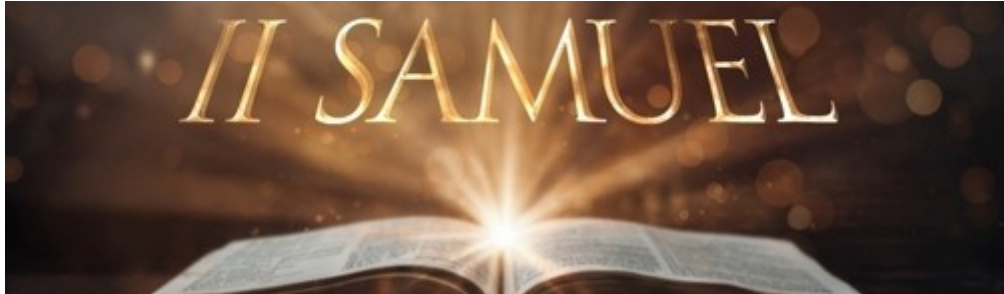


Let's Worship God

13th-18th July 2026

2 Samuel





Monday - 2 Samuel 15:1-17 - What Defines You?

Who are your true friends? They are those who are there for you in trouble, aren't they? In 2 Samuel 15 and 16, David is in trouble. It's when he's in trouble that we see who his true friends are - and who his enemies are. The first thing we have to remember when we come to all this is that David isn't just anybody. David is God's chosen king. So to rebel against David and his kingdom is to rebel against the LORD and his kingdom. That doesn't mean that David is perfect. In fact his suffering in these chapters is the direct result of his own sin. But unlike with Saul, God has not rejected David as king. God is the one who has put David in place. So to rebel against him is to rebel against God.

Something else to notice is that what defines all these characters in chapters 15 and 16 is how they respond to David. Just as the one thing that will define us forever won't be what we achieve in life, but how we respond to Jesus Christ, because he too is God's anointed king. And it's not just what we do with Jesus in general, but what we do with him when the majority of people are against him, and his cause looks weak. But that is where faith comes in - to believe that Jesus really is who he says he is, and to believe that one day every other kingdom will crumble, and his kingdom will be seen to be supreme.

For David's friends in this chapter to be loyal to him would mean leaving their homes and their comfortable lives and living by faith that his cause was right and one day God would vindicate it. It's the same for us. Peter in his letter writes to Christians to tell them how to conduct themselves during the time of their 'exile'. (1 Peter 1:17) He writes: 'Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul'. Why does Peter describe his readers as elect exiles? Not because war or persecution has forced them to leave their homes, but because they're Christians. So this world is no longer their home. From now on they are going to live like people whose true home is elsewhere. Count the cost before you say yes to following God's chosen Messiah. Because it will mean living as an exile, for the rest of your time on earth, even as those around you settle down and try to find heaven here and now.

Question

1. What defines the characters in this chapter?

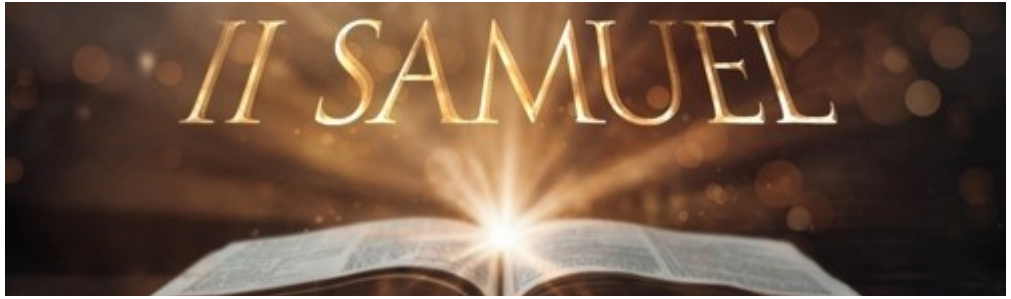
Prayer Points

1. Pray that we would be faithful even when God's cause looks weak.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

"Wherever my lord the king shall be, whether for death or for life, there also will your servant be." 2 Samuel 15:21b

Praise: Psalm 117C - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.



