

Figtree Anglican Church



# CROWNS

2 SAMUEL

LifeGroup studies and  
personal devotions



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# CROWNS

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## 2 SAMUEL

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Welcome to "Crowns": Figtree Anglican Church's series on 2 Samuel.

In 2021 we studied 1 Samuel together in our series, "Called to follow"<sup>1</sup>. We now return to complete the book. It's correct to refer to this work as a book, as in the Hebrew Bible, 1st and 2nd Samuel are one book.

As the story continues we will note a significant gear shift.

1 Samuel is very much a transitional narrative. Leadership of Israel moves from a focus on the Priesthood and office of the Prophet under Samuel, to Kingship. Saul is the King the people asked for. His name literally means to *ask*.

1 Samuel builds tension as God announces the kingdom will be taken from Saul and entrusted to another. The 'other' referred to here is David, the son of Jesse. Samuel announces to Saul, 'the Lord has sought out a man after his own heart and appointed him ruler of his people, because you have not kept the Lord's command' (1 Samuel 13:14). David will spend a long time on the run from Saul, who remains on the throne. After serving Saul a little too well, the King has become paranoid and seeks David's life. 2 Samuel opens with the announcement of Saul's death, and now we look for David to finally be crowned. We look for tension resolved – It will be, but there are twists ahead.

It would be a mistake to think of Saul as the sinful King, and David as the perfect King. This is not the correct contrast of these two men who we must review in more complex terms than the good guy and the bad guy.

Both have moments of true greatness, and deep depravity. The primary contrast is this:

Saul is the King of the people's choosing – the one they asked for.

David is the King of God's choosing, the man after his own heart.

Woodhouse corrects a misunderstanding on what *a man after his own heart* means,

"a man of God's own choosing, a man God has set his heart on. [It is] talking about the place the man has in God's heart rather than the place God has in the man's heart".<sup>2</sup>

As the story unfolds, we will see the kingdom come, and in 2 Samuel 7 we witness an eternal promise for this kingdom. But don't look for David- 'One of the most important figures in world history'<sup>-3</sup> to be the hero. He will amaze you as much as appal you. Look for the Lord who brings the Kingdom ultimately in the eternal crown of Jesus.

Come Lord Jesus, Come!

Shane Dirks

Maturity Minister.

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### Useful Resources:

- John Woodhouse, *2 Samuel Your Kingdom Come*
- Joyce Baldwin, *1 and 2 Samuel*
- [Thegospelcoalition.org.au](http://Thegospelcoalition.org.au)  
Nancy Guthrie interview John Woodhouse, overview of 2 Samuel
- [PaulTripp.com](http://PaulTripp.com) sermon series  
*David, a matter of the heart*

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<sup>1</sup>Called to follow studies and sermons remain available at [figtree.church](http://figtree.church) and on FigtreeTV on Youtube.

<sup>2</sup>Woodhouse, 1 Samuel: Looking for a Leader, page 287

<sup>3</sup>Woodhouse, 2 Samuel: Your Kingdom come, page 15

# CROWNS

## 9 STUDIES IN 2 SAMUEL

### SERIES OVERVIEW

[Sermons - Figtree TV on Youtube](#) | [Devotions - Page 4](#) | [Studies - Page 5-11](#)

The studies in this series are part of an immersive reading plan for 2 Samuel. The plan comprises readings and messages in Church services, personal devotion times, and these studies which may be used in the context of a LifeGroup or individually.

