

Sunday, May 26

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2 Samuel 9:1 - 11:27

9 1 One day David asked, "Is anyone in Saul's family still alive—anyone to whom I can show kindness for Jonathan's sake?" **2** He summoned a man named Ziba, who had been one of Saul's servants. "Are you Ziba?" the king asked. "Yes sir, I am," Ziba replied. **3** The king then asked him, "Is anyone still alive from Saul's family? If so, I want to show God's kindness to them." Ziba replied, "Yes, one of Jonathan's sons is still alive. He is crippled in both feet." **4** "Where is he?" the king asked. "In Lo-debar," Ziba told him, "at the home of Makir son of Ammiel." **5** So David sent for him and brought him from Makir's home. **6** His name was Mephibosheth ; he was Jonathan's son and Saul's grandson. When he came to David, he bowed low to the ground in deep respect. David said, "Greetings, Mephibosheth." Mephibosheth replied, "I am your servant." **7** "Don't be afraid!" David said. "I intend to show kindness to you because of my promise to your father, Jonathan. I will give you all the property that once belonged to your grandfather Saul, and you will eat here with me at the king's table!" **8** Mephibosheth bowed respectfully and exclaimed, "Who is your servant, that you should show such kindness to a dead dog like me?" **9** Then the king summoned Saul's servant Ziba and said, "I have given your master's grandson everything that belonged to Saul and his family. **10** You and your sons and servants are to farm the land for him to produce food for your master's household. But Mephibosheth, your master's grandson, will eat here at my table." (Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.) **11** Ziba replied, "Yes, my lord the king; I am your servant, and I will do all that you have commanded." And from that time on, Mephibosheth ate regularly at David's table, like one of the king's own sons. **12** Mephibosheth had a young son named Mica. From then on, all the members of Ziba's household were Mephibosheth's servants. **13** And Mephibosheth, who was crippled in both feet, lived in Jerusalem and ate regularly at the king's table.

10 1 Some time after this, King Nahash of the Ammonites died, and his son Hanun became king. **2** David said, "I am going to show loyalty to Hanun just as his father, Nahash, was always loyal to me." So David sent ambassadors to express sympathy to Hanun about his father's death. But when David's ambassadors arrived in the land of Ammon, **3** the Ammonite commanders said to Hanun, their master, "Do you really think these men are coming here to honor your father? No! David has sent them to spy out the city so they can come in and conquer

it!" **4** So Hanun seized David's ambassadors and shaved off half of each man's beard, cut off their robes at the buttocks, and sent them back to David in shame. **5** When David heard what had happened, he sent messengers to tell the men, "Stay at Jericho until your beards grow out, and then come back." For they felt deep shame because of their appearance. **6** When the people of Ammon realized how seriously they had angered David, they sent and hired 20,000 Aramean foot soldiers from the lands of Beth-rehob and Zobah, 1,000 from the king of Maacah, and 12,000 from the land of Tob. **7** When David heard about this, he sent Joab and all his warriors to fight them. **8** The Ammonite troops came out and drew up their battle lines at the entrance of the city gate, while the Arameans from Zobah and Rehob and the men from Tob and Maacah positioned themselves to fight in the open fields. **9** When Joab saw that he would have to fight on both the front and the rear, he chose some of Israel's elite troops and placed them under his personal command to fight the Arameans in the fields. **10** He left the rest of the army under the command of his brother Abishai, who was to attack the Ammonites. **11** "If the Arameans are too strong for me, then come over and help me," Joab told his brother. "And if the Ammonites are too strong for you, I will come and help you. **12** Be courageous! Let us fight bravely for our people and the cities of our God. May the LORD 's will be done." **13** When Joab and his troops attacked, the Arameans began to run away. **14** And when the Ammonites saw the Arameans running, they ran from Abishai and retreated into the city. After the battle was over, Joab returned to Jerusalem. **15** The Arameans now realized that they were no match for Israel. So when they regrouped, **16** they were joined by additional Aramean troops summoned by Hadadezer from the other side of the Euphrates River. These troops arrived at Helam under the command of Shobach, the commander of Hadadezer's forces. **17** When David heard what was happening, he mobilized all Israel, crossed the Jordan River, and led the army to Helam. The Arameans positioned themselves in battle formation and fought against David. **18** But again the Arameans fled from the Israelites. This time David's forces killed 700 charioteers and 40,000 foot soldiers, including Shobach, the commander of their army. **19** When all the kings allied with Hadadezer saw that they had been defeated by Israel, they surrendered to Israel and became their subjects. After that, the Arameans were afraid to help the Ammonites.

11 1 In the spring of the year, when kings normally go out to war, David sent Joab and the Israelite army to fight the Ammonites. They destroyed the Ammonite army and laid siege to the city of Rabbah. However, David stayed behind in Jerusalem. **2** Late one afternoon, after his midday rest, David got out of bed and was walking on the roof of the palace. As he looked out over the city, he noticed a woman of unusual beauty taking a bath. **3** He sent someone to find out who she was, and he was told, "She is Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite." **4** Then David sent messengers to get her; and when she came to the palace,

