

HOPE BEYOND

2 SAMUEL, 1-2 KINGS

Eden to Exile Leader's Guide

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OT Leader's Guide: Hope Beyond

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OT19

Greetings! Welcome to our journey through the Old Testament from Eden to Exile! I am so excited about what we are going to learn together and how we are going to grow together as we read God's Word together in these next twelve months.

Our reading the New Testament in a year as a church was a much broader and deeper success than we ever imagined. We saw God work in individuals and in relationships as his Word was made a daily priority. God tells us that his Word is powerful to accomplish his purposes (Isaiah 55:10-11), and we saw that on full display last year.

We believe that all of God's Word is, as Paul tells us, "able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 3:15). It is our commitment as a church to the whole counsel of God that has led us to read the Old Testament this year.

I am even more excited about this year because of a new and added "twist." Each week you'll read from the Old Testament, but you'll also find a devotional for the end of the week written by a member of our Lakewood Team. These devotionals will draw the connection between what you read each day and the New Testament. We are about to discover more regarding the unity of the Scriptures. God's Word tells us the one story of salvation freely offered through Jesus Christ.

Please keep current and encourage others to read along with you. I would love to hear your thoughts and impressions as you reflect on each day's reading. Please email me at tsmiley@lakewoodlife.org

We are blessed as a ministry to have such a talented, gifted, and doctrinally sound staff who each have the competency to lead us into a deeper understanding of God's Word. As you read their devotional thoughts and commentary, consider letting them know how their words have impacted your daily walk of faith.

Enjoy our journey from Eden to Exile!

Dr. Tom

INTRODUCTION

Following *Vision from the Valley*, we are focusing back in on our readings from 2 Samuel and 1-2 Kings as the basis for our small group discussions. As we finish 2 Samuel and begin 1 Kings, we will see the end of David's reign and then the beginning of Solomon's. Solomon's rule begins well, but then he has his share of troubles as he stops seeking the Lord. After his reign, the kingdom will divide, and then 2 Kings will take us through the decline of Israel and to her exile from the Promised Land.

There are still some great things to come in the reading. In particular, the Temple will be built, and the Lord's presence will fill his Temple. Josiah will rediscover the law, and his wise ruling will lead the people back to the Lord. Yet, for all that is good in these chapters, the general direction is decline. The kings forget who the Lord is and do not seek after him. As the kings forsake the ways of the Lord, the people follow.

Eventually, the people are driven in to Exile. The Lord hands his people over to their enemies, and they take them from the Promised Land to be slaves in foreign lands.

More than mere warnings about the dangers of forsaking the Lord, these chapters are pointing to our desperate need for new hearts. God's people were living in God's land with God's law, and yet they rejected his ways and so they forsook his blessing. In the story of Israel's decline, we do well to see our own story apart from Christ. Without the work of Christ, we would run from the Lord and experience utter ruin both in this life and the next. But Christ Jesus has redeemed us from sin and death. He has sent his Holy Spirit to give us new hearts, hearts that long to serve and to follow him.

As these chapters lead us to the Exile, we need to face the reality of our own hearts and look beyond the Exile to the One who will come to give us new hearts and will one day deliver us into the promised new creation. These weeks point us to the Hope Beyond our reading that we find only in Jesus Christ.

2 SAMUEL 18-22

OT19 WEEK 43

This week leads us from the end of Absalom's rebellion to nearly the end of David's reign. In 2 Sam. 18, Absalom is killed and his rebellion is stopped. In 2 Sam. 19, David returns to Jerusalem to re-establish his throne, but then in the next chapter he must deal with the rebellion of Sheba. Then, in 2 Sam. 21, David brings justice to the Gibeonites and fights the Philistines. All in all, these chapters show that David has returned to the throne and is doing what kings do: bring justice and fight enemies.

All, however, is not as it once was. In fighting the Philistines, "David grew weary" (21:15). The one who once had slayed his ten thousands, now grows tired in battle. He is nearing the end of his reign and his life.

This brings us to 2 Samuel 22, which in many ways serves as a summary for David's life. As such, we will focus on this song for discussion this week. However, as much as this song is about David, it is really a song about who the Lord is and how he has delivered David.