Tuesday - 2 Samuel 15:18-23 - A Recent Convert

Ittai is what you could call a recent convert. He isn't an Israelite. Rather he's from the Philistine city of Gath. That's the same city as Goliath. He's a Philistine. But he comes to trust in the true God. Up to this point, he and his men are presumably hired soldiers. It's one thing to be a hired soldier, or otherwise committed to David when he is king. But what about now he's on the run? David gives him the chance to leave. Is David saying that he doesn't want Ittai to go with him? No! But he doesn't want anyone serving him under compulsion. If Ittai follows David, David wants it to be from the heart. Does Jesus want any less from us? Do we honour him if we serve him merely out of duty? And so just like Naomi with her daughters-in-law Orpah and Ruth, David gives Ittai the chance to go home. But just like Ruth, Ittai will stick with David - and with David's God. Ittai is not going to abandon the LORD's anointed even if it means death. As Ittai talks about life and death, it's not just flowery words. A battle is looming where people will die. Ittai is saying that even if being loyal to David means facing death, he won't change his mind.

Ittai's faith is impressive in and of itself. But it's even more impressive when compared to those around him. Particularly those Israelites who have so easily switched allegiance from David to Absalom.

Ittai decides to follow David. But it's not just a decision for himself. We read in verse 22 that all his men follow him - and all the little ones who were with him. Whatever Ittai decides, it's not just a decision for himself. If he goes home to his Philistine city - his children will go with him. But if he chooses to risk his life and identify with God's true king who the people have rejected, his children will follow him in that instead. Parents who don't raise their children in the faith aren't being neutral. They're making a decision not to identify with God's true king, and that decision will impact their family.

Questions

1. Why is Ittai's loyalty especially impressive?
2. How does it affect his family?

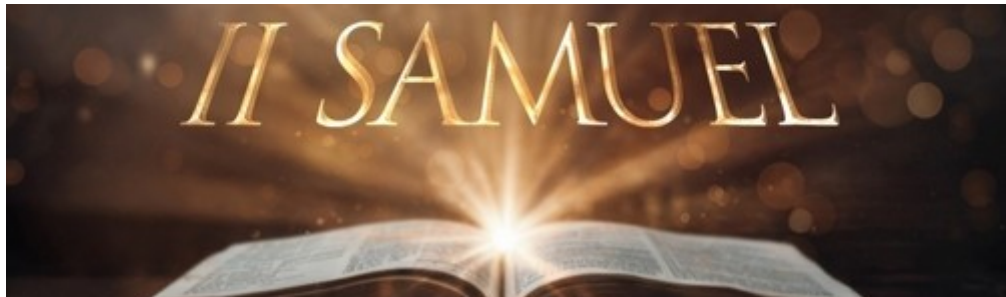
Prayer Points

1. Pray for Christian parents as they raise their children in the Lord.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

"Wherever my lord the king shall be, whether for death or for life, there also will your servant be." 2 Samuel 15:21b

Praise: Psalm 1A - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.



Wednesday - 2 Samuel 15:24-37 - Serving in Different Ways

We saw last week how Abiathar and Zadok come carrying the ark of the covenant. We looked at it from David's perspective - how he refused to try and use God. He refused to try and use that sacred object as a lucky charm as others had before him. Let's think about it briefly from Abiathar and Zadok's perspective. They're trying to help David, even if they're not going about it the right way. They've risked a lot by leaving Jerusalem. But David tells them that they'll actually be more useful to him in Jerusalem as informants. It's the same with Hushai. When he comes to David, David says verse 33: 'If you go on with me, you will be a burden to me'. But David has a better plan for him. Verse 34: Return to the city, let on that you're going to be loyal to Absalom - and defeat the counsel of Ahithophel. The big question in the chapter is: Who's going to be loyal to David? But we see here that people can be loyal to David in different ways. They all assume that being loyal to him will mean leaving Jerusalem. But for some of them David says: 'No', because they can be more useful where they are. So just because someone isn't serving God in the same way as you, don't assume they're not serving God. And just because you're not serving God in the same manner as someone else, don't assume that their service is more important than yours!

Notice as well how often God's people assume that they can be more useful to God by changing their circumstances. Whereas more often than not, God wants us to keep our circumstances the same, but get us to look at them with fresh eyes, and to realise the opportunities that we already have in front of us.

