

Sungai Way-Subang Methodist Church

Being with Jesus



Volume 1: January - March 2025

Name:

Love God, Love People | Mark 12:29-31

Make Disciples | Matthew 28:19-20

Reading Schedule, Jan — Mar 2025

	JANUARY		FEBRUARY		MARCH	
SAT			1	1 Sam 20:35–42	1	2 Sam 2:1–11
SUN			2		2	
MON			3	1 Sam 21:1–9	3	2 Sam 2:12–23
TUE			4	1 Sam 21:10–15	4	2 Sam 2:24–32
WED	1	1 Sam 13:15–22	5	1 Sam 22:1–5	5	2 Sam 3:1–11
THU	2	1 Sam 13:23–14:10	6	1 Sam 22:6–23	6	2 Sam 3:12–21
FRI	3	1 Sam 14:11–15	7	1 Sam 23:1–13	7	2 Sam 3:22–39
SAT	4	1 Sam 14:16–23	8	1 Sam 23:14–29	8	2 Sam 4:1–12
SUN	5		9		9	
MON	6	1 Sam 14:24–35	10	1 Sam 24:1–22	10	2 Sam 5:1–16
TUE	7	1 Sam 14:36–46	11	1 Sam 25:1–17	11	2 Sam 5:17–25
WED	8	1 Sam 14:47–52	12	1 Sam 25:18–31	12	2 Sam 6:1–11
THU	9	1 Sam 15:1–9	13	1 Sam 25:32–44	13	2 Sam 6:12–23
FRI	10	1 Sam 15:10–16	14	1 Sam 26:1–12	14	2 Sam 7:1–7
SAT	11	1 Sam 15:17–24	15	1 Sam 26:13–20	15	2 Sam 7:8–17
SUN	12		16		16	
MON	13	1 Sam 15:25–35	17	1 Sam 27:1–7	17	2 Sam 7:18–29
TUE	14	1 Sam 16:1–5	18	1 Sam 27:8–28:2	18	2 Sam 8:1–14
WED	15	1 Sam 16:6–13	19	1 Sam 28:3–14	19	2 Sam 9:1–13
THU	16	1 Sam 16:14–23	20	1 Sam 28:15–25	20	2 Sam 10:1–7
FRI	17	1 Sam 17:1–16	21	1 Sam 29:1–11	21	2 Sam 10:8–14
SAT	18	1 Sam 17:17–27	22	1 Sam 30:1–7	22	2 Sam 10:15–11:1
SUN	19		23		23	
MON	20	1 Sam 17:28–40	24	1 Sam 30:8–20	24	2 Sam 11:2–5
TUE	21	1 Sam 17:41–50	25	1 Sam 30:21–30	25	2 Sam 11:6–13
WED	22	1 Sam 17:51–58	26	1 Sam 31:1–13	26	2 Sam 11:14–27
THU	23	1 Sam 18:1–9	27	2 Sam 1:1–16	27	2 Sam 12:1–6
FRI	24	1 Sam 18:10–16	28	2 Sam 1:17–27	28	2 Sam 12:7–13a
SAT	25	1 Sam 18:17–30			29	2 Sam 12:13b–25
SUN	26				30	
MON	27	1 Sam 19:1–7			31	2 Sam 12:26–31
TUE	28	1 Sam 19:8–17				
WED	29	1 Sam 19:18–24				
THU	30	1 Sam 20:1–23				
FRI	31	1 Sam 20:24–34				

Pastoral Message

Happy and Blessed New Year!

The year 2025 is momentous for many reasons. In this message, I will mention the first reason.

F.I.T. is the acronym adopted by SSMC to define a disciple of Jesus. We define it as:

F being a Follower of Christ

I to Impact Community and Nation(s)

T being Transformed and becoming an agent of Transformation.

Jesus is our model and His life can be summarised as “LOVE GOD, LOVE PEOPLE, MAKE DISCIPLES.” Therefore, it is our aspiration and goal to present everyone equipped and fully mature in Christ.

How is this related to BWJ?

The WORD of GOD helps us grow in our faith, in our knowledge of God, and in our relationship with Him. Therefore, we must engage with it.

F.I.T. requires us to move from mere knowledge of facts (*Greek: gnosis*) to intimate knowledge that involves relationship (*Greek: ginosko*). We move from INFORMATION at the cognitive and intellectual level to TRANSFORMATION through practical action and obedience that is personal and experiential. In other words, to walk the talk.

F.I.T. requires us to re-orientate our focus from an accountability based on completing a syllabus or materials to an accountability based on transformed lives. Instead of asking questions such as "Have you read?" or "What does it say?", the main emphasis is now "How have you obeyed?", "What is the result/outcome?" or "What are you struggling with?". I know being truthful, honest, vulnerable and authentic can be frightening. However, real fellowship or "koinonia" is doing life and journeying together.

Pastor's Message

As we continue to read through BWJ this year, remember the words of Jesus, “Come follow me and I will make you fishers of men” (Matthew 4:19). Jesus calls, Jesus transforms, and Jesus commissions us to make us F.I.T.

My prayer is that many will experience movements that will make us F.I.T. in 2025!

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Robin and Leadership Team

Introduction to the Readings

Samuel's leadership of Israel has passed over to Saul, yet the prophet continued to prophecy God's Word and provide spiritual leadership counterbalancing the political leadership bestowed on Saul. Much of our readings this quarter concerns the kingship, the conduct of the kings, and inevitably their failings and sin. Even David, the man after God's own heart, engaged in sinfulness of the highest order. Perhaps it is a good time to remember that most of the accounts of the Old Testament are set in the backdrop of Israel's faithlessness and straying accentuating God's undeserved mercy and grace. As did Israel, so often do we. May we be more like David in whole-hearted repentance, rather than taking the example of Saul's outward 'obedience' motivated by reputation rather than a God-facing humility.

The provided questions for each day's readings are intended to prompt reflection. Some of them also include guidance in the form of historical or scriptural context. The pronouns "I", "me", and "my" are used to reflect the reader's perspective and emphasize the personal nature of these reflections. We encourage those in faith communities (whether related by blood or by the Spirit) to engage together, substituting "we" and "our" pronouns as appropriate. May we forever revere the divinely-breathed nature of the Scripture we read, while fully engaging our mind to understand the context that give depth and complexity to its' words and stories. The questions are a mere guide, and Scripture itself is alone in its primacy.

May God bless the reading of His Word.