TWO

#### **2 Samuel 5-6**

Sermon - *2 Samuel 6:1-23*  
*Colossians 1:15-23*

Bible Study - *2 Samuel 5:1-25*

Devotions - *2 Samuel 2:1*  
*2 Samuel 5:19*

FOUR

#### **2 Samuel 10-12**

Sermon - *2 Samuel 11:1-26*  
*Romans 13:11-14*

Bible Study - *2 Samuel 10:1-19*

Devotions - *2 Samuel 12:1-31*

SIX

#### **2 Samuel 16-18**

Sermon - *2 Samuel 16:1-23*  
*John 15:12-15*

Bible Study - *2 Samuel 17:1-29*

Devotions - *2 Samuel 18:1-33*

EIGHT

#### **2 Samuel 21-22**

Sermon - *2 Samuel 21:1-14*  
*Romans 5:6-11*

Bible Study - *2 Samuel 21:15-22:20*

Devotions - *2 Samuel 22:21-51*

ONE

#### **2 Samuel 1-4**

Sermon - *2 Samuel 1:1-27*  
*1 Timothy 4:1-8*

Bible Study - *2 Samuel 2:1-3:39*

Devotions - *2 Samuel 4:1-12*

THREE

#### **2 Samuel 7-9**

Sermon - *2 Samuel 7:1-29*  
*Hebrews 1:5-14*

Bible Study - *2 Samuel 8:1-18*

Devotions - *2 Samuel 9:1-13*

FIVE

#### **2 Samuel 13-15**

Sermon - *2 Samuel 13:1-20*  
*2 Peter 2:21-25*

Bible Study - *2 Samuel 14:1-33*

Devotions - *2 Samuel 15:1-37*

SEVEN

#### **2 Samuel 19-20**

Sermon - *2 Samuel 19:11-43*  
*Matthew 6:9-13*

Bible Study - *2 Samuel 20:1-26*

Devotions - *2 Samuel 19:1-10*

NINE

#### **2 Samuel 23-24**

Sermon - *2 Samuel 24:1-25*  
*1 John 1:8-2:2*

Bible Study - *2 Samuel 23:8-39*

Devotions - *2 Samuel 23:1-7*

## TIME ALONE WITH GOD

## PERSONAL DEVOTIONS

## THE R.E.A.P METHOD

**Try the REAP method:**

The REAP method of journaling outlines the essentials of reading and exploring what God is teaching you. There is no 'right or wrong' way to study the Bible but writing down what you have learnt helps you remember it for longer and you can look back at what you learnt weeks, months or years later and reflect on how you've grown over that time. If you have never sat down and read the Bible or prayed to God don't panic! We have a guide that will help you do it by yourself.

Each letter stands for a different aspect of journaling.

**R IS FOR READ**

Read today's passages. Make a note of verses that strike you as significant.

**E IS FOR EXPLORE**

Write down the main points surrounding the verse(s) you are reflecting on. What is the big idea?

**A IS FOR APPLY**

Write down how your life could be changed by what you have read today. What is one thing you will intentionally do to take steps of growth?

**P IS FOR PRAY**

Write out a prayer around what you have learnt today. Thank God for what he is doing in your life and ask Him to help you put into practice what you have been learning.

## READINGS

**Week One**

2 Samuel 4:1-12

**Week Two**

2 Samuel 2:1  
2 Samuel 5:19

**Week Three**

2 Samuel 9:1-13

**Week Four**

2 Samuel 12:1-31

**Week Five**

2 Samuel 15:1-37

**Week Six**

2 Samuel 18:1-33

**Week Seven**

2 Samuel 19:1-10

**Week Eight**

2 Samuel 22:21-51

**Week Nine**

2 Samuel 23:1-7

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## STUDY ONE

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# CROWNS IN CONFLICT

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### Study Focus 2 Samuel 2:1-3:39

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Have you ever felt you were living in another's shadow? How did you feel?

*The shadow of the crown of Saul still lingers over David's kingdom as seen in chapter one. Now somewhat inevitably the crown of David and the crown of Saul will collide in the following chapters.*

#### Read 2 Samuel 2:1-32

1. Our passage opens with a question and an answer in verse 1. What do you suppose this may suggest about David? (see also Gen 13:18, 23:19, 25:7, 35:27)
2. Examine verses 2-7. How has David's story now progressed since Samuel anointed him (1 Sam 16)? What comments would you offer regarding his character so far?
3. What do you understand about the actions of Abner (verses 8-11)? What do you think he is trying to do?
4. The pool party becomes a blood bath! (verses 12-32) Two men are conspicuously absent from such a significant conflict – who are they? How is that significant?
5. How do you feel about the actions of Abner and Joab (and their men)? How do they differ from those of David?
6. Are there lessons to learn already as the narrative unfolds?

#### Read 2 Samuel 3:1-39

7. Recall, Samuel 2:8, 14, 26, and now 3:6-11. What picture is emerging of Abner?
8. What complex picture of David is emerging? (You may recall Deut 17:17)
9. There are several men in these two chapters who seem to be wearing metaphorical, or literal crowns (i.e. in one way or another they are in or
  - Describe the crown and character of Abner
  - Describe the crown and character of Joab
  - Describe the crown of character of Ish-bosheth
  - Describe the crown of character of David
 assume an authoritative position).
10. How do all of the above demonstrate that God's kingdom will need a superior King to any of them?
11. How do these events help you to further understand the kind of King Jesus is?

