

+

THE LOOKOUT

JUNE 2021

UNIT: History of Israel (2 Samuel; 2 Chronicles)

THEME: A King's House

OVERVIEW:

Israel reached her zenith during the reigns of Kings David and Solomon. The only reign to surpass them would be the coming of the true Son of David, Jesus Christ. This month, students will learn of the house (kingdom) of David being established, threatened, rescued, and secured.

HOW TO USE

Each week has a **lesson aim**, **lesson text**, and **supplemental text**.

WEEK OF JUNE 8, 2021

LESSON AIM: Praise God for Jesus, Son of David.

TEXT: History of David (2 Samuel 8-20)

THEME: A King's House

LESSON TEXT: 2 Samuel 7:2-29

SUPPLEMENTAL TEXT: 2 Chronicles 13:14-17:12

Tabs indicate the week of each lesson.

Each week features three sections: **Study**, **Application**, and **Discovery**.

EVERY STAGE OF THE JOURNEY BY DAVID LARUE

DISCOVERY BY MICHAEL C. RICE

1. In what way did you experience the power of the Holy Spirit?
2. How do you think you can best experience the power of the Holy Spirit?
3. How do you think you can best experience the power of the Holy Spirit?
4. How do you think you can best experience the power of the Holy Spirit?
5. How do you think you can best experience the power of the Holy Spirit?
6. How do you think you can best experience the power of the Holy Spirit?
7. How do you think you can best experience the power of the Holy Spirit?
8. How do you think you can best experience the power of the Holy Spirit?
9. How do you think you can best experience the power of the Holy Spirit?
10. How do you think you can best experience the power of the Holy Spirit?

Use the **Discovery** questions to study, discuss, and apply the Scripture passages in a group or class.

WEEK OF JUNE 13, 2021

LESSON AIM: **Offer a broken
and contrite heart
to the Lord.**

UNIT: History of Israel (2 Samuel & 2 Chronicles)

THEME: A King's House

LESSON TEXT: 2 Samuel 12:1-14

SUPPLEMENTAL TEXT: 2 Samuel 11; Psalm 51

HOUSE OF DAVID SHAKEN

BY MARK SCOTT

Just when the house of David had reached its zenith, the situation was about to implode. In the spring, when kings go back to battle, David stayed home (2 Samuel 11:1). David would have been safer in a foxhole than on his balcony. The narrative begins, "David saw a woman bathing." The narrative ends, "But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord" (2 Samuel 11:2, 27). The narrator has told us how we are to feel about the story.

In the aftermath of David's double sin, several lessons become apparent: We should care enough for others to confront them, parables can invade secret defenses, we can be blind to our own sins, "Aha" moments can be important, sin always carries consequences, and God can always forgive.

The Parable

2 Samuel 12:1-4

The Old Testament does not contain as many parables as the Gospels, but it does have some (e.g., Judges 9:7-15; 1 Kings 20:35-42; 2 Kings 14:9-10; Ezekiel 16:1-54; 17:2-24; 19:2-9; 19:10-14; 23:1-49; 24:3-14). But no Old Testament parable is so pointed and clear as this one by the prophet Nathan (his name means "giver," and did he ever "give" one to the king). If someone, even a prophet, confronts the king, it is better to come through a side window than walk through the front door. So, Nathan sneaks up beside David with a parable.

Nathan compared a rich man with a poor man (truly needy; impoverished). The Hebrews loved contrasts, so this kind of story would gain the ear immediately. The riches of the rich man were obvious—a *very large number of sheep and cattle*. The poverty of the poor man was underlined by his fivefold care for his one *ewe lamb* (bought, raised, grew, shared food and drink, and slept in the poor man's arms). The lamb was like a family member.

When the *traveler came*, the rich man stole the poor man's lamb and offered that for his banquet. The listener's sense of justice was immediately aroused. Everyone hearing this story wanted to cry out, "Unfair."

The Verdict

2 Samuel 12:5-9

David was about to slit his own throat. He *burned with anger* (to snort with one's nostrils) and pronounced the death

penalty as well as the accustomed recompense (Exodus 22:1). Nathan pointed his prophetic finger at David and said, "*You are the man!*" Months of cover-up come crashing down, and David ended up in a heap in the Jerusalem oval office.

Nathan continued the verdict. First, they looked at history. Nathan reminded David that God had *anointed* (the verb for "Messiah") him and *delivered* (rescued) him from Saul. God had also given David Saul's house and the land of *Israel and Judah*. God had planned to give David even more, but that gift had been compromised.

Second, Nathan had David look inward. David's actions indicated he had *despised the word of the Lord*. (In v. 14, the word used is *contempt*.) David had murdered Uriah by letting the *Ammonites* do his dirty work. There is nothing in the text that would indicate Uriah and Bathsheba were not happy together. In fact, she mourned his loss (2 Samuel 11:26-27). In addition, Uriah was not even a true Israelite. He was a *Hittite* (descended from Heth, the second son of Canaan), but he was a loyal soldier to David. He was more righteous in his drunkenness than David was in his deception (2 Samuel 11:10-13). The verdict was in.