Yours truly,
Ng Oon-Ee (Christian Education)

This edition of Being With Jesus has seen significant contributions from various disciples in the body. Special thanks to the Christian Education team for their efforts and time in preparing this material, as well as to Rosalind for setting all of it in place (literally). Much appreciation to Zachary Singkee for providing the visual design.

Book of 1 Samuel

1 JAN, WEDNESDAY

1 Samuel 13:15–22

Dire Imbalance

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Saul's army was now reduced 5-fold. How large was the Philistine army in comparison? 2) Today's passage describes the technological disparity between Israel and the Philistines (who regularly traded with the Greeks over the sea). How did the Philistines maintain this technological disparity, and what was the consequence of it? 3) What lesson can I take from today's passage's description of the army of Israel and Saul?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

2 JAN, THURSDAY

1 Samuel 13:23–14:10

Nothing Can Hinder the Lord

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) This chapter describes the battle against the Philistines. Who initiates the battle? What is his motivation? What is Saul doing while this is happening? 2) What do the words of 1 Samuel 14:6-7 tell me about the heart and intentions of Jonathan and his armour-bearer? 3) Having found the enemy, Jonathan does not take immediate action. Do his words in 1 Samuel 14:9-10 indicate doubt or faith? Is Jonathan testing God?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

3 JAN, FRIDAY

1 Samuel 14:11-15

The Lord Has Given Them Into the Hands of Israel

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What do the Philistines' words tell me about their experience and expectation of the Hebrews up to this point (see also 1 Samuel 13:6-7 and 14:21)? 2) How do Jonathan and his armour-bearer interpret the Philistines' condescending words? 3) Attacking a defensive position uphill while outnumbered (at least 10-fold) is foolishness. What is the outcome of Jonathan's foolishness, both in his immediate area and among the whole Philistine army?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

4 JAN, SATURDAY

1 Samuel 14:16–23

Who Is in Charge?

Context

Questions
to ponder

- 1) What is Saul's first (and second) response to the surprising chaos in the Philistine camp? What does this say about the king of Israel?
- 2) In 1 Samuel 14:20, Saul and his army enter the battle. Is Saul fulfilling the desire of Israel as expressed in 1 Samuel 8:20?
- 3) The 600-strong army increases greatly in size through this battle. Who is responsible for this?

Head

What can I
understand?

Heart

How do I respond?

Hands

What must I do?

5 JAN, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

6 JAN, MONDAY

1 Samuel 14:24–35

The Oath of a King

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Saul binds the army of Israel with an oath of fasting. Is this oath inspired by a righteous desire to seek God and glorify Him? 2) The honey on the ground could be seen as God's provision, or a temptation to sin. Are Jonathan's words based in truth, or a youthful rebellious brashness? 3) The exhausted and hungry Israelites proceed to sin against the Lord due to Saul's oath. Who does Saul blame for this sinfulness? What does this tell me about Saul's attitude as king?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

7 JAN, TUESDAY

1 Samuel 14:36–46

The King's Second Oath

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Saul receives (and follows) wise counsel, that Israel should inquire of God. Yet in response to God's refusal to answer, Saul immediately swears another stronger oath. Why is the king so quick to swear oaths?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2) Saul fully intends to follow through on his oath, even at the cost of his own son's life. Is this praiseworthy obedience, foolish stubbornness, or something else? Should matters of principle always be strictly held to, disregarding circumstance and context?
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) Jonathan is rescued by the men of the army. What great credit do they give to Jonathan in defending him? Amidst this drama, how does the comparison between 1 Samuel 14:36 and 1 Samuel 14:46 show the consequence of Saul's rash oaths?
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

8 JAN, WEDNESDAY

1 Samuel 14:47–52

Saul's Strength and Success

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Today's passage summarises Saul's strength and success. How does this compare with the young man from 1 Samuel 10:21? Has Saul grown into the kingship? 2) Saul's family is also mentioned in today's passage. Notably, Ishbosheth (Saul's eventual heir) is not mentioned. How did Saul's utilise his family to strengthen his authority as king? 3) One of Samuel's warnings to Israel (see reading from Dec 20) had been that the king they chose would conscript from their youth, as described in 1 Samuel 14:52. Would Israel have considered this cost worthwhile?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

9 JAN, THURSDAY

1 Samuel 15:1-9

Go and Attack Amalek

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Samuel carries the word of the Lord to Saul, that Saul is to complete God's punishment from Exodus 17:14-6. Israel is to carrying out God's judgement. How does king Saul respond? 2) Saul gathers Hebrew troops (compare the numbers mentioned with those of 1 Samuel 13:15) and prepares for battle by forewarning the Kenites with whom Israel had no quarrel. What does this say about Saul's capabilities and the kingdom he had built?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) The actual battle proceeds well, and the Amalekites cannot stand against Israel and their king. Does Saul carry out the judgement of God in obedience? How does the taking of plunder (common in all wars which are primarily driven by acquisition and desire) debase the specific purpose God had given to Israel in this war?
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

10 JAN, FRIDAY

1 Samuel 15:10-16

Saul Shifts Blame

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Unbeknownst to Saul, God is speaking to Samuel. Why is Samuel angry, and why does he spend all night 'crying out to the Lord'? 2) What do Saul's actions and words in 1 Samuel 15:12-13 tell me about his understanding of what he had done? 3) When confronted with his sin, Saul immediately tries to shift blame. There is also another subtler shift, where Saul refers to 'the Lord YOUR God'. Do I also distance myself from God when confronted with the reality of my sinfulness?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

11 JAN, SATURDAY

1 Samuel 15:17-24

What Does Repentance Look Like?

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) In verses 17-19, Samuel summarises Saul's instructions and sin, as one might for an obstinate child. How does Saul respond? Is there any repentance in his reply? 2) Samuel pronounces God's judgement by exposing Saul's focus on external observances and image over genuine obedience and humility. Is the prophecy of 1 Samuel 15:22-23 directly relevant to me in my faith walk before God today?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) Finally, in verse 24 Saul says "I have sinned". Is his repentance complete and sincere? Have I ever apologised or repented insincerely? Do I need to approach God in genuine repentance today?
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

12 JAN, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

13 JAN, MONDAY

1 Samuel 15:25–35

Saul's Priority

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Despite God's judgement, Saul continues to cling on to the kingship. How does the progression of Saul's pleas in verses 25 and 30 show what is really important to Saul? 2) Samuel uses a title in verse 29 for God which is not used anywhere else in Scripture — the Glory (strength) of Israel. How does that title specifically the image Saul had built up around himself as king? 3) Samuel relents and honours Saul, while fulfilling the command that Saul had not. How does the contrast between Samuel's reaction and Saul's reaction illustrate the relationship between these two men?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

