II Samuel 23-24

Review…

- **II Samuel 22 – The song of David…**
  - Written after God saved David from all his enemies and Saul (*not an enemy*)
    - David wrote at least 78 songs – recoded for us in the book of Psalms…
    - And David wrote this song – so he would never forget to call out on the Lord!
  - God answered David when he called out to him in times of trouble…
    - David uses 3 of the most terrifying disasters – to describe how the Lord came to help…
    - God came like the explosion of a volcano / He came down like a typhoon…
    - He ripped open the earth like a violent earthquake – rushing to the aid of his son!
  - God answered David because David was innocent / blameless before the Lord…
    - David was not perfect – the sin with Bathsheba - but David was forgiven…
    - God also rescues those who are humble – but He humbles those who are proud!
  - The reward of calling on the Lord - God would be a light to David…
    - God would be his strength – so he can crush any army into dust…
    - God made David the ruler of Israel – the King over the people of God!

The finals words / acts of David… (*3 things*)

- **1st – Chose a Godly leader… vs. 1-7** Read: II Samuel 23:1-7
  - 1st – David knew his time was coming to an end… vs. 1
    - So with his 'final words' – he encouraged Israel to follow a Godly leader…
      - David – the son of Jesse / anointed by God / the sweet psalmist of Israel…
      - David never forgot his humble beginnings – the youngest son of a shepherd…
      - He never forgot that it was only by the Grace of God he became the King of Israel…
      - Therefore David did not want to be remembered for being King / or a conqueror…
      - Instead he wanted to focus on the one thing that mattered – his praise of God!
    - No matter how smart or talented a leader is – they are nothing without God…
      - If you see a beautiful pot – you do not congratulate the clay…
      - You look for the master sculptor who could take dirt and make it beautiful!
      - A leader is nothing more than the instrument God uses to reach out to His people!
      - They need to humbly remember they are just the tools – God is the master!
      - **Isaiah 64:8** - "You are our Father; We are the clay, and You our potter; And all we are the work of Your hand."
  - 2nd – The Spirit of God spoke to David and said… vs. 2-4

- A person who rules a nation with the fear of God – is like the sunrise…
  - The sun bursting forth from behind the mountains – lighting up a cloudless sky…
  - The darkness of the night being immediately banished by dazzling light!
  - A Godly leader does not leave his people in the uncertainty / in the dark…
  - Instead he leads his people in the brilliant light of the Word of God!
- A person who rules a nation with the fear of God – is like a blossoming plant…
  - When you see a blossom` come out after a new rain – hope of a harvest…
  - A poetic picture of the hope God had given to David and his royal line…
  - David was the blossom – and from him God would bring hope – the Messiah!
  - When you hear politicians talking about their programs / and projects – be careful…
  - People do not need better roads / better schools / or a 'new colosseum'…
  - A Godly leader knows the greatest responsibility of a leader – is to lead people to Jesus!
  - **John 8:12** – "Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

○ 3rd – Ungodly leaders are the sons of rebellion – they are like thorns… vs. 6-7

- Thorns have no purpose – they only tear at the hand of those who touch them…
  - It is the same with those who do not follow the Lord – they have not purpose…
  - And anyone who trusts in them will only end up being hurt by them!
  - Any nation that chooses a leader they know is not a Godly man...
  - Is doomed to suffer at the hand of the very man they choose to follow!
  - **Proverbs 29:2** - "When a wicked man rules, the people groan."
- The end of those Godless leaders / thorns – is to be chopped down and cast into the fire…
  - **Philippians 3:17-19** - "They are enemies of the cross of Christ. Their future is eternal destruction. Their god is their appetite... all they think about is this life here on earth."
  - Ungodly leaders do not look to bring glory to God - they only look to please themselves!
  - They only think about things here on earth - food / money / fame / power...
  - They are not going to lead us to Jesus – they are not going to lead us to heaven…
  - So be careful whom you follow – make sure you want to go where they are taking you!

