

May 4  
Adults and Next Gen  
Lesson 17

2025  
**CHRONOLOGICAL BIBLE**

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**DOES MY SIN  
AFFECT OTHERS?  
2 Samuel 24:1–25;  
1 Chronicles 21:1–27**

**May 4, 2025**  
**Lesson 17**

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**2 Samuel 24:1–25; 1 Chronicles 21:1–27**

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**MAIN IDEA**

Our personal sin leads to other people's pain.

**OUTLINE**

**Weekly Reading Recap**

**Era Overview**

**Introduction**

- 1. Our Sin Begins With Offensive Plans (1 Chronicles 21:1–3, p. 417)**
  - David's instructions were disobedient.
  - David's instructions were self-initiated.
  - David's instructions were prideful.
- 2. Our Sin Involves Other People (1 Chronicles 21:4–6, p. 417)**
  - David involved Joab and his commanders.
  - David involved every man who registered.
- 3. Our Sin Leads to Others' Pain (1 Chronicles 21:7–15, p. 417)**
  - God punished Israel.
  - God offered mercy to Israel.

**Redemption Thread**

**Call to Action** (Repent of any sin you are holding on to.)

**Conclusion**

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**Special Note**

This Life Group series draws from the work of Iva May and her team at Chronological Bible Teaching Ministries Inc. Foundational concepts, such as dividing the Bible into 14 Eras, the Redemption Thread, and understanding how God speaks, acts, and reveals Himself in each era, come directly from her work. We are thankful for her willingness to allow us to utilize her

14 Era framework and concepts to create these lessons. Our aim with this series is to encourage participants to read the Bible chronologically, but it is not intended to replace or replicate the comprehensive work of Iva and her team. For more resources on reading the Bible chronologically, we highly recommend visiting [chronologicalbibleteaching.com](http://chronologicalbibleteaching.com).

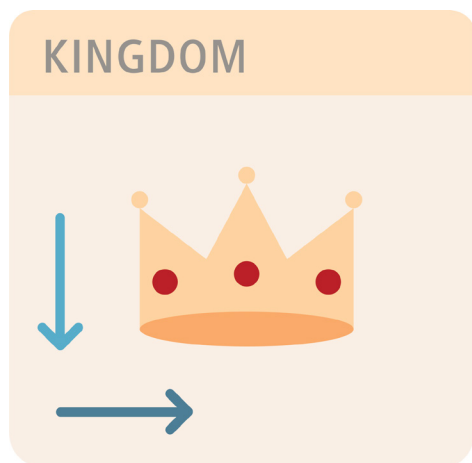


### WEEKLY READING RECAP

This week's reading covered David's turbulent later years as Israel's king. God's judgment for David's sin with Bathsheba began to settle in as David's family experienced much strife. One of David's sons, Amnon, assaulted his half-sister Tamar, and Absalom, who was Tamar's full brother, retaliated by killing Amnon. Absalom rebelled against David and temporarily seized power. However, David's forces defeated him, and David was restored as king. David sinned by taking a census of the people, which we will discuss in our lesson today. We also read several Psalms that reveal David's emotions and prayers during some of these events.

### DISCUSSION QUESTION

1. What does David's life reveal about the consequences of sin?



### ERA OVERVIEW

*Leader, our lesson today takes place during the Kingdom Era. Utilizing pages A16 in your Chronological Bible, briefly review the Kingdom Era and how it fits within God's whole story.*

### INTRODUCTION

In the early 2000s, management at Wells Fargo set unrealistic sales goals that pushed their employees to grow profits at the expense of anything else. The foundation of this strategy was establishing incentives for salespeople who sold multiple products to each customer, which is a common tactic known as cross-selling. The salespeople didn't attempt to sell these products based on what was best for the customer; they only did it because it would improve their bottom line. These plans, concocted on a foundation of greed, eventually brought this company to its knees and harmed thousands of customers.<sup>1</sup> (*Leader, this illustration is continued throughout today's lesson.*)

Many people make sinful choices because they believe no one else will be affected. But is that true? Do our sins only impact us, or is there often collateral damage? In our lesson today

we will examine how one sinful choice made by King David had devastating consequences not just for him but also for his entire nation.

### OUR SIN BEGINS WITH OFFENSIVE PLANS

(1 Chronicles 21:1–3, p. 417)

In the latter years of David's reign as king, he decided to conduct a census of the people of Israel.

Read 1 Chronicles 21:1–3 (p. 417).

To us this may seem like a simple and straightforward instruction with no serious issues because we're used to censuses—the United States Constitution mandates taking one every 10 years. So why was Joab, David's top general, so distraught because of this order?

### David's instructions were disobedient.

Read Exodus 30:11–13 (p. 139, Exodus Era).

These were God's original instructions to Moses concerning a census. Every man counted was to pay a small amount of silver as an offering to the Lord because they belonged to Him. This money was used to care for the tabernacle and ensure the people were right with God (Exodus 30:16, p. 139, Exodus Era).

David's instructions to Joab did not include receiving an offering from the men who would be counted. You can only count what you have, and David did not "have" God's people, but his instructions showed that he believed he did.

**GOD PROVIDED EVERYTHING DAVID HAD THROUGHOUT HIS LIFE, YET DAVID WAS READY TO CLAIM IT FOR HIMSELF. BIG NUMBERS HAVE A WAY OF PUFFING UP EGOS, AND DAVID'S EGO WANTED TO FEEL FULL.**

### David's instructions were self-initiated.

The Israelites conducted two censuses before David's. Moses conducted one at the beginning of the Israelites' time in the wilderness (Numbers 1, pp. 191–192, Exodus Era), and he conducted another one 40 years later as they prepared to enter the promised land (Numbers 26, pp. 219–221, Exodus Era). What makes those two censuses different from David's is that God, not Moses, initiated both. David did not receive any instructions from God to count the people; he was moving on his own.

### David's instructions were prideful.

God allowed Satan to tempt David, and David fell into Satan's trap. We see David's motivation at the end of his instruction—"so I may know how many there are" (1 Chronicles 21:2, p. 417). God provided everything David had throughout his life, yet at this moment David was ready to claim it for himself. Big numbers have a way of

puffing up egos, and David's ego wanted to feel full. David's plan was so offensive to God that even David's general, who wasn't the most scrupulous of people, tried to dissuade David from that path. However, David was determined and gave the final order to conduct the census.

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. David ignored the counsel of his closest advisor. Why is it important to listen to those closest to us concerning our decisions? Why are we often tempted to push aside counsel from those who know us best?
2. After all his successes as king, David quickly fell into the sin of pride. What other sins must we be aware of when things are going well in our lives?

#### **OUR SIN INVOLVES OTHER PEOPLE**

(1 Chronicles 21:4–6, p. 417)

As the employees at Wells Fargo attempted to meet their sales goals, they quickly realized that the only way to hit their targets was through opening new accounts in their customers' names without their knowledge. Managers encouraged employees to order new credit cards for preapproved customers without their consent. Wells Fargo employees also opened fraudulent bank accounts and moved customers' money between accounts. It is estimated that 3.5 million fraudulent accounts were opened. As the years passed, more employees became involved in these deceitful tactics as Wells Fargo took advantage of their customers.<sup>1</sup>

Ask someone to read 1 Chronicles 21:4–6 (p. 417).

**EVERY MAN WHO WAS COUNTED IN THE CENSUS AND DID NOT PAY THE REQUIRED OFFERING DISOBEYED GOD'S COMMAND IN EXODUS. ONE MAN'S SIN RAPIDLY CAUGHT OTHER PEOPLE IN ITS WEB.**

#### **David involved Joab and his commanders.**

David's sin rapidly began to involve other people. First Joab and his commanders were forced to carry out David's instructions by traveling throughout the land to count every man aged 20 or older. This task took nine months and 20 days (2 Samuel 24:8, pp. 416–417).