14 JAN, TUESDAY

1 Samuel 16:1-5

Samuel Sent to Bethlehem

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) God has chosen His king. Why is Samuel still mourning? 2) What is Samuel's concern regarding God's command? Is his concern justified? 3) Bethlehem is a small town not far from Jerusalem, the home of Ruth and Boaz from whom Jesse descended. Why were the elders of the town afraid? What does this say about Saul's rule?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

15 JAN, WEDNESDAY

1 Samuel 16:6-13

The Lord Does Not Look At the Things People Look At

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Today's passage is familiar to many believers. God reminds Samuel that He does not look at the things people look at. How does this compare to the selection Saul (see 1 Samuel 9:1-2 and 10:23-24)? 2) God's words to Samuel indicate that Samuel himself is (once again) taken by the stature of Jesse's elder sons. Am I also taken by outward appearances? How can I be like Samuel in hearing God's "no" clearly? 3) Finally David is brought in, and God affirms that He is the chosen king. Scripture does not clearly state whether Jesse and his sons (including David) are aware of the significance of this anointing. But what is clearly stated is that the Spirit of the Lord comes powerfully upon David. Are my own leaders also powerfully anointed? How can I pray for them today?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

16 JAN, THURSDAY

1 Samuel 16:14–23

The Lord Is With Him

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Saul's rejection by God leads to the departing of the Spirit of the Lord. How does this affect Saul? 2) Saul's attendants prescribe treatment with music, which brings David from Bethlehem into the service of the king. How do Saul's attendants describe David (in contrast with yesterday's description)? 3) Among all the complements paid to David, the most important is found in the final sentence of 1 Samuel 16:18. Why was this an important factor in the selection of David to play the lyre before Saul?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

17 JAN, FRIDAY

1 Samuel 17:1–16

The Champion From Gath

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Once again the Philistines assembled an army. How did Israel (and Saul's) strength in today's passage compare to that of 1 Samuel 13? What effect does the greater strength of Israel and Saul have here? 2) The Hebrew word for 'champion' refers to a middle man, a man between two armies. Did Israel have a comparable champion to the Philistine behemoth (recall the description of 1 Samuel 9:2)? 3) The armies of Israel and the Philistines appear to have been relatively well matched, leaving any possible battle as an impasse. In that situation, patience and discretion may have been a perfectly sound strategy. However, how does Scripture describe the inaction of Israel in the face of Goliath of Gath?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

18 JAN, SATURDAY

1 Samuel 17:17-27

Do You See?

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) David's errand is to bring provision to his brothers and see how they are faring. What else does he see in 1 Samuel 17:20-24? 2) What do the men of the army see according to 1 Samuel 17:25? 3) David's words in 1 Samuel 17:26 differs, from his description of Goliath, to his focus on God instead of Israel. Is this just the brashness of youth, or does David see what the men of Israel do not?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

19 JAN, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

20 JAN, MONDAY

1 Samuel 17:28–40

You Are Not Able

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) In today's passage, David first faces the anger and dismissal of his eldest brother. What grounds does Eliab have to dismiss David's questions and motivations? 2) David volunteers to do what the other men will not. What is Saul's evaluation of David's prospects against Goliath? How does David respond to Saul's words? 3) With Saul convinced, David is provided the best in equipment, yet it is now his turn to say "I am not able". How is David's self-assessment here different from the dismissals of Eliab and Saul? Was Saul's armour the best that David could use?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

21 JAN, TUESDAY

1 Samuel 17:41–50

The Battle Is the Lord's

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What was Goliath's opinion of his opponent? What power does he have to back up his confidence? 2) What is David's opinion of his opponent (and himself)? What power does he have to back up his confidence? 3) What sort of battles am I facing which belong to God? What sword, spear, and javelin are raised against me? How can I have the faith and courage of David?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

22 JAN, WEDNESDAY

1 Samuel 17:51–58

Whose Son Is That Young Man?

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Why did the Philistines flee? What does this say about the truth behind Goliath's challenge in 1 Samuel 17:9? 2) Prior to this battle, David was known as a talented musician rather than as a warrior. Possibly Saul took as little notice of him as we do with the cleaners or attendants at our workplaces. Why is David's lineage suddenly so important to Saul? 3) David's instigation of the rout of the Philistine army in today's passage bears similarity to Jonathan's instigation of the same in 1 Samuel 14. What commonality do I find between the faith of both these young men?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

23 JAN, THURSDAY

1 Samuel 18:1-9

Love and Jealousy

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) David was an obvious threat to Jonathan's position as crown prince, yet Jonathan gave his royal armour to David (who accepted it, unlike in 1 Samuel 17:39). What is the basis of the love between these two brothers? 2) David's success brings praise, which arouses Saul's jealousy. Why is the king jealous of one of his successful servants? What could be the cause of Saul's insecurity here?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) Saul's jealousy leads to unjustified suspicion. Have I also been provoked to paranoia due to my own insecurities and jealousies?
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

24 JAN, FRIDAY

1 Samuel 18:10–16

High Risk Service

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Saul attempts to murder David, yet not only does David escape and refuse to retaliate, the young man returns for Saul to try again! How would this have affected Saul's insecurity and realisation of the truth of 1 Samuel 18:12? 2) Saul sends David away, yet David's reputation continues to grow due to his military successes. What is the reason for David's success? 3) As king, Saul's legitimacy was built on his success in fighting Israel's battles. How does David's success undermine his own legitimacy?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

25 JAN, SATURDAY

1 Samuel 18:17–30

Become My Son in Law

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Saul's next plan is to offer his daughter(s) hands in marriage to David. What is he hoping will happen (1 Samuel 18:17)? 2) David initially avoids Saul's trap by refusing his offer (recall also Saul's promises prior to the killing of Goliath). What is David's attitude towards the offer? How does that reflect the contrast between David the anointed king and Saul the king of Israel? 3) When David is eventually convinced, he exceeds Saul's demands two-fold. The dowry requested was dangerous and would have (rightfully) aroused the ire of the Philistines against David. Yet David succeeds, provoking Saul to greater fear. Is it possible to successfully scheme against God's anointed?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

26 JAN, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

27 JAN, MONDAY

1 Samuel 19:1-7

Jonathan Defends David's Life

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Saul realises that the Philistines would not accomplish his goals and decides to take matters into his own hands. Why does he enlist Jonathan? 2) Jonathan speaks first to his friend David and then to his father interceding for David. Is Jonathan here lacking filial piety or loyalty to his father the king? 3) Jonathan's intercession works (for a time) and David is restored to the royal household. Who are the peacemakers in my faith community? How can I pray for and support them?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

