

NEVER ENOUGH

READING PLAN

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Reading Plan

UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXT:

When does 1 and 2 Samuel take place?

Based upon the order of Scripture, following Judges in the Old Testament comes the book of 1 Samuel. Judges ends with stories of spiritual problems among the priests, misconduct of the people in other parts of Israel, that leads to the introduction of Eli as the priest that is spiritually dull to the things of God.

What is 1 and 2 Samuel about?

The story follows the interactions among three main characters:

Samuel: Early in the book of 1 Samuel, we are introduced to the miraculous birth and call of Samuel from a young man to be a judge for the Israelites. Rather than accepting the continued leadership of God through the men of God, the people desire to have a king. Samuel maintains his position as a spiritual leader for the children of Israel even with the arrival of the king.

Saul: Saul comes on the scene at first as a tall, shy young man that has no desire to be king. Yet eventually he embraces his role. Early in his life as a king, we can see moments of following the Lord's leadership, however, we begin to quickly see the compromises and jealousies that follow his life leading to his ultimate death in battle.

David: The young shepherd boy that is pronounced king steps from the flock to the fortress. His integrity and character shows early in his life as a servant in the kingdom, warrior, and eventual king set the stage for a very successful kingdom that promises to have a king on the throne forever from his lineage. However, as sin crept in, so do compromises as well that lead to the murdering of a faithful warrior. Yet through his story we can see the redemption and forgiveness of God.

HOW TO USE THE READING PLAN:

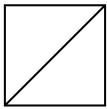
Here is a basic guide of the week to week interactions with the reading plan.

Memory Verse Challenge:

Each week there is a memory verse related to the topic of Scripture discussed that week. Sometimes the verse may come directly from the reading plan, while other times it may relate to the topic. We are challenged to take God's Word and memorize it to our lives to encourage or correct us as needed.

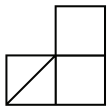
Reading Plan Description:

There are three types of plans that you can participate in with daily reading as well as homework called "Digging in" depending on where you are in your season of life. Each plan takes into account a certain amount of time and challenge to help you grow spiritually. The reading plan is divided by each type of plan so you can follow the logos on the bottom of the page to know which level you are studying. Here is a brief description of each plan:



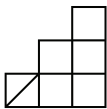
First Step Reading Plan is a three-day reading plan that covers specific parts of 1 and 2 Samuel with three days of "digging in" that asks questions of reflection and action of each person.

Begins page 5



Next Step Reading Plan is a five-day reading plan that covers specific parts of 1 and 2 Samuel with three days of "digging in" that encourages interaction with the text as far as discovery of themes and points of application using a method called HEAR (Highlight, Explain, Apply, Respond).

Begins page 18



Growth Step Reading Plan is a daily reading plan with five days of "digging in" that covers the meaning of specific words and phrases that inform the overall theme of the text using the DART (Define, Answer, Reflect, Tell) method. Additional resources such as commentaries, dictionaries, or cross-reference tools (blueletterbible.org) are required for this part of the reading plan, but many are offered online for free.

Begins page 42

Note: Questions with an asterisk* are found in all three reading plan

FIRST STEP

READING PLAN



FIRST STEP READING PLAN: WEEK 1: 1 SAMUEL 2:12-25

MEMORY VERSE CHALLENGE:

Hebrews 9:15, *“For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance...”*

DAILY READING PLAN:

Day 1 Reading: 1 Samuel 1

Major Moment: Hannah prays for a child and is given Samuel, whom she dedicates to the Lord.

Day 2 Reading: 1 Samuel 2

Major Moment: Hannah rejoices, and Eli’s sons turn away from God.

Day 3 Reading: 1 Samuel 3

Major Moment: Samuel is called by the Lord.

DIGGING IN:

Day 1: 1 Samuel 2:12-17

¹² *Eli’s sons were scoundrels; they had no regard for the Lord.* ¹³ *Now it was the practice of the priests that, whenever any of the people offered a sacrifice, the priest’s servant would come with a three-pronged fork in his hand while the meat was being boiled ¹⁴ and would plunge the fork into the pan or kettle or caldron or pot. Whatever the fork brought up the priest would take for himself. This is how they treated all the Israelites who came to Shiloh.* ¹⁵ *But even before the fat was burned, the priest’s servant would come and say to the person who was sacrificing, “Give the priest some meat to roast; he won’t accept boiled meat from you, but only raw.”* ¹⁶ *If the person said to him, “Let the fat be burned first, and then take whatever you want,” the servant would answer, “No, hand it over now; if you don’t, I’ll take it by force.”* ¹⁷ *This sin of the young men was very great in the Lord’s sight, for they were treating the Lord’s offering with contempt.*

What is God saying in this passage to me?



How can I live what I have learned today?

*Why was God upset with Eli's sons? What are ways that we can show disregard or contempt toward the Lord?

Day 2: 1 Samuel 2:18-21

¹⁸ But Samuel was ministering before the Lord—a boy wearing a linen ephod. ¹⁹ Each year his mother made him a little robe and took it to him when she went up with her husband to offer the annual sacrifice. ²⁰ Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife, saying, “May the Lord give you children by this woman to take the place of the one she prayed for and gave to the Lord.” Then they would go home. ²¹ And the Lord was gracious to Hannah; she gave birth to three sons and two daughters. Meanwhile, the boy Samuel grew up in the presence of the Lord.

What is God saying to me in this passage?

How can I live out what I have learned today?

*How was the Lord gracious to Hannah? Samuel? What impact does God's grace make in our lives?



Day 3: 1 Samuel 2: 22-25

²² Now Eli, who was very old, heard about everything his sons were doing to all Israel and how they slept with the women who served at the entrance to the tent of meeting. ²³ So he said to them, "Why do you do such things? I hear from all the people about these wicked deeds of yours. ²⁴ No, my sons; the report I hear spreading among the Lord's people is not good. ²⁵ If one person sins against another, God may mediate for the offender; but if anyone sins against the Lord, who will intercede for them?" His sons, however, did not listen to their father's rebuke, for it was the Lord's will to put them to death.

What is God saying to me in this passage?

How can I live out what I have learned today?

*What are examples of ways that we may not listen to God's rebuke? What consequences can that have in our relationships with others and with Christ?





FIRST STEP READING PLAN: WEEK 2: 1 SAMUEL 18

MEMORY VERSE CHALLENGE:

John 15:13, “*Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.*”

DAILY READING PLAN:

Day 1 Reading: 1 Samuel 17

Major Moment: David defeats Goliath the Philistine.

Day 2 Reading: 1 Samuel 18

Major Moment: Major Moment: David and Jonathan become friends, but Saul fears David’s influence over the Israelites.

Day 3 Reading: 1 Samuel 19

Major Moment: Saul attempts to kill David, and Michal helps him escape.

DIGGING IN:

Day 1: 1 Samuel 18:1-4

After David had finished talking with Saul, Jonathan became one in spirit with David, and he loved him as himself. ² From that day Saul kept David with him and did not let him return home to his family. ³ And Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself. ⁴ Jonathan took off the robe he was wearing and gave it to David, along with his tunic, and even his sword, his bow and his belt.

What is God saying to me in this passage?

How can I live out what I have learned today?



* How are Jonathan's actions toward David a picture of the gospel of Jesus Christ (see also Philippians 2:1-11)?