#### **David involved every man who registered.**

Not only were David's commanders involved in David's sin, but every man who was counted in the census and did not pay the required offering disobeyed God's command in Exodus. One man's sin rapidly caught other people in its web. Do you remember the penalty if the people were counted but didn't give the required offering? A plague would strike the people. God's judgment was stirring even though no one knew it was coming.

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When have you seen small compromises of integrity lead to larger consequences, either in your life or in society?
2. David's sin rapidly involved many people before anyone knew the seriousness of what was going on. What are some modern examples of how others are drawn into sin?

#### **OUR SIN LEADS TO OTHERS' PAIN**

(1 Chronicles 21:7–15, p. 417)

Judgment was swift and stiff when the fraud at Wells Fargo finally came to light. Customers realized they had been swindled out of millions of dollars, damaging their credit scores. The bank paid \$3 billion in settlements. The CEO eventually resigned in disgrace, and about 5,300 employees lost their jobs.<sup>1</sup> What began as a small operation to meet unrealistic sales goals became a massive scandal that has left scars on the banking industry and individual lives today.

Read 1 Chronicles 21:7–8 (p. 417).

What separated David from many other kings of Israel was that his heart truly desired to follow the Lord even after he sinned. David realized he had sinned and genuinely repented. However, repentance doesn't mean consequences won't come.

**GOD IS FAITHFUL TO KEEP HIS WORD WHEN HE PROMISES SOMETHING GOOD, BUT HE IS ALSO FAITHFUL TO HIS WORD WHEN HE PROMISES JUDGMENT.**

#### **God punished Israel.**

Ask someone to read 1 Chronicles 21:9–15 (p. 417).

God gave David three choices concerning his punishment, and David chose to place himself in God's hands instead of the hands of another man. So the punishment that God promised Moses in Exodus 30:12 (p. 139, Exodus Era) came to pass, and a plague killed 70,000 people. We often talk about how God is faithful to keep His word when He promises something good, but He is also faithful to His word when He promises judgment, as difficult as that is to understand.

Imagine David's anguish during those three days of judgment as he called on God to be merciful. He had to have been consumed with regret and pain as people died around him by the thousands. He called on God, saying, "Let your anger fall against me and my family, but do not destroy your people" (1 Chronicles 21:17, p. 418).

**THE NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF OUR SINS NEVER STAY WITH US; THEY ALWAYS BLEED OVER TO OTHER PEOPLE.**

**God offered mercy to Israel.**

While this punishment seems harsh, we must remember that David led the entire nation to sin against the Lord. Even if the people were unaware of the statute of giving an offering during a census, ignorance of God's law has never been an excuse for sin. However, it was David's pride that led to this pain. Mercifully, God stopped the death angel just before it destroyed Jerusalem (1 Chronicles 21:15, p. 417).

When we choose sin, a common justification is that it's not hurting anyone. We know it's wrong, but we delude ourselves into believing that it won't negatively impact anyone. Unfortunately that just isn't true. The negative impacts of our sins never stay with us; they always bleed over to other people.

When you look at a screen more than the people around you, your relationships will eventually shrivel. When you consistently choose to overeat, your health will degrade, sometimes drastically, prompting others to have to care for you. When you drink alcohol and drive, you run the risk of taking someone's life. When you constantly yell at others in anger, people will begin to believe the negative things you say about them. Whenever you step outside God's boundaries, there will be consequences that you never imagined.

Read Galatians 6:7-8 (p. 1,139, Missions Era).

When you're tempted to think your sin won't affect anyone, remember this verse. Sin only leads to destruction and pain that will affect you and those who care for you.

Is your sin worth that collateral damage?

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. What does God's response to David's census teach us about God's view of sin? Why is this important for us today?
2. When we sin, we show that we don't believe Galatians 6:7-8, which says we will reap what we sow. Why do we believe God's Word doesn't apply to us?

**REDEMPTION THREAD**

Today's passage ends with David offering a sacrifice to God on land owned by Araunah the Jebusite, who offered David the land for free. David's reply to this offer? "I will not present burnt offerings that have cost me nothing!" (1 Chronicles 21:24b, p. 418). God witnessed David's heartfelt repentance and stopped the plague. Authentic repentance begins with the heart, and it always costs us something. When someone sinned in the Old Testament, they had to provide an offering or sacrifice to the Lord that cost them, no matter their economic level. However, in the New Testament God took the cost upon Himself by sending Jesus to pay the price we could never afford to pay.

**CALL TO ACTION**

Remind your Life Group that one of our values at Bellevue is intimacy with Jesus, and the only way to stay close to Him is through repenting of our sin. Give everyone time to silently pray and repent of any sin they are harboring because they think it won't affect other people. Then encourage everyone to tell a friend how they will make authentic changes in their lives so they don't continue their sin.

**CONCLUSION**

When we choose to sin, we rarely think of the potential collateral damage. And almost always, that damage is to the people around us. Our former Pastor, Dr. Adrian Rogers, used to say, "Sin will take you further than you want to go, keep you longer than you want to stay, and cost you more than you want to pay."

When you are tempted to sin this week, remember our Main Idea: "Our personal sin leads to other people's pain." May your love and care for the people in your life prompt you to stay on God's path, which leads to blessings and flourishing.

# NEXT GEN

## DOES MY SIN AFFECT OTHERS?

2 Samuel 24:1–25; 1 Chronicles 21:1–27

### OPENING

#### Activity: Ripple Effect

Supplies: A large bowl, water, and paper clips

Before Life Group fill a large bowl with water. During Life Group place the bowl in the middle of your classroom. Give everyone in your group a paper clip. Instruct a few students to drop their paper clip into the bowl from as high a point as possible. Direct a few other students to drop their paper clips into the water from a medium height. Tell others to drop their paper clip into the water from a low height. Point out that no matter what height a paper clip was dropped from, ripples always reached the edge of the bowl. Tell your students that their sinful decisions, no matter how large, small, or seemingly hidden, will always have negative consequences, just like the paper clips always produced ripples in the bowl.

### Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever made a decision that seemed right at the time, but you later regretted it? What happened?
2. Why do people believe their secret sins won't have any consequences?
3. Why is it easier to place our trust in things we can see instead of in God?

### APPLICATION

Have the students form several small groups. Give each group a piece of paper and a pen. Direct the groups to draw a diagram of David's sin and how it affected others. Encourage them to be creative and thoughtful when they create their diagrams. Next direct them to flip their page over. Instruct them to pick a common sin that many teenagers commit, such as cheating, lying, gossiping, or watching pornography. Direct them to draw a similar diagram about how this specific sin affects other people. Allow several groups to share their diagrams with the rest of the Life Group.

### Citations

1. Wikipedia. "Wells Fargo Cross-Selling Scandal." *Wikipedia*, 18 Nov. 2022, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wells\_Fargo\_cross-selling\_scandal.

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### Additional Resources

"Why Was God So Angry at David for Taking the Census?"

[gotquestions.org/David-census.html](https://gotquestions.org/David-census.html)

\*All thoughts and ideas listed under Additional Resources may not be completely in agreement with Bellevue's theology, and their listing should not be considered as an endorsement.

# CONGRATULATIONS— YOU FINISHED LESSON 17!



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May 11  
Adults and Next Gen  
Lesson 18

2025  
**CHRONOLOGICAL BIBLE**

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**WHAT WILL BE  
MY LEGACY?  
1 Chronicles 29:1–9**



May 11, 2025

## Lesson 18

### WHAT WILL BE MY LEGACY?

1 Chronicles 29:1–9

#### MAIN IDEA

I should prepare, give, and lead with the future in mind to build God's Church.