## STUDY TWO

# CROWNS CONSOLIDATED

### Study Focus 2 Samuel 5:1-25

Has anyone ever told you something good or bad about yourself that surprised you? Share with one another.

**Read 2 Samuel 5:1-15**

1. Consider together how verses 1<sup>1</sup>-3 represent a climactic point in the Bible's whole story so far.

3. David's Kingdom is established! (verses 9-18). Offer your approval rating of the King on a scale of 0-5 (0 being useless scoundrel and 5 being blameless leader) Explain your score.
4. What is to be commended in your view about how David wages war as Israel's anointed King? (verses 17-25)

*Verses 4-5 provides a summary of David's entire reign before returning to the story and the establishment of that reign.*

***A fighter not a lover!*** *It seems David is a godlier warrior than he is a lover.*

2. David will capture and reign from Jerusalem (verses 4-10). What is significant about this location and the King reigning from there? (consider Gen 14:18-20, Ps 2, Ps 110:4, Heb 6:20-7:1, Rev 21:10-27)

5. Amid David's success in battle do you discern any possible dangers in his faithfulness or manner as the anointed King? (You might take a sneak peek at Chapter 6)
6. Is there a danger that we can discern success as faithfulness in our own lives? Or conversely do you think hardship or falling short of an intended outcome indicates unfaithfulness?
7. How can the life and sayings of the perfect King Jesus shine light on the above question and your responses?
8. How has this passage given you insight into Jesus the king and Son of David. In what ways do you see the Son of David as far surpassing His father?

***The Blind and Lame!***

*David's use of 'blind and lame' (5:8) and the restriction on blind and lame should be understood as a play on words, reflecting the confident but mistaken assertion of the Jebusites 'the blind and lame can ward you off' (5:6). The reply is classic of David the poet, and is a smart retort rather than a reference to any laws found in the book of Leviticus, or in this case a restriction on disability as we will see in chapter 9.*

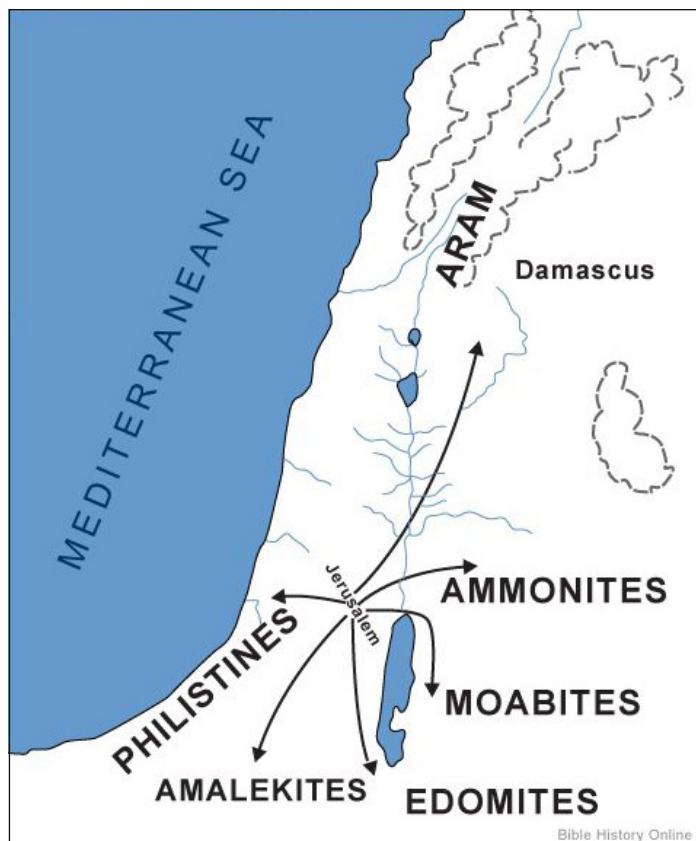
<sup>1</sup>Woodhouse explains verse 1 is literally translated 'We are your own bone and flesh' and contends is more accurately understood as 'we are your body' rather than 'we are your family' as inferred by the less accurate 'We are your flesh and blood.'

## STUDY THREE

## CROWNS AND KINGDOMS

## Study Focus 2 Samuel 8:1-18

Read 2 Samuel 8:1-6 using the map below to help you understand the locations of Israel's enemies.



