

General Church Education



David Becomes King of Judah

2 Samuel 2

Lesson 22

Jacob's Ladder Religion Lessons

Level 5: The Lord Is Our King

For ages 10-11

David Becomes King of Judah

2 Samuel 2

Teacher Background

After Saul's death David inquired of the Lord what he should do. He went up to Hebron with his family and was anointed king of Judah. He reached out to the men of Jabesh-Gilead in kindness for burying Saul. Meanwhile Abner, Saul's military commander, provoked war with Judah by crowning Saul's son Ishbosheth king over Israel. This divided the kingdom. David's and Saul's commanders set up a skirmish between twenty-four soldiers in which they all died, and a vicious battle broke out. Abner's army lost and Asahel pursued Abner. Abner tried to avoid harming Asahel, but he would not leave Abner alone so eventually Abner killed him. Abner saw that many would die if the conflict continued, so he sought peace from Joab.

Anointing David as king of Judah re-established Israel's covenant with the Lord, which had become impossible due to Saul's concern for himself and his own glory. Abner, Saul's commander, vacillated between the roles of combatant and peacemaker. He appeared to want power by anointing Ishbosheth king of Israel, but protected Asahel until he would not leave him alone. Finally, he sought peace. These alternating states are similar to children's states, for which they need ongoing love and support, even during times of strife.

Focus Points

- The Lord told David to go to Hebron, where he was crowned king of Judah.
- Saul's commander, Abner, anointed Ishbosheth king over Israel, provoking conflict.
- Abner killed Joab's brother Asahel, but then tried to make peace with Joab.

Readings from the Writings

“Spiritual temptation ... is a conflict between the evil spirits and the angels with that person, and he ordinarily feels that conflict in his conscience. As regards such conflict it should be recognized ... that the angels are protecting people constantly and are warding off the evils that evil spirits direct against him.” *Arcana Coelestia* 761

“None but the person who is acquainted with the state of peace is capable of knowing about the serenity of peace of the external person, which ensues when conflict, the unrest caused by evil desires and by falsities, comes to an end. That state is so joyful that it transcends every idea of joy. It is not just an end of conflict; it is also life coming from an inward peace, influencing the external man in a way that defies description. At that point truths of faith and goods of love are born, which draw their life from the joy that peace brings.” *Arcana Coelestia* 92

Teacher Activity Overview

The lesson offers the following choices:

Recitation

Learn the Lord's Word by heart.

“The king shall have joy in your strength, O Lord:
And in your salvation how greatly shall he rejoice!” (Psalm 21:1)

Projects and Activities (see back of lesson for answers)

Who Said It? David, Abner, or Joab?

Read statements and identify the speaker and the listener.

Healthy and Unhealthy Competition

The main theme of this lesson is the competition between the house of Saul and the house of David. Saul's son, Ishbosheth, ruled in the north. David ruled in the south. Compare the fairness David showed his enemy with the unfairness Saul's family showed his enemy by thinking about healthy and unhealthy competition.

Additional Project and Activity Choices

Make a Sword of Truth

We can use truth from the Word to fight for what is right, and to protect ourselves against what is wrong. Print a sword template on stiff paper and write one or more true ideas on it to show how true ideas can protect us. Online at <https://newchurchvineyard.org/file/project-make-a-sword-of-truth.pdf>

Write a Thank You Card

David sent messengers to the men of Jabesh Gilead to thank them for burying Saul's body. Think of someone who has done something kind for you or for others. Write them a thank you to show your appreciation. For ideas, see <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/file/ss-teacher-ideas-for-making-thank-you-cards.pdf>

