

Tim Chester

2 Samuel

The Fall and Rise of the King



✓ 6-Session Bible Study

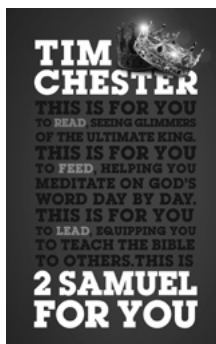
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*The Fall and Rise
of the King*



 **6-Session Bible Study**



2 Samuel For You

These studies are adapted from *2 Samuel For You*. If you are reading *2 Samuel For You* alongside this Good Book Guide, here is how the studies in this booklet link to the chapters of *2 Samuel For You*:

Study One > Ch 1-2

Study Two > Ch 4-5

Study Three > Ch 5-6

Study Four > Ch 7-8

Study Five > Ch 9, 11

Study Six > Ch 12-13

Find out more about *2 Samuel For You* at:

www.thegoodbook.com/for-you

2 Samuel: The Fall and Rise of the King

A Good Book Guide

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Introduction

One of the Bible writers described God's word as "a lamp for my feet, a light on my path" (Psalm 119:105, NIV). God gave us the Bible to tell us about who he is and what he wants for us. He speaks through it by his Spirit and lights our way through life.

That means that we need to look carefully at the Bible and uncover its meaning—but we also need to apply what we've discovered to our lives.

Good Book Guides are designed to help you do just that. The sessions in this book are interactive and easy to lead. They're perfect for use in groups or for personal study.

Let's take a look at what is included in each session.

Talkabout: Every session starts with an ice-breaker question, designed to get people talking around a subject that links to the Bible study.

Investigate: These questions help you explore what the passage is about.

Apply: These questions are designed to get you thinking practically: what does this Bible teaching mean for you and your church?

Explore More: These optional sections help you to go deeper or to explore another part of the Bible which connects with the main passage.

Getting Personal: These sections are a chance for personal reflection. Some groups may feel comfortable discussing these, but you may prefer to look at them quietly as individuals instead—or leave them out.

Pray: Here, you're invited to pray in the light of the truths and challenges you've seen in the study.

Each session is also designed to be easily split into two! Watch out for the **Apply** section that comes halfway through, and stop there if you haven't got time to do the whole thing in one go.

In the back of the book, you'll find a **Leader's Guide**, which provides helpful notes on every question, along with everything else that group leaders need in order to facilitate a great session and help the group uncover the riches of God's light-giving word.

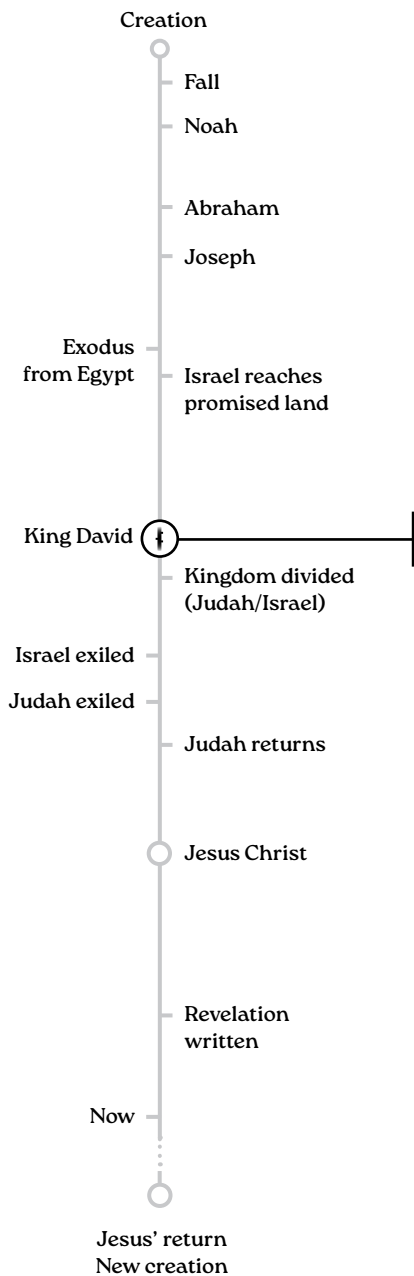
Why Study 2 Samuel?

2 Samuel is full of powerful, dramatic, emotional action. We lurch from one electrifying moment to another. We move from victory to defeat and back to victory; from civil war to national victory and back to civil war again. We read of domestic dramas and national crises, miraculous interventions and faithful suffering. The big beasts of Israelite politics square off against one another on numerous occasions. It can all seem somewhat breathless.

And alongside all the action is a good deal of ambiguity. Yes, we meet heroes and villains. But more often we meet people somewhere in between. We encounter heroic loyalty and treacherous betrayals in the same person. We find people whose lives are both good and bad, ugly and beautiful, selfless and self-serving—people just like us, in fact.