- **2ND – DAVID'S MIGHTY MEN… VS. 8-39** READ: II SAMUEL 23:8-12

○ 1st – David had great warriors who fought along wise him in his many battles… vs. 8-17

- The greatest of them were called 'The three'…
  - Jashobeam – was the greatest of 'The Three' / chief among the captains of Israel…
  - He had once killed 800 men by himself in a single battle…
  - He had proven himself in battle – and so was given great responsibility!
  - If someone wants to teach the kids / or a Bible study – we usually ask them to wait…
  - We want to see consistency – look at the example of their life first…
  - People want to be trusted with responsibility – before they have proven themselves…
  - First you have to show you are faithfulness – then you will be given responsibility!
- Eleazar – was second among 'The Three' – he stood with David when everyone else ran…
  - He killed Philistines until his hand was exhausted – and stuck to his sword…
  - When he had finished all the army had to do – was come and collect the plunder!

- I was digging a ditch once for hours – when I stopped my hand would not open!
- It had locked around the digging bar – and I had to pry it off!
- God has given us a sword to fight our battles with - the Word of God...
- **Hebrews 4:12 -** "The word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any… sword."
- Oh - that like Eleazar - we would hold on so tightly to the Word – we could not let go!
- In the market / at school / a home – that we would have the Word in our hand / heart…
- Because it is only when we cling to the Word – that we find victories in life!

▪ Shammah – was the third among 'The Three'…

- The Philistines attacked and tried to capture a field of lentils (*talumnan*)…
- Even though all of Israel fled – Shammah stood alone in the field and defeated them!
- It is easy to follow Jesus – when everyone else it to – but what if you are alone…
- God is looking for those who are willing to stand up for him – even if no one else does!
- The greatest warriors for God are proven / cling to the word / and stand no matter what!

▪ Once during a battle with the Philistines – David was camped near the Bethlehem…

- David had grown up there – and he remembered a well with sweet water…
  - But it was near the gate of the city – in the middle of the Philistine camp…
  - 'The Three' broke through the enemy lines – and got some of the water!
  - But when they brought it back to David – he poured it out on the ground…
  - They risked their life to get it – making it VERY valuable - so David offered it to God!
- 'The Three' were willing to do anything / even small things – to please there King…
  - If God came to you and asked you to climb a high mountain – you would obey…
  - But when God asks us to be refreshed daily in the water of His Word – we forget…
  - It is the little things that often are the hardest things for us to do…
  - But the mightiest warriors for God – realize it is the little things that make us great!

o 2nd – 'The Thirty' – mighty men of David… vs. 18-39

▪ 'The thirty' were the elite warriors of David – though not as famous as 'The Three'…

- There were 37 mighty men in all – 'The Thirty' was just their title…
- Included in the list of 'The Thirty' was Uriah the Hittite – whom David murdered…
- Not included in the list was Joab – the commander of the army of Israel!
- Instead Abishai – the brother of Joab – was the commander of 'The Thirty'…
- He used a spear to kill 300 men in a battle – making his as famous as 'The Three'…
- He was the greatest of 'The Thirty' – but he was not one of 'The Three'…

▪ Benaiah – was another of 'The Thirty' – commander of David's body guard…

- He once killed two of the greatest warriors of Moab in a single battle…
  - He also killed a giant from Egypt who was almost 8' tall – **I Chronicles 11:23**
  - With only a staff – he wrestled away the Egyptians spear and killed him with it!
  - He even chased a lion into a snowy pit – and killed it with his bare hands!
- Benaiah had not fear – he knew that no matter what with God he would be victorious!
  - Nothing is impossible for our God - nothing is too difficult - **Luke 1:37**
  - And God is looking for those who are wiling to step out and believe that…
  - It has been said seeing is believing - but that is not true...
  - It is when we believe God can do the impossible - that we get to see!