Day 2: 1 Samuel 18:5-8

⁵ Whatever mission Saul sent him on, David was so successful that Saul gave him a high rank in the army. This pleased all the troops, and Saul's officers as well.

⁶ When the men were returning home after David had killed the Philistine, the women came out from all the towns of Israel to meet King Saul with singing and dancing, with joyful songs and with timbrels and lyres. ⁷ As they danced, they sang:

*"Saul has slain his thousands,
and David his tens of thousands."*

⁸ Saul was very angry; this refrain displeased him greatly. "They have credited David with tens of thousands," he thought, "but me with only thousands. What more can he get but the kingdom?" ⁹ And from that time on Saul kept a close eye on David.

What is God saying to me in this passage?

How can I live out what I have learned today?

* How did Saul respond to the praise David received from the Israelites (vv. 8-9)? Why do you think Saul became so fixated on David from this point forward?



Day 3: 1 Samuel 18: 10-15

¹⁰ The next day an evil spirit from God came forcefully on Saul. He was prophesying in his house, while David was playing the lyre, as he usually did. Saul had a spear in his hand ¹¹ and he hurled it, saying to himself, "I'll pin David to the wall." But David eluded him twice.

¹² Saul was afraid of David, because the Lord was with David but had departed from Saul. ¹³ So he sent David away from him and gave him command over a thousand men, and David led the troops in their campaigns. ¹⁴ In everything he did he had great success, because the Lord was with him. ¹⁵ When Saul saw how successful he was, he was afraid of him. ¹⁶ But all Israel and Judah loved David, because he led them in their campaigns.

What is God saying to me in this passage?

How can I live out what I have learned today?

* What are the areas in your life in which you can easily become jealous? How can you guard against jealousy in those areas?





MEMORY VERSE CHALLENGE:

James 1:15, *“Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.”*

DAILY READING PLAN:

Day 1 Reading: 2 Samuel 11

Major Moment: David lusts after Bathsheba.

Day 2 Reading: 2 Samuel 12

Major Moment: Nathan rebukes David.

Day 3 Reading: 2 Samuel 13

Major Moment: Amnon rapes Tamar, and Absalom kills Amnon.

DIGGING IN:

Day 1: 2 Samuel 13: 1-8

In the course of time, Amnon son of David fell in love with Tamar, the beautiful sister of Absalom son of David.

² *Amnon became so obsessed with his sister Tamar that he made himself ill. She was a virgin, and it seemed impossible for him to do anything to her.*

³ *Now Amnon had an adviser named Jonadab son of Shimeah, David’s brother. Jonadab was a very shrewd man. ⁴ He asked Amnon, “Why do you, the king’s son, look so haggard morning after morning? Won’t you tell me?”*

Amnon said to him, “I’m in love with Tamar, my brother Absalom’s sister.”

⁵ *“Go to bed and pretend to be ill,” Jonadab said. “When your father comes to see you, say to him, ‘I would like my sister Tamar to come and give me something to eat. Let her prepare the food in my sight so I may watch her and then eat it from her hand.’”*

⁶ *So Amnon lay down and pretended to be ill. When the king came to see him, Amnon said to him, “I would like my sister Tamar to come and make some special bread in my sight, so I may eat from her hand.”*

⁷ *David sent word to Tamar at the palace: “Go to the house of your brother Amnon and prepare some food for him.” ⁸ So Tamar went to the house of her brother Amnon, who was lying down. She took some dough, kneaded it, made the bread in his sight and baked it.*



What is God saying to me in this passage?

How can I live out what I have learned today?

* How does this story reveal the sinful nature of everyone? How do we see in this story the importance of the people surrounding us to either guide us to godliness or to sin?

Day 2: 2 Samuel 13: 9-14

⁹ Then she took the pan and served him the bread, but he refused to eat.

¹⁰ Then Amnon said to Tamar, "Bring the food here into my bedroom so I may eat from your hand." And Tamar took the bread she had prepared and brought it to her brother Amnon in his bedroom. ¹¹ But when she took it to him to eat, he grabbed her and said, "Come to bed with me, my sister."

¹² "No, my brother!" she said to him. "Don't force me! Such a thing should not be done in Israel! Don't do this wicked thing. ¹³ What about me? Where could I get rid of my disgrace? And what about you? You would be like one of the wicked fools in Israel. Please speak to the king; he will not keep me from being married to you." ¹⁴ But he refused to listen to her, and since he was stronger than she, he raped her.

What is God saying to me in this passage?



How can I live out what I have learned today?

* How does this story show us that sin takes us farther than we want to go? How does this story reveal the consequences of our personal sin with others?

Day 3: 2 Samuel 13: 15-22

¹⁵ Then Amnon hated her with intense hatred. In fact, he hated her more than he had loved her. Amnon said to her, "Get up and get out!"

¹⁶ "No!" she said to him. "Sending me away would be a greater wrong than what you have already done to me."

But he refused to listen to her. ¹⁷ He called his personal servant and said, "Get this woman out of my sight and bolt the door after her." ¹⁸ So his servant put her out and bolted the door after her. She was wearing an ornate robe, for this was the kind of garment the virgin daughters of the king wore. ¹⁹ Tamar put ashes on her head and tore the ornate robe she was wearing. She put her hands on her head and went away, weeping aloud as she went.

²⁰ Her brother Absalom said to her, "Has that Amnon, your brother, been with you? Be quiet for now, my sister; he is your brother. Don't take this thing to heart." And Tamar lived in her brother Absalom's house, a desolate woman.

²¹ When King David heard all this, he was furious. ²² And Absalom never said a word to Amnon, either good or bad; he hated Amnon because he had disgraced his sister Tamar.

What is God saying to me in this passage?



How can I live out what I have learned today?

* How does Tamar's response show the impact of Amnon's sexual sin? What surprises you about Absalom and David's response?





FIRST STEP READING PLAN: WEEK 4: 2 SAMUEL 15:1-12

MEMORY VERSE CHALLENGE:

Galatians 2:20, *"For I have been crucified with Christ, it is no longer I who lives, but Christ in me."*

DAILY READING PLAN:

Day 1 Reading: 2 Samuel 14

Major Moment: Absalom is restored and returns to Jerusalem.

Day 2 Reading: 2 Samuel 15

Major Moment: Absalom manipulates his way into leadership, David is forced to flee.

Day 3 Reading: 2 Samuel 16

Major Moment: Absalom takes over Jerusalem.

DIGGING IN:

Day 1: 2 Samuel 15:1-4

In the course of time, Absalom provided himself with a chariot and horses and with fifty men to run ahead of him. ² He would get up early and stand by the side of the road leading to the city gate. Whenever anyone came with a complaint to be placed before the king for a decision, Absalom would call out to him, "What town are you from?" He would answer, "Your servant is from one of the tribes of Israel." ³ Then Absalom would say to him, "Look, your claims are valid and proper, but there is no representative of the king to hear you." ⁴ And Absalom would add, "If only I were appointed judge in the land! Then everyone who has a complaint or case could come to me and I would see that they receive justice."

What is God saying to me in this passage?



How can I live out what I have learned today?

* In what way did Absalom manipulate the people? How did he encourage the manipulation? How do our words have weight today?

Day 2: 2 Samuel 15:5-9

⁵ Also, whenever anyone approached him to bow down before him, Absalom would reach out his hand, take hold of him and kiss him. ⁶ Absalom behaved in this way toward all the Israelites who came to the king asking for justice, and so he stole the hearts of the people of Israel.