Discussion Questions

2 Sam. 22:1

- Who delivered David from all his enemies?
- When are we tempted to take credit for our being delivered? Why is this?
- Why is it important for us to recognize the Lord as the one who is behind our being delivered?

2 Sam. 22:2-4

- How does David describe the Lord here? *Consider having people underline each descriptor of the Lord.* How are these descriptors encouraging to you?
- *Notice how personal these verses are. Consider having people circle the first person singular pronouns.*

- Do you sense that you have this close of a personal connection with God? Why or why not?

2 Sam. 22:5-6

- *“Sheol” is the place of the dead. Here it is used as a synonym for death.*
- Describe David’s circumstances.
- When have you ever felt this way?

2 Sam. 22:7

- How does David respond?
- How does the Lord respond?

2 Sam. 22:8-16

- How does David describe the Lord’s coming to help him?
- What do these images convey?
- Do you find these images comforting? Why or why not?

2 Sam. 22:17-20

- Should we expect this kind of deliverance in this life?
- Or, for the Christian, is this more a description of Christ’s defeating sin and death?
- How would you support your answer biblically?

2 Sam. 22:20-25

- How can David claim that the Lord delighted in him? That he was righteous?
- How might Psalm 51 help us answer that question?
- Can we as Christians claim to be righteous before God? How? Consider Philippians 3:9.

2 Sam. 22:26-31

- Look particularly at v. 28. What is biblical humility? Why is it connected with God’s salvation?

2 Sam. 22:32-49

- This war imagery makes sense for the life of David. Can we apply such language to our lives today as believers?
- Do you ever feel like you are in a battle?
- Consider Ephesians 6:10-20 and how Paul describes our on-going spiritual battle.

2 Sam. 22:50-51

- After all we have read about the life of David, does he deserve this from the Lord?
- Why does the Lord do this for him? *Consider 2 Samuel 7.*
- Do we deserve the Lord's deliverance?
- Why, then, does he save us?
- If we have been graciously saved by the Lord — not because of anything we have done — how can we respond like David in proclaiming this glorious grace among the nations? How is the Lord calling you to be part of his mission that Christ would be exalted among the nations?

2 SAMUEL 23-24, 1 KINGS 1-4

OT19 WEEK 44

These chapters bring us to the end of David's reign and his death. 2 Samuel ends with another incident of David's sin against the Lord, and then our reading in 1 Kings takes us through his setting apart Solomon as king and then David's death.

In these chapters, David's shortcomings are again highlighted, and we are even given hints that Solomon's reign will not perfectly align with the peace that his name implies.

With all their shortcomings and failures, David and Solomon point to the better Son of David who will come. Our hope will never be found in any sort of earthly ruler but only in the King of kings and Lord of lords, Jesus Christ.

Discussion Questions

2 Sam. 23:5

- What is David referencing here? See 2 Sam. 7.
- How does this covenant come true in Jesus?

2 Sam. 24:10

- Why was the census a sin?
- How are we tempted to trust in God's blessings rather than in God himself?
- Why would the author of 2 Samuel end with this story of David's sin? What message does such an ending convey?

1 Kings 2:1-4

- What would it look like for you to be strong, keep the charge of the Lord, walk in his ways, and keep his statutes?
- What provision has God given all believers in Christ to empower us to do these things?

1 Kings 3:3-4

- What is foreboding about these verses?
- Why is our worship so revealing about what we actually believe about God?
- Consider Psalm 115:4-8. Why is false worship so dangerous? What are you tempted to worship rather than the Lord?

1 Kings 3:9

- What is biblical wisdom?
- Look at James 1:2-5. What kind of wisdom does James encourage his readers to ask for?
- Where do you need to pray for wisdom from God in your life today?

1 KINGS 5-9

OT19 WEEK 45

This week's reading takes us through the construction of the temple. This temple will only be around for about 400 years as it will be destroyed with the fall of Jerusalem in 586 BC. In Jesus's day, a new temple had been built in Jerusalem, but rather than this physical structure, he identifies himself as the true temple — the true dwelling place of God among his people (John 2:19-22). As we will explore in the discussion this week, other NT writers pick up on this theme of Jesus as the true temple and identify the church — as we are united to Jesus through faith and by the Holy Spirit — as the temple of God.