The Result

2 Samuel 12:10-14

Someone said, "Forgiveness is always possible with the Lord, but stupid is forever." David's double sin would have a twofold result. First, war would continue to mark David's life. The sword would not depart from his house. David remained a man of bloodshed (a reason given later for why he would not be allowed to build the temple).

In addition to that, *calamity* (evil) would come out of his household. God repays in kind (Galatians 6:7). Since David's sin was sexual, judgment would come in a sexual way. Part of this was manifest in Amnon's sin with Tamar (2 Samuel 13:1-22), and then Nathan predicted more sexual sin within Absalom's rebellion (2 Samuel 16:20-22). David's dirty laundry would be hung out for all to see.

The best part of our text is David's confession, "*I have sinned against the Lord.*" Nathan assured David of God's forgiveness, but the *son born* from this union would die. Psalm 51 is the drama of a changed heart. A contrite heart can gain the ear of God, who can cleanse a diseased heart. ■

APPLICATION

DO YOU HAVE A CONTRITE HEART?

BY DAVID FAUST

A veteran church leader I hold in high regard recently confided that he has been reflecting on Psalm 51 throughout the last year. At first, I felt concerned. After all, Psalm 51 contains David's heartfelt confession after he committed adultery with Bathsheba. My friend, who has been married nearly 50 years, assured me he has not been unfaithful to his wife. In his journey with the Lord, he finds himself drawn to Psalm 51 because it exposes his weaknesses and pushes him to new places of vulnerability and spiritual growth.

This great chapter contains gems like "Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me" (Psalm 51:10) and "Restore to me the joy of your salvation" (v. 12). David reminded himself (and us) that the Lord does not despise "a broken and contrite heart" (v. 17).

What It Means to Be Contrite

There is a form of art that uses pieces of broken glass to make vases and other beautiful objects. That's what the Lord does when we bring him the broken pieces of our lives.

David's heart was broken and "contrite"—sorry, repentant, and regretful. You are contrite if you feel deep remorse and a sincere desire for redemption and forgiveness. The Hebrew *dakah* comes from a root word that meant "to crush," "shatter," or "bring very low" (as in Psalm 38:6). *The Message* version paraphrases Psalm 51:17 by saying, "I learned God-worship when my pride was shattered."

We have nothing to lose by coming clean with God. Jesus said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit" (Matthew 5:3). To appreciate the light of his love, we need to recognize the darkness in our hearts.

How to Be More Contrite

When you think of successful people, many qualities come to mind: discipline and hard work, communication skills, wise and magnetic leadership, business acumen, integrity of character, people skills, a winsome personality. Psalm 51 adds another quality to the list: a contrite heart. I haven't graduated yet from the school of contrition, but here are three lessons I am learning.

Get real with God. Don't try to impress him with elaborate prayers and feverish religious deeds. Don't minimize, rationalize, and explain away your sin, or try to excuse your flaws by comparing yourself to others. The real God wants to hear from the real you.

Embrace—don't resist—painful truth. David wrote Psalm 51 after the prophet Nathan confronted him with the harsh facts of his sin. Be grateful if you have faithful friends who help you confront reality by speaking the truth in love. "Better is open rebuke than hidden love" (Proverbs 27:5).

Focus on your faith more than on your failures. David's moral failures damaged his leadership and brought tragic consequences to his family, but he was not beyond the reach of redemption. After asking God to give him a pure heart and renewed joy, David declared, "Then I will teach transgressors your ways, so that sinners will turn back to you" (Psalm 51:13). His life—even the broken pieces—served as a positive testimony to others. We admire David's successes, but even more, let's appreciate how God made something beautiful out of David's life in spite of his glaring failures.

Personal Challenge: Write your own prayer of confession to God, using Psalm 51 to guide your thoughts. ■

DISCOVERY

BY MICHAEL C. MACK

1. How did you live as God's servant over the past week?
2. What was the biggest challenge you faced last week?

Ask two people to read aloud **2 Samuel 12:1-14** one after the other, preferably from different Bible versions. Then ask two other people, playing the parts of Nathan and David, to act out the story as best as they can.

3. What did you notice about the Bible story in addition to or different from the way our actors portrayed it?
4. Let's dig deeper:
 - What prompted Nathan to go to David?
 - In what ways was King David like the rich man in Nathan's parable?
 - How was Uriah the Hittite like the poor man?
 - What emotions did David display throughout this story?
 - How did God, through Nathan, describe David's sin?
 - What consequences, both short-term and long-term, would David face?
 - What words would you use to characterize David's response?
5. What do you learn about God from these passages?
 - What do you learn about his justice and his grace?
6. What do you learn about people?
7. What does this passage teach you about the importance of obeying God?
8. In Psalm 51, which David wrote in response to the events in this story, he said, "Then I will teach transgressors your ways, so that sinners will turn back to you." Consider a lesson you have learned the hard way. How can you teach others about God's grace by sharing your story?
9. Based on our study and discussion, complete this sentence: "This week, I will . . ."
10. What new challenge do you anticipate facing this week?

For Next Week: Read and reflect on **2 Samuel 22:17-25; 23:1-5**. You can also read next week's supplemental texts as well as the Study and Application sections as part of your personal study. ■