⁷ At the end of four years, Absalom said to the king, "Let me go to Hebron and fulfill a vow I made to the Lord. ⁸ While your servant was living at Geshur in Aram, I made this vow: 'If the Lord takes me back to Jerusalem, I will worship the Lord in Hebron.'"

⁹ The king said to him, "Go in peace." So he went to Hebron.

What is God saying to me in this passage?

How can I live out what I have learned today?



* What actions showed Absalom's pride? What are examples of ways that we sometimes try to steal the hearts of others? How do these things lead to more problems?

Day 3: 2 Samuel 15:10-12

¹⁰ Then Absalom sent secret messengers throughout the tribes of Israel to say, "As soon as you hear the sound of the trumpets, then say, 'Absalom is king in Hebron.'" ¹¹ Two hundred men from Jerusalem had accompanied Absalom. They had been invited as guests and went quite innocently, knowing nothing about the matter. ¹² While Absalom was offering sacrifices, he also sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor, to come from Giloh, his hometown. And so the conspiracy gained strength, and Absalom's following kept on increasing.

What is God saying to me in this passage?

How can I live out what I have learned today?

* How did Absalom go against God's plan? How can our selfishness impact others?

NEXT STEP

READING PLAN



MEMORY VERSE CHALLENGE:

Hebrews 9:15, *“For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance...”*

DAILY READING PLAN:

Day 1 Reading: 1 Samuel 1-2

Major Moment: Hannah prays for a child and is given Samuel, whom she dedicates to the Lord. Hannah rejoices, and Eli’s sons turn away from God. Samuel is called by the Lord.

Day 2 Reading: 1 Samuel 3

Major Moment: Samuel is called by the Lord.

Day 3 Reading: 1 Samuel 4-6

Major Moment: Israel wars with the Philistines, and they steal the ark of the covenant. The ark of the covenant brings plagues to the Philistines. The ark is returned to the Israelites.

Day 4 Reading: 1 Samuel 7

Major Moment: Samuel subdues the Philistines.

Day 5 Reading: 1 Samuel 8

Major Moment: The Israelites demand a king. Samuel anoints Saul as king.

DIGGING IN:

Day 1: 1 Samuel 2:12-17

¹² *Eli’s sons were scoundrels; they had no regard for the Lord.* ¹³ *Now it was the practice of the priests that, whenever any of the people offered a sacrifice, the priest’s servant would come with a three-pronged fork in his hand while the meat was being boiled ¹⁴ and would plunge the fork into the pan or kettle or caldron or pot. Whatever the fork brought up the priest would take for himself. This is how they treated all the Israelites who came to Shiloh.* ¹⁵ *But even before the fat was burned, the priest’s servant would come and say to the person who was sacrificing, “Give the priest some meat to roast; he won’t accept boiled meat from you, but only raw.”* ¹⁶ *If the person said to him, “Let the fat be burned first, and then take whatever you want,” the servant would answer, “No, hand it over now; if you don’t, I’ll take it by force.”* ¹⁷ *This sin of the young men was very great in the Lord’s sight, for they were treating the Lord’s offering with contempt.*



HEAR HOMEWORK:

H- Highlight

Highlight (or underline) words above that standout to you as you read the passage. Try to find other words or phrases that are similar in other passages.

Answer the following questions: What truth God did communicate to the original hearers? What verse stands out?

E- Explain

From the words (or phrases) that you highlighted, explain the meaning of the passage in one or two sentences. Answer the following questions to help: What does God seem to be communicating through this passage? What is the point of these verses? Why do we need to hear this truth? (Hint: A biblical commentary can help you in this area)

A- Apply

From the main points that you have discovered, begin to apply the passage to your life. Evaluate areas in your life that do not align with the main points. Affirm areas that do align with the passage. Answer the following questions: How does God expect me to change from reading His Word? What does it look like in my life for me to live out these main points?

R- Respond

Reflect on what needs to change in your life for the truths to be applied and begin to craft an action strategy. Use the feedback of others and personal reflection to see if you are living out the truth or not experiencing victory in your life. Answer the following questions: What will you say in response to God about what He desires? What can or did

you do as a result of studying? Did you follow through and obey God's Word?

*Why was God upset with Eli's sons? What are ways that we can show disregard or contempt to the Lord?

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*What are examples of ways that we may not listen to God's rebuke? What consequences can that have in our relationships with others and with Christ?



NEXT STEP READING PLAN: WEEK 2: 1 SAMUEL 18

MEMORY VERSE CHALLENGE:

John 15:13, “*Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.*”

DAILY READING PLAN:

Day 1 Reading: 1 Samuel 13-14

Major Moment: Major Moment: Saul is disobedient to God and is rebuked. Jonathan breaks his father’s oath by eating honey.

Day 2 Reading: 1 Samuel 15-16

Major Moment: Saul is rejected as king by God because of his disobedience. Samuel anoints David as the future king of Israel.

Day 3 Reading: 1 Samuel 17

Major Moment: David defeats Goliath the Philistine.

Day 4 Reading: 1 Samuel 18-19

Major Moment: David and Jonathan become friends, but Saul fears David’s influence over the Israelites. Saul attempts to kill David, and Michal helps him escape.

Day 5 Reading: 1 Samuel 20

Major Moment: Jonathan makes a covenant with David.

DIGGING IN:

Day 1: 1 Samuel 18:1-4

After David had finished talking with Saul, Jonathan became one in spirit with David, and he loved him as himself. ² From that day Saul kept David with him and did not let him return home to his family. ³ And Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself. ⁴ Jonathan took off the robe he was wearing and gave it to David, along with his tunic, and even his sword, his bow and his belt.

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* How did Saul respond to the praise David received from the Israelites (vv. 8-9)? Why do you think Saul became so fixated on David from this point forward?

Day 3: 1 Samuel 18: 10-15

¹⁰ The next day an evil spirit from God came forcefully on Saul. He was prophesying in his house, while David was playing the lyre, as he usually did. Saul had a spear in his hand ¹¹ and he hurled it, saying to himself, "I'll pin David to the wall." But David eluded him twice.

¹² Saul was afraid of David, because the Lord was with David but had departed from Saul. ¹³ So he sent David away from him and gave him command over a thousand men, and David led the troops in their campaigns. ¹⁴ In everything he did he had great success, because the Lord was with him. ¹⁵ When Saul saw how successful he was, he was afraid of him. ¹⁶ But all Israel and Judah loved David, because he led them in their campaigns.

HEAR HOMEWORK:

H- Highlight

Highlight (or underline) words above that stand out to you as you read the passage. Try to find other words or phrases that are similar in other passages.

Answer the following questions: What truth God did communicate to the original hearers? What verse stands out?

E- Explain

From the words (or phrases) that you highlighted, explain the meaning of the passage in one or two sentences. Answer the following questions to help: What does God seem to be communicating through this passage? What is the point of these verses? Why do we need to hear this truth? (Hint: A biblical commentary can help you in this area)



A- Apply

From the main points that you have discovered, begin to apply the passage to your life. Evaluate areas in your life that do not align with the main points. Affirm areas that do align with the passage. Answer the following questions: How does God expect me to change from reading His Word? What does it look like in my life for me to live out these main points?