- **3RD – COUNTING THE PEOPLE… VS. 1-** READ: II SAMUEL 24:1-4 / 10-15
  - 1st – David decided to count the total population of Israel… vs. 1-9
    - According to **Exodus 30:12** – Israel was never to take a census of God's people...
      - If they went into Battle - knowing how many troops they had...
      - They might trust in their strength of numbers - rather than trusting in the Lord...
      - Even today we have a tendency to look to and trust in 'numbers'...
      - The 1st questions someone will ask about a church - how many people come...
      - We see quantity as a sign of God's blessings - but God does not look at numbers...
      - In **Acts 6** - God told Philip to leave the multitudes - to go and reach just one man!
      - God looks at the heart - He looks for those who truly desire to follow Him!
    - We are told that God was angry at Israel (*sin*) – so stirred up David to take the census…
      - But in **I Chronicles 21:1** – we are told that satan moved David to number the people…
      - It would seem David towards the end of his reign – got a little cocky…
      - He wanted to see how vast and powerful – 'His Empire' had become…
      - God did not temp David – David was tempted by his own sin - **James 1:13**
      - Satan used that pride in the heart of David – to lure him into sin…
      - Then God used that temptation – as an opportunity to humble David / and Israel…
    - David ordered Joab to take the census – but he argued with the King…
      - Joab knew the Word – and he knew it was wrong to count the children of Israel…
      - But the King insisted – so Joab went and counted the people – it took over 9 months…
      - There were 1.3 million men of military age (*not counting the Levites or Benjamin*)…
      - When we see someone whose life is 'out of control' - running from their choices...
      - It is our opportunity to come along side and help that person face their consequences...
      - Sin destroys lives – it is not loving to let someone destroy themselves...
      - A true friend is one loves you enough to tell you when you are wrong - **Proverbs 27:6**
  - 2nd – David was convicted after the census… vs. 10-14
    - He confessed to the Lord – it was a great sin – please forgive me…
      - When we make a mistake - we feel condemned - like we cannot come to Jesus...
      - But that is exactly when we NEED to come to Jesus – so He can forgive us…
      - **Romans 8:1** - "There is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus."
      - Jesus is the in the business of forgiving sins - mending torn up lives!
    - The Lord sent the prophet Gad to give David a choice…
      - David was forgiven – but there was still a consequence for his sin…
      - He could choose which one of three punishments he wanted…
      - 3 years of famine / 3 months of fleeing from his enemies / 3 days of plague
      - It was a terrible choice for the King to make – there was no 'good' option…
      - David did not want to run from men (*Absalom*) – they had no mercy…
      - Instead David chose to fall into the hands of God (*Bathsheba*) – cause God is merciful!
      - When we sin there are always consequences for our actions – **Galatians 6:7**
      - So when we make a mistake we want to hide from God – avoid the consequences…
      - But there is no better place to be – than to fall into the hands of the Grace of God!
  - 3rd – God sent a plague on the land of Israel… vs. 15-25

- It lasted for three days – and over 70,000 people died throughout Israel…
  - As the Angel of Death was about to enter Jerusalem – it stopped…
  - David saw the angel – and asked the Lord to punish the shepherd not the sheep…
  - The prophet Gad came and told David to make a sacrifice…
  - So David went to build an alter at the 'threshing floor' of Araunah the Jebusite…
- When Araunah saw David coming – and saw the angel – he was terrified…
  - He offered to give David his field / his cart for a fire / and his ox for the sacrifice…
  - The King refused them – 'I will not give the Lord something that cost me nothing!'
  - Instead David purchase the field and oxen for 600 shekels of gold – **I Chronicles 21:25**
  - David built the altar – offered the sacrifice – and the plague was stopped!
  - It is easy to say – 'Sorry God' – but our action speak far louder than our words…
  - If we are truly repentant – we will want to take responsibility for our actions!
- The field of Araunah goes by another name – Mt. Moriah…
  - This same field was where Abraham offered his son Isaac – **Genesis 22**
  - The same field where Solomon would build the first Temple – **II Chronicles 3:1**
  - The same filed where Jesus was offered as a sacrifice for the sin of all men!
  - The place David paid for because of his sin – became the place where sin was paid for!
  - When we come to the Lord – we will find we do not have to pay for our sin…
  - Instead we find forgiveness - He is the one who has already paid the price for us!