

# The Kingdom Cracker

2 Samuel 8-15

**Term 2, 2024**  
**Study Guide**



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## Welcome to Term 2

Life is challenging, complex, and messy. And the older we get, the clearer that is. There is war, abuse, evil, suffering, and confusion. And if God is to save us from our sin and the chaos of the world, he must save us from the world as it is. That's why the Bible doesn't shy away from the evil and chaotic realities we face.

This term we'll be looking at 2 Samuel 8-15. These are some of the most confronting chapters you can read in the Bible. There is war, adultery, murder, sexual abuse, cold-blooded revenge, and the failure of justice. And as challenging as these chapters are, they present realities we are far too familiar with. Yet God does not give us these chapters to weigh us down with despair, but to lead us to the greatness of his salvation in Jesus. Only in Christ is there true justice, mercy, and the restoration we all long for.

Nonetheless, as we grapple with these chapters, we are aware that they may raise past hurt and trauma for people. Please pray for wisdom and insight for preachers and Home Groups leaders as they prepare to teach on these chapters. Ask also that God might use the sermons in ways that lead to healing and hope, rather than despair.

If the teaching does raise great hurt for you, here are a couple of things you could do in response:

1. Speak to a member of the ministry team or a mature Christian friend. The ministry team are not counsellors or psychologists, but will be able to pray with you and point you in the direction of people who could help.
2. Contact a number of support services available:
  - a. Beyond Blue (<https://www.beyondblue.org.au/>) – help for people struggle with mental health challenges.
  - b. 1800 Respect (<https://www.1800respect.org.au/>) – confidential information, counselling, and support for people impacted by sexual abuse and domestic violence.

Please pray for the sermon series this term. Ask that God would use it to grow us as God's people and mature us in Christ.

If you'd like to join a Home Group, you can sign up at -  
<https://my.redlands.org.au/pages/home-group-sign-up/> - for Redlands  
<http://shorehope.church/nextsteps> - for Shore Hope

In Christ, Jen, Sam, Russ and Josh



## SUMMIT CAMP 2024



We're so thankful to God for the opportunity we had back in February to run our annual Redlands Youth camp: Summit Camp.

The Olsson's farm & homestead, tucked away in the picturesque valley of Darlington, made for the perfect location to spend time in God's Word, as well as explore (and run amuck) in his beautiful creation.

Praise God, this year we had 51 campers (38 Youth, 13 Leaders), with 5 of these youth having never been part of our program before. We used the opportunity to dig into Colossians, where we were encouraged and challenged to think about how God, through His Son, Jesus, has "rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins." (Colossians 1:13-14). These verses became our memory verse for Term 1 (which we had a lot of fun learning!), and the great hope we cling to.

Camps are such an important ministry to our young people and serve as a wonderful opportunity for many to feel connected, loved and encouraged in their walk with Jesus. We can't wait to do Summit Camp again next year!



# MUM LIFE & WOMEN'S TEACHING DAY

Mum Life is returning in Term 2. This is an opportunity for mums of young kids to get together to connect, support and encourage one another in Christ.

Motherhood is a time when we change and adapt in all kinds of ways. It can be a great time in our lives, but is also full of new challenges. Sometimes it is hard to feel that

we can keep growing in Christ with all the other demands in our lives. But God knows how to change and grow our hearts, even when we are sleep deprived or time poor.

Come along and join us as we think together about how we might respond in practical ways to God's work in our lives in Christ. Be encouraged and supported as we learn together what it means to follow Jesus and be loved by him in all the seasons of our lives.

Chat with Susannah Hannant (0431 932 272) from Early Church if you'd like to learn more.



Connection  
Support  
Encouragement  
In Christ



We're looking forward to hosting our annual Women's Teaching Day on Saturday, 25<sup>th</sup> May.

This is normally a great day, enjoyed by many, including those who come from some of our neighbouring churches.

This year, we are expecting it to be even more enjoyable. Emma Fooks (known to and loved by those of us at Redlands), will be joining us to open

God's word on the thorny issue of 'Forgiveness'. She'll be reminding us of the incredible forgiveness that the Lord Jesus offers to us based on his death and resurrection for us and will help us to think through what it means to follow Jesus in our relationships.