R- Respond

Reflect on what needs to change in your life for the truths to be applied and begin to craft an action strategy. Use the feedback of others and personal reflection to see if you are living out the truth or not experiencing victory in your life. Answer the following questions: What will you say in response to God about what He desires? What can or did you do as a result of studying? Did you follow through and obey God's Word?

* What are the areas in your life in which you can easily become jealous? How can you guard against jealousy in those areas?



NEXT STEP READING PLAN: WEEK 3: 2 SAMUEL 13: 1-22

MEMORY VERSE CHALLENGE:

James 1:15, *“Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.”*

DAILY READING PLAN:

Day 1 Reading: 2 Samuel 8

Major Moment: David’s victories are reported.

Day 2 Reading: 2 Samuel 9

Major Moment: David brings Mephibosheth into his care.

Day 3 Reading: 2 Samuel 10

Major Moment: David attacks the Ammonites.

Day 4 Reading: 2 Samuel 11-12

Major Moment: David lusts after Bathsheba. Nathan rebukes David for his actions.

Day 5 Reading: 2 Samuel 13

Major Moment: Amnon rapes his sister Tamar. Absalom kills Amnon.

DIGGING IN:

Day 1: 2 Samuel 13: 1-8

In the course of time, Amnon son of David fell in love with Tamar, the beautiful sister of Absalom son of David.

² *Amnon became so obsessed with his sister Tamar that he made himself ill. She was a virgin, and it seemed impossible for him to do anything to her.*

³ *Now Amnon had an adviser named Jonadab son of Shimeah, David’s brother. Jonadab was a very shrewd man. ⁴ He asked Amnon, “Why do you, the king’s son, look so haggard morning after morning? Won’t you tell me?”*

Amnon said to him, “I’m in love with Tamar, my brother Absalom’s sister.”

⁵ *“Go to bed and pretend to be ill,” Jonadab said. “When your father comes to see you, say to him, ‘I would like my sister Tamar to come and give me something to eat. Let her prepare the food in my sight so I may watch her and then eat it from her hand.’”*

⁶ *So Amnon lay down and pretended to be ill. When the king came to see him, Amnon said to him, “I would like my sister Tamar to come and make some special bread in my sight, so I*



may eat from her hand.”

⁷ David sent word to Tamar at the palace: “Go to the house of your brother Amnon and prepare some food for him.” ⁸ So Tamar went to the house of her brother Amnon, who was lying down. She took some dough, kneaded it, made the bread in his sight and baked it.

HEAR HOMEWORK:

H- Highlight

Highlight (or underline) words above that standout to you as you read the passage. Try to find other words or phrases that are similar in other passages.

Answer the following questions: What truth God did communicate to the original hearers? What verse stands out?

E- Explain

From the words (or phrases) that you highlighted, explain the meaning of the passage in one or two sentences. Answer the following questions to help: What does God seem to be communicating through this passage? What is the point of these verses? Why do we need to hear this truth? (Hint: A biblical commentary can help you in this area)

A- Apply

From the main points that you have discovered, begin to apply the passage to your life. Evaluate areas in your life that do not align with the main points. Affirm areas that do align with the passage. Answer the following questions: How does God expect me to change from reading His Word? What does it look like in my life for me to live out these main points?

R- Respond

Reflect on what needs to change in your life for the truths to be applied and begin to craft an action strategy. Use the feedback of others and personal reflection to see if you are living out the truth or not experiencing victory in your life. Answer the following questions: What will you say in response to God about what He desires? What can or did you do as a result of studying? Did you follow through and obey God's Word?

* How does this story reveal the sinful nature of everyone? How do we see in this story the importance of the people surrounding us to either guide us to godliness or to sin?

Day 2: 2 Samuel 13: 9-14

⁹ Then she took the pan and served him the bread, but he refused to eat.

"Send everyone out of here," Amnon said. So everyone left him. ¹⁰ Then Amnon said to Tamar, "Bring the food here into my bedroom so I may eat from your hand." And Tamar took the bread she had prepared and brought it to her brother Amnon in his bedroom. ¹¹ But when she took it to him to eat, he grabbed her and said, "Come to bed with me, my sister."

¹² "No, my brother!" she said to him. "Don't force me! Such a thing should not be done in Israel! Don't do this wicked thing. ¹³ What about me? Where could I get rid of my disgrace? And what about you? You would be like one of the wicked fools in Israel. Please speak to the king; he will not keep me from being married to you." ¹⁴ But he refused to listen to her, and since he was stronger than she, he raped her.

HEAR HOMEWORK:

H- Highlight

Highlight (or underline) words above that stand out to you as you read the passage. Try to find other words or phrases that are similar in other passages.

Answer the following questions: What truth God did communicate to the original hearers? What verse stands out?

E- Explain

From the words (or phrases) that you highlighted, explain the meaning of the passage in one or two sentences. Answer the following questions to help: What does God seem to be communicating through this passage? What is the point of these verses? Why do we need to hear this truth? (Hint: A biblical commentary can help you in this area)

A- Apply

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R- Respond

Reflect on what needs to change in your life for the truths to be applied and begin to craft an action strategy. Use the feedback of others and personal reflection to see if you are living out the truth or not experiencing victory in your life. Answer the following questions: What will you say in response to God about what He desires? What can or did you do as a result of studying? Did you follow through and obey God's Word?

* How does this story show us that sin takes us farther than we want to go? How does this story reveal the consequences of our personal sin with others?

Day 3: 2 Samuel 13: 15-22

¹⁵ Then Amnon hated her with intense hatred. In fact, he hated her more than he had loved her. Amnon said to her, "Get up and get out!"

¹⁶ "No!" she said to him. "Sending me away would be a greater wrong than what you have already done to me."

But he refused to listen to her. ¹⁷ He called his personal servant and said, "Get this woman out of my sight and bolt the door after her." ¹⁸ So his servant put her out and bolted the door after her. She was wearing an ornate robe, for this was the kind of garment the virgin daughters of the king wore. ¹⁹ Tamar put ashes on her head and tore the ornate robe she was wearing. She put her hands on her head and went away, weeping aloud as she went.

²⁰ Her brother Absalom said to her, "Has that Amnon, your brother, been with you? Be quiet for now, my sister; he is your brother. Don't take this thing to heart." And Tamar lived in her brother Absalom's house, a desolate woman.

²¹ When King David heard all this, he was furious. ²² And Absalom never said a word to Amnon, either good or bad; he hated Amnon because he had disgraced his sister Tamar.

HEAR HOMEWORK:

H- Highlight

Highlight (or underline) words above that standout to you as you read the passage. Try to find other words or phrases that are similar in other passages.

Answer the following questions: What truth God did communicate to the original hearers? What verse stands out?



E- Explain

From the words (or phrases) that you highlighted, explain the meaning of the passage in one or two sentences. Answer the following questions to help: What does God seem to be communicating through this passage? What is the point of these verses? Why do we need to hear this truth? (Hint: A biblical commentary can help you in this area)

A- Apply

From the main points that you have discovered, begin to apply the passage to your life. Evaluate areas in your life that do not align with the main points. Affirm areas that do align with the passage. Answer the following questions: How does God expect me to change from reading His Word? What does it look like in my life for me to live out these main points?

R- Respond

Reflect on what needs to change in your life for the truths to be applied and begin to craft an action strategy. Use the feedback of others and personal reflection to see if you are living out the truth or not experiencing victory in your life. Answer the following questions: What will you say in response to God about what He desires? What can or did you do as a result of studying? Did you follow through and obey God's Word?