1. How do you feel about the Kingdom of God having enemies? Try to explain your feelings.
2. What do you notice about the locations of the peoples David has had victories over? How do you think this relates to the promises of 2 Samuel 7?
3. Let's consider three crowns considering what we have read:
  - a. King Saul: How do these victories reflect upon the Kingdom of God under Saul?

- b. King David: What do these victories indicate about the Kingdom of God under David?
- c. What might we anticipate of the Kingdom of God under the crown of the Son of David, Jesus.

**Justice and Mercy**

*David's treatment of the Moabites (8:1) understandably unsettles us. It seems a picture of abhorrent violence. God and his people do not delight in suffering. As we have seen already, and will continue to see, the actions of David are not always approved. As always, let scripture guide, and in this case the context is positive with regards to David's action.*

*'The stringency which David exercised against the Moabites ought not to be considered cruelty, but to be the just judgment of God, since they had abused his long patience and had mocked him'<sup>1</sup> (Calvin)*

4. Once more consider the Crowns:
  - a. Saul – Read 1 Samuel 15:3, 7-9. Was Saul obedient? Was he merciful?
  - b. David – Can you observe mercy in David's actions?
  - c. How does David give us an insight into the justice and mercy of the Son of David, Jesus?
  - d. How does Jesus develop mercy further as a demonstration of God's love?

<sup>1</sup> John Calvin, *Sermons on 2 Samuel Chapters 1-13*, trans. Douglas Kelly (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1992), p.406.

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## STUDY THREE CONTINUED

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**Read 2 Samuel 8:7-18**

5. We have seen in the victories of David the establishment of his Kingdom by God. How do the actions of King Toi demonstrate wisdom regarding the Lord's anointed one?
6. How does Toi demonstrate how Kings of the earth should respond to the Lord's anointed one?

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***Final thoughts:** Chapter 8 has demonstrated David as the King of Kings, and the crowned anointed one of the Lord. Those who receive him find peace, those who resist him face destruction. He has acted obediently and wisely... mostly...However, there are flaws that call for a greater King again. Even when he is great, he is not perfect.*

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7. Do you see David's errors in 2 Samuel 8:4, 18?

**Optional over a beverage question:**

Why do you think we tend to struggle or are reluctant to see the shortcomings of biblical 'heroes' sometimes?



## STUDY FOUR

# CONTEMPTUOUS CROWNS

### Study Focus 2 Samuel 10

Share with one another a story of a time somebody showed you kindness. What happened? How did you feel? Do you know why they acted this way?

#### Read 2 Samuel 10:1-6

1. Consider David's actions in verses 1-2
  - a. How do you feel about what David has done?
  - b. What motivates David to show kindness?
  - c. Compare and contrast David with Jesus, who also shows kindness to non-Jews.
2. How is the kindness of David received? (verses 3-4)
3. How can the events of verses 1-5, prepare God's people for the experience of announcing His gracious salvation?
4. What do you suppose motivated the peoples to band together against David and Israel? (verses 5-6)

#### Read 2 Samuel 10:7-19

#### ***Enough is Enough!***

*The Lord's anointed is kind, but he will not stand to see He or His kingdom humiliated. Joab, David's army general, wages a battle on two fronts! On one side are the hired Arameans along with the men from King Maacah, and the men from Tob. Dividing his army in two, Joab defeats the mercenaries, having commissioned his brother Abishai to lead the other side of the army against the Ammonites. Seeing their hired army defeated,*

*the Ammonites fled back to their city. The whole affair would be a victory for Israel, and a defeat for both the Ammonites and a crushing defeat for the Arameans (15-18). They would learn why Psalm 2 warns the nations and their Kings not to conspire against the Lord and His anointed.*

5. What do we learn about how God's anointed one will respond when his kindness has been treated with contempt? (verses 7, 17-19)
6. How does this passage teach us to anticipate what happens to God's enemies when they receive His kindness, or reject the kindness of His Messiah?
7. The kindness of Jesus is at times treated with contempt. Historically and up to this day members of the Kingdom of Jesus have even suffered martyrdom. How do you explain this continued torment, and Jesus' tolerating it if Jesus is the superior Messiah to David?
8. What steps of kindness could you take now in the interests of seeing all receive God's kindness?

