothers. Do you know what David did when he conquered Edom? I Kings 11 tells us. He spent 6 months trying to kill off all the males of Edom. Even if you figure just adult males, that is a monstrous thing to do when it flies in the face of the word of God according to Deuteronomy 23, but David deliberately defied God and tried to eliminate Edom. [God did let Hadad the king and his family escape to Egypt. They came back later and were a thorn in the side of Solomon.] So you see this hardening beginning to happen to David.

II Samuel 8:15:

**So David reigned over all Israel; and David administered justice and righteousness for all his people. And Joab the son of Zeruiah was over the army, and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder [That is the chief aide, executive secretary of David] And Zadok the son of Ahitub [was the priest at one location] and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar [was the priest at the other location. He has two rival lines of priests, one of which gets involved in the rebellion and is later on banished] were priests, and Seraiah was secretary. [that is the Secretary of State in their terminology] And Benaiah was son of Jehoiada was [king] over the Cherethites and the Pelethites; [Those were the personal bodyguards of David. They were Philistines]. and David's sons were chief ministers.**

Well, that looks pretty good on the surface. There is only one problem. What kind of a person was Joab the man David put in charge of all his army? Joab was David's nephew through his sister Zeruiah. He killed Abner, a general of Israel for two reasons. #1 to get even because Abner had killed his bother Asahel in battle, and #2 to eliminate a rival who might become the general of all Israel. It was Abner, remember, who delivered all of Israel, the northern part, into the hand of David who at the time was king of only Judah. In

Hebron, which was a city of refuge where you were not allowed to touch anybody even if you had the right of revenge, Joab murdered Abner. He would later on murder Uriah the Hittite for David and after that, to maintain his position, would murder Amasa, a nephew of David's from his other sister and also a general in Judah. Joab may have been brilliant, but he was a ruthless and totally immoral general. David was afraid of him. We don't know much about the chap who was the secretary, but we have Zadok and Ahimelech who were rival priests in two different locations. One of them later turned traitor. Then we have David's sons. He made his own sons chief ministers. Well #1 son, Ammon, we will find out, raped his half-sister, Tamar and in turn was murdered by his half-brother Absalom. #2 son Absalom chased daddy out of town, tried to take over the kingdom and wanted to kill daddy. He got killed in the process. #3 son Chileab apparently died some how. We don't know why or what. #4 son Adonijah tried to usurp the throne from Solomon after God had given it to Solomon through David and got killed for his actions. This was the kind of administration David set up.

Do you see the problem? He could not put a righteous general in charge of his army because of his fear of Joab. He had two rival priestly lines, a situation he didn't even try to settle and eventually lost one of them to Adonijah who wanted to usurp his throne.

As the kid who was the runt of the litter, was denied everything, was ridiculed and at the bottom of the heap, he wanted his children to have everything he didn't have. So as I Kings 1:6 says, "And his father [David] had never crossed him at any time by asking, 'Why have you done so?'" He never even questioned the things his sons did. They grow up totally spoiled brats. So David puts together an administration, part of which is holy but part of it unfortunately is not. He doesn't seem to realize what he is doing.

Next we have Chapter 9, Mephibosheth. This looks like a great deal on the surface too. Mephibosheth was the son of Jonathan. You will recall when Saul was killed by the Philistines, three of his sons died with him and with Ishbosheth gone, that wiped out the chain of command. The next young man in line was Mephibosheth. But in fleeing from the Philistines, who had killed his grandfather, his father and his uncles, the nurse dropped him. He was crippled, lame in both feet, and he therefore could not reign. He could not lead his people into battle, so he was no threat to the throne. David came back after his victories and asked, "Is there anyone left of the house of Saul to whom I can show favor for Jonathan's sake?" They find a servant of Saul's named Ziba who says, "There is still a son of Jonathan who is crippled in both feet." He wants to make sure David doesn't do what most oriental kings do and that is eliminate all of the line of a fallen king.

So, David sends for Mephibosheth who arrives expecting to be killed, but David says, "I will restore to you all the lands of your father Saul and you shall eat at my table regularly and Ziba and his children shall be your servants to take care of your property." Then the last verse in chapter 9 is, "Now he was lame in both feet."

