

Connect360: A Tale of Three Kings

May 22, 2023

- *Lesson 10 in the Connect360 unit "How Great Is Our God: Passing the Faith Along" focuses on 2 Samuel 18:6-11.*

The narrative thread of 1 Samuel is continued in 2 Samuel, with Saul who had been rejected by God as king was dying and David was taking his rightful place as king of Israel. Although roughly half of the book covers the victories and triumphs as Israel's leader (2 Samuel 1-10), David's crimes of adultery and murder (2 Samuel 11) set up both his personal and national losses recorded in its remainder.

Of particular importance in the second half of the book is David's third son, Absalom. He murdered his half-brother Amnon, David's first son (2 Samuel 13), raised an army against his father (2 Samuel 15) and set himself up as king against David in open rebellion (2 Samuel 16-17).

The broken things of this life are thrown away so easily. It is more convenient to go online and order a replacement than to fix what is broken. There is an abundance of broken things in this world. Just look around at hearts, fellowship, spirits, friendships and marriages.

When we reach the bottom of our struggles, it is easy to look up then and ask for God's help. There is nowhere else to go. It is during the middle of the struggle, when we are fighting against the pain, trying to keep things together, hustling to make ends meet that we should stop and seek God's presence in humility and sincerity. Psalm 34:18 reminds us God is "near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit." We should never think the Lord is deaf to our tears and our grief, even if we are the architects of

those pains.

David knew the brokenness that comes from being out of God's will. As he recognized the fallout from his affair with Bathsheba, the Spirit moved him to write the words of Psalm 51. "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me" (Psalm 51:10). As he wrote this phrase, he might have been thinking of how his heart had once beaten in sync with God's; now, David's heart was out of rhythm with the Spirit.

The words of Nathan the prophet broke David's heart each time he remembered them: "...the sword shall never depart from your house" (2 Samuel 12:10). Moreover, Nathan proclaimed the Lord would not allow David's punishment to remain a secret; all of Israel would know of the consequences (2 Samuel 12:11-12). The clandestine encounter with Bathsheba would forever cover Israel's greatest king with a cloak of heartache and dysfunction.

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