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## STUDY FIVE

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# MISPLACED CROWNS

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### Study Focus 2 Samuel 14

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Let's try something different. Today we will act out the reading (feel free to dress up!) and immerse ourselves into the complex motives and actions of those in the passage.

#### We need the following roles:

- Narrator
- Joab
- Wise Woman
- King David
- Absalom

#### Script: 1 Samuel 13:37-14:17

**Narrator:** Absalom fled and went to Talmai son of Ammihud, the king of Geshur. But King David mourned many days for his son. After Absalom fled and went to Geshur, he stayed there three years. And King David longed to go to Absalom, for he was consoled concerning Amnon's death. Joab son of Zeruiah knew that the king's heart longed for Absalom. So Joab sent someone to Tekoa and had a wise woman brought from there. He said to her.

**Joab:** Pretend you are in mourning. Dress in mourning clothes, and don't use any cosmetic lotions. Act like a woman who has spent many days grieving for the dead. Then go to the king and speak these words to him.

**Narrator:** And Joab put the words in her mouth.

When the woman from Tekoa went to the king, she fell with her face to the ground to pay him honour, and said:

**Wise Woman:** Help me, Your Majesty!

**King:** What's troubling you?

**Wise Woman:** I am a widow; my husband is dead. I your servant had two sons. They got into a fight with each other in the field, and no one was there to separate them. One struck the other and killed him. Now the whole clan has risen up against your servant. They say, 'Hand over the one who struck his brother down, so that we may put him to death for the life of his brother whom he killed; then we will get rid of the heir as well.' They would put out the only burning coal I have left, leaving my husband neither name nor descendant on the face of the earth.

**King:** Go home, and I will issue an order in your behalf.

**Wise Woman:** Let my lord the king pardon me and my family, and let the king and his throne be without guilt.

**King:** If anyone says anything to you, bring them to me, and they will not bother you again.

**Wise Woman:** Then let the king invoke the LORD his God to prevent the avenger of blood from adding to the destruction, so that my son will not be destroyed.

**King:** As surely as the LORD lives, not one hair of your son's head will fall to the ground.

**Wise Woman:** Let your servant speak a word to my lord the king.

**King:** Speak

**Wise Woman:** Why then have you devised a thing like this against the people of God? When the king says this, does he not convict himself, for the king has not brought back his banished son? Like water spilled on the

## STUDY FIVE CONTINUED

ground, which cannot be recovered, so we must die. But that is not what God desires; rather, he devises ways so that a banished person does not remain banished from him.

And now I have come to say this to my lord the king because the people have made me afraid. Your servant thought, 'I will speak to the king; perhaps he will grant his servant's request. Perhaps the king will agree to deliver his servant from the hand of the man who is trying to cut off both me and my son from God's inheritance.'

And now your servant says, 'May the word of my lord the king secure my inheritance, for my lord the king is like an angel of God in discerning good and evil. May the LORD your God be with you.'

### Intermission

Reflecting on what you have read / acted:

1. What do you think drives and guides Joab's actions? (e.g. would you call him a rule keeper)?
2. What comments would you make about David's decision making? Both retrospectively and now, has the King been wise with his family?
3. Think about the times Jesus makes wisdom calls. How does he demonstrate himself so supremely different to David?
4. What is your view of the wise woman?

### Read (in the normal way) 2 Samuel 14:18-33

5. Consider 2 Samuel 14:21-23. What continues to be missing from the King's actions?
6. Even Absalom knows he is not reconciled to his father. What is being left continuously undone by David? Can you call this grace? (verses 28-33)
7. An ominous warning is sounded by the description of Absalom the unreconciled in verses 25-28. What danger is on the horizon?
8. Recall the words of the wise woman: *'Like water spilled on the ground, which cannot be recovered, so we must die. But that is not what God desires; rather, he devises ways so that a banished person does not remain banished from him.'* (2 Samuel 14:14)
 

How is Jesus' way of restoring the banished significantly different to David's bringing back of Absalom? What do we learn about grace?
9. Where do you see grace misunderstood in relationships? How can we get better at being gracious?

## STUDY SIX

# CROWNS CONSPIRACY

### Study Focus 2 Samuel 17

**Context:** Absalom the most handsome and highly praised man in Israel. His campaign to steal his father David's crown is now in full swing. Absalom has gathered an army, has offered campaign promises, and has had himself proclaimed King in Hebron (Chapter 15). So great a threat is he, that David and his servants have fled with the Levites and the ark of the covenant.