Question

1. What does this teach us about serving God?

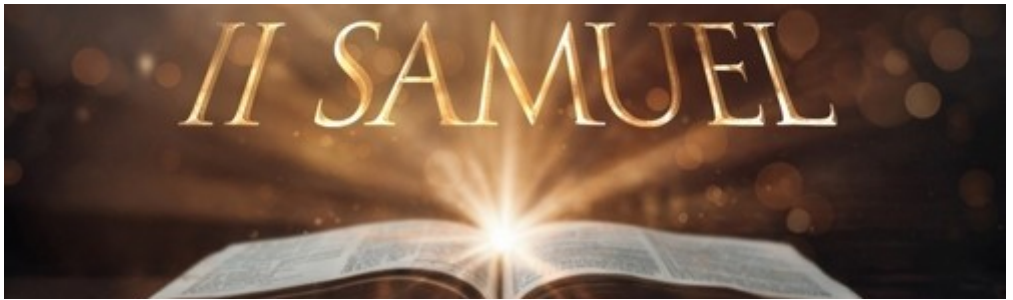
Prayer Points

1. Pray that you would serve God well in whatever situation he puts you in.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

"Wherever my lord the king shall be, whether for death or for life, there also will your servant be." 2 Samuel 15:21b

Praise: Psalm 2:1-4 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.



Thursday - 2 Samuel 16:1-4 - Building Our Kingdom Rather Than God's

Ziba is the servant of Mephibosheth, who is a son of David's friend Jonathan, and a grandson of Saul. Jonathan was killed along with his father Saul at the end of 1st Samuel. But when David became king, rather than wipe out anyone associated with the previous king, he shows kindness to Mephibosheth. And here comes Mephibosheth's servant Ziba to meet David, and Ziba has laid on a feast for him. Where's Mephibosheth, David asks? At this Ziba puts on the saddest face he can muster, perhaps even a few tears. Alas, Mephibosheth has stayed in Jerusalem. He's hoping - Ziba says - to get Saul's kingdom back. And David believes him. He has to take a snap decision. Though perhaps significantly, he doesn't send up a prayer to God first as he does up in verse 31.

But is Ziba's story true? Well for a start, it doesn't really add up. Why would Absalom be interested in restoring Saul's kingdom? If David's life was under threat from Absalom, why would Absalom spare Mephibosheth? We'll get Mephibosheth's side of the story in chapter 19, where he tells us that Ziba deceived him. I think we can take it that Mephibosheth is telling the truth there. Whereas Ziba here is lying. Ziba is a manipulator. He's taking advantage of David's trouble to advance his own cause. He knows that if he turns up without Mephibosheth, David will ask him where his master is. He knows that David won't be able to check his story, and will need to make a snap decision. He takes advantage of someone's trouble to promote his own cause.

I'm not suggesting any of us are a Ziba. But perhaps it does call us to search our hearts. Someone has suggested that a modern equivalent of this might be when we tell a troubled friend that we're praying for them. Do we do that simply to encourage them - in which case, great! Or is part of it because we want them to think well of us? It could be easier than we might think to use someone else's trouble for our own benefit. It's really any way in which we might say we're showing loyalty to the true king, but we're actually using what looks like commitment to him to build our own kingdom and advance our own platform.

Question

1. How does Ziba manipulate the situation?

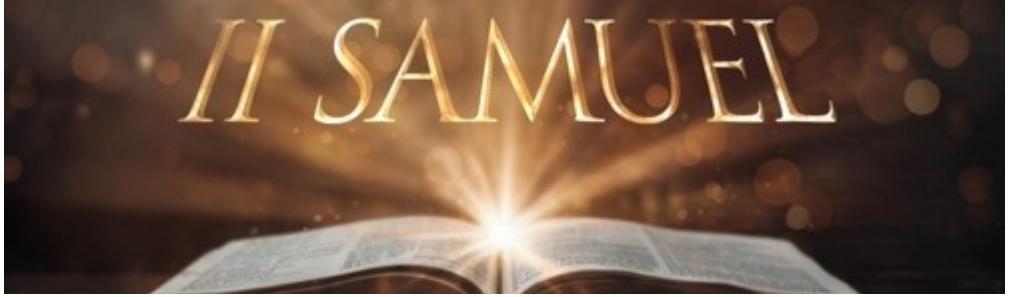
Prayer Points

1. Pray that we would put Christ and His people before ourselves.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

"Wherever my lord the king shall be, whether for death or for life, there also will your servant be." 2 Samuel 15:21b

Praise: Psalm 2:5-8 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.