#### OUTLINE

##### Weekly Reading Recap

##### Era Overview

##### Introduction

**1. Prepare With the Future in Mind (1 Chronicles 29:1–2, pp. 426–427)**

- Questions To Ask To Plan for the Future

**2. Give With the Future in Mind (1 Chronicles 29:3–5a, p. 427)**

- Reasons People Do Not Give
  - Fear
  - Greed
  - Negligence

**3. Lead With the Future in Mind (1 Chronicles 29:5b–9, p. 427)**

- David's generosity produced more generosity.
- The people's generosity produced joyful giving.
- How To Lead With the Future in Mind
  - Steward your time.
  - Steward your resources.
  - Steward your money.

##### Redemption Thread

**Call to Action** (Discuss how your Life Group can fulfill Bellevue's mission.)

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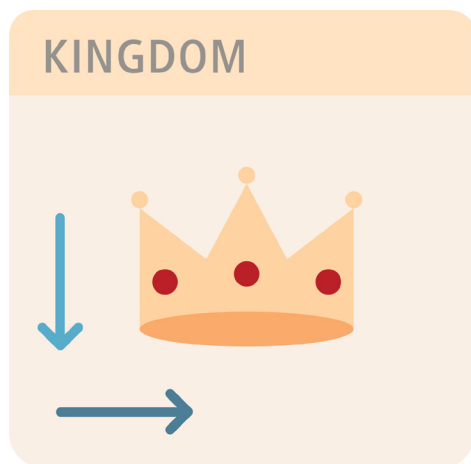


### WEEKLY READING RECAP

Our reading this week covered the end of King David's life. He prepared the resources needed to build the temple, and Solomon was crowned the next king of Israel. Before David died, Adonijah attempted to claim the throne, but Samuel and Bathsheba intervened to thwart his plans. Our reading also included many of David's Psalms, which covered themes such as trusting in God, crying out for help, praising God, and God's faithfulness.

### DISCUSSION QUESTION

1. How does reading David's Psalms give you a better understanding of his relationship with God?



### ERA OVERVIEW

*Leader, our lesson today takes place during the Kingdom Era. Utilizing page A16 in your Chronological Bible, briefly review the Kingdom Era and how it fits within God's whole story.*

### INTRODUCTION

Many animals prepare for the future, such as ants or squirrels storing food for the winter. However, these actions are based upon instinct, not foresight. Only one species on our planet can mentally time travel to the future, determine needs based upon those thoughts, and develop complex plans: humans. Our prefrontal cortex allows us to detach from our present state and imagine the future, which enables us to plan accordingly.<sup>1</sup> (While these findings were discovered in a secular study, they point to God's incredible attention to detail when creating people.)

In today's lesson we will discover that the future was on King David's mind as he prepared his people to build the temple after his death. While we are not tasked with building a temple, God has called us to build His Church, so we will examine how David's preparations show us how to honor God's command today.

### PREPARE WITH THE FUTURE IN MIND

(1 Chronicles 29:1–2, pp. 426–427)

Ask someone to read 1 Chronicles 29:1–2 (pp. 426–427).

Originally David planned on constructing the temple himself, but God told him that since he had been a man of war, he would not be the person to build it. Instead, David's son Solomon, who would be a man of peace, would build it (1 Chronicles 22:6–10, p. 419).

**BECAUSE OF DAVID'S PREPARATIONS, SOLOMON HAD ALL THE NECESSARY RESOURCES TO FULFILL GOD'S PLAN.**

Even though David was not going to be the one to build the temple, he looked forward to and planned out everything needed for this massive project. Under God's direction David created the plans for the temple and determined the amount of supplies required for the project (1 Chronicles 28:11–19, p. 426). Then he took his plans one step further by collecting the needed resources. He did not halfheartedly prepare for this project even though he would never witness it, but he did as much as possible. Because of David's preparations, Solomon had all the necessary resources to fulfill God's plan.

In the Missions Era, motivated by love for the entire world, Jesus commanded His followers to spread the Gospel and build His Church.

Read Acts 1:8 (p. 1,112, Church Era)—“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

**IT'S OUR TURN TO LOOK TO THE FUTURE AND DETERMINE WHAT WE NEED TO DO TO BUILD GOD'S GLOBAL CHURCH, NOT JUST FOR THE WORLD TODAY BUT ALSO FOR THE GENERATIONS OF TOMORROW.**

We gather as the Church today because many Christians before us took this charge seriously. Christians in every generation over the course of 2,000 years have looked ahead and sought to ensure that Christ's Church would continue past their lifespan. They determined what was needed to reach towns, cities, and even entire countries for Jesus, and they placed their efforts there. They knew they would never see the complete fulfillment of God's plans, but they planned anyway. Even our own church has a deep

history of people working hard to ensure Bellevue would continue many decades after their lives.

Dr. Henry Hurt, Bellevue's first Pastor who served from 1903 to 1915, said, "I hope the new church would become one of the greatest powers for good the city of Memphis has ever seen."

As Dr. Hurt laid a solid foundation for our church more than 100 years ago, he envisioned a church that would impact Memphis unlike any church before it. He never saw the fulfillment of that vision, but God has used Bellevue in mighty ways throughout our city and nation because of Dr. Hurt's preparation.

It's now our turn to look to the future and determine what we need to do to further build God's global Church, not just for the world today but also for the generations of tomorrow. Like David, we must pray and plan to ensure that future generations of our church can continue to serve and glorify God.

**YOU CAN FOOL PEOPLE WITH YOUR WORDS AND ACTIONS, BUT THE SWIPE OF YOUR DEBIT CARD WILL INSTANTLY ILLUMINATE THE DESIRES OF YOUR HEART.**

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

##### **Questions To Ask To Plan for the Future**

Here are some questions we can ask to help us plan for the future:

1. What are the needs of our city?
2. What is the current status of families in Memphis?
3. How is our culture different today than it was 20 years ago?
4. How can we make God tangible to the people of Memphis?

##### **GIVE WITH THE FUTURE IN MIND**

(1 Chronicles 29:3-5a, p. 427)

Ask someone to read 1 Chronicles 29:3-5a (p. 427).

"Your money is like a mirror—it reflects your heart." —Unknown

Nothing reveals the state of someone's heart more than how they spend their money. You can fool people with your words and actions, but the swipe of your debit card will illuminate the desires of your heart in an instant—faster than you can pay a friend through Venmo.

David revealed his heart to his people by stating that he would give all his personal gold and silver to this project. He had already done a lot of work as king, and he could have left it at that. However, he showed that he was all in on building the temple by committing his own money to its construction.

**IN MAN'S ECONOMY YOU HAVE LESS WHEN YOU PART WITH YOUR MONEY. BUT IN GOD'S ECONOMY, WHEN YOU GIVE TO OTHERS, GOD GENEROUSLY GIVES TO YOU, ENSURING YOU CAN MEET YOUR NEEDS AND GIVE MORE TO OTHERS.**

David's gift was not symbolic but substantial: 112 tons of gold and 262 tons of refined silver. He did not give a token gift but a thankful one, as David knew that God, through His generosity, had given him everything he had.

Today, our bank statements reveal our hearts. Is all your money going toward your immediate needs and personal desires, or do you put aside money to give to others so the church can impact people in the coming years?

What are some reasons that people don't give?

##### **Reasons People Do Not Give**

###### **Fear**

Many people don't give because they fear they will not have enough money for their needs. Let's examine one passage to see what God says about this fear.

Ask someone to read 2 Corinthians 9:6-8 (p. 1,192, Missions Era).

God's economy works differently from man's economy. In man's economy you have less when you part with your money. But in God's economy, when you give to others, God generously gives to you, ensuring you can meet your needs and give more to others!

###### **Greed**

Some people don't give because they desire to grow their money into the largest pile possible.

Ask someone to read 1 Timothy 6:9-10 (p. 1,232, Missions Era).

When people pursue worldly wealth as their ultimate goal, believing they will find comfort and joy in its offerings, they only discover pain as they succumb to worldly temptations.

###### **Negligence**

Some people don't give because they are negligent with their money. They don't know how much they earn or how much they spend, which leads to being wasteful with what they have.