he slept with her. She had just completed the purification rites after having her menstrual period. Then she returned home. **5** Later, when Bathsheba discovered that she was pregnant, she sent David a message, saying, "I'm pregnant." **6** Then David sent word to Joab: "Send me Uriah the Hittite." So Joab sent him to David. **7** When Uriah arrived, David asked him how Joab and the army were getting along and how the war was progressing. **8** Then he told Uriah, "Go on home and relax." David even sent a gift to Uriah after he had left the palace. **9** But Uriah didn't go home. He slept that night at the palace entrance with the king's palace guard. **10** When David heard that Uriah had not gone home, he summoned him and asked, "What's the matter? Why didn't you go home last night after being away for so long?" **11** Uriah replied, "The Ark and the armies of Israel and Judah are living in tents, and Joab and my master's men are camping in the open fields. How could I go home to wine and dine and sleep with my wife? I swear that I would never do such a thing." **12** "Well, stay here today," David told him, "and tomorrow you may return to the army." So Uriah stayed in Jerusalem that day and the next. **13** Then David invited him to dinner and got him drunk. But even then he couldn't get Uriah to go home to his wife. Again he slept at the palace entrance with the king's palace guard. **14** So the next morning David wrote a letter to Joab and gave it to Uriah to deliver. **15** The letter instructed Joab, "Station Uriah on the front lines where the battle is fiercest. Then pull back so that he will be killed." **16** So Joab assigned Uriah to a spot close to the city wall where he knew the enemy's strongest men were fighting. **17** And when the enemy soldiers came out of the city to fight, Uriah the Hittite was killed along with several other Israelite soldiers. **18** Then Joab sent a battle report to David. **19** He told his messenger, "Report all the news of the battle to the king. **20** But he might get angry and ask, 'Why did the troops go so close to the city? Didn't they know there would be shooting from the walls?' **21** Wasn't Abimelech son of Gideon killed at Thebez by a woman who threw a millstone down on him from the wall? Why would you get so close to the wall?' Then tell him, 'Uriah the Hittite was killed, too.'" **22** So the messenger went to Jerusalem and gave a complete report to David. **23** "The enemy came out against us in the open fields," he said. "And as we chased them back to the city gate, **24** the archers on the wall shot arrows at us. Some of the king's men were killed, including Uriah the Hittite." **25** "Well, tell Joab not to be discouraged," David said. "The sword devours this one today and that one tomorrow! Fight harder next time, and conquer the city!" **26** When Uriah's wife heard that her husband was dead, she mourned for him. **27** When the period of mourning was over, David sent for her and brought her to the palace, and she became one of his wives. Then she gave birth to a son. But the LORD was displeased with what David had done.

15 **1** “I am the true grapevine, and my Father is the gardener. **2** He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn’t produce fruit, and he prunes the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more. **3** You have already been pruned and purified by the message I have given you. **4** Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me. **5** “Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing. **6** Anyone who does not remain in me is thrown away like a useless branch and withers. Such branches are gathered into a pile to be burned. **7** But if you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be granted! **8** When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples. This brings great glory to my Father. **9** “I have loved you even as the Father has loved me. Remain in my love. **10** When you obey my commandments, you remain in my love, just as I obey my Father’s commandments and remain in his love. **11** I have told you these things so that you will be filled with my joy. Yes, your joy will overflow! **12** This is my commandment: Love each other in the same way I have loved you. **13** There is no greater love than to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. **14** You are my friends if you do what I command. **15** I no longer call you slaves, because a master doesn’t confide in his slaves. Now you are my friends, since I have told you everything the Father told me. **16** You didn’t choose me. I chose you. I appointed you to go and produce lasting fruit, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask for, using my name. **17** This is my command: Love each other. **18** “If the world hates you, remember that it hated me first. **19** The world would love you as one of its own if you belonged to it, but you are no longer part of the world. I chose you to come out of the world, so it hates you. **20** Do you remember what I told you? ‘A slave is not greater than the master.’ Since they persecuted me, naturally they will persecute you. And if they had listened to me, they would listen to you. **21** They will do all this to you because of me, for they have rejected the one who sent me. **22** They would not be guilty if I had not come and spoken to them. But now they have no excuse for their sin. **23** Anyone who hates me also hates my Father. **24** If I hadn’t done such miraculous signs among them that no one else could do, they would not be guilty. But as it is, they have seen everything I did, yet they still hate me and my Father. **25** This fulfills what is written in their Scriptures : ‘They hated me without cause.’ **26** “But I will send you the Advocate —the Spirit of truth. He will come to you from the Father and will testify all about me. **27** And you must also testify about me because you have been with me from the beginning of my ministry.

119 **49** Remember your promise to me; it is my only hope. **50** Your promise revives me; it comforts me in all my troubles. **51** The proud hold me in utter contempt, but I do not turn away from your instructions. **52** I meditate on your age-old regulations; O LORD, they comfort me. **53** I become furious with the wicked, because they reject your instructions. **54** Your decrees have been the theme of my songs wherever I have lived. **55** I reflect at night on who you are, O LORD ; therefore, I obey your instructions. **56** This is how I spend my life: obeying your commandments. **57** LORD, you are mine! I promise to obey your words! **58** With all my heart I want your blessings. Be merciful as you promised. **59** I pondered the direction of my life, and I turned to follow your laws. **60** I will hurry, without delay, to obey your commands. **61** Evil people try to drag me into sin, but I am firmly anchored to your instructions. **62** I rise at midnight to thank you for your just regulations. **63** I am a friend to anyone who fears you— anyone who obeys your commandments. **64** O LORD, your unfailing love fills the earth; teach me your decrees.

Proverbs 16:1 - 3

16 **1** We can make our own plans, but the LORD gives the right answer. **2** People may be pure in their own eyes, but the LORD examines their motives. **3** Commit your actions to the LORD, and your plans will succeed.