* How does Tamar's response show the impact of Amnon's sexual sin? What surprises you about Absalom and David's response?



NEXT STEP READING PLAN: WEEK 4: 2 SAMUEL 15:1-12

MEMORY VERSE CHALLENGE:

Galatians 2:20, *"For I have been crucified with Christ, it is no longer I who lives, but Christ in me."*

DAILY READING PLAN:

Day 1 Reading: 2 Samuel 14

Major Moment: Absalom is restored and returns to Jerusalem.

Day 2 Reading: 2 Samuel 15

Major Moment: Absalom manipulates his way into leadership, David is forced to flee.

Day 3 Reading: 2 Samuel 16

Major Moment: Absalom takes over Jerusalem.

Day 4 Reading: 2 Samuel 17

Major Moment: Absalom takes bad advice.

Day 5 Reading: 2 Samuel 18-19

Major Moment: Absalom is killed. David is reinstated in Jerusalem.

DIGGING IN:

Day 1: 2 Samuel 15:1-4

In the course of time, Absalom provided himself with a chariot and horses and with fifty men to run ahead of him.² He would get up early and stand by the side of the road leading to the city gate. Whenever anyone came with a complaint to be placed before the king for a decision, Absalom would call out to him, "What town are you from?" He would answer, "Your servant is from one of the tribes of Israel."³ Then Absalom would say to him, "Look, your claims are valid and proper, but there is no representative of the king to hear you."⁴ And Absalom would add, "If only I were appointed judge in the land! Then everyone who has a complaint or case could come to me and I would see that they receive justice."

HEAR HOMEWORK:

H- Highlight

Highlight (or underline) words above that stand out to you as you read the passage. Try to find other words or phrases that are similar in other passages.



Answer the following questions: What truth God did communicate to the original hearers? What verse stands out?

E- Explain

From the words (or phrases) that you highlighted, explain the meaning of the passage in one or two sentences. Answer the following questions to help: What does God seem to be communicating through this passage? What is the point of these verses? Why do we need to hear this truth? (Hint: A biblical commentary can help you in this area)

A- Apply

From the main points that you have discovered, begin to apply the passage to your life. Evaluate areas in your life that do not align with the main points. Affirm areas that do align with the passage. Answer the following questions: How does God expect me to change from reading His Word? What does it look like in my life for me to live out these main points?

R- Respond

Reflect on what needs to change in your life for the truths to be applied and begin to craft an action strategy. Use the feedback of others and personal reflection to see if you are living out the truth or not experiencing victory in your life. Answer the following questions: What will you say in response to God about what He desires? What can or did you do as a result of studying? Did you follow through and obey God's Word?

* In what way did Absalom manipulate the people? How did he encourage the manipulation? How do our words have weight today?

Day 2: 2 Samuel 15:5-9

⁵ *Also, whenever anyone approached him to bow down before him, Absalom would reach out his hand, take hold of him and kiss him. ⁶ Absalom behaved in this way toward all the Israelites who came to the king asking for justice, and so he stole the hearts of the people of Israel.*

⁷ *At the end of four years, Absalom said to the king, "Let me go to Hebron and fulfill a vow I made to the Lord. ⁸ While your servant was living at Geshur in Aram, I made this vow: 'If the Lord takes me back to Jerusalem, I will worship the Lord in Hebron.'"*

⁹ *The king said to him, "Go in peace." So he went to Hebron.*

HEAR HOMEWORK:

H- Highlight

Highlight (or underline) words above that stand out to you as you read the passage. Try to find other words or phrases that are similar in other passages.

Answer the following questions: What truth God did communicate to the original audience? What verse stands out?

E- Explain

From the words (or phrases) that you highlighted, explain the meaning of the passage in one or two sentences. Answer the following questions to help: What does God seem to be communicating through this passage? What is the point of these verses? Why do we need to hear this truth? (Hint: A biblical commentary can help you in this area)



A- Apply

From the main points that you have discovered, begin to apply the passage to your life. Evaluate areas in your life that do not align with the main points. Affirm areas that do align with the passage. Answer the following questions: How does God expect me to change from reading His Word? What does it look like in my life for me to live out these main points?

R- Respond

Reflect on what needs to change in your life for the truths to be applied and begin to craft an action strategy. Use the feedback of others and personal reflection to see if you are living out the truth or not experiencing victory in your life. Answer the following questions: What will you say in response to God about what He desires? What can or did you do as a result of studying? Did you follow through and obey God's Word?

* What actions showed Absalom's pride? What are examples of ways that we sometimes try to steal the hearts of others? How do these things lead to more problems?

Day 3: 2 Samuel 15:10-12

¹⁰ Then Absalom sent secret messengers throughout the tribes of Israel to say, “As soon as you hear the sound of the trumpets, then say, ‘Absalom is king in Hebron.’” ¹¹ Two hundred men from Jerusalem had accompanied Absalom. They had been invited as guests and went quite innocently, knowing nothing about the matter. ¹² While Absalom was offering sacrifices, he also sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David’s counselor, to come from Giloh, his hometown. And so the conspiracy gained strength, and Absalom’s following kept on increasing.

HEAR HOMEWORK:

H- Highlight

Highlight (or underline) words above that standout to you as you read the passage. Try to find other words or phrases that are similar in other passages.

Answer the following questions: What truth God did communicate to the original hearers? What verse stands out?

E- Explain

From the words (or phrases) that you highlighted, explain the meaning of the passage in one or two sentences. Answer the following questions to help: What does God seem to be communicating through this passage? What is the point of these verses? Why do we need to hear this truth? (Hint: A biblical commentary can help you in this area)



A- Apply

From the main points that you have discovered, begin to apply the passage to your life. Evaluate areas in your life that do not align with the main points. Affirm areas that do align with the passage. Answer the following questions: How does God expect me to change from reading His Word? What does it look like in my life for me to live out these main points?

R- Respond

Reflect on what needs to change in your life for the truths to be applied and begin to craft an action strategy. Use the feedback of others and personal reflection to see if you are living out the truth or not experiencing victory in your life. Answer the following questions: What will you say in response to God about what He desires? What can or did you do as a result of studying? Did you follow through and obey God's Word?

* How did Absalom go against God's plan? How can our selfishness impact others?

GROWTH STEP

READING PLAN



GROWTH STEP READING PLAN: WEEK 1: 1 SAMUEL 2:12-25

MEMORY VERSE CHALLENGE:

Hebrews 9:15, ***“For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance...”***

DAILY READING PLAN:

Day 1 Reading: 1 Samuel 1-2

Major Moment: Hannah prays for a child and is given Samuel, whom she dedicates to the Lord. Hannah rejoices, and Eli’s sons turn away from God. Samuel is called by the Lord.

Day 2 Reading: 1 Samuel 3

Major Moment: Samuel is called by the Lord.

Day 3 Reading: 1 Samuel 4-5

Major Moment: Israel wars with the Philistines, and they steal the ark of the covenant. The ark of the covenant brings plagues to the Philistines.

Day 4 Reading: 1 Samuel 6-7

Major Moment: The ark is returned to the Israelites.

Day 5 Reading: 1 Samuel 8-9

Major Moment: The Israelites demand a king. Samuel anoints Saul as king.