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Vocabulary

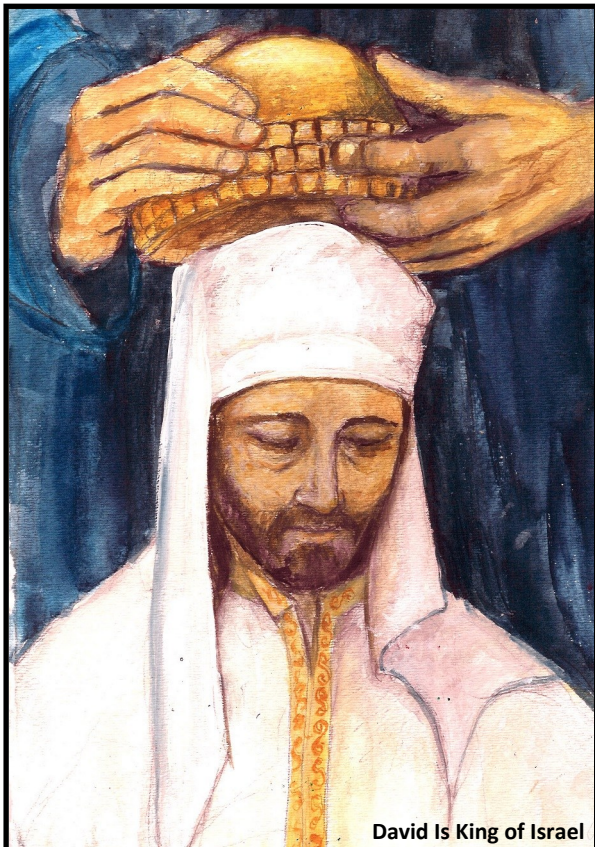
guidance—advice or information to solve a problem

deception—being dishonest or cheating someone

truce—agreement between enemies to stop fighting for a certain time

From Patriarch to King

The Lord promised Abraham that his descendants would one day live in the Promised Land, the land of Canaan. The Lord gave Abraham’s son Jacob a new name, Israel. Israel’s descendants were the children of Israel, or the Israelites. Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt on a long journey through the wilderness. Joshua led them across the Jordan River into the Promised Land. For hundreds of years their rulers were judges. Eventually, the children of Israel wanted to be like other nations and asked for a king. Even though the Lord knew the Israelites were moving further from Him as their leader, He let them have a king.



David Is King of Israel

First, the Lord gave them king Saul. Saul was tall and strong. But soon Saul stopped obeying the Lord, and the Lord chose David, a shepherd boy, to be the next king. Saul began to hate David. He wanted to kill him. David spent many years hiding from Saul. When Saul died David did what he usually did, he asked the Lord for guidance.

“David inquired of the Lord, saying, ‘Shall I go up to any of the cities of Judah?’ And the Lord said to him, ‘Go up.’ David said, ‘Where shall I go up?’ And He said, ‘To Hebron.’ (2 Samuel 2:1)

David becomes king of Judah

So David and his followers left Ziklag, and went to Hebron, in the land of Judah. David came from the tribe of Judah. He was born in Bethlehem, and lived there as a young boy. For a time

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he hid from Saul in the wilderness of Judah, so the people knew David well. The men of Judah went to Hebron to meet David and anointed him as the king of Judah.

One of the first things David did as king was to thank the people of Jabesh-Gilead for burying Saul. He promised that he would repay them for their kindness.

Ishbosheth Made King of Israel

Saul and three of his sons had been killed in battle at Mt. Gilboa, but Saul had another son named Ishbosheth. Ishbosheth was a weak man, but Abner, the powerful commander of Saul's army, was with him. Abner had brought David to Saul after he killed Goliath. Abner was with Saul during his fights against the Philistines and other enemies of Israel.

Abner took Ishbosheth to Mahanaim, a large walled city east of the Jordan, where the people were friendly and grateful to his father, Saul. Saul and his family lost their kingdom because they had rejected the Lord's leadership, but Abner crowned Ishbosheth king over the northern tribes of Israel even though the Lord had not chosen or anointed him.



Abner's act divided Canaan into a northern and a southern kingdom with separate rulers. Ishbosheth ruled the northern part, and David ruled the southern part. This must have been very difficult.

As you can imagine, it was not long before deception, trickery and war began between the two parts of the kingdom.

Israel and Judah at War

The first battle was set up by Abner, the leader of Ishbosheth's army and Joab, the leader of David's men. Instead of having their armies fight a battle, they chose twelve men from each side to fight. The men were all killed during the fight. The place where they fought was called The Field of Sharp Swords. This was just the beginning of a long and fierce battle which David's army would eventually win.

After the battle, Joab's brother Asahel chased Abner and tried to kill him. Abner tried to make Asahel stop chasing him three times. But Asahel did not stop, so finally, Abner killed him. Joab and Abishai, another of Joab's brothers, also went after Abner. They arrived at the hill of Ammah at sunset.