28 JAN, TUESDAY

1 Samuel 19:8–17

Michal Helps David Escape

Psalms 59

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The temporary peace is broken as renewed war brings David success and Saul's jealousy returns. How did Saul make himself vulnerable to temptation according to 1 Samuel 9:9? 2) Michal warns David and helps him to escape, thus betraying her father and king. What does this tell me about the consequences of losing God's blessing and anointing on Saul? 3) In Psalms 59, David sings about the uncertainty and betrayal of this period of time. He will not return to the palace for more than a decade, yet he sings of God being his strength. How can I trust in God in times of upheaval and loss?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

29 JAN, WEDNESDAY

1 Samuel 19:18–24

Samuel Protects David

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Regardless of whether David was yet aware of the royal implications of his anointing by Samuel, it is to Samuel that David flees, rather than home to Bethlehem. What is David seeking from Samuel? 2) Saul persists in sending men to capture David, despite God's Spirit clearly working against his plans. To what can I attribute this stubbornness? 3) To his credit, king Saul decides to take matters into his own hands. What is the result of this? How can I reconcile what happens in today's passage with 1 Samuel 16:14?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

30 JAN, THURSDAY

1 Samuel 20:1–23

Testing Saul's Intentions

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Today's passage begins with both friends disbelieving each other. What underlying reasons are there for the eldest son of Saul and the anointed David to be mistrustful of each other? 2) Jonathan and David's love and trust for each other remains strong, as evidenced by their conversation in today's passage. What need then was there for the covenant of 1 Samuel 20:12-17? 3) Despite David's protestations, Jonathan is still not fully convinced. Yet he protects his friend and makes arrangements to safely pass information to him regarding his father's intentions. How can I build such trust into my relationships with those I love?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

31 JAN, FRIDAY

1 Samuel 20:24–34

Saul's Hatred for David

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Jonathan's explanation does not fool Saul, though Saul is unaware exactly how he is being deceived. Why does this raise Saul's anger? 2) Saul's words against Jonathan are incredibly harsh and revealing of his hatred for David (though Saul considered himself to be defending Jonathan's interest as well). How would Jonathan have felt on hearing the words of 1 Samuel 20:30-31? 3) Jonathan, unlike his father, does not react in anger, instead he attempts to understand his father, and perhaps intercede for David once again. How does Saul cut off all possibility for peace and reconciliation?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

1 FEB, SATURDAY

1 Samuel 20:35–42

David and Jonathan's Farewell

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Jonathan fulfilled his promise to David, risking his royal inheritance as well as possibly his own life. What does this tell me about his character and strength? 2) Jonathan's well-made plans ensured secrecy of communication, for the boy knew nothing of what was happening. The friends then share a tearful final farewell. Why does Scripture record that David 'wept the most'? What were both of them mourning?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) Jonathan as crown prince dismisses David in peace, as his father the king was unwilling to do, not knowing when they will ever meet again, nor even that David will survive safely. What peace is Jonathan invoking in sending David off?
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

2 FEB, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

3 FEB, MONDAY

1 Samuel 21:1-9

On The King's Business

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Ahimelek's reaction to David appearing alone (possibly tired and disheveled) is one of fear. While he was unlikely to have known that David was fleeing Saul, it was obvious something was unusual. How did Ahimelek react to this unusual situation? 2) David evades the truth and claims to be on the king's business (a plausible lie). Should he have been truthful with Ahimelek on the circumstances surrounding his presence?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) Ahimelek does not raise significant objection to giving the consecrated showbread which was customarily reserved for the priest (Jesus specifically approves this act in Matthew 12:1-8) or the sword of Goliath to David. Is David being practical in preparing for his exile, or has he lost some of the faith in God that he had had while facing the giant?
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

4 FEB, TUESDAY

1 Samuel 21:10–15

Captured by Philistines

Psalms 56, Psalms 34

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) 1 Samuel 21:10 says that David went to 'Achish king of Gath'. How does the context of Psalms 56 help me understand David's fear in today's passage? 2) Today's passage tells us that David pretended insanity. Significantly, David allows saliva to run down his beard — an integral part of the dignity of men of that culture and time. How does David's pretense reflect in some form the truth of what he is experiencing?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) Achish is fooled by David's act. How does Psalms 34 describe David's thankfulness for this?
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

5 FEB, WEDNESDAY

1 Samuel 22:1-5

The Cave of Refuge

Psalms 142

Context

Questions
to ponder

- 1) The word Adullam means 'refuge', yet David does not find much refuge there according to Psalms 142. What instead does he find (and who is it who finds him)?
- 2) What drew these 400 men to David's leadership? Where else would they have gone?
- 3) After David ensures the safety of his parents in the land of his great-grandmother Ruth, he is told by the prophet Gad to return to Judah where Saul was strong. What does David's obedience indicate?

Head

What can I
understand?

Heart

How do I respond?

Hands

What must I do?

6 FEB, THURSDAY

1 Samuel 22:6–23

Saul Murders the Priests of Nob

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Saul, in his paranoia, begins finding fault with his officials (a dangerous situation for them at this point). Doug the Edomite chooses this moment to volunteer information regarding the priests of Nob. Why had he not immediately informed king Saul about this? 2) Ahimelek claims innocence (and ignorance) of treachery. How does Saul react to this? Is Saul interested in the truth?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) The Jewish officials refused to murder Ahimelek and the other priests, but Doug the Edomite commits an act of genocide against them and their entire town. How does David make amends for this tragedy?
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

7 FEB, FRIDAY

1 Samuel 23:1–13

David and Keilah

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Philistine raiders were looting Keilah. Whose responsibility was it to deal with them? Who instead seeks the Lord and goes to the rescue of the town? 2) How does David's reliance on Abiathar's inquiry of the Lord reflect his attitude towards God in every action he was taking? How has this been reflected in the size of the group of men David leads? 3) What does Saul's willingness to raise an army against David (but not against the Philistines) say of his priorities at this time? Whose actions again save the city of Keilah?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

8 FEB, SATURDAY

1 Samuel 23:14–29

David at Horesh in the Desert of Ziph

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Jonathan goes to David and the close friends meet for the final time. What does Jonathan do for David? Who among my friends have I helped (or been helped by) in this way? 2) The Ziphites report David's location to Saul, and Saul and his army close in on David. What is their motivation for doing so? 3) Saul's army is closing in on David and his men when a messenger interrupts them, dramatically providing an escape for David. How did David and his men name that place after these events?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