The reading in 1 Kings should help us see that there are three particularly significant things about the temple: (1) it is where God is worshipped, (2) it is where God dwells with his people, and (3) it is where God forgives his people's sin. In short, the temple points to God's glory, God's presence, and God's forgiveness. For those of us who are now his temple, we must consider what it means for us to be the place of his glory, presence, and forgiveness in our world today.

Discussion Questions

1 Kings 8:27-32

- What does Solomon highlight about God's temple in these verses? What happens at the Temple?

1 Kings 8:54-61

- For whom should you pray this prayer?
- How can we be even more confident of this prayer because of the finished work of Christ?

Consider having your group break into smaller groups and each look up the following NT passages on the temple.

- John 2:19-22 | What does Jesus mean that he is the temple? How are the things that were true of the temple true of him?

- 1 Corinthians 3:10-17 | Paul here describes the whole church at Corinth as a single temple. “You (plural) are God’s temple” (3:16). What is the foundation of this temple? In a book about the need for unity in the church, how does this image help promote unity?
- Ephesians 2:17-22 | Like 1 Corinthians, Ephesians emphasizes the unity of the church (this time across the social, ethnic, and religious divide that was the Jew-Gentile distinction). Consider once again how the temple language promotes unity. What is this unity of the church built upon? Why is it significant that God dwells with his people who together make up a temple? Also, look at how Paul prays for the church in 3:14-21. Notice how he prays that they would be “filled,” which is much like the language used for the Lord coming to dwell in his temple.
- 1 Peter 2:5-7 | If each believer is a single, living stone, what does that say about our need for others to become the spiritual house (i.e. temple) that God desires his people to be?
- What implications for our local church should we draw from this notion of the church being the temple of our God?

1 KINGS 10-12, 14

OT19 WEEK 46

1 Kings 10 highlights how immensely the Lord was blessing his people through Solomon. Solomon's wisdom and wealth were renowned throughout the world. Yet, Solomon quickly turns from following the way of the Lord. Chapter 11 shows how Solomon followed in his father's footsteps and took many wives, but unlike his father, Solomon also turned toward many other gods. For his turning from the Lord, the Lord would not allow Solomon's son to rule over all of Israel but would divide the kingdom. The fall from the heights of David and Solomon becomes clear in chapter 12 where Rehoboam's foolishness splits the nation and Jeroboam crafts idols for the northern part of Israel to worship. Rehoboam, we learn in chapter 14, follows suit and also leads Judah to worship false gods. By the end of 1 Kings 14, Israel is divided and worshipping false gods.

These chapters leading us to wanting one who is greater than Solomon, and in Jesus Christ, "something greater than Solomon is here" (Luke 11:31). Jesus is not just wiser than Solomon, he is himself the wisdom of God (1 Cor. 1:24). All of Scripture points to Christ and is "able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 3:15). We exercise true wisdom when we seek to know Jesus Christ, the wisdom of God.

Discussion Questions

1 Kings 10:1-9

- With whose honor and fame is Solomon's wisdom linked?
- How do we honor the Lord with the abilities and gifts he has given us?
- Where has God placed you in authority over others? How can you exercise wisdom and execute righteousness and justice to his glory in that role?

1 Kings 11:6-10

- Why did Solomon turn away from the Lord and to other gods? Do you think Solomon saw his actions as turning from God?
- How are you tempted — perhaps even unwittingly — to turn from following the Lord?
- Why is endurance in the faith so much harder than initial enthusiasm?
- How does the Lord work to preserve NT believers in their faith? See John 10:27-29; Ephesians 1:13-14.

1 Kings 11:34-36 & 12:16-24 — Notice here that after Solomon Israel is split into two kingdoms: the northern kingdom (Israel) and the southern kingdom (Judah). Jeroboam led the northern kingdom, and Rehoboam, Solomon's son, the southern kingdom. These details become important for making sense of what follows in 1-2 Kings and in many of the prophetic writings.