In our afternoon seminar, we will welcome Carolyn Russell, a Christian psychologist who has shared her wisdom with us on previous occasions. She will be guiding us through some more of the practical outworkings of forgiveness in a seminar after lunch. Amongst other things, she will be helping us think through what it means to rebuild trust in relationships.

If you're a man, encourage the women in your world to come along - perhaps you might need to cook a meal for them or look after some children to make that possible. If you're a woman, plan to join us, even if you can't make it for the whole time. We'd love to have your company!

Please pray for this day: that those who attend will be encouraged, challenged and comforted by God's Word, and that the Lord Jesus will be glorified.

Speak to Jennie Baddeley if you'd like to know more or if you can help out with some of the logistics. ([jen@redlands.org.au](mailto:jen@redlands.org.au); 0422 842 202)

# Kingdom Comes

## Read 2 Samuel 8

1. What happened? Who are the main characters? What did they do?  
How does this connect with 2 Samuel 1-7?
2. How does 2 Samuel 8 move the story on?
3. Read 2 Samuel 7:10 and Numbers 24:17-19. How does God fulfill these promises in David's reign?
4. What it mean that David kept some chariot horses?  
(See Deuteronomy 17:16 and 1 Samuel 8:11-12)
5. David defeated God's enemies (who were also enemies of David's people) and so carried out justice. What do these nations bring to Jerusalem? (vv 7-12)  
How is Toi different? (Read Psalm 2:10-12)
6. What is distinctive about David's reign? (vv 15, 18) How would you describe 'justice and righteousness'?

7. What do you expect might happen next in the David story? Why?
8. Read Isaiah 11:1-5. How does Jesus fulfill what David did as the true king?
9. Read Philippians 2:6-11. Who does Jesus reign over at the end of all things? What does this have in common with 2 Samuel 8? How is it different?
10. Knowing that Jesus is true king, how should we (and all people) respond? (See Acts 17:30-31)
11. How does Jesus reign in your life? Choose one way that you would like to submit to his lordship more this week and share it with someone. How would you like to pray about this?
12. What would you say to someone who said to you, 'Why does God think he has a right to judge people?'

### *Kingdom Kindness*

Read 2 Samuel 9

1. What happened in this chapter? Who are the main characters? What did they do?
2. How does 2 Samuel 9 move the story on? How does this show 2 Samuel 8:15 in action?
3. Compare Ziba's description of Mephibosheth (9:3) with David's description of him (9:7) with his own self-description (9:8). What do these similarities and differences tell you about this situation?
4. How does this show David being faithful? (2 Samuel 8:14-15) What relationship might this have with God's promise to David in 2 Samuel 7:15?
5. How do Mephibosheth's circumstances change? (9:9-13) Why is it significant that Mephibosheth has a son of his own? What might we expect David to do about this potential threat to his throne?



6. What do you expect might happen next in the David story? Why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. How does David shape his behaviour here out of his knowledge of God's mercy and faithfulness? Choose something or someone in your life: how would you like what you know of God to shape or reshape your behaviour and attitudes towards this person or situation?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. How has Jesus, the true King, been kind to you? How might you express this in one sentence to a non-Christian family member or friend? Pray for an opportunity to use your sentence this week!
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. What would you say if someone were to say, 'Kindness is just weakness: Christians are always being soft but that's just because they don't have the courage to take what they want.'

### *Kingdom Kindness*

Read 2 Samuel 10

1. What just happened? Who are the main characters? What nation are they from? What did they do? How did David react? Why?
  
2. How does this move the story on? What do we learn about David as king from this? Why is it important that we know David's motivation (vv 1-2)
  
3. How does Hanun's actions compare with David's actions towards the servants (vv 3-5) Read Leviticus 7:20, 19:25, and Genesis 12:3.
  