As I have mentioned before, the Hebrew always expresses something twice for emphasis. "He was lame in both feet" appears in verse 3 and again in verse 13. What do you think God is trying to tell us about this wonderful gift of "love" that David gave to Mephibosheth? How much did it cost David? Think about it. When Jonathan made his covenant with David he was the heir apparent to the throne. With his dad on the throne threatening to kill David, all Jonathan had to do, by his own father's statement, was let Saul kill David and his ascendancy was secure. Jonathan in essence gave the throne to David. Jonathan said, "I'll protect you. I'll find out when Saul wants to kill you, and I will warn you. You are going to be king, and I am going to #2." It cost Jonathan a throne to make that covenant with David. Now David is trying to keep his side of the covenant. How much will this cost David? First: What about the lands of Israel? Who were the lands given to and for how long? When the Jews came into the land and Joshua divided it, one portion went to each of the tribes and within the tribes one portion went to each of the families. It was theirs forever. You could not take someone else's land from them. What David was giving back to Mephibosheth wasn't really his to give.

Secondly: What did it cost David to bring Mephibosheth into the court, protect him and treat him like a son? He was lame in both feet, no threat to David. Then there was David's shabby treatment of him later on. When David was chased out of town by his son Absalom, Mephibosheth wanted to follow him. Ziba, his servant assigned to him by David, saddled Mephibosheth's donkeys and took off with them himself. When



David inquired about Mephibosheth, Ziba said, "Behold, he is staying in Jerusalem for he said, 'Today the house of Israel will restore the kingdom of my father to me.'" Whereupon David countered with "Behold, all that belongs to Mephibosheth is yours." He announced this in public. When he returned after winning the battle he questioned Mephibosheth who came to meet him, in mourning by the way. He hadn't shaved, washed, changed his clothes from the day David departed until he came home in peace. All that time he was living in the camp of the enemy. He was in public mourning for the fleeing king and was risking his life by publicly demonstrating it. David asked Mephibosheth, "Why didn't you follow me?" Mephibosheth answered, "My servant tricked me and lied to me and lied to you." Well, David had already shot off his mouth in front of his troops, so to save face he said, "Well, I'll tell you what, we'll give half the land to you and half the land to Ziba," a traitorous, treacherous servant.. With no commitment there is no love. David in fulfilling his portion of the covenant with Jonathan does not have any love involved at all. It is really just a convenient way to solve an old problem.

**Class comment:** When David raised the question of whether there was anyone left of "the house of Saul," he didn't know the only one left was lame in both feet.

**Bob:** I don't question David's motive, only the lasting quality of David's altruism.

**Class response:** Yes, but there might have been someone left who was not lame.

**Bob:** True, but we don't know how David would have reacted in that event. The thing is that God repeats the phrase regarding Mephibosheth's lameness. If there is no risk, there is no profit to David. There's no real commitment, no real cost here, and it is the complete reversal of what Jonathan did for David when they made that covenant. Jonathan gave up the throne for David. David really didn't lose anything. There is a hardening setting in. His love relationship with Jonathan is even getting hardened. You would think the son of Jonathan would really elicit from David the desire to do everything in the world for a son of Jonathan, his beloved brother, his older brother who got him the kingdom. However, even that love is hardening, little by little. The word used is sclerosis. It is literally the word used for "hardening" in the Greek. It is gradual. You don't even see it. It is a scary word. David doesn't even know it but his love is quietly, slowly but surely hardening.

**Class comment:** Wasn't David's relationship with Jonathan purely on a taking basis. Wasn't Jonathan doing all the giving?

**Bob:** That is an excellent point. If you look back it was mostly Jonathan and not David on the giving end. Those days you might excuse David. He was scared to death and running for his life, but now he is king. There was a deep love relationship there. They did love each other as brothers, but that love is now beginning to harden.

Now to Chapter 10. This is probably the Scripture of one of the battles that occurred in chapter 8. I just want to go through it briefly.

First 5 verses. Nahash the king of the Ammonites, a friend of David's, died, and his son Hanun came to the throne. David in an attempt to express sorrow and comfort sent a group to him. He also wanted to establish a relationship with Hanun as he had with his father Nahash. The son was a young turk and was warned that David was coming to spy on him, "Look what he did to Moab." Moab and Ammon were brothers way back. They were related tribes. David had taken 2/3 of Moab's men, laid them in a line and shot them. He only let 1/3 live. These people were relatives of Ammon. He left himself wide open for the advisors of Hanun to say, "He is not coming here to do you honor or to give you comfort. He is coming here to spy us out. Look what he did to Moab." As a result they take the high court officials David sent to them and shave off half their beards, a devastating disgrace in that culture. It was similar to shaving a woman's head. They cut off their clothes from the waist down leaving them naked and sent them back to David. When you insult David, you are in big trouble. You do not cross David, my friend. When Edom attacked him, he tried to kill off all their males. When Nabal didn't receive his envoys hospitably, he was going to wipe out every male in Nabal's household. So, he began plotting. The Ammonites got rumblings of that, hired what Syrians were still around and went out to battle. They hid by their heavily fortified city of Rabbah. The Syrians, with a very mobile army of chariots and horsemen, came down and tried to put the