Ask someone to read Proverbs 21:20 (p. 517, Kingdom Era).

When people don't make a plan for their money, otherwise known as a budget, they will quickly spend everything they have, leading them to believe they have nothing to give, which often is not the case. Negligence leads to foolishness and scarcity while planning leads to generosity and prosperity.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. If God were to look at your bank statement, what would He say your top priorities are?
2. What practical steps can our Life Group take to change our mindset from growing our wealth to growing God's Church?

### **LEAD WITH THE FUTURE IN MIND**

(1 Chronicles 29:5b–9, p. 427)

While David's planning and personal contribution to the temple project were immense and impressive, he knew more was needed. The goal would never have been reached if he had been the only one invested in the temple's completion.

Read 1 Chronicles 29:5b–9 (p. 427).

David used his influence to call others to buy into the vision of building the temple so that all the people could worship God in a permanent place. Because David's goal was not selfish but sought to bring glory to God for future generations, an interesting chain of events occurred.

#### **David's generosity produced more generosity.**

While David's gift to the temple was substantial, it was nothing compared to what the people gave.

For example, the people gave 188 tons of gold, which was 5,000 talents. A talent weighed about 75 pounds. The average price of gold per ounce in 2024 was \$2,386<sup>2</sup>, so they gave approximately \$14 billion in today's money. Yes, that's *billion* with a B. The wealth of the people matched the needs of the project.

**DAVID UNDERSTOOD THAT EVERYTHING HE POSSESSED WAS A GIFT FROM GOD. HE WAS NOT THE OWNER OF HIS POSSESSIONS BUT A STEWARD.**

#### **The people's generosity produced joyful giving.**

After the offerings were given, the people rejoiced! They did not give under pressure but with a genuine desire to be part of building the temple. Everyone knew they had played a part in obeying God to build His temple for future generations.

How could David effectively prepare, give, and lead with the future in mind? We get a glimpse into his mindset later in 1 Chronicles 29.

Read 1 Chronicles 29:14b (p. 427)—“Everything we have has come from you, and we give you only what you first gave us!”

David understood that everything he possessed (and that the people possessed) was a gift from God. David was not the owner of his possessions but a steward. A steward is someone who manages another person's money and resources. A steward

has no authority over that money; he only does what the owner of the money tells him to do.

You may not be a king with vast wealth, and you may not even hold a position of leadership over other people, but you do have influence. Everyone does. And no matter the scale of your influence, you can lead others to keep the future in mind by having the mindset of a steward.

**WHEN YOU HAVE THE MINDSET OF A STEWARD, YOU PROACTIVELY LOOK FOR WAYS TO USE YOUR POSSESSIONS TO BUILD JESUS' CHURCH, NOT YOUR OWN KINGDOM.**

## **How To Lead With the Future in Mind**

### **Steward your time.**

God gave you your life, so your time is not your own. Since your time belongs to God, you should steward it in a way that pleases Him. When asked what the most important commandment is, Jesus replied in Matthew 22:37 and 39, “You must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.’ ... A second is equally important: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself’” (pp. 1,074–1,075, Gospel Era).

If Jesus said these were the most important commandments, shouldn't they define your time?

### **Steward your resources.**

Everything you possess is a gift from God. In His graciousness, He has allowed you to have a home, a car, high-tech gadgets that connect you to the globe, many sets of clothing, and so much more. When you have the mindset of a steward, you proactively look for ways to use your possessions to build Jesus' Church, not your own kingdom.

Ask someone to read Acts 4:32 (p. 1,117, Church Era)—“All the believers were united in heart and mind. And they felt that what they owned was not their own, so they shared everything they had.”

Because these early Christians saw themselves as stewards (not owners), they actively shared with others, ensuring everyone had what they needed!

### **Steward your money.**

As we've already stated, parting with our money is difficult. But when we struggle to hold our money with open hands, we reveal that we love our money more than we love God. Money itself is not the root of all evil; rather, our love of money is what leads us astray (1 Timothy 6:10, p. 1,232, Missions Era). The best way to ensure that money doesn't capture us in its grip is to actively look for ways to give the money God has given us to other people who need it.

Ask someone to read 1 Timothy 6:18 (p. 1,233, Missions Era)—“Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and generous to those in need, always being ready to share with others.”

When you steward your time, resources, and money well, you will discover you are leading others with the future in mind!

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why do you believe the people responded with joy after giving? How does our attitude after giving reflect our relationship with God?
2. What steps can we take to view ourselves as stewards of our time, resources, and money instead of viewing those things as our possessions?

#### REDEMPTION THREAD

When God created people, He showed His love for them by allowing them in His presence. He walked with them in the garden of Eden and enjoyed a close relationship with them. After Adam and Eve chose to sin, that close relationship was severed. But God was not done with people—He gave Moses instructions for how to build the tabernacle, which gave His people the opportunity to be in His presence once again. Many years later God took the next step by giving King David building plans for the temple, which gave the people an established place to worship Him. However, because of the people’s sin (once again), their relationship with God was damaged, and the temple was destroyed. The people needed a permanent solution to their separation from God, so at the right time God sent Jesus to Earth. Through Jesus’ victory on the cross, people can now have a close relationship with God that is not based on the location or durability of a building. We now have direct access to God because He has consistently worked to close the chasm between us and Him!

#### CALL TO ACTION

Bellevue’s mission is to love God, love people, share Jesus, and make disciples. Form multiple small groups and instruct the groups to brainstorm how your Life Group can prepare, give, and lead to help our church accomplish that mission for many years to come. After the groups discuss among themselves, allow the groups to share their ideas with everyone else.

#### CONCLUSION

Our Main Idea today is “I should prepare, give, and lead with the future in mind to build God’s Church.” Typically a legacy is not made in one day but over a long period of time. When you work with the future in mind, your name may never be great, but your legacy will make an impact for generations to come. Which is more important: a great name that will be forgotten or a legacy that ensures people will still come to Christ after you’re long gone? You must remember that you are not

the center of God’s plan—God is. He was working long before you existed and will continue to work long after you’re gone. Make sure you’re seeking to fit into His plans and not attempting to make Him squeeze into your plans. May today be the day you begin working toward an everlasting legacy!

## NEXT GEN

### WHAT WILL BE MY LEGACY?

1 Chronicles 29:1–9

#### OPENING

##### Discussion Questions

1. Think about a big goal or project you’ve worked on. What steps did you have to take to succeed? How did your preparation impact the outcome?
2. Why is it difficult for people to be generous?
3. Think about the end of your life. What do you want your legacy to be?

#### APPLICATION

Give an index card to every student and ensure everyone has a pen. Write this question on the whiteboard: What is one way I can prepare, give, or lead to impact our church’s future? Direct the students to write their answers on their index cards. Then help the students form groups of three and have them discuss how their one decision could impact our church in the next five years. Afterward ask for a few volunteers to share their answers.

#### Citations

1. Suddendorf, Thomas, and Michael C. Corballis. “Mental Time Travel and the Evolution of the Human Mind.” *Genetic, Social, and General Psychology Monographs*, vol. 123, no. 2, 1997, pp. 133–167.
2. Council, World Gold. “Gold Demand Trends: Full Year 2024.” *World Gold Council*, 5 Feb. 2025, [www.gold.org/goldhub/research/gold-demand-trends/gold-demand-trends-full-year-2024](http://www.gold.org/goldhub/research/gold-demand-trends/gold-demand-trends-full-year-2024). Accessed 10 Feb. 2025.

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#### Additional Resources

“Why Didn’t God Allow David To Build the Temple?”  
[gotquestions.org/David-temple.html](http://gotquestions.org/David-temple.html)

“What Does the Bible Say About Generosity?”  
[gotquestions.org/Bible-generosity.html](http://gotquestions.org/Bible-generosity.html)

\*All thoughts and ideas listed under Additional Resources may not be completely in agreement with Bellevue’s theology, and their listing should not be considered as an endorsement.