Abner called out to Joab and his men:



“Shall the sword devour forever?” (2 Samuel 2:26)

Joab understood that Abner was asking for a truce. Joab agreed to stop fighting and blew a trumpet. This gave Abner time to flee across the river Jordan to Mahanaim.

However, Joab had not heard about his brother Asahel's death. When he found out about it he was furious. He buried Asahel and then abandoned the peace treaty and resumed the battle. He and his men pursued Abner and all the men from the house of Saul.

Fighting the Battle

As with the house of Saul and David's servants, we sometimes experience conflicts in deciding whether to choose what is right or not. This conflict can start out small like the battle in which twenty four men fought. However, if we do not succeed in small battles against making bad choices, the battle for goodness becomes larger and more difficult.

For example, a person might want to dominate others in sports, or be tempted to put someone down to make themselves look better. If we give in to these temptations, we are more likely to give in again. The more this happens, the harder it will be for us to stop.

Abner's actions reflect the way people go back and forth between choosing the Lord's path and following their own path. Sometimes Abner supported Saul and other times he appeared to favor David. All of us go back and forth between choosing right and wrong. The battles between Saul and David could have been over early if Saul had recognized David as the Lord's anointed. If we recognize what the Lord wants of us in times of temptation and choose His path, the battle will be easier every time. Only the Lord can bring peace to us in moments of conflict.

Activity Overview

Recitation

Learn the recitation by heart.

“The king shall have joy in your strength, O Lord:
And in your salvation how greatly shall he rejoice!” (Psalm 21:1)

Projects and Activities (answers are at the back of this lesson)

Choose one or two.

Who Said It? David, Abner, or Joab?

Read statements and identify the speaker and the listener.

Healthy and Unhealthy Competition

The theme of this lesson is the competition between the house of Saul and the house of David. Saul’s son, Ishbosheth, ruled in the north. David ruled in the south. Compare the fairness David showed his enemy with the unfairness Saul’s family showed his enemy by thinking about healthy and unhealthy competition.

Who Said It? David, Abner, or Joab?

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Who made the following statements: **David, Abner, or Joab?** Once you have named the speaker, identify the person to whom they were speaking. Look at 2 Samuel chapter 2 for help with your answers. These quotes are from the New King James translation of the Bible. If you are reading from a different translation the words may be slightly different.

Statement	Speaker	Listener
1. "Shall I go up to any of the cities of Judah?"	_____	_____
2. "You are blessed of the Lord, for you have shown kindness to your lord..."	_____	_____
3. "Let the young men now arise and compete before us."	_____	_____
4. "Let them arise."	_____	_____
5. "Turn aside from following me. Why should I strike you to the ground?"	_____	_____
6. "Shall the sword devour forever?"	_____	_____
7. "As God lives, unless you had spoken, surely by morning all the people would have given up pursuing their brethren."	_____	_____

Healthy and Unhealthy Competition

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The main theme of this lesson is the competition between the house of Saul and the house of David. Each house ruled house part of the kingdom, and battles were fought between them. Some people handled the competition well, like David, but some did not.

Competition can bring out the best in people, and it can bring out the worst in people. Explain how:

Circle competitive events you think are healthy, and cross out ones you think are unhealthy. Your experiences with competition will affect your choices. Discuss your answers with others and listen for a variety of viewpoints.

The Olympics	Spelling Bees	T.V. Game Shows
Professional Sports	Beauty Contests	Sports
Eating Contests	Talent Shows	Math Contests

Circle positive results that can come from healthy competition. Cross out negative results that come from unhealthy competition.

pride in yourself	making your best effort
self-discipline	boasting
feeling better than others	motivation
feelings of teamwork	wishing others to make mistakes
excitement	stress
cheating	insulting remarks
feelings of accomplishment	feeling less than others
caring only about winning	fitness of mind or body

Are you the sort of person who enjoys competition? Does it bring out the best or the worst in you?

Answers

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Who Said It? David, Abner, or Joab?

1. David, the Lord 2. David, the men of Jabesh-Gilead 3. Abner, Joab 4. Joab, Abner 5. Abner, Asahel 6. Abner, Joab 7. Joab, Abner.