Israelites in a pincer. The Ammonites were in front of the city and hidden 15 miles away were the Syrians with their chariots and horsemen. Now old Joab may not be very moral, but he is no dummy. So instead of coming up to get the Ammonites where he would get cut off, he sneaks up and splits his troops. He puts himself between both Syria and Ammon so that if the battle goes this way, this group of troops can come this way, and if the battle goes that way, these troops can go that way. He cuts his enemies off from their own resources and puts them to flight. The defeat is severe enough to make Hadadezer king of Zobah and also the head of the vassal state of Syria and all the Syrian tribes on the other side of the Euphrates David's vassals. Therefore he has Ammon nicely isolated and nobody to help them. You can just see David licking his chops.

II Samuel 10:19-11:1:

**When all the kings, servants of Hadadezer, saw that they were defeated by Israel, [He had a whole coalition of his own vassal kings then] they made peace with Israel and served them. So the Arameans [Syrians] feared to help the sons of Ammon anymore. [He now has them isolated] Then it happened in the spring, at the time when kings go out to battle, that David sent Joab and his servants with him and all Israel, and they destroyed the sons of Ammon [literally, they ravished the land] and besieged Rabbah**

They went through the land and literally destroyed it. In Chapter 12:26ff, Joab besieges the capitol city [Rabbah] takes the outer part of it and then calls David to take the inner citadel so "the name will go to you David not to me," the glory will go to you not to me. So David takes the inner part of the city, takes the crown off the king's head, puts it on his own head and then:

II Samuel 12:31:

**He also brought out the people who were in it, and set (literally cut) them under saws, sharp iron instruments, and iron axes, and made them pass through the brickkiln. And thus he did to all the cities of the sons of Ammon. Then David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.**

He butchered them in a shockingly cruel way. Another relative nation that he was not allowed to touch. This is our lovely Shepherd King who is king by the grace of God.

His kingdom extended the whole distance now. He had the 2 trade routes all locked in, and he was master of all Israel. But now where do you think David got this hardening of heart that allowed him to take his best friend's wife in adultery, slay his best friend to cover up the crime and go on living a lie while worshipping Jehovah and leading the nation of Israel? Where did he get this hardening?

**Class question:** Why was David so victorious?

**Bob:** That is my point. Fruitfulness or accomplishments or scalps on your belt from evangelism are not necessarily a sign of spirituality. As I mentioned before, the first person I brought to Christ was done in total anger. It was totally out of the will of God, as far as I was concerned, but totally doing the will of God as far as God was concerned. Sure she came to Christ and the next morning was a believer, but it was not what I did. It is the methodology that counts.

God wanted to give David this kingdom because he wanted Moab, Ammon and Edom to become brothers under his influence. He had some brothers. Hiram king of Tyre the Sidonians were friends of his. They built his palace. He didn't touch them. He married the daughter of Talmi king of Geshur which was right smack in the middle of this whole territory. He didn't touch them. Why couldn't he have handled the others the same way if he had been a godly man? Do you notice something missing in these three chapters? In three whole chapters he never once inquired of the Lord. Nowhere, even in the details of chapter 10, did he inquire of the Lord. Tremendous victories but spiritual hardness, spiritual blindness, a spiritual veil closed over his eyes. David continued in the flesh. Out of all the people he conquered to whom was he vicious and cruel? The three to whom he was related; those that should normally have been his nearest and dearest.

What is the mark of the man of the heart? The man of the last days who has seen the love of the man in their sin? "Without natural affection." That is the mark of the pit. Do you see why David can kill Uriah, almost rape his wife, live a lie for a year and still be victorious? Don't ever kid yourself that what is happening on the outside is necessarily an indication of what is happening on the inside. You may be leading people to Christ all over the place or be a great Bible teacher and yet your core may be rotting away. Boy, chapters 8 through 10 scare the living daylights out of me.

Father, we just thank you so much for this warning in Scripture that you accomplish your purpose in spite of us, that even though you accomplish it through us we may be at enmity with you, we may be violating your very purpose for us, we may be down the tubes spiritually. There may be a sclerosis type of hardening so subtle and slipping in so easily that before we know it the veil will come right across our eyes and we won't even see it. Father, I pray that we do not fall into this trap and do not end up like David committing the greatest sin of his life but will heed this warning which you have given us here. In Jesus' name Amen.

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