# CONGRATULATIONS— YOU FINISHED LESSON 18!



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May 18  
Adults and Next Gen  
Lesson 19

2025  
**CHRONOLOGICAL BIBLE**

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**DID GOD PLAN FOR  
THE MESSIAH?  
Psalm 22**

May 18, 2025

## Lesson 19

### DID GOD PLAN FOR THE MESSIAH?

#### Psalms 22

#### MAIN IDEA

Scripture reveals God's plan for the Messiah's birth, death, and victory.

#### OUTLINE

##### Weekly Reading Recap

##### Era Overview

##### Introduction

- 1. The Promise of the Messiah's Birth (Psalm 22:9–10, p. 437)**
  - Explanation of the Prophecy
  - Fulfillment by Jesus
- 2. The Pain of the Messiah's Death (Psalm 22:1–8, 11–18, p. 437)**
  - Explanation of the Prophecy
  - Fulfillment by Jesus
  - Explanation of the Prophecy
  - Fulfillment by Jesus
- 3. The Power of the Messiah's Victory (Psalm 22:22–31, pp. 437–438)**
  - Explanation of the Prophecy
  - Fulfillment by Jesus

##### Redemption Thread

**Call to Action** (Look up various prophecies and how Jesus fulfilled them.)

##### Conclusion

#### Special Note

This Life Group series draws from the work of Iva May and her team at Chronological Bible Teaching Ministries Inc. Foundational concepts, such as dividing the Bible into 14 Eras, the Redemption Thread, and understanding how God speaks, acts, and reveals Himself in each era, come directly from her work. We are thankful for her willingness to allow us to utilize her

14 Era framework and concepts to create these lessons. Our aim with this series is to encourage participants to read the Bible chronologically, but it is not intended to replace or replicate the comprehensive work of Iva and her team. For more resources on reading the Bible chronologically, we highly recommend visiting [chronologicalbibleteaching.com](http://chronologicalbibleteaching.com).



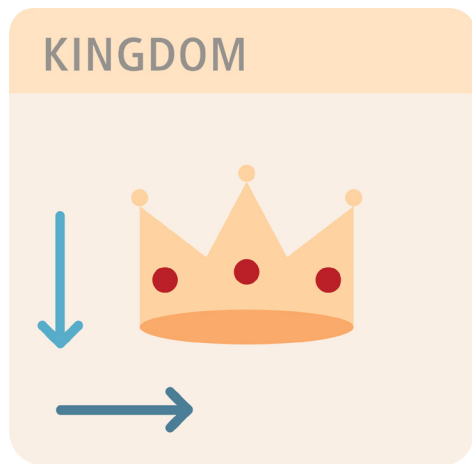


### WEEKLY READING RECAP

This week's reading consisted entirely of various Psalms, many of which were written by King David. In these Psalms we discover the difficulties and joys of following God. Some of the themes covered this week were God's sovereignty, crying out for help in difficult situations, God's righteousness, and trusting God in every situation.

### DISCUSSION QUESTION

1. How did God fill you with comfort and courage this week as you read Psalms?



### ERA OVERVIEW

*Leader, our lesson today takes place during the Kingdom Era. Utilizing page A16 in your Chronological Bible, briefly review the Kingdom Era and how it fits in God's whole story.*

### INTRODUCTION

Transport yourself to the afternoon of Resurrection Sunday, just hours after Jesus rose from the dead—rumors of Jesus being alive have spread through the city like wildfire, but you don't know what to believe as you and a friend begin the seven-mile trek home to Emmaus. A stranger joins you as you walk through the fields, and he seems clueless about the drama of the weekend. You tell him about Jesus' crucifixion and how some friends of yours are now claiming that He's alive. This stranger, whom God has kept you from realizing is Jesus, seems indignant that you don't understand the prophecies. As He continues to walk with you and your friend, He takes you "through the writings of Moses and all the prophets, explaining from all the Scriptures the things concerning himself" (Luke 24:27, p. 1,107, Gospel Era).

We can imagine Jesus saying, "Moses and all the prophets clearly stated what would happen to the Messiah. For example, let's look at what one of the

prophets, King David, said in Psalm 22." (David is called a prophet in Acts 2:30, p. 1,114, Church Era.)

**A MESSIANIC PROPHECY IS A PREDICTION IN THE OLD TESTAMENT THAT POINTS TO THE COMING OF GOD'S PROMISED MESSIAH. EVEN THOUGH JESUS WAS BORN HUNDREDS OF YEARS AFTER PSALM 22 WAS WRITTEN, ALL THESE PREDICTIONS CAME TRUE.**

### THE PROMISE OF THE MESSIAH'S BIRTH

(Psalm 22:9–10, p. 437)

Psalm 22 is considered a messianic prophecy, as various parts of the Psalm correctly describe what happened in the Messiah's life. A messianic prophecy is a prediction in the Old Testament that points to the coming of God's promised Messiah. Even though Jesus was born hundreds of years after Psalm 22 was written, all these predictions came true.

### Explanation of the Prophecy

Ask someone to read Psalm 22:9–10 (p. 437).

We see a promise that the Messiah would be born and have a close relationship with God the Father from a young age. From the moment the Messiah would be born, He would be set apart by God and have a special calling on His life. The Messiah would trust God completely.

### Fulfillment by Jesus

Before Jesus was born, the angel declared to Mary that Jesus would be God's Son.

Read Luke 1:35b (p. 983, Gospel Era)—"So the baby to be born will be holy, and he will be called the Son of God."

Jesus was different from every other child around him. As He grew up, He was completely filled with godly wisdom, and God's favor rested upon Him.

Ask someone to read Luke 2:40 (p. 985, Gospel Era)—"There the child grew up healthy and strong. He was filled with wisdom, and God's favor was on him."

Jesus' life was defined by obedience to God's ways, and when it mattered most—the moment before He was arrested to be crucified—Jesus chose trust and obedience again.

Read Luke 22:42 (p. 1,092, Gospel Era)—"Father, if you are willing, please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine."

#### DISCUSSION QUESTION

1. Why is it important to know how messianic prophecies point to Jesus?

#### **THE PAIN OF THE MESSIAH'S DEATH**

(Psalm 22:1–8, 11–18, p. 437)

Put yourself back on the road to Emmaus. We can imagine Jesus saying (after pointing out the unique circumstances of the Messiah's birth), "Now, let's look at the pain and suffering the Messiah would have to bear."

#### **Explanation of the Prophecy**

Ask someone to read Psalm 22:1–2 (p. 437).

This is why Jesus was indignant with the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. Psalm 22 makes it clear that the Messiah would suffer, and this is only one prophecy of many that carry that message. The Messiah would feel forsaken by God, as He would call out to God repeatedly but receive no answer.

#### **Fulfillment by Jesus**

As Jesus was dying on the cross, He called out to God and directly quoted Psalm 22:1.

Ask someone to read Matthew 27:46 (p. 1,101, Gospel Era)—"At about three o'clock, Jesus called out with a loud voice, 'Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?' which means, 'My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?'"

**PSALM 22 SAID THE MESSIAH'S LIFE WOULD BE TAKEN FROM HIM, AND HIS BONES WOULD BE RIPPED OUT OF THEIR SOCKETS. HE WOULD LOSE HIS STRENGTH, AND HIS HANDS AND FEET WOULD BE PIERCED.**

#### **Explanation of the Prophecy**

Ask someone to read Psalm 22:6–8, 11–18 (p. 437).

These verses say the Messiah would not be loved but scorned and mocked by many. People would say that because the Messiah relied on the Lord, God should be the one to save the Messiah from His persecution. The Messiah's enemies would be like bulls, who often surround and charge at new and unusual objects.

At the point in history when Psalm 22 was written, Israel had not encountered a society that crucified people, yet we see allusions to the cruelty of this form of execution in this Psalm. The Messiah's life would be taken from Him, and His bones would be ripped out of their sockets. He would lose His strength, and His hands and feet would be pierced. The Messiah's enemies would take His garments and gamble for them.

