

April 11

2 Samuel, 1 Samuel and 1 Chronicles

Hi again, this is Klint Bitter with your Project 4:4 daily accelerator for April 11th.

In today's reading, we covered snippets of 2 Samuel, 1 Samuel and 1 Chronicles. The reason for all the choppy, jumping around is that the end of 2 Samuel changes from a chronological record to a topical one. This is still historical record, just arranged differently. That's why the daily Bible has us skipping around a bit, it's placing the events in chronological order rather than the topical order found in the traditional arrangement of the Scriptures.

Today, we begin with the heart breaking end to the tragic story of David's adulterous relationship with Bathsheba.

Yesterday, we left David pleading with God. He's fasting, praying, and lying on the ground. For seven days this goes on. The Scriptures tell us that on the seventh day, the child died. This is hard to read, and difficult to imagine.

This is tough to process. Why did the child have to die, when David, the sinner would be spared? One explanation that may help us gain some perspective is to remember that to have a son in those days is a mark of God's blessing – that your name and legacy will continue. God was not going to allow David to prosper through his wicked actions. This likely would have skewed the perception pagan nations had of the God of Israel; that he would reward adultery and murder by giving the king a new heir. Ultimately, this was not a judgment against the child – but a judgment against David for his sin.

Any way you look at it, this is hard to come to terms with.

Upon the child's death, David ends his mourning and interceding on behalf of the boy. He gets up, changes clothes and begins transitioning back to life. There's a glimpse here of David being at peace with the sovereignty of God. David's actions show that, in the end he knows who is God and who is not.

We don't understand why everything in life happens the way it does. But, like David, we're wise to trust God's sovereignty. God is good and in control. We'll wrestle with this idea more deeply upon our reading of the book of Job later this year.

Well, our reading continues with an expanding, conquering Israel. David's armies lead several successful campaigns against those around them. Among those conquered are the Moabites.

At first glance, it appears that David dealt with the Moabites in an especially harsh manner. Our reading tells us that Israel's army put two thirds of the Moabites to death. Why so harsh? Doesn't that seem a bit 'over the top'? Some scholars have

noted that, while killing two thirds of the army was, indeed harsh; the common practice of the day was for the conquering army to kill all of the opposing force. So, this may have been a gesture of David's mercy.

Another consideration for the harsh treatment of the Moabites comes from a tradition held by some Jewish writers. In 1 Samuel 22, we read that David takes refuge with the Philistines in Gath. He then leaves his mother and father in the care of the Moabite king. Some Jewish writers have a tradition that the King of Moab eventually put David's parents to death, which sparked the war. Whatever the cause for war, David dealt with them harshly and the result was that these foes to the South East of Israel were now subject to Israel and King David, just as the Philistines to the South West of Israel were.

It's important to note what we saw twice in today's reading: "The LORD gave David victory wherever he went." It was God's intent for the nation of Israel to prosper and expand. Israel, under David's leadership, was expanding beyond anything they had seen before. Thinking back in our reading, you may recognize here that God is fulfilling a covenant he made with Abraham regarding the land he would give them. (Genesis 15:18-21)

Our reading for today concludes by listing David's mighty men and the exploits of the "chiefs of David's might men" Jashobeam, Eleazar and Shammah. These and the 30 men listed after them are the men who not only helped David ascend to the throne, but also kept him there.

One thing that struck me as I read through the list is that, among the thirty men listed is Uriah the Hittite, husband to Bathsheba. Knowing the important role Uriah played makes the stench of David's affair with Bathsheba even more disheartening.

I'll be back tomorrow with another chapter from the amazing life of King David. This is Klint Bitter encouraging you to go and be a blessing today.