9 FEB, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

10 FEB, MONDAY

1 Samuel 24:1–22

David Refuses to Take Saul's Life

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Once again Saul is informed of David's whereabouts and pursues him. In the pursuit, Saul enters a cave unprotected, not knowing that David and his men lurk within. Is this merely a coincidence? What is God's intention in arranging this? 2) What reason does David give to rebuff the advise of his men? How has David remained consistent with regards to his treatment of Saul throughout the turmoil of their relationship?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) When David risks his life to come out from hiding and humbly bows before Saul, Saul reacts with sorrow, gratitude, and even acknowledgement of David's coming ascension to the throne. What is missing from Saul's speech which indicates his lack of complete repentance?
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

11 FEB, TUESDAY

1 Samuel 25:1-17

Angered by a Fool

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Nabal was a wealthy man, and the time of sheep-shearing was when he was richest (reaping the economic benefits of his flocks). Why does David choose this season to send the young men to Nabal? 2) What right did David have to request (or demand) gifts from Nabal? What service had he and his men provided (recall their actions at Keilah in 1 Samuel 23)? 3) What is the intention of Nabal's reply in verses 10-11 (see also the servants' summary in verse 14)? What is David's immediate response to it?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

12 FEB, WEDNESDAY

1 Samuel 25:18–31

Saved by Abigail

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) 1 Samuel 25 refers to Abigail's intelligence, and today's passage demonstrates it. What is her purpose in preparing the generous gifts and setting out immediately towards David and his men? Who is she trying to save? 2) 1 Samuel 25:21-22 records David's intentions in response to Nabal's insults. What does this tell me about David's heart at this point in time? Do his actions (or reactions) bear any similarity to the failings of king Saul? 3) Abigail's speech to David does not focus on the gifts she has brought or the household she is protecting. Instead she spends most of it addressing David before God. Who else is Abigail trying to save with her actions?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

13 FEB, THURSDAY

1 Samuel 25:32-44

Praise Be to the Lord

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Twice in today's passage David offers praise to God. What is he acknowledging in these offerings of praise? 2) David also praises Abigail and sends her away in peace, mission fulfilled. What is David specifically thankful to Abigail for? 3) God does what David intended to do, and Nabal is struck down. Will my obedience and mercy cause God to immediately strike down my enemies today? What principle can I learn from David's encounter with Nabal?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

14 FEB, FRIDAY

1 Samuel 26:1–12

David Sneaks Into Saul's Camp

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) As with in 1 Samuel 24, David's whereabouts are reported to Saul. Once again Saul brings an army, despite his apparent remorse the last time this occurred (1 Samuel 24). What does this say about Saul's previous words and reactions? 2) David is again presented with an opportunity to end his exile and persecution, with Abishai even offering to do the deed on his behalf. What stays David's hand once more?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) David recognised (as mentioned in verse 12) the divine nature of the slumber Saul's finest men had fallen into. How does this affect his decisions in today's passage?
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

15 FEB, SATURDAY

1 Samuel 26:13–20

David's Plea

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Once again David reveals himself and the evidence of his restraint. How does 1 Samuel 26:13 differ from 1 Samuel 24:8? What does this mean? 2) David makes two pleas in today's passage (verses 18-20 and verses 23-24). How does this explain his continued refraining from taking Saul's life over multiple opportunities? 3) Saul once again speaks words of remorse and invites David to return with a promise of safety. Why doesn't David take him up on his offer (this is the last time they will meet)?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

16 FEB, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

17 FEB, MONDAY

1 Samuel 27:1-7

David Flees Israel

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) How can I describe David's state of mind (and spirit) in today's passage? What does this state of mind lead him to do? Does David consult God? 2) When Saul hears that David has fled Israel, he stops pursuing him. Has David won a victory? 3) David is no longer a lone madmen, but a leader of a sizable band of fighters. How does this open doors for Achish to accept and welcome him?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

18 FEB, TUESDAY

1 Samuel 27:8–28:2

David the Philistine Raider

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) David had previously fought against Philistine raiders. What do he and his men now engage in? 2) How do David and his men conduct themselves when raiding? Were they any better (or perhaps worse) than the Philistine raiders they had previously defended against? 3) Achish believes David to be raiding Israelite territory, leading him to trust David. Why does David agree to fight against Israel (and is there any indication that he is lying or being deceitful here)?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

19 FEB, WEDNESDAY

1 Samuel 28:3-14

Saul Consults the Medium at Endor

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Where does Saul first go for answers when faced with the great Philistine army? What is the result of his queries? 2) In desperation, Saul goes in secret to a medium, against the express command of God's Law. Whose advise is he seeking? 3) The woman's reaction in verse 12 indicates she had not expected to actually see Samuel. Why does this cause her to realise that Saul stood before her?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

20 FEB, THURSDAY

1 Samuel 28:15–25

Samuel's Final Message

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What reason does Samuel give for Saul's failure to receive word from God? Am I also in danger of being cut off from God's word and counsel? 2) Would any of Samuel's words have been a surprise to Saul? How does Saul react? Can I draw any lessons from this passage about the limits of God's patience? 3) It is ironic that the medium who secretly practiced divination despite Saul's campaign of extermination is the one who sustains Saul's strength for a while longer. Why does Saul refuse to eat?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

21 FEB, FRIDAY

1 Samuel 29:1–11

David Rejected by the Philistines

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Why are the Philistine rulers angry with Achish regarding David's mercenary band? Were their concerns well-founded? 2) Achish seems to genuinely trust David's loyalty. Is there any evidence in scripture for David actually being disloyal to Achish? 3) Is this where God intended for David to be, preparing to go to war against Israel? How do I see God's hand at work in the events of today's passage?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

22 FEB, SATURDAY

1 Samuel 30:1-7

Ziklag Attacked

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) While David and his men were away, Ziklag had been attacked and looted. How did David and his men react on reaching the burning town? 2) For some time now it has been obvious from his actions that David is not walking with the Lord. What does the tragedy of his family's kidnappings stir in him, according to 1 Samuel 30:6? 3) David asks Abiathar to bring out the ephod (last recorded to be used in 1 Samuel 23 after saving Keilah). How does this action illustrate the turnaround in David's spiritual posture?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

23 FEB, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

24 FEB, MONDAY

1 Samuel 30:8–20

You Will Certainly Succeed

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Unlike Saul in 1 Samuel 28:6, David receives an answer from God. What does God instruct David to do? 2) David immediately proceeds to obey God's instructions. Why do the men who had been talking about stoning him follow? 3) A chance discovery of an abandoned servant provides them with the intelligence they needed to locate the Amalekite raiders. What is the result of David seeking God's direction and obeying? Have I been faithful in seeking God's direction and obeying Him?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

