

Reflecting on 2 Samuel 15-20

May 24, 2020

Introduction: Today's message traced the insurrection lead by David's eldest son, Absalom. This text presents a David who is deeply conflicted. He has a blind spot toward his son and he is blind-sided by the conspiracy Absalom mounts against the throne. This entire incident, which culminates in Absalom's death, is a fulfillment of the punishment pronounced on David by the prophet Nathan for his sin with Bathsheba.

But even while God allowed the difficult circumstances to punish David, God consistently showed David mercy and kindness. We can observe this at several key junctures in the story. This led us to the big idea of the passage: *God is both just and merciful and uses times of chastening to change our hearts.*

Questions to Discuss:

1. What part of this week's study was most impactful to you?
What truth or principle will you seek to practically apply in your life in the coming days?
2. This message covers six chapters of material. Were you unfamiliar with any of the stories in this passage? If so, what new details or lessons did you find in your study this week?

3. The introduction to this week's message raises a theological question: Is the God of the Old Testament the same God as the God of the New Testament? Have you ever thought about this question before? What answer have you settled on in the past? Has your study this week confirmed or changed your answer?

4. This section of David's life certainly demonstrates God's justice: God sends a prophet to tell David the punishment he would suffer for his sin, and the passage records that very prophecy coming to pass. There are also traces of God's mercy and kindness in these stories. In what ways does God show His mercy to David?

5. When we experience difficulties (even of our own doing), it is easy to make God out to be a stern, unreasonable Father. "Why would He let this happen?" we think to ourselves. Yet amidst the difficulties, God sends evidences of kindness and mercy. Why is it so hard to see those evidences when we are experiencing difficulty? Why is it so important that we do acknowledge them?

6. God uses difficulties in David's life to bring about a change in his heart. We see a humble David, which we haven't see for some time. What makes difficult circumstances an ideal time for God to shape/reshape our hearts?