Day 6 Reading: 1 Samuel 10-11

Major Moment: Major Moment: Saul is made king of Israel. Saul is renewed as king because of his victory at Jabesh.

Day 7 Reading: 1 Samuel 12-13

Major Moment: Samuel gives his final speech and compels the Israelites to fear the Lord. Saul is disobedient to God and is rebuked.



DIGGING IN:

Day 1: Read 1 Samuel 1:1-20

Focus Passage: 1 Samuel 2:12

¹² *Eli's sons were scoundrels; they had no regard for the Lord."*

Define the following terms:

Scoundrels:

No regard for the Lord:

Answer the following questions:

*Why was God upset with Eli's sons? What are ways that we can show disregard or contempt to the Lord?

What questions do you have about the meaning of these words?

Is there another example in Scripture of seeing these words being used in the Old or New Testament?

Does Jesus say anything about these words or phrases and how they are used?

Reflect on this passage:

What is something you have learned from studying these words or phrases today?

Tell someone else what you learned:

How would you state the meaning and truth of this passage in your own words?

Day 2: Read 1 Samuel 1: 21-28

Focus Passage: 1 Samuel 2:17

17 This sin of the young men was very great in the Lord's sight, for they were treating the Lord's offering with contempt.

Define the following terms:

Sin of the young men:

Treating the Lord's offering with contempt:

Answer the following questions:

How does God view our sin? How does that impact the way you live?

What questions do you have about the meaning of these words?

Is there another example in Scripture of seeing these words being used in the Old or New Testament?

Does Jesus say anything about these words or phrases and how they are used?

Reflect on this passage:

What is something you have learned from studying these words or phrases today?

Tell someone else what you learned:

How would you state the meaning and truth of this passage in your own words?

Day 3: Read 1 Samuel 2:1-11

Focus Passage: 1 Samuel 2:18

¹⁸ *But Samuel was ministering before the Lord—a boy wearing a linen ephod.*

Define the following terms:

Ministering before the Lord:

Answer the following questions:

*How was the Lord gracious to Hannah? Samuel? What impact does God's grace make in our lives?

What questions do you have about the meaning of these words?

Is there another example in Scripture of seeing these words being used in the Old or New Testament?

Does Jesus say anything about these words or phrases and how they are used?

Reflect on this passage:

What is something you have learned from studying these words or phrases today?

Tell someone else what you learned:

How would you state the meaning and truth of this passage in your own words?

Day 4: Read 1 Samuel 2: 12-26

Focus Passage: 1 Samuel 2:22-23

²² Now Eli, who was very old, heard about everything his sons were doing to all Israel and how they slept with the women who served at the entrance to the tent of meeting. ²³ So he said to them, “Why do you do such things? I hear from all the people about these wicked deeds of yours.

Define the following terms:

Wicked deeds:



Answer the following questions:

How does what we do in our daily lives either bring honor or dishonor to the Lord?

What questions do you have about the meaning of these words?

Is there another example in Scripture of seeing these words being used in the Old or New Testament?

Does Jesus say anything about these words or phrases and how they are used?

Reflect on this passage:

What is something you have learned from studying these words or phrases today?

Tell someone else what you learned:

How would you state the meaning and truth of this passage in your own words?

Day 5: Read 1 Samuel 2: 27-36

Focus Passage: 1 Samuel 2:25

²⁵ If one person sins against another, God may mediate for the offender; but if anyone sins against the Lord, who will intercede for them?" His sons, however, did not listen to their father's rebuke, for it was the Lord's will to put them to death.

Define the following terms:

Mediate for the offender:

Rebuke:

Answer the following questions:

*What are examples of ways that we may not listen to God's rebuke? What consequences can that have in our relationships with others and with Christ?

What questions do you have about the meaning of these words?

Is there another example in Scripture of seeing these words being used in the Old or New Testament?

Does Jesus say anything about these words or phrases and how they are used?

Reflect on this passage:

What is something you have learned from studying these words or phrases today?

Tell someone else what you learned:

How would you state the meaning and truth of this passage in your own words?





GROWTH STEP READING PLAN: WEEK 2: 1 SAMUEL 18

MEMORY VERSE CHALLENGE:

John 15:13, *“Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”*

DAILY READING PLAN:

Day 1 Reading: 1 Samuel 14-15

Major Moment: Jonathan breaks his father’s oath by eating honey. Saul is rejected as king by God because of his disobedience.

Day 2 Reading: 1 Samuel 16-17

Major Moment: Samuel anoints David as the future king of Israel. David defeats Goliath the Philistine.

Day 3 Reading: 1 Samuel 18-20

Major Moment: David and Jonathan become friends, but Saul fears David’s influence. Saul attempts to kill David. Jonathan makes a covenant with David.

Day 4 Reading: 1 Samuel 21-23

Major Moment: David escapes and lies to the priests at Nob. David leaves Nob and Saul kills the priests. Saul continues his pursuit of David.

Day 5 Reading: 1 Samuel 24-26

Major Moment: Saul is delivered into David’s hands, but David spares Saul’s life. Samuel dies. David spares Saul a second time.

Day 6 Reading: 1 Samuel 27-29

Major Moment: David hides from Saul among the Philistines. Saul consults a medium and hears nothing from God. The Philistines send David away.

Day 7 Reading: 1 Samuel 30-31

Major Moment: David attacks the Amalekites for destroying Ziklag. Saul takes his own life.

DIGGING IN:

Day 1: Read 1 Samuel 18:1-4

¹After David had finished talking with Saul, Jonathan became one in spirit with David, and he loved him as himself. ²From that day Saul kept David with him and did not let him return home to his family. ³And Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself. ⁴Jonathan took off the robe he was wearing and gave it to David, along with his tunic, and even his sword, his bow and his belt.

Define the following terms:

Became one in spirit:

Made a covenant:

Answer the following questions:

* How are Jonathan's actions toward David a picture of the gospel of Jesus Christ (see also Philippians 2:1-11)?

What questions do you have about the meaning of these words?

Is there another example in Scripture of seeing these words being used in the Old or New Testament?

Does Jesus say anything about these words or phrases and how they are used?



Reflect on this passage:

What is something you have learned from studying these words or phrases today?

Tell someone else what you learned:

How would you state the meaning and truth of this passage in your own words?

Day 2: 1 Samuel 18:5-7

⁵ *Whatever mission Saul sent him on, David was so successful that Saul gave him a high rank in the army. This pleased all the troops, and Saul's officers as well.*

⁶ *When the men were returning home after David had killed the Philistine, the women came out from all the towns of Israel to meet King Saul with singing and dancing, with joyful songs and with timbrels and lyres.* ⁷ *As they danced, they sang:*

*"Saul has slain his thousands,
and David his tens of thousands."*

Define the following terms:

David was so successful:

Answer the following questions:

* How did Saul respond to the praise David received from the Israelites (vv. 8-9)? Why do you think Saul became so fixated on David from this point forward?

What questions do you have about the meaning of these words?

Is there another example in Scripture of seeing these words being used in the Old or New Testament?

Does Jesus say anything about these words or phrases and how they are used?

Reflect on this passage:

What is something you have learned from studying these words or phrases today?

Tell someone else what you learned:

How would you state the meaning and truth of this passage in your own words?

Day 3: 1 Samuel 18: 8-9

⁸ Saul was very angry; this refrain displeased him greatly. "They have credited David with tens of thousands," he thought, "but me with only thousands. What more can he get but the kingdom?"⁹ And from that time on Saul kept a close eye on David.