4. Describe the Ammonite action and David's reaction. (vv 6-7) How do Joab's words help us to understand this battle? (vv6-13)
  
5. How does this second aggression against Israel play out? (vv14-18) How could these nations have avoided this outcome?

6. What do you expect might happen next? Why? Because this is overshadowed by David's sin, look ahead to 2 Samuel 11:1 and 12:26-31 while it is fresh in your mind!
7. How has God been kind to us? (Romans 2:4-5) How are people supposed to respond to God's kindness?
8. How does Romans 13:14-21 help us to endure having our acts of kindness thwarted or rejected? How does our Lord enable us to live this way?
9. What would you say if someone were to say, 'I'm not God's enemy! I just don't do religion.'

## Kingdom Power Abused

Read 2 Samuel 11

1. What just happened? Who are the main characters? How are they related to David?
2. How does this move the story on? Why is this so jarring? If you can imagine reading this for the first time, would you expect David to do something like this?
3. Describe the choices that David made in verses 1-5. What difference should the information of verse 3 have made to his decisions? (See 2 Samuel 23:34, 39)
4. How should David react when he receives news of Bathsheba's pregnancy? (verse 5)
5. How does David make things worse? (vv6-13) How does Uriah show him up? Does he know what David did?

6. How does David continue to make things worse? (vv14-25) What do Joab's words show about what he is concerned about? (vv 19-21) How do David's words to the messenger show how he thinks about what has happened? (v25)
7. What does God think of all of this? (verse 27)
8. What do you expect might happen next? Why?
9. Read Matthew 1:6. How is Bathsheba described? What does this tell you about how God viewed this situation? Why is it allowed to go into Jesus' genealogy?
10. Read 1 Peter 4:12-19. How does being saved help us to fear God and think about what we do? Some people might accuse Peter of being legalistic here. How do we know that he is instead calling us to a life of grace?
11. How might you respond if someone were to say that Christianity is just a list of meaningless rules to follow?



### *The True King Speaks*

Read 2 Samuel 12

1. What just happened? Who were the main characters? How are they related to David? What did they do?
2. How does this move the story on? How does this resolve chapter 11? What is left unresolved?
3. What does God's story emphasise about David's actions? How does David's reaction fit with his actions of chapter 11? What does God identify as David's central sin/s? (verse 9)
4. How is David to be punished? (vv10-14) Who else pays for David's sin? (vv 9-10, 11, 14) How is God's forgiveness of David here an example of his scandalous grace? (v 13, vv24-25)
5. Read Exodus 22:1. What punishment should David have suggested for the rich man in the story on the basis of the law? How is his judgement different? What punishment should David have received for his adultery and murder?

6. Describe David's actions in verses 15-23. Why does he act this way?
7. How is Solomon specifically blessed? (vv 24-25)
8. How has David changed as a king? (vv 26-31)
9. What might you expect to happen next in the David story? Why?
10. Think carefully over your life. Are there any areas of your life where you might be despising what God has given you? How might you go about repenting? Would being grateful help to shift your attitude?
11. Remember a time when God's word shattered your view of yourself. How does Jesus' death and resurrection for you shape how you view who you are now? Spend some time thanking God for his grace towards you.
12. How might you reply if someone were to say, 'God forgives. It is his job. What we do doesn't matter all that much.'

## *Evil Cascades*

Read 2 Samuel 13:1-22

1. What just happened? Who are the main characters? How are they related to David? What did they do?
2. How does this move the story on? See 2 Samuel 12:10.
3. How do we know that Tamar is innocent? What does Tamar lose in this sin against her?
4. Compare David, Amnon and Absalom's responses to Amnon's assault. (vv20-22)
5. Why might David say nothing directly to his heir? What does this communicate to his children? To Israel?
6. What do Absalom's words to Tamar tell us about Amnon's reputation?

7. What do you expect might happen next? Why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. As an Old Testament believer, Tamar looked ahead (like all faithful Israelites) to the promised Messiah: Jesus Christ. What good things does Jesus have for her in the future? (See Isaiah 61:1, 3, 7; Revelation 20:11-21:4). How does Jesus treat women? Why is that important?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. Read Matthew 5:27-30. Where does sexual sin begin? Whose responsibility is it? How does Jesus' death for us and his teaching here show us a different path to Amnon's? (See Romans 6:20-23)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
10. What might you reply if someone were to say, 'God lets evil happen! He isn't good!'