#### **Fulfillment by Jesus**

As Jesus hung on the cross, He was ridiculed and mocked by many of the people who attended His crucifixion. Some of them even said phrases

that match the prophecy in Psalm 22:8.

Ask someone to read Matthew 27:39–43 (p. 1,100, Gospel Era).

**IT WAS COMMON FOR PEOPLE'S ARMS TO BE WRENCHED OUT OF SOCKET WHEN THE CROSS WAS SLAMMED INTO PLACE, AND JESUS' HANDS AND FEET WERE PIERCED AS HE WAS NAILED TO THE CROSS.**

Jesus' life didn't just leave Him *like* water, but fluids actually came out of His body when a soldier speared His side. After being whipped and forced to carry the cross, Jesus likely went into hypovolemic shock, which means he had low blood volume. One of the results of hypovolemic shock is that the heart begins to race, attempting to pump blood that is no longer there, which causes fluid to gather in the sac around the heart (this is called pericardial effusion). When the soldier speared Jesus, he ruptured this sac, causing fluids to come pouring out.<sup>1</sup>

Ask someone to read John 19:34 (p. 1,101, Gospel Era)—"One of the soldiers, however, pierced his side with a spear, and immediately blood and water flowed out."

Additionally, it was common for people's arms to be wrenched out of socket when the cross was slammed into place, and Jesus' hands and feet were pierced as He was nailed to the cross.

Ask someone to read John 20:25b (p. 1,108, Gospel Era)—"They told him, 'We have seen the Lord!' But he replied, 'I won't believe it unless I see the nail wounds in his hands, put my fingers into them, and place my hand into the wound in his side.'"

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How does knowing that Psalm 22 was written hundreds of years before the practice of crucifixion impact your understanding of biblical prophecy?
2. Why do you think God allowed the Messiah to suffer in such a public and humiliating way?

**THE HUMBLE PROMISES OF THE MESSIAH'S BIRTH AND THE PAIN OF HIS DEATH CULMINATED IN THE POWER OF HIS VICTORY.**

#### **THE POWER OF THE MESSIAH'S VICTORY**

(Psalm 22:22–31, pp. 437–438)

We can imagine the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, listening with rapt attention as they crested

a hill and saw their home in the distance. At that point Jesus' tone could have changed as He said, "But what is happening right now and what will happen in the future are the most exciting parts of all."

Ask someone to read Psalm 22:22-31 (pp. 437-438).

The humble promises of the Messiah's birth and the pain of His death culminated in the power of His victory! The entire tone of this Psalm shifts from heartache to excitement.

### **Explanation of the Prophecy**

The last section of Psalm 22 reveals the Messiah's victory over His enemies. God would be praised not just by Israel but by the entire world: "The whole earth will acknowledge the LORD and return to him. All the families of the nations will bow down before him." Future generations would also hear of God's great actions and be told of everything He has done.

### **Fulfillment by Jesus**

Today we can see how Jesus has already fulfilled this prophecy and is still fulfilling it as we move into the future.

Jesus defeated His enemies—He didn't defeat just the Pharisees, soldiers, and the crowd but also sin, death, and Satan.

Ask someone to read Luke 24:4-7 (p. 1,105, Gospel Era).

People who choose to follow Jesus become His brothers and sisters, and Jesus quoted Psalm 22:22 (p. 437) when He declared that Christians share God as their Father.

Ask someone to read Hebrews 2:11-12 (p. 1,239, Missions Era).

Every person will bow before Jesus, and His kingdom will be established here on Earth.

Ask someone to read Revelation 11:15 (p. 1,275, End and New Beginning Era).

Additional connections could be made, but the point is clear: Jesus is victorious and fulfilled these prophecies!

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. How does Jesus' victory fill you with hope about your life today?
2. While we wait for Jesus to completely fulfill the prophecies of His victory, how can we already begin to show others His victory in our lives?

### **REDEMPTION THREAD**

While walking on the road to Emmaus, Jesus did not limit His discussion only to Psalm 22, but He showed the two disciples how the writings of Moses and all the prophets pointed to Himself. He could have talked about God's original promise in Genesis 3:14-15 to send someone to crush Satan (p. 9, Creation Era). He could have pointed to God's

promise to Abram in Genesis 12:3 to bless the whole world through Abram's descendants (p. 22, Patriarch Era). He could have pointed to the symbolism of the Passover lamb in Exodus 12 (p. 116, Exodus Era). He may have referred to Isaiah, who said a virgin would conceive a child (Isaiah 7:14, p. 603, Divided Kingdom Era). Maybe Jesus mentioned Micah 5:2, which says the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem (pp. 698-699, Divided Kingdom Era). Jesus fulfilled all these Old Testament prophecies and many others!

### **CALL TO ACTION**

Before Life Group print off several copies of this resource: "How Many Prophecies Did Jesus Fulfill?" ([gotquestions.org/prophecies-of-Jesus.html](http://gotquestions.org/prophecies-of-Jesus.html)).

During Life Group have everyone get into small groups, and give each group a copy of the resource above. Direct the groups to look up several prophecies in their Bibles and then examine the corresponding New Testament passages that show how Jesus fulfilled those prophecies. Allow time afterward for groups to share what they discovered. Remind your Life Group that reading and studying the Bible in a deeper manner will help them grow in Christlikeness, which is a part of Bellevue's pathway.

### **CONCLUSION**

Jesus' time with the two disciples ended with a meal in Emmaus, and He blessed their food and gave it to them. At that moment the disciples' eyes were opened to understand that Jesus was with them! As He disappeared from their presence, they realized that the promise of the Messiah's birth, the pain of the Messiah's death, and the power of the Messiah's victory were completely true! Jesus had fulfilled every promise, and they had just received a master class from the Master Himself concerning God's plan for the Messiah.

# NEXT GEN

## DID GOD PLAN FOR THE MESSIAH?

### Psalm 22

#### OPENING

##### Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever tried to predict that something would happen in the future? How accurate were you?
2. What does it tell us about God that He prompted multiple prophecies about the Messiah hundreds of years in advance?
3. Why was it important for God to tell people in advance what to look for in His promised Messiah?

#### APPLICATION

Give each student an index card and ensure everyone has access to a Bible and a pen. Direct everyone to examine Psalm 22. Tell the students to write down one word to describe the first half of the Psalm (e.g., loneliness, pain, or suffering). Then instruct the students to flip their cards over and write one word to describe the second half of the Psalm (e.g., triumph, joy, or victory). Ask, "How does this transformation match Jesus' journey?" Next ask, "How does this transformation match your life because of what Jesus accomplished on the cross?"

#### Citations

1. "Why Did Blood and Water Come out of Jesus' Side When He Was Pierced?" *GotQuestions.org*, [www.gotquestions.org/blood-water-Jesus.html](http://www.gotquestions.org/blood-water-Jesus.html).

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#### Additional Resources

"How Many Prophecies Did Jesus Fulfill?"

[gotquestions.org/prophecies-of-Jesus.html](http://gotquestions.org/prophecies-of-Jesus.html)

"How Can I Identify Messianic Prophecies in the Old Testament?"

[gotquestions.org/messianic-prophecies.html](http://gotquestions.org/messianic-prophecies.html)

\*All thoughts and ideas listed under Additional Resources may not be completely in agreement with Bellevue's theology, and their listing should not be considered as an endorsement.

# CONGRATULATIONS— YOU FINISHED LESSON 19!



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May 25  
Adults and Next Gen  
Lesson 20

2025  
**CHRONOLOGICAL BIBL**

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**HOW CAN I  
BECOME WISE?  
1 Kings 3:5–15**

May 25, 2025

## Lesson 20

### HOW CAN I BECOME WISE?

1 Kings 3:5–15

#### MAIN IDEA

I will be wise when I recognize my inadequacy, remember God's faithfulness, and seek God's wisdom.

