

April 16-22

## **Week 16**

In the story of Scripture we are still in Act 2, scene 5.

Saul had died, and David had come to the throne. Notice that David's character and zeal for justice asserted themselves in the first chapters of 2 Samuel.

The rest of our readings push the pause button on David's story and expose us to psalms and genealogies related to the greatest of Israel's kings.

Take time to enjoy the psalms. Use them to deepen your prayer life this week.

The genealogies in 1 Chronicles span from the beginning of creation until after the Babylonian exile, which took place five centuries after the time of David. Yet it is appropriate to anchor these genealogies in the story of David. As the chronicler crafted his genealogies, he was especially interested in the tribes of Judah and Levi, because he was laying the foundation for his narrative about the house of King David and appropriate worship of God through the temple in Jerusalem. See what nuggets of truth you can find in these celebrations of heritage and identity.

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**Day 1**

**Read 2 Samuel 1-4**

**Act 2 - Scene 5 - Reading 15**

Second Samuel begins with the transition from Saul's reign to David's long rule over Israel. Watch for details. Joab's revenge and David's very different response to Saul dominate today's story. Notice how countercultural David is in this regard. Saul had pursued and tried to kill him for years; nevertheless, David honored Saul and his family, even crafting a lament for his former master. Certainly, David acted from respect for Saul's position as king. His actions and attitude are instructive for us.

This passage is framed by two stories in which David brought down judgment on the heads of those who acted against Saul. The Amalekite lied about his role in Saul's death (see 1 Samuel 31), hoping to win David's favor; he received wrath instead. David also judged the assassins of Ish-bosheth. Also watch for the way David handled Joab's revenge on Abner.

*How do you respond to those who attack you or treat you poorly?*

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**Day 2****Read Psalms 6; 9-10; 14; 16; 21****Act 2 - Scene 5 - Reading 16**

In these Davidic psalms we find a powerful mix of cries to God for help, confidence in God's character, reflections on the wicked, and celebration of God's justice and deliverance. Notice the figurative language used. What might be parallels in our cultural context for words like these:

You will put them to flight  
when you ready your bowstrings to shoot at them (Psalm 21:12)?

Carefully meditate on the use of repetition in these psalms. For instance, each verse in Psalm 6 expresses a thought and then repeats the thought in the second line of the verse.

*What does the psalmist's use of repetition add to these psalms?*

*Choose a passage from these psalms that is most relevant for you at this time.  
Turn that psalm into a personal prayer for your need.*

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**Day 3****Read 1 Chronicles 1-2; Psalms 43-44****Act 2 - Scene 5 - Reading 17**

First Chronicles 1 focuses on the ancestors of God's people up to the time of Israel (Jacob).

Chapter 2 begins the genealogy of the Israelites by focusing especially on the tribe of Judah, the tribe from which the Davidic monarchy came.

The genealogies remind God's people that their past as a people—their very identity—had been crafted by God for a purpose. As you read, watch for hints of what the chronicler found especially important.

Psalms 43 records a cry for vindication in the face of great oppression.

Psalms 44 is the psalmist's cry for help.

*Read Psalm 43 as a personal prayer and reflection and Psalm 44 as a community prayer. Is there a way Psalm 44 applies to a community in which you are involved?*

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**Day 4**

**Read Psalms 49; 84-85; 87**

**Act 2 - Scene 5 - Reading 18**

Psalms 49 offers rich reflections on the limitations of wealth and the importance of placing hope in God.

*What is your attitude toward your wealth or lack of it?*

Psalms 84–85; 87 focus on the temple, the land, and Zion (Jerusalem), respectively, as places of God’s blessing.

Hebrews 12:22-24 says we, as followers of Christ, have come to Mount Zion. This means that through the new covenant we have come to the real place where God lives: he is actively present in our lives.

*How does the fact that we are now the temple of God affect your reading of Psalm 84?*

*Praise God for this wonderful truth.*

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**Day 5**

**Read 1 Chronicles 3-5**

**Act 2 - Scene 5 - Reading 19**

The chronicler gave the big picture of Israel's history—its identity as a people. King David, from the tribe of Judah, played a central role in that history, but the history of other tribes was important as well.

*What is your identity as God's person in the world?*

*What is your spiritual heritage? If someone asked you the history of your spiritual ancestors, what would you say?*

*Thank God for those who blazed the trail of commitment to God for you.*

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**Day 6****Read 1 Chronicles 6; Psalms 36; 39; 77-78****Act 2 - Scene 5 - Reading 20**

First Chronicles 6 shows the special place the tribe of Levi had in the history of Israel and particularly in temple worship during David's reign.

Observe the historical marker in 1 Chronicles 6:31-33.

In reading the psalms for today, focus especially on the character of God, the contrast between his righteousness and the character of the wicked (see Psalm 36), his immortality and power in contrast to the fleeting nature of human life (see Psalm 39), and his greatness as seen in creation (see Psalm 77).

Grasping God's character means recognizing ways he has worked in history in calling a people to himself. Psalm 78 culminates with a focus on David's special role in that regard.

*Worship God today, focusing on various aspects of his character that are reflected in these psalms.*

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**Day 7**

**Reading Summary for Week 16**

From 1 Chronicles, we've traced genealogies from Adam to David and beyond. From 2 Samuel, we've observed David's rise as king after Saul's death. From Psalms, we've experienced again a kaleidoscope of worshipful responses to life's challenges and to the God who is greater than these challenges. What connects these three diverse sets of readings? God himself. He is present and faithful throughout all generations. This is especially evident in David's life, and is given exuberant expression in Psalms.

**Prayer/Meditation**

Lord God of Israel, you fulfilled the pledge you made to David, that he would become the king over your people. Thank you for your faithfulness to your word. I commit myself to you again, knowing that you will fulfill all your promises to me because of Christ. I joyfully join with David in saying, "I will thank the Lord with all my heart; I will declare all your wonderful works. I will rejoice and boast about you; I will sing about your name, Most High" (Psalm 9:1-2). Amen.

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