But through it all we see the hand of God, who is the true hero of 2 Samuel. David sings a song at the end of his life in 2 Samuel 22. At the beginning, in the middle and at the end is the affirmation, “The Lord is my rock”. It’s the refrain of the song, the refrain of David’s life, and the overarching theme of the book of 2 Samuel.

But more thrilling than any of that, you’ll see Jesus Christ. And seeing him in and through 2 Samuel will enable you to see him with fresh colour and texture, and understand more clearly the privilege and joy of following him today—because Christians do not follow a flawed and capricious king who rules on a whim, and for his own personal gain. We are privileged to serve a King who came not to be served, but to serve and give his life as a ransom for many.



2 Samuel

c. 1010 – 970 BC



1

Game of Thrones

2 Samuel 1:1 – 5:5

Talk about

1. Who is your favourite hero or villain—real or imagined? What is it about them that impresses you most? What are their flaws?

Investigate

2 Samuel opens with a tragic and dangerous scene. King Saul and his son and heir, Jonathan, have both died in battle at the hands of the Philistines. David, the anointed king-in-waiting, must prepare himself for the inevitable struggle over the throne.

 **Read 2 Samuel 1:1-27**

DICTIONARY

Amalekite (v 1): someone from the nomadic tribe of Amalek.

Lament (v 17): a mournful song about a tragedy or death.

2. What's wrong with the Amalekite messenger's story? (See 1 Samuel 31:4-5.) What did he hope to gain, do you think?

- Why is David's response just and right?

3. Although David's song (1:17-27) does not mention God, how does it reveal David's godly character and his attitude towards kingship?

Read 2 Samuel 2:1 – 3:39

DICTIONARY

Judah (2:1): David's tribe; descendants from one of the sons of Jacob.

Hebron (2:1): the largest town in Judah.

Concubine (3:7): an official live-in mistress.

4. What do we learn, both positive and negative, about each of the characters in this gritty drama?

- Abner (2:21-22, 26; 3:6-12)

- Joab (2:27-28)

- Ish-Bosheth (2:8-9; 3:11, 14-16)

5. How does David stand out (2:1-7; 3:2-5)?

Apply

6. What hostility or conflict do you face in your everyday life? How can you understand the causes of those conflicts, pray about them, and work to resolve them in light of what we have read so far?

- Read Matthew 5:9. David worked hard to heal the divisions in the nation (3:19-21). How can you be an agent to bring peace to others: at church, with neighbours or at work, for example?

Getting Personal | OPTIONAL

Those who have embraced God's eternal King, Jesus, have been given peace through his death on the cross. But the peace we have with God through Christ should flow out into our lives and hearts to others: "Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts" (Colossians 3:15).

Reflect on the different areas of life where we need to feel, live and promote the peace we have received through Jesus' death on the cross: read 1 Thessalonians 5:15; Philippians 4:7; Romans 12:18.

Explore More | OPTIONAL

Read 2 Samuel 4

- What principle is David applying to his judgments? (See 3:39.)
- How do you feel when you read brutal stories like this in the Bible?
- How might we answer those who say that the God of the Old Testament is a bloodthirsty, cruel tyrant?

Investigate

After Ish-Bosheth is murdered, David unites the tribes as their king.

Read 2 Samuel 5:1-5

DICTIONARY

Covenant (v 3): a binding agreement.


Anointed (v 3): pour oil on someone's head to signify they are the chosen king.

7. What details show how David's role as king will differ from that of other military dictators and warlords?

8. What does the description of the king as a "shepherd" (v 2) imply about how a leader should think and behave?

- Read, recite or sing the words of Psalm 23. How might David have understood how he should regard his kingly duty, do you think?

Getting Personal | OPTIONAL

 **Read John 10:11, 14**

How does the Lord Jesus show us perfect leadership?

If you are in any kind of leadership at work, with your family or in church, how should you apply the shepherd principle of leadership?

- What should be your motivation?
- Where should you get your strength from?
- Who should be your prime “mentor” and model?
- What should you be looking to achieve?

9. The storyline of this whole section is about how God’s chosen king is eventually recognized by *all* of Israel. What might this tell us about how God achieves his purposes in the world?

10. Why is it important to remember that God is the true hero of this story?

Apply

11. In the seven years between Saul’s death and David ruling all Israel, there were many moments when nothing seemed to be happening or else terrible, confusing and strange things were happening. How can this help us trust that God’s sovereign power is at work when our world or our lives are in a mess?

- How should we react when terrible things happen?

12. In light of these chapters, how can we encourage and help those who are our leaders and shepherds—at home, in our work, at church and in the world? What do we need to remember about all of them?

Pray

Thank God...

- *that he is in control, and that he works his purposes out, often in slow and invisible ways.*
- *for Jesus—the peacemaker and perfect Shepherd of his people.*
- *for those who lead you in the various areas of your life.*

Ask God...

- *to bring his peace where there is conflict, and to help you be a peacemaker.*
- *to help those who lead to lead like Jesus—the good Shepherd.*
- *to help you trust in his purposes for you, your loved ones, your church, your country and the world.*