Define the following terms:

Saul was very angry:

Kept a close eye:

Answer the following questions:

* Even though David was bringing success to Saul, how did jealousy and envy begin to rise up in Saul? How can this happen in our lives with fellow employees, team members, etc?

What questions do you have about the meaning of these words?

Is there another example in Scripture of seeing these words being used in the Old or New Testament?

Does Jesus say anything about these words or phrases and how they are used?

Reflect on this passage:

What is something you have learned from studying these words or phrases today?

Tell someone else what you learned:

How would you state the meaning and truth of this passage in your own words?

Day 4: 1 Samuel 18: 10-11

¹⁰ The next day an evil spirit from God came forcefully on Saul. He was prophesying in his house, while David was playing the lyre, as he usually did. Saul had a spear in his hand ¹¹ and he hurled it, saying to himself, "I'll pin David to the wall." But David eluded him twice.

Define the following terms:

Evil spirit:

David eluded him:

Answer the following questions:

*How do we see in these verses that jealousy is from the enemy (Satan)? How have you seen the protection of God in difficult times?

What questions do you have about the meaning of these words?

Is there another example in Scripture of seeing these words being used in the Old or New Testament?

Does Jesus say anything about these words or phrases and how they are used?

Reflect on this passage:

What is something you have learned from studying these words or phrases today?

Tell someone else what you learned:

How would you state the meaning and truth of this passage in your own words?

Day 5: 1 Samuel 18: 12-15

¹² Saul was afraid of David, because the Lord was with David but had departed from Saul. ¹³ So he sent David away from him and gave him command over a thousand men, and David led the troops in their campaigns. ¹⁴ In everything he did he had great success, because the Lord was with him. ¹⁵ When Saul saw how successful he was, he was afraid of him. ¹⁶ But all Israel and Judah loved David, because he led them in their campaigns.

Define the following terms:

Saul was afraid of David:

The Lord was with him:

Answer the following questions:

* What are the areas in your life in which you can easily become jealous? How can you guard against jealousy in those areas?

What questions do you have about the meaning of these words?

Is there another example in Scripture of seeing these words being used in the Old or New Testament?

Does Jesus say anything about these words or phrases and how they are used?

Reflect on this passage:

What is something you have learned from studying these words or phrases today?

Tell someone else what you learned:

How would you state the meaning and truth of this passage in your own words?





GROWTH STEP READING PLAN: WEEK 3: 2 SAMUEL 13: 1-22

MEMORY VERSE CHALLENGE:

James 1:15, *“Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.”*

DAILY READING PLAN:

Day 1 Reading: 2 Samuel 1-2

Major Moment: David mourns deaths of Saul and Jonathan. David is anointed king of Judah.

Day 2 Reading: 2 Samuel 3-5

Major Moment: Abner supports David but is murdered by Joab. Ish-bosheth is murdered by David’s men. David becomes king of Israel.

Day 3 Reading: 2 Samuel 6-7

Major Moment: David returns the ark of the covenant. Nathan, the prophet brings a promise to David.

Day 4 Reading: 2 Samuel 8-10

Major Moment: David’s victories. David brings Mephibosheth into his care. David attacks the Ammonites.

Day 5 Reading: 2 Samuel 11-13

Major Moment: David lusts after Bathsheba. Nathan confronts David. Amnon rapes his sister Tamar. Absalom kills Amnon.

DIGGING IN:

Day 1: 2 Samuel 13: 1-4

¹ *In the course of time, Amnon son of David fell in love with Tamar, the beautiful sister of Absalom son of David.*

² *Amnon became so obsessed with his sister Tamar that he made himself ill. She was a virgin, and it seemed impossible for him to do anything to her.*

³ *Now Amnon had an adviser named Jonadab son of Shimeah, David's brother. Jonadab was a very shrewd man.* ⁴ *He asked Amnon, "Why do you, the king's son, look so haggard morning after morning? Won't you tell me?"*

Amnon said to him, "I'm in love with Tamar, my brother Absalom's sister."

Define the following terms:

Obsessed:

Very Shrewd man:

Answer the following questions:

* How does this story show us that sin takes us farther than we want to go? How does this story reveal the consequences of our personal sin with others?

What questions do you have about the meaning of these words?

Is there another example in Scripture of seeing these words being used in the Old or New Testament?



Does Jesus say anything about these words or phrases and how they are used?

Reflect on this passage:

What is something you have learned from studying these words or phrases today?

Tell someone else what you learned:

How would you state the meaning and truth of this passage in your own words?

Day 2: 2 Samuel 13: 5-8

⁵ *“Go to bed and pretend to be ill,” Jonadab said. “When your father comes to see you, say to him, ‘I would like my sister Tamar to come and give me something to eat. Let her prepare the food in my sight so I may watch her and then eat it from her hand.’”*

⁶ *So Amnon lay down and pretended to be ill. When the king came to see him, Amnon said to him, “I would like my sister Tamar to come and make some special bread in my sight, so I may eat from her hand.”*

⁷ *David sent word to Tamar at the palace: “Go to the house of your brother Amnon and prepare some food for him.”* ⁸ *So Tamar went to the house of her brother Amnon, who was lying down. She took some dough, kneaded it, made the bread in his sight and baked it.*

Define the following terms:

Pretended:

Answer the following questions:

* How does this story reveal the sinful nature of everyone? How do we see in this story the importance of the people surrounding us to either guide us to godliness or to sin?

What questions do you have about the meaning of these words?

Is there another example in Scripture of seeing these words being used in the Old or New Testament?

Does Jesus say anything about these words or phrases and how they are used?

Reflect on this passage:

What is something you have learned from studying these words or phrases today?

Tell someone else what you learned:

How would you state the meaning and truth of this passage in your own words?

Day 3: 2 Samuel 13: 9-14

⁹ Then she took the pan and served him the bread, but he refused to eat.

“Send everyone out of here,” Amnon said. So everyone left him. ¹⁰ Then Amnon said to Tamar, “Bring the food here into my bedroom so I may eat from your hand.” And Tamar took the bread she had prepared and brought it to her brother Amnon in his bedroom. ¹¹ But when she took it to him to eat, he grabbed her and said, “Come to bed with me, my sister.”

¹² “No, my brother!” she said to him. “Don’t force me! Such a thing should not be done in Israel! Don’t do this wicked thing. ¹³ What about me? Where could I get rid of my disgrace? And what about you? You would be like one of the wicked fools in Israel. Please speak to the king; he will not keep me from being married to you.” ¹⁴ But he refused to listen to her, and since he was stronger than she, he raped her.



Define the following terms:

Wicked thing:

He refused to listen to her:

Answer the following questions:

*How do we see in these verses that jealousy is from the enemy (Satan)? How have you seen the protection of God in difficult times?

What questions do you have about the meaning of these words?

Is there another example in Scripture of seeing these words being used in the Old or New Testament?

Does Jesus say anything about these words or phrases and how they are used?

Reflect on this passage:

What is something you have learned from studying these words or phrases today?

Tell someone else what you learned:

How would you state the meaning and truth of this passage in your own words?

* How does this story show us that sin takes us farther than we want to go? How does this story reveal the consequences of our personal sin with others?