Absalom is relentless, when David learns their trusted advisor Ahithophel is 'among the conspirators with Absalom' (2 Samuel 15:31), David prays that Ahithophel's counsel will be turned to foolishness! Ahithophel's advice was regarded by David and Absalom as a word from God himself in those days!

Chapter 16 closes with a significant kingdom grab as Absalom on Ahithophel's advice sleeps with his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel!

### The Swedish Method

Let's try the Swedish Method of bible Study today. Work individually first before coming back together.

#### Read 1 Samuel 17



Make note of any questions. Words, phrases, or concepts not understood, or not agreed with. You may have questions you would ask the author.



What in the passage shone out to either illuminate the rest of the passage or a personal concern/ point of interest?



What from this passage most directly points to you? Either by way of encouragement, challenge or application.

Now bring the group back together and share from the notes you made, with an opportunity for general discussion, and thought development. You will be surprised at the insights you gain as you share.



# STUDY SEVEN

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# CROWNS

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## Study Focus 2 Samuel 20

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**Let's start with a debrief:** Its been something of a journey through 2 Samuel (not forgetting our journey truly began in 1 Samuel. So what have you learnt, where are you fatigued in the story, what have been highs and lows, and take aways?

### Read 1 Samuel 20

Based on this and some of the preceding chapters, let's try together to create a 'state of the nation.' How would you describe the state of the Davidic Kingdom at this point?

1. Describe the threat to David's kingdom in verse 1-2.
2. Verse 3 is an unusual detail at this point! Can you see any kind of symbolic and/or perhaps prophetic relationship between what is reported and the future for the house of David?
3. Consider David's response to the threat. (verse 4) How would you describe David's sense of urgency, and the seriousness with which he takes this threat?
4. Things continue to escalate in verse 7-13. How do the actions of Joab, and one of his young men reflect the mood of the King?
5. In verses 14-20 the pursuit rages on, and we are on the verge of war and destruction:
  - a. How does the wise woman broker peace for the city? (verses 16-22)
  - b. How does Joab make clear the intention of the mission? (verse 20)
  - c. How is peace secured? At what cost?
6. Drawing upon your further knowledge of the later parts of the Old Testament, would you say David has been successful in his attempts to pacify and further consolidate his kingdom?
7. How would you contrast this story with how the Son of David, Jesus, pacifies and consolidates His kingdom?
8. What is the key factor in the consolidation of the Kingdom of Jesus?
9. Thinking on question 7 again, what is common, and what is contrasted in the Kingdom under David, and the Kingdom under Jesus?
10. What are the lessons for those of us in the Lord's kingdom service?

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## STUDY EIGHT

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# THE CROWN'S ARMOUR

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### Study Focus 2 Samuel 21:15 - 22:20

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What would you hope people would say at your retirement party?

#### Read 2 Samuel 21:15-22

1. Do you hear any echoes of David's previous battle?
2. How would you compare and contrast this account with 1 Samuel 17?
3. How does your comparison reflect upon:
  - a. David
  - b. The Kingdom of Israel
  - c. God

4. Can you offer a 'State of the nation' for the Kingdom of God at this point?

#### Read 2 Samuel 22:1-20

5. How do David's words in verses 1-6 rebuke, comfort, or challenge you?
6. How do David's words in verses 7-20 influence your understanding of God's capacity to respond to crisis?

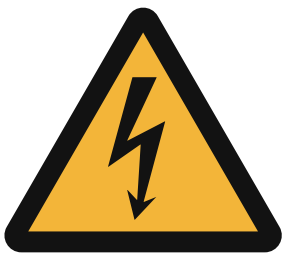
**Final reflection:** How do old David and young David teach us lessons about trusting God in the wake of 'Giants?'

## STUDY NINE

## THE CROWN'S REFLECTION

## Study Focus 2 Samuel 23-24

What information is conveyed by the following signs:



*Second Samuel has been a story with a central character, David. David, who was introduced to us as a man after God's own heart. We came to understand that David and his story was less about David's heart but God's. In the life and kingdom of David it is not David that 2 Samuel is teaching us about, but the God of David and just what he is like.*

**Read 2 Samuel 23:1-39**

- Using verses 1-7, and all you have learnt in 2 Samuel, write down and share the attributes and ways of God, along with the significance of them for you as they are reflected in the crown of David.





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