25 FEB, TUESDAY

1 Samuel 30:21–30

Shared Spoils

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Why did David make the men who fought share the plunder with the men who were too exhausted in 1 Samuel 30:10? What is David's justification for this unusual practice? 2) David also sends some of the bountiful plunder to those in the towns surrounding the territories he and his men had frequented. What would the elders of this towns have thought about David over the past year while he was with the Philistines?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) In his actions in today's passage, is David behaving merely as a leader of a band of fighters, or as a king? What has prompted this change in perspective and outlook?
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

26 FEB, WEDNESDAY

1 Samuel 31:1–13

Saul's End

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) 1 Samuel 31:6 summarizes the end of Saul's story. As I reflect on his journey, why did he not live up to the initial promise of his selection as king? 2) The Philistine victory is total, even affecting towns far across the Jordan. What is the significance of the Philistine treatment of Saul's body in 1 Samuel 31:10? 3) The valant men of Jabesh Gilead retrieve the bodies of Saul and his sons. What special debt did the city owe to Saul (1 Samuel 11)? How do these men's actions remind me of hope in the midst of Israel's total defeat?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

Book of 2 Samuel

27 FEB, THURSDAY

2 Samuel 1:1-16

David Learns of Saul's Death

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The story told by the Amalekite in today's passage differs from the account of 1 Samuel 31. Which account do I think seems more likely to be true? What likely motivation does the Amalekite have in bringing this story and items to David? 2) David and his men had spent years being pursued by Saul. Why then do they immediately mourn in 2 Samuel 1:11-12? 3) David's judgement is immediate and consistent with his own actions in preserving Saul's life despite repeated opportunities for regicide. If the Amalekite's story had been fabricated, would this have changed David's reaction?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

28 FEB, FRIDAY

2 Samuel 1:17–27

David Laments

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) David writes a song of lament over the passing of Saul and Jonathan. How does David's personal history and enmity with Saul influence David's lament? 2) Where is David when he writes this lament (2 Samuel 1:1)? Why does he specifically mention Gath and Ashkelon (two great cities of the Philistines) in verse 20? 3) While David's lament does focus on Saul and Jonathan's stature and prowess in combat, verse 26 brings a more personal note. Have I had the privilege of experiencing this deep brotherly love and soul kinship?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

1 MAR, SATURDAY

2 Samuel 2:1-11

Two Kings

Context

Questions
to ponder

- 1) What clear indication do we have in today's passage that David is now fully recommitted to God (after abandoning both the land of Israel and the counsel of God for a year serving the Philistines)? How do I know that I am fully committed to God?
- 2) What do David's words to the men of Jabesh Gilead say about his attitude as king?
- 3) Who was it who appointed Ish-Bosheth son of Saul as king over the tribes of Israel (except Judah)? What gave him that authority (and what was his motivation)?

Head

What can I
understand?

Heart

How do I respond?

Hands

What must I do?

2 MAR, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

3 MAR, MONDAY

2 Samuel 2:12–23

War Between Joab and Abner

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Joab and Abner were the commanders of each competing king's armies, and they meet at the pool of Gibeon. Did the meeting begin peacefully? 2) The battle begins with a sort of duel or contest, which is handled very violently. What indication does this give regarding the battle which is about to begin? 3) During the fierce battle, Joab's brother Asahel pursues Abner, hoping to end the war by killing the opposing commander. Why does Abner attempt to warn Asahel away repeatedly? What does he fear?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

4 MAR, TUESDAY

2 Samuel 2:24–32

Peace?

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Joab and Abishai continue the pursuit, no doubt angered by their brother's death. What is the significance of Abner's army taking a stand in verse 25? 2) Abner sues for peace, invoking their shared Israelite heritage. What can I take away from the stark difference in casualties between the armies? 3) Both armies march throughout the night on leaving the battlefield. Does this urgency indicate a sense of fear for their own safety? What is the effect of civil war (material or spiritual) on a community?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

5 MAR, WEDNESDAY

2 Samuel 3:1-11

The King's Wives

Deuteronomy 17:17

Context

Questions
to ponder

1) The list of sons of David also includes the names of their mothers. What does this tell me about David's obedience to God's commands for kings in Deuteronomy 17:17?

2) On the other side of the civil war, Abner is 'strengthening his own position'. The accusation of Ish-Bosheth is that Abner is attempting to claim the kingship by appropriating king Saul's concubine (personal property of the deceased king). Scripture does not state whether this accusation is true, but what does Abner's reaction to the accusation imply?

3) In anger, Abner declares a change of allegiance. What does Ish-Bosheth's inaction tell me about the power dynamics in the house of Saul?

Head

What can I
understand?

Heart

How do I respond?

Hands

What must I do?

6 MAR, THURSDAY

2 Samuel 3:12–21

A Negotiated Settlement

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) David demands what is rightfully his, and Ish-Bosheth complies. What am I to make of the sorrow of Michal's husband Paltiel? 2) David is careful not to demand the kingship, having patiently waited for God's anointing as king to come to fruition. Who is it who utilizes his considerable influence to have David anointed by all the tribes? 3) David honours Abner and his men with a feast, despite Abner having been the greatest obstacle to David's kingship in recent times. What kingly example does David show here?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

7 MAR, FRIDAY

2 Samuel 3:22–39

Joab Murders Abner in Retribution

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Joab was away while Abner was in Hebron. Why does he react to the news with such opposition in verse 24? 2) Joab accuses Abner of deception and plots. What does he himself engage in in verses 26-27? 3) David is quick to renounce Joab's actions, declaring himself innocent. Why though does David the king not exact any punishment on his own general beyond requiring him to participate in mourning Abner?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

8 MAR, SATURDAY

2 Samuel 4:1–12

Murder of Ish-Bosheth

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The civil war is brought to an end by treachery. What do Baanah and Rekab's actions tell me about the conditions of Saul's household following Abner's murder? 2) Baanah and Rekab bring the head of the murdered son of Saul. What did they expect to receive for bringing David the head of his enemy? Did David see Ish-Bosheth as his enemy? 3) David's actions here mirror those he took when the Amalekite claimed to have killed Saul. Why is David so harsh on the crimes of these men?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

