

## **CALVARY PANDAN BIBLE- PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

[Adapted from Bethel Bible-Presbyterian  
Church, 10 Downing St. Oakleigh, Vic., 3166]

### **DHW BIBLE CLASS LESSON 6 SECOND SAMUEL CHAPTERS 8, 9 & 10**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Chapter 8 describes the expansion of the Davidic kingdom. David became renowned. He had fought many victorious battles after his ascension to the throne. These chapters provide more details of some of the wars he had fought against the hostile countries surrounding Israel. The establishment of David's kingdom as promised by the LORD in the previous chapter was only a partial fulfilment of the ultimate kingdom when Jesus Christ, the son of David, would return to claim the Davidic throne and rule the world from Jerusalem.

Chapter 9 describes one of the most touching scenes in David's life. It details David's love for Jonathan even after Jonathan's death in battle. David kept his covenantal promise to Jonathan by showing kindness to his living children. David's action provided a worthy example for us to follow. Many, after they had gained security and substance, often forgot their friends.

Chapter 10 reminds us that things do change when relationships change. Sometimes the consequences of such changes can be very bitter and ugly. Our diligent study of these three

chapters will benefit us tremendously when we apply them in our lives.

#### **COMMENTARY**

##### **David Expands & Secures Israel —8:1-18**

David subdued the Philistines first. It was natural for him to do so as they had been constantly harassing Israel. The account given in this chapter continues from chapter 5. David took Metheg-ammah in the south-western part of Israel. This city could not be precisely determined but it was probably Gath.<sup>1</sup> David then turned to Moab, the region on the south-eastern part across the river Jordan. The Moabites were related to David. His great-grandmother was Ruth, a Moabitess.<sup>2</sup> When David was a fugitive, he even asked the king of Moab to look after his parents (1 Samuel 22:3). We do not know why David smote the Moabites and treated them cruelly.<sup>3</sup> He made the Moabites lie on the ground and killed two-thirds of them. We do not know the exact number. David made the remaining Moabites pay tribute to him.

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Chronicles 18:1 Now after this it came to pass, that David smote the Philistines, and subdued them, and took Gath and her towns out of the hand of the Philistines.

<sup>2</sup> Genesis 19:36 Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father. 37 And the firstborn bare a son, and called his name Moab: the same *is* the father of the Moabites unto this day.

Ruth 4:17 And the women her neighbours gave it a name, saying, There is a son born to Naomi; and they called his name Obed: he *is* the father of Jesse, the father of David.

<sup>3</sup> Ancient Jewish commentators state that David's action were a result of their having massacred his parents and family.

Then David turned to the north. He subdued Hadadezer, the king of Zobah. David took the offensive because they were hostile neighbours of Israel. Saul had cause to fight against them (1 Samuel 14:47). David chose an opportune time to attack the Zobahites. Hadadezer was at that time trying to recover his authority over the border territory at the river Euphrates. David defeated them and “houghed all the chariot horses” (8:4). This was hamstringing (cutting their hamstrings) the horses in order to make them useless for war. However, David reserved enough horses for 100 chariots. Now when the Syrians came to the aid of king Hadadezer, David turned on them too and defeated them. He took their capital city Damascus (which is still the capital city in modern day Syria) and stationed garrisons. He made the Syrians serve and pay tribute to him. In all these battles, David took great spoils and he brought the gold, silver and brass to Jerusalem.

Toi, the king of Hamath, was delighted when David defeated king Hadadezer because the latter had fought with him. Toi sent a high-level delegation, headed by Joram his son, to visit David. Joram brought vessels of silver, gold and brass. David received the gifts and dedicated them to the LORD just as he did with all the spoils from the other nations, namely Syria, Moab, Ammon (modern Jordan), Philistine (modern Palestinians in Gaza), Amalek, and Zobah. Having dealt with the northern territory of Israel, David proceeded to the southern part of the “valley of the salt” (the Dead Sea) where he subdued the Edomites. He stationed

soldiers in the region and made the Edomites pay tribute to him.

David’s success in all these battles could be attributed to two factors. First and foremost, it was the LORD who had preserved him in all his battles (8:6, 14). It was the LORD who protected him and gave him the victory and the spoils. The LORD was fulfilling His promise to David to build a “house” for him and establish it forever. The second factor was that David showed considerable military and diplomatic leadership. For the territories that were far away, he placed soldiers there in order to keep law and order and to prevent any rebellion. At the same time, his soldiers would ensure that the tributes were promptly paid.