1 Kings 14:7-10

- What did Jeroboam do that provoked the Lord's punishment?
- Where are you tempted not to serve the Lord with your whole heart? Is there part of your heart or life that you are unwilling to give totally to the Lord?
- How is the Holy Spirit good news for us when it comes to committing our whole hearts to the Lord?

2 KINGS 19-25

OT19 WEEK 47

Much has transpired since last week's readings. 2 Kings 19 brings us into the life of Hezekiah who was born about 200 years after the death of Solomon. Hezekiah was king of Judah, the southern kingdom. During his lifetime, the northern kingdom of Israel had fallen to the Assyrians in 722 BC. Now, the Assyrians are threatening Jerusalem and Hezekiah.

Sennacherib, king of Assyria, threatens to destroy Jerusalem, but then the Lord miraculously delivers the city. In chapter 20, Hezekiah once again faces death, but this time through personal illness. He prays, and the Lord delivers him.

However, 2 Kings 20 ends with a foreboding scene: Hezekiah shows off all the riches of Jerusalem to an envoy from Babylon. Little does Hezekiah realize that this small kingdom will grow to become the next great empire in this region.

2 Kings 21 recounts the downfall into idolatry through Mannaseh and Amon, but then in chapters 22-23, there is a period of restoration as King Josiah re-discovers God's law and seeks to lead by it.

In the final two chapters of 2 Kings, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, appears on the scene. In the intervening years, the Babylonians have become the dominant power in this region, and now they threaten Jerusalem. In 586 BC, the Babylonians conquer

722 - Fall of Israel

716-687 - Hezekiah reigns as king of Judah.

687-643 - Mannaseh reigns

643-640 - Amon reigns

640-609 - Josiah reigns

609 - Jehoahaz reigns. Deposed by Pharaoh Neco. Judah is a vassal state of Egypt.

609-598 - Jehoiakim reigns.

605 - Judah becomes a vassal state of Babylon

598-597 - Jehoiachin reigns (3 months)

597-586 - Zedekiah reigns

586 - Fall of Judah

Jerusalem. 2 Kings closes with the defeat of Jerusalem, the destruction of the temple, and the king of Judah residing as a captive in Babylon.

Discussion Questions

2 Kings 19

- Describe the current situation Hezekiah and Jerusalem are facing.
- According to vv. 25-28, who is in charge of Sennacherib? Why is it good news for us that God even has control over our enemies?
- According to v. 34, why did the Lord protect Jerusalem? What does this tell us about why the Lord acts? How does this apply to our lives today?

2 Kings 20

- Verses 1-7 record Hezekiah's prayer and the Lord's response. What does this section teach us about prayer?

Here are a few thoughts on what this section teaches about prayer:

- *God hears our prayers (v. 5).*
- *God has sympathy for us in our weakness and pain (v. 5).*
- *God answers prayers for his glory (v. 6).*
- *God keeps his promises. He will maintain his covenant (v. 6).*
- What was foolish about Hezekiah's actions in 20:12-20? What responsibility do we have to prepare for the next generations?

2 Kings 21

- What was the root of Manasseh's and Amon's sin?
- What is idolatry? Is this something NT believers are tempted with? Consider Paul's warning in 1 Cor. 10:14.
- How are you tempted to worship something other than the one, true God?
- Consider Ephesians 5:5 and Colossians 3:5. What form of idolatry does Paul warn against in these verses?

- Read Psalm 135:15-18 and consider what happens to those who worship idols? If this is what happens when we worship idols, what happens when we worship the Lord?

2 Kings 22-23

- What alerted Josiah to the reality of his and his people's sin?
- How did he know how to respond appropriately to the Lord?
- Consider the dangers God's people faced when they hid from his Word. What steps are you taking to regularly read and hear from God's Word?
- Notice that for Josiah hearing God's Word leads to action. What is one realistic and specific way you need to apply God's Word in your life this week?

2 Kings 24-25

- These chapters trace the final fall of Jerusalem. In 24:12-17, exile begins. In 25:8-17, the temple is destroyed. The book closes in 25:27-30 with the king of Judah in captivity in Babylon.
- What are these final chapters trying to teach us?
- How do these chapters point to the hope that can only be found in Christ?



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