## *Vengeance without Justice*

Read 2 Samuel 13:23-39

1. What just happened? Who are the main characters? How are they related to David? What did they do?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. How does this move the story on?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Describe Absalom's revenge. What do we learn about him from that? (vv23-29, 32, 37-38) How does this relate to 2 Samuel 12:10?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. What does Jonadab's involvement tell us about him? (vv 31-35) Where have we seen him in action before? (13:3-5)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. How does David respond to the news of his sons' deaths, his son's death and Absalom's exile? (vv30-31, 36, 39) What does this show us about David?



6. What do you expect to happen next? Why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. How does Jesus' example help us to deal with injustice in our own life without taking vengeance? (1 Peter 2:18-25) Is there an example in your life where you need to embrace this attitude? How would you like God to work in you to achieve that?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. Jesus is the true Son – the only worthy Heir – how do we know this? (See Mark 1:10-11, John 5:19-20) Why does this matter to us?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. Absalom's actions might be seen as justified because they were on behalf of someone else; specifically, someone who had missed out on justice. What is wrong with this thinking? Think about whether there is something you are doing or some attitude you might on behalf of someone else that may not be pleasing to God. What would you like to say to God about that? Turn those thoughts into a prayer.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
10. How might you respond if someone were to say, 'It doesn't matter what I do. There's no justice in this world anyway; I might as well do whatever I can get away with!'

## *Restoration without Repentance*

Read 2 Samuel 14

1. What just happened? Who are the main characters? How are they related to David? What did they do?
2. How does this move the story on? This is one of the longest speeches in the book. Why might so much space be given over to this woman's words?
3. Why did Joab act? (v1) What did the woman's story highlight about chapter 13? What did her retelling omit?
4. How did the king respond to Joab? (vv21-24) What does the king *not* do? (v24) Why is that significant?
5. What do we learn about Absalom from verses 25-33? Why is he so popular? How does he approach delicate diplomatic situations? If he is the heir to the throne now, what kind of king might we expect him to become?

6. What do you expect might happen next? Why?
7. How does Jesus accomplish what David never could? (Colossians 1:17-20) How does he accomplish this?
8. What does true restoration of a relationship look like for Jesus' followers? (Matthew 18:15-18, Galatians 6:1-3) Where is the place of repentance?
9. If someone wants to talk with you about how one of you has wronged the other, how do you respond? How would you like to grow in this area of your life? What would you like to learn to say or do or think about differently?
10. How might you respond if someone were to say, 'Forgive and forget, I say! Too much drama to talk about it all endlessly. Life is too short!'

## *The King Flees*

Read 2 Samuel 15

1. What happened in this chapter? Who are the main characters? What is their relationship to David?
2. How does this move the story on?
3. How does Absalom increase his power? (vv1-7) Why might he be an attractive alternative to David?
4. Why does he choose Hebron for his power grab? (v7) See 2 Samuel 2;1-4.
5. Why does David send back Zadok and the ark of God? (vv24-29) What advantage would it be to David (and disadvantage of Absalom) to have the ark of God?
6. What was Ahitophel's significance? (v12, 31) How does David attempt to thwart Ahitophel's counsel? (vv31-37)

7. Describe David's hastily constructed spy network. What does this tell you about David's hopes for the future?
8. What do you expect might happen next? Why?
9. Jesus, fulfilling all that David was meant to be, follows a similar path to David. (see Luke 19:37-44, 22:39-46) How is Jesus similar and yet different to David?
10. David's followers have to make a choice: leave with him and lose their lives or stay and keep their lives. This is similar to the choice we make to follow Jesus. How is following Jesus better?
11. When do you find it a struggle to be loyal to Jesus? What do you dread to lose for following him? How can your group support you as you grow in this area?
12. How is Ittai an example to us as we follow Jesus? (15:21; see Philippians 1:20-21)
13. How might you respond to someone who says, 'Christians are just bigots hiding behind their religion.'