9 MAR, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

10 MAR, MONDAY

2 Samuel 5:1–16

David Established as King

1 Chronicles 12:38–40

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The tribes of Israel heed Abner's advise and come to David to anoint him king. What does 1 Chronicles 12:38-40 say about the scale and spirit of this event? 2) David's first recorded act as king is to capture the city which would be most associated with him, Jerusalem. The boasts of the Jebusites were proven fruitless in the face of God's anointed king. What difficult victories has God won for me in my life? 3) David's kingdom is established, with a fortress capital being built up and support even from neighbouring monarchs. How does verse 12 indicate David's heart before God at the point of God fulfilling all that had been promised?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

11 MAR, TUESDAY

2 Samuel 5:17–25

Philistines Defeated

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The Philistines were not pleased that Israel was reunited under a new king. How did they attempt to resolve this problem? 2) In two separate campaigns, David and Israel triumphed using two different strategies. Am I sometimes guilty of sticking to the same old methods which have worked for me before? 3) Beyond mere military strategy, David's well-known military skills are not the primary cause of Israel's victories. Why is David so successful against the Philistines (in comparison with king Saul) according to verse 25?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

12 MAR, WEDNESDAY

2 Samuel 6:1–11

Bringing Back the Ark

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) David's next act concerns the ark of the covenant. Why does David intend to bring the ark to him in Jerusalem? What did the ark represent? 2) The ark had been in the house of Abinadab (1 Samuel 7:1) for 20 years, having been a scourge both to the Philistines and the irreverent men of Beth-shemesh (1 Samuel 5 and 6). Why then does Uzzah son of Abinadab fail to treat the ark with reverence? 3) David becomes both angry and afraid because of what happens in today's passage. Why does this cause him to abandon his intention to bring the Ark to Jerusalem?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

13 MAR, THURSDAY

2 Samuel 6:12–23

Bringing Back the Ark Again

1 Chronicles 15:13–15

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The first attempt to bring the Ark back to Jerusalem included celebration to honour God and the occasion. The second is likewise, but what obedience has David included according to verse 13 (see also 1 Chronicles 15:13-15)? 2) David himself participated in the celebrations, dressing as the priests did (without the robes of a king) and dancing before the Lord in worship. What example does he set here about worship before God?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) Scripture records that Michal despises David. Why does she feel this way about her husband the king? What is David's response to her criticism, and what does this tell me about how David sees his position as king?
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

14 MAR, FRIDAY

2 Samuel 7:1-7

Would You Build Me a House?

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) David intends to build God a house. What does it say about David that the king first discusses his intentions with the prophet Nathan? 2) Nathan immediately replies positively to David's expressed intentions in verse 3. Yet that very night, the word of the Lord came to Nathan. Was Nathan presumptuous in his initial response to David? 3) God refuses David's intentions. What are the reasons that God gives in today's passage? Are there principles here for me to learn regarding God's purposes and instruction?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

15 MAR, SATURDAY

2 Samuel 7:8–17

I Will Build Your House

1 Chronicles 22:8–10

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<p>1) God reminds David of what He has done for him, and then begins to promise more to come for both Israel and David. Is God's faithfulness and blessing conditional on His people's devotion to Him (as demonstrated by David's intention to build God a house)?</p> <p>2) God's promise to Israel is security from their enemies, while David is promised a throne established forever. Additionally, his son would fulfil his intentions to build God a house. Why is this task given to David's son rather than to David who expressed the intention (see also 1 Chronicles 22:8-10)?</p>
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	<p>3) Verse 14 includes the promise of chastening. Is this a threat and warning to David's descendents? How does this differ from the punishment God had visited upon Saul?</p>
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

16 MAR, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

17 MAR, MONDAY

2 Samuel 7:18–29

David's Prayer of Thanksgiving

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) David begins his thanksgiving by establishing his position before God. What can I learn from this king about humility and awareness of self? 2) David continues his thanksgiving by extolling God's greatness (and the uniqueness of His people). How do I extol the greatness of God in my times of prayer and worship? 3) David ends his thanksgiving by asking that God keep His promises. Do David's words here indicate a lack of faith or an attempt to 'pressure' God? What can I learn here for my own times of supplication before God?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

18 MAR, TUESDAY

2 Samuel 8:1-14

David's Victories

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<p>1) David was a man of war (see also the reading on 2 Samuel 7:8-17), and defeated nations in every direction around Israel. What was the basis of David's victories according to verse 6?</p> <p>2) David's victories were not only military in nature. Other nations (such as Hamath in verses 9-10) establish friendly relations with Israel in response to their military victories. What does David do with the tribute and plunder from his victories? Is there something for me to learn here about the fruit of my own victories?</p>
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	<p>3) Israel was under one God, but the kingdom was not a one-man-show (unlike Saul's kingdom where Scripture does not record any government beyond Saul and Abner his commander). How do verses 16-18 illustrate the success of David's victories just as much as the territorial gains described in prior verses?</p>
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

19 MAR, WEDNESDAY

2 Samuel 9:1-13

David's Kindness

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Having a well-established kingdom, David seeks out survivors of Saul's family. It appears that the king is not (to this point) aware that Jonathan's son Mephibosheth is still alive. What does this imply about Mephibosheth's desire to remain hidden? 2) How does Mephibosheth respond to David when he meets him for the first time? Why are David's first words to the son of king Saul's first-born that he need not be afraid?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) Instead of eliminating a potential rival for the throne, David restores all Saul's land to Mephibosheth (in accordance with God's law) and goes even further by inviting him to the king's table as family. What motivates David to do this? Is this example of overflowing kindness relevant to my life today?
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

20 MAR, THURSDAY

2 Samuel 10:1-7

Israel Insulted by the Ammonites

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<p>1) Scripture does not record what kindness Nahash king of the Ammonites had shown David (though a son of Nahash does assist David when he is fleeing from Absalom in 2 Samuel 17:27). However David obviously appreciated Nahash. How does the king intend to show that appreciation?</p> <p>2) The Ammonites commanders likely viewed Israel with suspicion given their recent military victories against other military powers in the region. How do these suspicions escalate into direct insults against David's ambassadors? Have I ever needlessly escalated a situation based on my own suspicions or prejudices?</p>
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	<p>3) Verse 6 shows that the Ammonites realised the implications of what they had done, and hence prepared for war. How did the Ammonites attempt to secure victory over Israel? What did David do in response?</p>
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

21 MAR, FRIDAY

2 Samuel 10:8–14

Joab Defeats the Alliance

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) In this first set of battles, Joab is in command. Why does David remain in Jerusalem? 2) Joab finds himself surrounded, a very disadvantageous position in warfare. How does he attack this problem, and what encouragement does he give to the fighting men of Israel? 3) Scripture records that Joab and his troops advanced, and the enemy fled before him rather than engaging in battle (see also Deuteronomy 28:7). While this did not occur in every battle Israel engaged in, what lesson can I take for the battles I engage in on God's behalf?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