The inspired writer gave us a brief summary of David’s administration of Israel. David ruled all Israel and was personally responsible for judgment and justice in the land. He was both the king and the judge of Israel. Joab, who was David’s nephew, was the commander in chief of his army. Joab deserved the appointment because he bravely captured Jerusalem. Jehoshaphat was first introduced to us here. He was the “secretary of state” to David. He kept record of the affairs of the kingdom and acted as David’s confidential advisor and consultant. Zadok and Abiathar who were priests were appointed to work side by side. Seraiah was the scribe who was an expert of the Law and he taught it to the people. David employed Cherethites and Pelethites as mercenary soldiers under the command of Benaiah, the son of Jehoida. David probably employed

these foreign soldiers to ensure his personal safety and to prevent any inter-tribal rivalries amongst his people. These men from Crete gave whole-hearted allegiance to him.

### **David Remembers Jonathan**

#### **—9:1-13**

David was now king over Israel. He had defeated his enemies and established his kingdom. The LORD had given him peace and stability in his kingdom. David thought of Jonathan, his faithful friend. He had not forgotten the promise he had made to Jonathan who had helped him to escape from Saul his father. Jonathan told David: “thou shalt not cut off thy kindness from my house forever: no, not when the LORD hath cut off the enemies of David every one from the face of the earth” (1 Samuel 20:15). Many years had passed since that day when Jonathan had made the covenant with David. Now that David was king of Israel and the LORD had given him rest, he remembered the covenant. David asked his courtiers whether there was any one left of Saul’s family that he might show kindness for Jonathan’s sake. Most ancient Near-Eastern kings when they became the new ruler would have killed all the family members who were related to their predecessor. On the contrary, David wanted to show kindness to them.

A servant of Saul by the name of Ziba informed David that Jonathan had a son, Mephibosheth, who had become lame as a result of a fall (2 Samuel 4:4) He was five years old when David had reigned in Hebron. Mephibosheth now had a son indicating that he was married and much older (v.12). When Ziba told

David where he was living, David gave instructions to send for him.

The meeting between David and Mephibosheth was a very touching one. When Mephibosheth came to David, David noticed that he was trembling and fearful. Mephibosheth had not known David nor had he any contact with him. He knew David by name and was fearful for his life as he would be familiar with the practice of kings in those days. When he was brought before David, he quickly showed reverence by falling down on to his face—a position of abject servitude. David called him by name “Mephibosheth,” and he replied, “Behold, thy servant!” David immediately reassured him: “Fear not: for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan thy father’s sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father, and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually” (9:6, 7). Mephibosheth could not believe what he had heard. He expressed his unbelieving surprise at David’s great-heartedness and generosity to “such a dead dog” as he! Mephibosheth’s expression of himself as “a dead dog” told us of how he had been treated by others.

Mephibosheth suddenly became a rich man who owned the vast estate of Saul. Moreover, he was given a place of honour in David’s court. He needed someone to manage his vast estate. David instructed Ziba to manage it for him. Ziba’s sons and servants were also to serve Mephibosheth by working on the land so his newfound master’s family could be adequately provided for. Ziba obeyed king David accordingly. As for Ziba, he was no ordinary person. He

had 15 sons and 20 servants. He himself possessed considerable wealth and lived in comfort. He was a capable person and now he was given a position of great responsibility. For showing interest and promptly answering the king, he was richly rewarded.

### **David's Kindness Misconstrued —10:1-19**

David came to know of the death of Nahash, the king of the Ammonites. Nahash had been kind to David probably during his time as a fugitive. The Ammonites lived on the eastern side of the Jordan. Ammon is present-day Amman, capital of modern day Jordan. David sent his ambassadors to Hanun, the son of Nahash, to convey his condolences. This was also to strengthen and continue their goodwill and friendship. Hanun, instead of receiving David's sincere sympathy, listened to the advice of his advisers not to trust David and the ambassadors he sent. Hanun's advisers told him that David's purpose in sending the ambassadors to comfort him was only a pretext to spy and to destroy their country (10:3). Accordingly, Hanun insulted David's ambassadors. He shaved off half of the beards of David's men. This was the ultimate act of humiliation. The ancient Semites looked upon their beards as the symbol of their status, seniority, dignity and rank.

To add injury to insult, Hanun also had their robes cut short such that the buttocks of David's servants were exposed. Then he sent David's men away. This was a declaration of war!

David was told of the degrading and humiliating treatment that his ambassadors received from Hanun,

the new king. David told his servants to remain in Jericho until their beards had grown before returning to Jerusalem thus saving them further shame. In the meantime, the Ammonites realised that they had made themselves repulsive before David. They were so afraid that they engaged the military services of the Syrians. When David heard this, he assigned Joab, Israel's military commander-in-chief to confront the Ammonites and their Syrian allies. Joab observed that the army of Israel was sandwiched between the Ammonites to the east and the Syrians to the west. Joab had a good strategy. He personally would lead a battalion to meet the Syrians, who were more formidable. Joab also realised that if the Syrians were defeated, the Ammonites would flee. It was a good military strategy. Joab then had his brother Abishai meet the armies of the Ammonites. Joab explained to his men that if the Syrians were too powerful for him, the warriors who were led by Abishai were to go to his aid and vice versa.