#### OUTLINE

##### Weekly Reading Recap

##### Era Overview

##### Introduction

**1. Look Backward To Discover God's Faithfulness (1 Kings 3:5–6, p. 477)**

- God is good, and His promises are true.
- When God makes a promise, He is faithful to keep it.
- God always provides for what He requires.

**1. Look Inward To Discover Your Inadequacy (1 Kings 3:7–8, p. 477)**

- You must be connected to Christ to accomplish anything.

**2. Look Upward To Discover True Wisdom (1 Kings 3:9, p. 477)**

- How To Discover God's Wisdom
  - Through God's Word
  - Through God's Spirit

##### Redemption Thread

**Call to Action** (Determine if you need to look backward, inward, or upward.)

##### Conclusion

#### Special Note

This Life Group series draws from the work of Iva May and her team at Chronological Bible Teaching Ministries Inc. Foundational concepts, such as dividing the Bible into 14 Eras, the Redemption Thread, and understanding how God speaks, acts, and reveals Himself in each era, come directly from her work. We are thankful for her willingness to allow us to utilize her

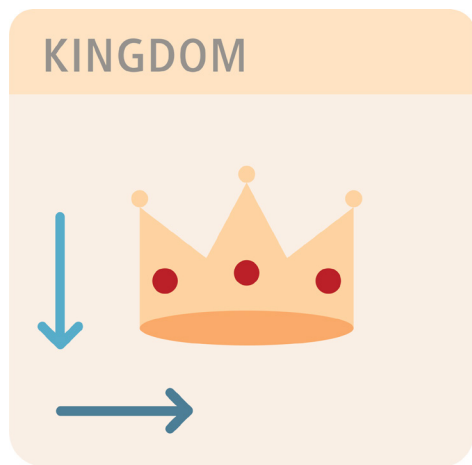
14 Era framework and concepts to create these lessons. Our aim with this series is to encourage participants to read the Bible chronologically, but it is not intended to replace or replicate the comprehensive work of Iva and her team. For more resources on reading the Bible chronologically, we highly recommend visiting [chronologicalbibleteaching.com](http://chronologicalbibleteaching.com).

### WEEKLY READING RECAP

This week's reading focused on the beginning of Solomon's reign, when he became established as Israel's third king. Solomon realized he could not be a wise king on his own, so he asked God to fill him with wisdom. God granted Solomon's desire, and Solomon revealed his wisdom when judging a case between two women who each claimed the same child as their own. Solomon finished constructing the temple and brought the ark of the covenant into the most holy place. In response, God's glory filled the temple.

#### DISCUSSION QUESTION

1. Why do you believe Solomon's reign as king began so well?



#### ERA OVERVIEW

*Leader, our lesson today takes place during the Kingdom Era. Utilizing page A16 in your Chronological Bible, briefly review the Kingdom Era and how it fits in God's whole story.*

#### INTRODUCTION

The first electronic message was sent between computers at the University of California, Los Angeles, and the Stanford Research Institute on October 29, 1969, on ARPANET, the precursor to the modern internet.<sup>1</sup> As the internet became global with the World Wide Web in the 1990s, there was a general belief that the internet would usher in a new golden age of humanity, as people would have access to the knowledge of the entire world.

Bill Gates said, "The internet is becoming the town square for the global village of tomorrow." And what would be the result of this new connected global village?

Someone else once stated, "The great promise of the internet is that more information means more informed citizens."

Unfortunately we have discovered that access to unlimited knowledge does not produce more wisdom. Lies circle the globe twice before the truth even gets out the door. Scams lurk around every corner. Plus, people are beginning to be deceived by deepfakes (photos or videos that look real but are as phony as a \$3 bill).

So if the great promise of wisdom through the internet is a colossal failure, where can we find true wisdom? In today's lesson we'll examine the beginning of Solomon's reign as Israel's third king. Where did he turn to find the wisdom he needed to lead an entire nation?

#### LOOK BACKWARD TO DISCOVER GOD'S

**FAITHFULNESS** (1 Kings 3:5–6, p. 477)

Read 1 Kings 3:5 (p. 477).

#### DISCUSSION QUESTION

1. How would you respond if God asked you that question? (*Leader, prompt your Life Group members to give honest answers, not "church" answers.*)

Solomon could have asked for anything, as God seemingly gave him a blank check. He could have requested riches, comfort, fame, or the defeat of his enemies. Let's see how he responded.

Ask someone to read 1 Kings 3:6 (p. 477).

**LOOKING BACK WILL REMIND YOU OF GOD'S CHARACTER AND HIS LOVE FOR YOU.**

Solomon looked back and remembered God's faithfulness to his father, David. Solomon would have known all the stories of God's faithful love for his father:

- How Samuel anointed David as king when he was the runt of his family.
- How God filled David with courage in his face-off with Goliath.
- How God gave David victories over his many enemies.
- How God protected David when Saul attempted to kill him many times.
- How God forgave David when he sinned by committing adultery with Bathsheba and later by taking a census.

Because Solomon remembered to look backward, he knew that God was a faithful God who showed unfailing love to His people.



When we need wisdom, we must remember to do the same. In every situation we must look backward to remember God's faithfulness in our lives.

Examine how God has provided for you—how He has proven Himself faithful, protected you, and showed you grace when you didn't deserve it. Looking back will remind you of God's character and His love for you.

And who is God? Let's reexamine some of the truths we've learned about God so far in our Chronological Bible readings:

**God is good, and His promises are true.**

In the Creation Era we discovered that God revealed His pure goodness through everything He created. There is no darkness in Him, and He is incapable of evil.

**When God makes a promise, He is faithful to keep it.**

During the Patriarch Era God promised that Abraham would have a son. After many years of refining Abraham's character, God honored His promise and provided Abraham with a son, Isaac. Abraham's old age at the time of Isaac's birth proved one thing—God honored His word.

**God always provides for what He requires.**

In the Exodus Era God called the people to build a tabernacle in the wilderness. Where did a group of former slaves get the materials to build a structure made of lovely fabrics and golden objects? God provided these materials when He liberated the Israelites from Egypt and prompted the Egyptians to give the Israelites all their valuable possessions.

Read Proverbs 9:10 (p. 505, Kingdom Era) (NIV)—“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.”

In this verse we see that to fear God means to respect or revere Him. When you look back at your life and examine Scripture, you will grow in your knowledge of God, leading you toward wisdom.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. How has God shown His faithfulness in your life?
2. Where do you usually turn to seek wisdom?

**LOOK INWARD TO DISCOVER YOUR INADEQUACY** (1 Kings 3:7–8, p. 477)

Ask someone to read 1 Kings 3:7–8 (p. 477).

Have you ever gone to a store with a toddler? In those moments the toddler is confident in his newfound freedom and believes he's ready for anything. But then he walks in front of a car in the parking lot. He knocks over a large pyramid of cans because he wants to play with one can from the bottom. And as he's stretching to reach the \$100 bottle of perfume, you scoop him up and decide he's not coming to a store with you again until he's 25.

**SOLOMON CHOSE HUMILITY OVER HAUGHTINESS. HIS HEART HUMBLY BOWED BEFORE THE LORD INSTEAD OF STANDING PROUDLY IN GOD'S PRESENCE.**

Solomon looked at himself and realized he was just like a toddler in a store. He didn't know how to lead more than a million people. He didn't know what common people needed because he'd grown up in a palace. He didn't know how to manage an army because his dad had always done that. He didn't know how much to tax the people to ensure he could provide for their needs. What he *did* know was that it would be very easy for him to make a big mess quickly.

Solomon knew he was inadequate to the task God had put before him because he didn't have the experience or knowledge to succeed. And he didn't try to hide that fact; instead he openly declared it to the Lord. He chose humility over haughtiness. His heart humbly bowed before the Lord instead of standing proudly in God's presence.