Friday - 2 Samuel 16:5-14 - When God Doesn't Judge Immediately

Shimei openly curses David. Just as many openly curse the Lord Jesus in our own day - and nothing seems to happen to them. That's exactly the situation here. David could easily have stopped Shimei's cursing. Abishai offers to do it for him. He says: 'Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? Let me go over and take off his head.' Abishai has a simple but effective way to stop him cursing. He has noticed that people without heads don't curse. But David says no. And Shimei continues to curse.

People think that because they say something blasphemous, and they don't get hit by lightning, that God must not exist. Or that he's not able to do anything. Or that he doesn't care. But David has his reasons for not striking down Shimei here. And God has his reasons for not always striking down those who curse him today. The biggest of which is patience. 'The Lord is not slow to fulfil his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.' But if they don't repent, their being allowed to curse will make them more guilty. And by being spared they are actually, to use a phrase employed by both Jesus and Paul, filling up the measure of their sins. That is a solemn, solemn thing. Judgement would fall on Shimei during Solomon's reign in 1 Kings 2:26, just as it will on all who don't repent.

Questions

1. What does Shimei do?
2. What happens to those who do not repent?

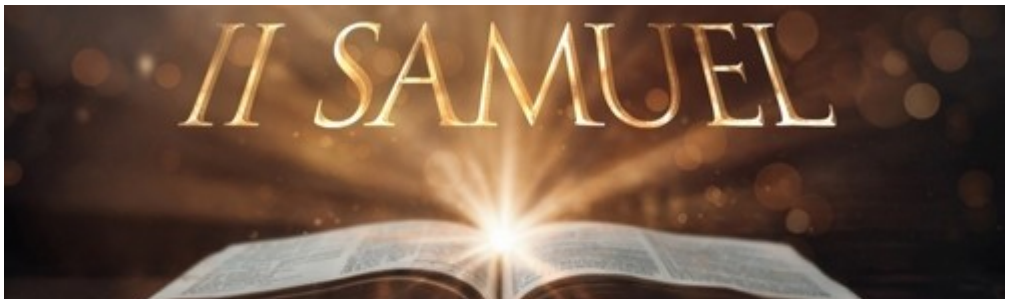
Prayer Points

1. Pray for the salvation of friends and family.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

"Wherever my lord the king shall be, whether for death or for life, there also will your servant be." 2 Samuel 15:21b

Praise: Psalm 4:1-5 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.



Saturday - 2 Samuel 16:11-23 - Absalom Enters Jerusalem

Why doesn't David stop Shimei? He says at the end of verse 11: 'The LORD has told him to do it'. By that David recognises that it's part of the consequences of his sin in committing adultery with Bathsheba and murdering Uriah. David knows that God is a God of justice who is fulfilling his word. But he also knows more than that. He also knows that God is gracious. "It may be that the LORD will look on the wrong done to me, and that the LORD will repay me with good for his cursing today." (2 Samuel 16:12) How can David say that? How can David even consider the possibility that the LORD might look on his iniquity and replace cursing with goodness? Because he knows God's character. He knows that the LORD has this strangely wonderful way of looking upon guilt and yet returning blessing instead of curse. Isn't that what happened above all at the cross? The LORD looked at our iniquity - and he laid it on his Son - in order that he might return us blessing instead of cursing. And because of all that, David resists the natural human inclination to retaliate. Just as Jesus did when he told Simon Peter to put his sword away. In fact, when David says in verse 10: 'What have I to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah?' It's hard not to think forward to Jesus rebuking James and John, the sons of Thunder, when they ask him if he wants to tell fire to come down from heaven and consume a village that didn't receive him. So once again, as David walks away from Jerusalem to save his life, he reminds us of the Lord Jesus, walking to Jerusalem to give his life.

May God give us all grace to choose and keep choosing to follow God's true king - whatever the consequences might be. Because we know that one day his kingdom will come - and his will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Question

1. Why doesn't David stop Shimei?
2. How does Christ turn cursing into blessing?

Prayer Points

1. Pray for the preaching and hearing of God's Word tomorrow.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

"Wherever my lord the king shall be, whether for death or for life, there also will your servant be." 2 Samuel 15:21b

Praise: Psalm 3 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

**The goal of Let's Worship God is to
encourage and help you in your worship of God each day.**

**God tells us that
Ezra read from
the book of the Law
day after day
and that
the people of God
were filled with joy!**

**Let's Worship God is produced
by the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland.**

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