22 MAR, SATURDAY

2 Samuel 10:15–11:1

David Defeats the Arameans

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The Arameans regrouped to continue the war. Why does David lead Israel's army this time (verse 17)? 2) What difference does David's leadership make in the battle (verse 18 compared with verse 13) and the outcome of the battle (verse 19 vs verse 15)? 3) The war is halted by the change of seasons with the Ammonites still secure Rabbah. The next spring, David again remains in Jerusalem (a mistake). Should David have been with his men during the spring battles? What lesson can I take here about persisting in being where God places me?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

23 MAR, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

24 MAR, MONDAY

2 Samuel 11:2-5

David's Sin

James 1:13-15

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<p>1) Intentional sins start off with temptation. Did David's sin start with an evening walk and a glance of a woman bathing? Did it start in 2 Samuel 11:1? Or did it start in 1 Samuel 25:42-43?</p> <p>2) James 1:13-15 describes the progression from temptation to sin. What specific actions did David take in verses 2 and 3 which progressed his temptation into sin against God and against Bathsheba?</p>
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	<p>3) Theologians differ on the subject of whether Bathsheba was a willing or unwilling party in this sin. Considering the disparity in power and responsibility between the king and Bathsheba, does her consent or lack thereof in any way mitigate David's own sin? Am I able to recognise abuse without falling for victim-blaming?</p>
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

25 MAR, TUESDAY

2 Samuel 11:6–13

Uriah's Righteousness

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) David follows-up his sin by trying to cover it up. Is this my first instinct as well? 2) Uriah's sense of righteousness and responsibility contrasts starkly with David sinning while remaining home in Jerusalem while his men were at war. How can being in the center of God's ordained plan protect me from falling into sin? 3) Methodists are familiar with the evils of alcohol taken carelessly. However, Scripture is clear that Uriah's drunkenness does not provoke an abandonment of his righteous adherence to his values. How can I build Godly values into my life such that even a loss of inhibitions will not bring about sinfulness?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

26 MAR, WEDNESDAY

2 Samuel 11:14–27

David Sins to Cover Up His Sin

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<p>1) David now adds to his sin by arranging for Uriah's death, echoing the intent of Saul for David in 1 Samuel 18:17 and 18:25. Can this sin be blamed on a temporary loss of willpower or control?</p> <p>2) Joab is by all accounts a great general, yet in obedience to his king he willingly sacrifices Uriah and some other men of his army. What can I learn here both about the infectious nature of sin as well as the responsibility of every man to avoid sin even when under orders (see also 1 Samuel 22:17)?</p>
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	<p>3) Today's passage ends with David's success in covering up his sin. In the public eye he remains a kind king, generously taking in the widow of one of his faithful fallen soldiers. Have I ever gotten away with my sin before? Is God also fooled?</p>
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

27 MAR, THURSDAY

2 Samuel 12:1-6

The Poor Man's Lamb

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The Lord sends Nathan to prophecy to David. Why does Nathan begin with a story about sheep and lambs instead of directly confronting David? 2) David's righteous anger shows how well he understands the law of God (see Exodus 22:1 on the law for restoration for theft). Is it possible for me (or any believer) to know God's Word well but yet not live by it? 3) In his reaction, David (though he does not yet know it) condemns his own sin. This is a necessary part of repentance, condemning my own sin rather than minimizing or deflecting it. Is there any area of sin in my life which I need to condemn today?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

28 MAR, FRIDAY

2 Samuel 12:7-13a

Nathan Confronts David

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Nathan begins his rebuke of David by summarizing God's promises and blessings on David from 2 Samuel 7:4-17. Has God richly blessed me? How should that influence how I view my own sinfulness? 2) God promises multiple punishments for David. How do each of these punishments reflect the sins that David had committed? 3) David's response to Nathan is similar in form to Saul's response to Samuel in 1 Samuel 15:24-25. What similarities and differences are there between the punishments for these 2 kings (and their repentance)?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

29 MAR, SATURDAY

2 Samuel 12:13b-25

Consequences of Sin

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) While the punishments in yesterday's passage were of larger national import, Nathan also conveys a very personal consequence from the Lord on David — the death of Bathsheba's son. How does my sin impact other innocent people around me? 2) David's heart (despite his sin) shows in his pleading before God, the intensity of which frightened even those who knew him best. Have I ever pleaded desperately to God before? Does my desperation mean that God will surely give what I ask for? 3) David demonstrates a wise understanding of God's sovereignty as well as the limits of man's endeavours. The final consequence of his sin in today's passage is not another punishment, but a restoration in verses 24-25. Does God's grace here mitigate the severity of David's sin?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

30 MAR, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

31 MAR, MONDAY

2 Samuel 12:26–31

David Conquers Rabbah

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) While David had been losing his struggle against sin, Joab and his army had been struggling to capture Rabbah. Did David's repentance have an effect on that material struggle in the land of the Ammonites? 2) Joab has led the army throughout the campaign for Rabbah, but he seems to understand that it is David who should have been there leading the troops. How did David's return to the field provide some closure to his sin regarding Bathsheba and Uriah the Hittite?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) David and Israel continue to be victorious on the battlefield. Similarly, Saul continued to be victorious (through David) after he sinned against God in 1 Samuel 15. Are my victories and accomplishments proof that I am righteous before God?
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

Notes

Notes

Notes

Notes

SSMC | 2025 key dates.

January 19 Jan Church Visioning	February	March
April 18 Apr Good Friday 20 Apr Easter Sunday	May 24 - 25 May 50th Anniversary Dinner & Anniversary Gift Day for Missions May (Dates TBC) Vacation Bible School	June
July	August 24 Aug DG Sunday 30 Aug - 1 Sep Youth Camp	September 21 Sep Social Concerns Sunday 28 Sep Youth Sunday
October 12 Oct MSF Sunday 18 - 20 Oct Birds & Bees Camp 26 Oct Children's Church Sunday	November 23 Nov Baptism & Membership Service	December 25 Dec Christmas Service 31 Dec Covenant Watchnight Service

Dates may be subjected to changes. Please refer to our website / church announcements for updates & more info.

ssmc.com.my



Sungai-Way Subang Methodist Church

Lot 1044, Jalan Cempaka, Kampung Sungai Kayu Ara,
Damansara Utama, 47400 Petaling Jaya, Selangor

 603-7726 9172  ssmethodist@gmail.com  www.ssmc.com.my