

BIBLE READING NOTES FOR JUNE 2023
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You will find reading the Bible rewarding and encouraging,
but reading the Bible is not always easy!

These guidelines may help you.

Before you read each passage, ask God to speak to you through His Word.

Set aside a special time each day to read the Bible, and stick to it!

Make use of your Bible index to find readings – every Bible has a contents page.

Pray that what you have read will help you live according to God's wishes.

June 1st 1Samuel 17:28-40

It is a measure of the fear which gripped the army that the King was willing to entrust his own life, and the lives of his soldiers, to the outcome of a most unequal contest between a mere boy and a giant. No doubt many regarded David's claim that "The Lord will save me from the Philistine" as the idle boast of an immature, but they really had no alternative. David at least was willing to go at a time when no one else was.

June 2nd 1Samuel 17:41-45

The impossible happened! The unarmed boy slew the mighty giant. Those of faith know that the impossible does sometimes happen. When Jesus was nailed to the Cross no one thought the resurrection possible—yet it happened. That feared 'Goliath' in our own private lives—the memory, the fear, the temptation—can also be slain if we but put our trust in God.

June 3rd 1Samuel 17:55-18.5

What an emotional meeting that must have been! Saul at once relieved and overjoyed that his nation was once again safe from the threat of conquest; David Flushed with pride that he was so suddenly the hero of the entire army; and Jonathan, the king's son, fascinated by this new friend for whom he had developed such an admiration. It was one of those rare moments in life when life seems one long summer and there is no cloud on the horizon!

June 4th 1Samuel 18:6-16

The joy of yesterday's passage didn't last long. David went from success to last long. David went from success to success and became the hero of the entire nation. Saul feared this new national hero and was jealous of him. His jealousy even led to a fit of rage. Notice how v.10 speaks of "an evil spirit taking control of him".

June 5th 1Samuel 19:1-10

The rage becomes more than a passing fit. Now it is an almost continual obsession. Even Jonathan is torn between loyalty to his father and love for his friend. These chapters give us a moving insight into the onset of madness. Perhaps the pressure of kingship was too great for him. It is so easy to criticise those called to high office in any society. They may enjoy certain privileges, but they are also under pressures the majority of us know nothing about.

June 6th 1Samuel 20:1-8, 27-33

Jealousy, rage, violence towards a suspected enemy and now there is violence towards his own son. What a change from the fine young man in the prime of life we read about in Chapter 9!

June 7th 1Samuel 22:1-8

The time had come for David to flee, but he is not alone in his plight. He becomes the leader of 400 dissidents who had all suffered at the hands of Saul. In this strange way David is being prepared for the great task of leadership that will one day be laid upon him. The chosen people of God are in sore straits under a mad king, but already God is preparing a new ruler. We may often grumble when God seems to have withdrawn from the affairs of this life; God is never idle.

June 8th 1Samuel 23:14-29

Saul's madness will not give him peace until he has destroyed David, and so he hunts the fugitive. Saul's men are closing in and it seems David's fate is sealed, when suddenly an urgent message that the Philistines, that ancient enemy, are attacking Israel forces Saul to call off the chase and hurry home. As we have seen so often before, God has strange ways of working! Only God's divine intervention saved David.

June 9th 1Samuel 24:1-22

What a strange chapter! Saul resumes the hunt, and unwittingly goes into a cave where David is hiding. How easily David could have slain his attacker, removed the threat from his life, and assumed the leadership of the army and the nation. It was his golden opportunity, but he refused to take it - so strong was his loyalty to, and respect for, the man whom God had placed on the throne, even though that man was hunting his life. Ought a Christian ever engage in civil disobedience?

June 10th 1Samuel 26:1-17

A second time God places Saul at David's mercy, and again David refuses to allow personal ambition to lead him into a sin against God's chosen servant.

June 11th 1Samuel 28:3-25

Saul is now desperate. The Philistine army is gathering on his borders; David is still alive and the object of all the King's maniacal hatred; and Samuel, the wise old prophet and man of God, has died. Saul is both defenceless and threatened. In his mental condition he is almost at breaking point. If only he could go to Samuel, the man of God, for counsel and advice. Saul takes his fatal step - he consults a medium. We may not understand all there is to know about spiritism and the occult, but of two things we may be absolutely certain; first, it is real, and second, it is horribly dangerous. No one, and least of all a Christian, should have anything at all to do with witchcraft, mediums, seances or magic of any kind. It is an evil power.

June 12th 1Samuel 31:1-13

Saul's struggle with life is over, and it was anything but a heroic end. The story of Saul is a tragedy. His life began so full of promise and potential, but it ended in ruins, and the ruin encompassed his sons as well. It seems to be one of the rules of life that a foolish man never suffers alone; in his foolishness he destroys others, the innocent, along with himself. We think we are free to please ourselves, but whatever we choose inevitably involves others as well, for good or for ill. We cannot avoid it.

June 13th 2Samuel 1:17-27

In spite of all that David had suffered at the hands of Saul, he still honoured him as the king whom God had appointed. Nor could David ever forget the loyalty of Jonathan. When he heard of their deaths, his grief was genuine. A lesser man might have rejoiced at the death of his enemy, but David was truly a man whom God had chosen.

June 14th 2Samuel 2:1-11

David's preparation in the wilderness is now over and his march to power has begun. He is now king of the relatively small country of Judah where he reigns for seven years until he is ready for the next stage. Have you ever thought of how often God uses the wilderness as a period of preparation. There was Jesus in the wilderness after His baptism and before His ministry began; there was Paul, the apostle, who 'disappeared' for a time before he was ready for the great task to which God had called him; there was the journey through the wilderness by the whole people of Israel before they eventually settled in the land of promise. Don't grumble if you feel left in the backwater of life. God may be preparing you for something which God has called you, and you alone to do.