Day 4: 2 Samuel 13: 15-20

¹⁵ Then Amnon hated her with intense hatred. In fact, he hated her more than he had loved her. Amnon said to her, “Get up and get out!”

¹⁶ “No!” she said to him. “Sending me away would be a greater wrong than what you have already done to me.”

But he refused to listen to her. ¹⁷ He called his personal servant and said, “Get this woman out of my sight and bolt the door after her.” ¹⁸ So his servant put her out and bolted the door after her.

She was wearing an ornate robe, for this was the kind of garment the virgin daughters of the king wore. ¹⁹ Tamar put ashes on her head and tore the ornate robe she was wearing. She put her hands on her head and went away, weeping aloud as she went.

²⁰ Her brother Absalom said to her, “Has that Amnon, your brother, been with you? Be quiet for now, my sister; he is your brother. Don’t take this thing to heart.” And Tamar lived in her brother Absalom’s house, a desolate woman.

Define the following terms:

Hated:

Put ashes on her head:

Answer the following questions:

*How does Amnon's actions show us a never enough attitude? What can we learn from this story about how to treat those that have gone through the tragedy of rape?

What questions do you have about the meaning of these words?

Is there another example in Scripture of seeing these words being used in the Old or New Testament?

Does Jesus say anything about these words or phrases and how they are used?

Reflect on this passage:

What is something you have learned from studying these words or phrases today?

Tell someone else what you learned:

How would you state the meaning and truth of this passage in your own words?

Day 5: 2 Samuel 13: 21-22

²¹ When King David heard all this, he was furious. ²² And Absalom never said a word to Amnon, either good or bad; he hated Amnon because he had disgraced his sister Tamar.

Define the following terms:

Furious:

Never said a word:

Answer the following questions:

*How would you compare the two reactions of David and Absalom? What is the difference between godly anger and ungodly revenge?

What questions do you have about the meaning of these words?

Is there another example in Scripture of seeing these words being used in the Old or New Testament?

Does Jesus say anything about these words or phrases and how they are used?



Reflect on this passage:

What is something you have learned from studying these words or phrases today?

Tell someone else what you learned:

How would you state the meaning and truth of this passage in your own words?

* How does Tamar's response show the impact of Amnon's sexual sin? What surprises you about Absalom and David's response?



GROWTH STEP READING PLAN: WEEK 4: 2 SAMUEL 15:1-12

MEMORY VERSE CHALLENGE:

Galatians 2:20, *"For I have been crucified with Christ, it is no longer I who lives, but Christ in me."*

DAILY READING PLAN:

Day 1 Reading: 2 Samuel 14-15

Major Moment: Absalom is restored and manipulates his way to leadership.

Day 2 Reading: 2 Samuel 16-17

Major Moment: Absalom takes over Jerusalem. Absalom takes bad advice.

Day 3 Reading: 2 Samuel 18-19

Major Moment: Absalom is killed, David mourns. David is reinstated as king.

Day 4 Reading: 2 Samuel 20

Major Moment: A revolt is thwarted.

Day 5 Reading: 2 Samuel 21

Major Moment: Saul's children are killed after a famine.

Day 6 Reading: 2 Samuel 22-23

Major Moment: David sings songs of praise for deliverance. A list of warriors are provided.

Day 7 Reading: 2 Samuel 24

Major Moment: David builds an altar to God and he removes the plague from the land.

DIGGING IN:

Day 1: 2 Samuel 15:1-4

¹ In the course of time, Absalom provided himself with a chariot and horses and with fifty men to run ahead of him. ² He would get up early and stand by the side of the road leading to the city gate. Whenever anyone came with a complaint to be placed before the king for a decision, Absalom would call out to him, "What town are you from?" He would answer, "Your servant is from one of the tribes of Israel." ³ Then Absalom would say to him, "Look, your claims are valid and proper, but there is no representative of the king to hear you." ⁴ And Absalom would add, "If only I were appointed judge in the land! Then everyone who has a complaint or case could come to me and I would see that they receive justice."



Define the following terms:

Appointed judge:

Receive justice:

Answer the following questions:

* In what way did Absalom manipulate the people? How did he encourage the manipulation? How do our words have weight today?

What questions do you have about the meaning of these words?

Is there another example in Scripture of seeing these words being used in the Old or New Testament?

Does Jesus say anything about these words or phrases and how they are used?

Reflect on this passage:

What is something you have learned from studying these words or phrases today?

Tell someone else what you learned:

How would you state the meaning and truth of this passage in your own words?

Day 2: 2 Samuel 15:5-6

⁵ Also, whenever anyone approached him to bow down before him, Absalom would reach out his hand, take hold of him and kiss him. ⁶ Absalom behaved in this way toward all the Israelites who came to the king asking for justice, and so he stole the hearts of the people of Israel.

Define the following terms:

Bow down:

Stole the hearts:

Answer the following questions:

* What actions showed Absalom's pride? What are examples of ways that we sometimes try to steal the hearts of others? How do these things lead to more problems?

What questions do you have about the meaning of these words?



Is there another example in Scripture of seeing these words being used in the Old or New Testament?

Does Jesus say anything about these words or phrases and how they are used?

Reflect on this passage:

What is something you have learned from studying these words or phrases today?

Tell someone else what you learned:

How would you state the meaning and truth of this passage in your own words?

Day 3: 2 Samuel 15:7-9

⁷ At the end of four years, Absalom said to the king, "Let me go to Hebron and fulfill a vow I made to the Lord. ⁸ While your servant was living at Geshur in Aram, I made this vow: 'If the Lord takes me back to Jerusalem, I will worship the Lord in Hebron.'"

⁹ The king said to him, "Go in peace." So he went to Hebron.

Define the following terms:

Fulfill a vow:

Answer the following questions:

How was Absalom giving a false impression of a king? Why do we sometimes go for counterfeits?

What questions do you have about the meaning of these words?

Is there another example in Scripture of seeing these words being used in the Old or New Testament?

Does Jesus say anything about these words or phrases and how they are used?

Reflect on this passage:

What is something you have learned from studying these words or phrases today?

Tell someone else what you learned:

How would you state the meaning and truth of this passage in your own words?

Day 4: 2 Samuel 15:10-12

¹⁰ Then Absalom sent secret messengers throughout the tribes of Israel to say, “As soon as you hear the sound of the trumpets, then say, ‘Absalom is king in Hebron.’” ¹¹ Two hundred men from Jerusalem had accompanied Absalom. They had been invited as guests and went quite innocently, knowing nothing about the matter. ¹² While Absalom was offering sacrifices, he also sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David’s counselor, to come from Giloh, his hometown. And so the conspiracy gained strength, and Absalom’s following kept on increasing.

Define the following terms:

Accompanied:

Offering sacrifices:

Answer the following questions:

* How did Absalom go against God's plan? How can our selfishness impact others?

What questions do you have about the meaning of these words?

Is there another example in Scripture of seeing these words being used in the Old or New Testament?

Does Jesus say anything about these words or phrases and how they are used?

Reflect on this passage:

What is something you have learned from studying these words or phrases today?

Tell someone else what you learned:

How would you state the meaning and truth of this passage in your own words?

Day 5: Reflection

Answer the following questions:

What further questions do you have after going through this study?

What has been the most affirming to you in this study?

Reflect on this passage:

What is something you have learned from studying these words or phrases today?

Tell someone else what you learned:

How would you state the purpose of this study to someone?