Joab showed his faith in the LORD his God. He encouraged his men to be strong and courageous -- to be "men" for their people and their cities which God had given to them. Then he told the people to trust the LORD to do in accordance to His will! Joab defeated the Syrians who fled. When the Ammonites saw that their mercenary Syrian warriors had fled, they also abandoned their battle with Abishai.

The Syrians regrouped to fight Israel. Hadarezer of Zobah joined forces with the Syrians and they both gathered to attack. When David heard

this, he personally led his army against the combined force. They fought at Helam where David defeated the Syrians and Sobach, the commander-in-chief of the Zobahites. When all the other kings who were serving Hadarezer saw that he was defeated, they quickly made peace with Israel and served them. This was a bonus benefit enjoyed by David. After this, the Syrians feared to go to the aid of the Ammonites.

### **PRACTICAL VALUE**

One of the wonderful truths we learn about God is that He will always protect and preserve His servants when they do His will or are called according to His purpose. David was the LORD's anointed to be Israel's king. God had made a promise to David and He ensured that His plan for him was fulfilled. God did that for David and He will do the same for all of His servants who obey and do His will. This truth concerning the nature and character of the LORD our God is most comforting and reassuring.

David also exemplified his love for God when he gave the spoils of his victories to the LORD's treasury. He did not take them for himself. He acknowledged that his victories were the results of God's intervention. God deserved the honour and glory. The salient point is that David remembered the LORD and was grateful to Him.

David's organisational skill is a good example for pastors and church leaders. David saw the need to delegate the work of the church to capable, loyal, dedicated and like-minded men. Pastors, elders and deacons are responsible for the

spiritual growth and expansion of the church. They should understand that the LORD's work requires a team working together for the perfecting of the believers unto the "measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ".

David was a covenant keeper. Although years had passed since his covenant with Jonathan, he did not forget it when he became king of Israel. Many who had risen to the height of affluence and influence tend to forget those who had helped them in the earlier days of their struggle. But David was not like that.

Our life is made up of covenant obligations. We publicly confess our faith in Christ not only as our Saviour but our Lord. When we bring our children for baptism, we make a pledge to nurture them in the fear of the Lord. When we assume an office in the church, we give our undertaking to be faithful, loyal and to work together with the Session. When we become a member of the church, we promise to abide by the Constitution of the church. When we marry, we vow to be faithful to our spouse through thick and thin. We ought to remember these promises and keep them like David.

Hanun's behaviour teaches us that we should not simply believe the malicious things that others tell us. Hanun should be more discerning. Very often, good relationships are broken by malicious slander and untruths!

We must be wary of the bad things people say of others. Find out the truth from reliable sources.

AMEN

**DAILY READINGS & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

**Daily Readings**

**Monday:** 2 Samuel 8:1-8; Psalm 9:1-20; 2 Timothy 4:18.

**Tuesday:** 2 Samuel 8:9-18; Psalm 108:5-13; Proverbs 3:9.

**Wednesday:** 2 Samuel 9:1-13; Ephesians 1:3-14; Psalm 119:63.

**Thursday:** 2 Samuel 10:1-12; Colossians 3:12-14; Proverbs 17:13.

**Friday:** 2 Samuel 10:13-19; 1 Corinthians 16:13; Psalm 20:1-9.

**Analysis:**

Text	Practical Value
2 Samuel 8:1-8	
2 Samuel 8:9-18	
2 Samuel 9:1-13	
2 Samuel 10:1-19	

**Discussion Questions**

1. What was the secret of David's success in the wars he fought? What application does this have for us?

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2. What did David do with the booty from these wars? What application does this have for us?

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3. How was God's promise regarding the boundary of David's kingdom (7:9-10) fulfilled in chapter 8?

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4. Why did David want to show kindness to Saul's lineage? What does this tell us about David's character?

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5. How did David show kindness to Mephibosheth? Do you see any similarity in God's kindness towards us (Ephesians 1:3-14)?

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6. What kind of a servant was Ziba?

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7. What caused the war between the Ammonites and Israel?

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8. In what or whom did Joab rely upon in his battle against the enlarged armies of the enemy?

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9. How many vital lessons for Christian living can you find in chapters 8 – 10?

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10. How should we respond to those who misunderstand our good intentions and instead seek to shame us?

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