June 15th 2Samuel 5:1-12

David is now king of both Israel and Judah and has established Jerusalem as his capital. The former fugitive and outlaw is now in control. Notice how David realised that God had established him and was making the kingdom prosperous "for the sake of his people". If God chooses to bestow upon us any special gift, or places us in some position of special responsibility, then it is never for our own personal benefit or pleasure but always for the good of God's own people.

June 16th 2Samuel 5:17-25

There seems to be no limit to David's successes and conquests, but notice that he always seeks God's guidance before he attempts anything, and he always gives God the credit for any success that is granted to him.

June 17th 2Samuel 6:1-15

The Covenant Box was a religious heirloom from Israel's days in the wilderness under Moses. During the time of Eli it had been captured by the Philistines and David sought to recover it at the very first opportunity. David's kingdom was not to be founded on military power but on the honouring of God's name.

June 18th 2Samuel 7:1-17

David is reaching the very height of his power. He is king over a united nation, he is feared by his enemies, he has produced both security and prosperity throughout the land.

How easy it would be for him to bask in the glory of his own achievements, but David knew that he was able to accomplish all that only because God was with him. It was his great desire that God should be honoured, not by the primitive Covenant Box of their forefathers but by a fine temple worthy of the King of Heaven. How fortunate a nation is when it is ruled by a God-honouring monarch or government.

June 19th 2Samuel 7:18-29

David was not only a man of war, he was also a man of prayer, a man of humility and a man of spiritual vision. We might not be able to share David's military prowess and personal heroism, but we can share his prayer, his humility, his devotion and his vision.

June 20th 2Samuel 9:1-13

Today we read of David at his noblest and best. In spite of his own personal success he still remembers with gratitude and affection his friend Jonathan. He discovers that there is a son of his friend still surviving though a helpless cripple. Poor Mephibosheth thinks of himself as no higher than a *dead dog*, but because he is his father's son the king honours him and makes him a guest at the table - as we might say, one of the family.

June 21st 2Samuel 11:1-17

Today we read of David at his sinful worst. In a moment of idleness a beautiful woman captivated his eye. His flagrant immorality was bad enough, but the way he contrived the murder of that woman's husband, one of his own military officers, was quite inexcusable. How fickle human nature can be! The man who was capable of such generosity to Mephibosheth is capable also of lust for Bathsheba and the murder of Uriah. Not one of us dare say, "I would never do a thing like that". In a moment of idleness we cannot tell what temptation may afflict us, and how we may succumb to it. Our only protection is a daily walk in the strength of Christ.

June 22nd 2Samuel 11:18-27

The chilling message of this passage comes in the very last words, "but the Lord was not pleased with what David had done". There is an idea going around that each of us is free to do whatever we want to do and it is no concern of anyone else. Everything we do, and everything we think, is known to God and it pleases or it displeases God according to whether it is in accordance with God's will or not. Even a king chosen by God may, in a moment of temptation, do what is displeasing to God.

June 23rd 2Samuel 12:1-14

This is perhaps the best known parable in the whole of the Old Testament. The prophet, Nathan, tells the king a parable which so rouses his anger that he pronounces punishment on the guilty man. Little does David realise that the parable is told against himself and that he is the guilty man. How easily we pass judgement on others and never realise that we are guilty of the very same, or an even greater, fault.

June 24th 2Samuel 12:15-23

We may think it unjust of God that David should be forgiven and the innocent child die. One of the hardest lessons in this life to learn is that my action and my behaviour will

inevitably affect other people, and particularly those within my family circle. I may do something great and noble, and my family will feel pleased and proud; or I may do something dishonourable and cruel, and my family will know shame and disgrace. It is unavoidable.

June 25th 2Samuel 13:15-22

How fascinating to trace the stages in David's life (a) the shepherd boy who becomes a national hero; (b) the fugitive fleeing from a mad king; (c) the statesman who brings his nation to a level of international acclaim it was never to know again; (d) the adulterer and murderer who is about to undergo a period of personal and national humiliation and degradation. There is perhaps no other chapter in the Bible which so portrays the weakness and corruption and infallibility of human nature.

June 26th 2Samuel 13:23-39

We have already seen how an innocent child may die as a result on one man's sin. Here we see how the sin of one man almost destroys an entire family.

June 27th 2Samuel 13:23-39

This is self-deception. We need someone to hold a mirror before us in order that we may see ourselves as others see us. The clearest mirror any person may have is Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Constantly we must ask ourselves, "Would Jesus have done what I have just done? How would Jesus handle this particular situation that faces me?" He is our Guide, if we but let Him guide us.

June 28th 2Samuel 14:25-33

Absalom may have been without defect in outward appearance, but his inner character and personality were rotten. How truly it has been said that beauty is only skin deep!

June 29th 2Samuel 15:1-12

Absalom had been forgiven and restored, but still he is not satisfied. He is filled with such a pride that nothing will satisfy him but his father's throne. There are times when we must be bold for the sake of Christ and His Kingdom, but we must never be bold for our own personal advantage. In those chapters which tell of the near-destruction of David's family have you noticed how seldom God's name is mentioned? This is the secret of the whole chapter. When we turn from God, we turn head-on into trouble.

June 30th 2Samuel 15:13-23

David's humiliation is now almost complete. How bitter it must have been for one who had been the hero and darling of his nation once again to take to the hills for safety. Notice how there is no whisper of complaint or suggestion that God has deserted him. Does not this remind us of Someone else in His hour of suffering?