A key word in Proverbs 9:10 (p. 505, Kingdom Era) is “beginning”: “The fear of the LORD is the *beginning* of wisdom” (NIV; emphasis added). Someone can respect God but still be filled with an arrogant spirit. You must take the next step by looking at yourself and realizing that you are inadequate for any task God has put before you. No matter your task, you depend entirely upon Him for its success, whether you acknowledge that truth or not.

Who gave you life? The Lord.

Who gave you the ability to use your body? The Lord.

Who gave you the ability to think and reason? The Lord.

Who designed your heart to beat

every second? The Lord.

**You must be connected to Christ to accomplish anything.**

Without the Lord's providence, you could not accomplish a single thing.

Read John 15:5 (p. 1,087, Gospel Era)—“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.”

**ANYTHING A STRONG CHRISTIAN PRODUCES IN HIS OWN STRENGTH WILL PALE IN COMPARISON TO WHAT GOD ACCOMPLISHES THROUGH A SMALL AND INSIGNIFICANT PERSON WHO FULLY RELIES ON HIM.**

If you remove a branch from the vine, it will quickly die. No matter how full and fruitful that branch was when it was attached to the vine, it will wither once it is disconnected. It may still look vibrant and healthy for a time, but it cannot produce any more fruit because it has been disconnected from its life source.

Similarly, if we are disconnected from Christ, our Source of Life, then we cannot accomplish anything of value. The only way for us to experience an abundant life is through Jesus (John 10:10, p. 1,051, Gospel Era). Anything we seek to accomplish apart from Christ will be destroyed on judgment day (1 Corinthians 3:12–15, p. 1,154, Missions Era). It is only through Christ that we can accomplish any task put before us (Philippians 4:13, p. 1,222, Missions Era).

Remember that God is not looking for the strongest, smartest, best-looking, and most influential people to accomplish His will across our nation. No, He is looking for those who will obey Him no matter what, even if they are weak, small, ugly, or insignificant (1 Corinthians 1:27, p. 1,153, Missions Era). Anything a strong Christian produces in his own strength will pale in comparison to what God accomplishes through a small and insignificant person who fully relies on Him.

May the realization that you cannot accomplish anything on your own drive you to be humble before the Lord. It is only through humility and weakness that you will discover God's strength to help you accomplish every great thing He puts before you (2 Corinthians 12:8–10, p. 1,196, Missions Era).

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Even if you acknowledge God's faithfulness, why is it vital to also recognize that you're inadequate to accomplish anything on your own?
2. Since you can't accomplish anything apart from Christ, what steps must you take to stay connected to Him?

#### **LOOK UPWARD TO DISCOVER TRUE WISDOM** (1 Kings 3:9, p. 477)

Ask someone to read 1 Kings 3:9 (p. 477).

After Solomon looked backward to discover God's faithfulness and looked inward to discover his inadequacy, he looked upward to God and discovered true wisdom. Solomon realized the only way to have an understanding heart or the "wisdom and knowledge to lead ... properly" (2 Chronicles 1:10, p. 477) was to receive it from God.

Solomon knew that to lead the people well, he had to "know the difference between right and wrong" (1 Kings 3:9, p. 477). How would Solomon discover this wisdom?

#### **Through God's Word**

Several months ago we discovered the following command in the law.

Ask someone to read Deuteronomy 17:18–20 (p. 253, Exodus Era).

As king, Solomon had to write down God's law and read it daily. This would have kept God's will, directions, and commands in his heart and kept him pointed in the right direction.

**IF YOU WANT TO DISCOVER GOD'S WISDOM, THEN YOU MUST READ GOD'S WORD AND LISTEN TO HIS SPIRIT.**

#### **Through God's Spirit**

At the beginning of his reign Solomon walked closely with God and talked with Him through prayer, and God spoke back to him. Scripture records Solomon's prayers to God and God's communication with him at different points in his life. In 1 Kings 8 we see Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the temple. In 1 Kings 9 we see that God heard Solomon's prayer and warned Solomon to follow His ways. In 1 Kings 11 we see that God communicated with Solomon concerning his unfaithfulness and told him the consequences of his sin.

We still discover God's true wisdom through His Word and Spirit today. One of Bellevue's values is biblical truth, which is why we are reading Scripture together this year. We treasure God's perfect Word as our standard for life and faith. However, we are only able to understand what God is saying through His Word because His Holy Spirit reveals the truth to us (1 Corinthians 2:10, p. 1,154, Missions Era).

If you want to discover God's wisdom, then you must read God's Word and listen to His Spirit. What are you prioritizing over seeking God? Is it truly more important than God's presence? Can it offer you anything more than what He offers?

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. If God's wisdom can only be discovered by spending time with Him, why do people prioritize other things?
2. What are some real-world examples of someone not pursuing God's wisdom?

#### **REDEMPTION THREAD**

Ask someone to read 1 Kings 3:10–14 (p. 477).

God was pleased with Solomon's request and promised to give him wisdom. However, God also gave Solomon gifts he didn't ask for—great wealth and fame. Solomon's response to God's question revealed that his character was ready for such blessings. In Deuteronomy 28 we learned that obedience brings God's blessings, and Solomon's desire to honor God put him in the

position to receive blessings. Today God still desires to bless His people's obedience by helping them know Christ more deeply. Our obedience allows us to experience more of God's presence and draws us closer to Him. It is in these times that we will experience His love, compassion, care, strength, and power.

Ask someone to read John 14:21 (p. 1,087, Gospel Era).

### **CALL TO ACTION**

Give everyone an index card and ensure everyone has a pen. Instruct your Life Group members to write down which direction they need to look this week (backward, inward, or upward) and one step they can take to help them accomplish this. Afterward allow several volunteers to share what they wrote down.

### **CONCLUSION**

The internet is not our answer to becoming wise. You must continually meditate on God's faithfulness, remind yourself of your inadequacy, and seek God to learn His wisdom. This will take time and consistency. If you're tired of continually making poor choices, let today be the day when you begin to chart a new course by seeking the wisdom of God.

## **NEXT GEN**

### **HOW CAN I BECOME WISE?**

**1 Kings 3:5-15**

#### **OPENING**

**Activity: What Would You Ask For?**

Supplies: None needed

Ask the students, "If God offered you anything you wanted, what would you ask for?" Ask for a few volunteers to act out their requests in front of the group without saying any words. Allow time for the group to guess the correct answers and ensure there is enough time for multiple volunteers to participate. Say, "In our lesson today God asked Solomon what he wanted, and we will look at how Solomon replied to God."

#### **Discussion Questions**

1. Who or what do most teenagers turn to in order to find help or advice?  
Why do they turn there?
2. How would you define wisdom?
3. Do you think you are wise? How do you prove it by your actions?

#### **APPLICATION**

Ask the students, "When has God been faithful in your life?" Allow volunteers to write their answers on the board. After all the answers have been written, allow each person to share about what they wrote. Remind the students that being wise begins with remembering God's faithfulness. Challenge them to remember their story of God's faithfulness when they are tempted to sin this week!

#### **Citations**

1. Sullivan, Missy. "First Electronic Message Is Sent via Internet Precursor ARPANET." *HISTORY*, 29 Oct. 2024, [www.history.com/this-day-in-history/first-electronic-message-sent-arpamet-internet-precursor](http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/first-electronic-message-sent-arpamet-internet-precursor).

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#### **Additional Resources**

"How Did God Respond When Solomon Asked for Wisdom?"

[gotquestions.org/Solomon-wisdom.html](http://gotquestions.org/Solomon-wisdom.html)

"Why Should We Read the Bible / Study the Bible?"

[gotquestions.org/why-read-Bible.html](http://gotquestions.org/why-read-Bible.html)

\*All thoughts and ideas listed under Additional Resources may not be completely in agreement with Bellevue's theology, and their listing should not be considered as an endorsement.

# CONGRATULATIONS— YOU FINISHED LESSON 20!



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