

International Bible Lessons Commentary
2 Samuel 23:1-7; 1 Chronicles 18:14

International Bible Lessons

Sunday, July 8, 2012

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The **International Bible Lesson** (*Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series*) for **Sunday, July 8, 2012**, is from **2 Samuel 23:1-7; 1 Chronicles 18:14**.

Questions for Discussion and Thinking

Further follow the verse-by-verse *International Bible Lessons Commentary* (formerly, *Bible Lesson Forum*) below. **Study Hints for Thinking Further** discuss the five questions below to help with class preparation and in conducting class discussion; these hints are available on the **International Bible Lessons Commentary** website. For additional **International Bible Lesson Commentaries**, see the complete and comprehensive **International Bible Lessons Commentary Index**. The weekly **International Bible Lesson** is posted each Saturday before the lesson is scheduled to be taught at **<http://InternationalBibleLessons.org>** and in **The Oklahoman** newspaper.

International Bible Lesson Commentary

2 Samuel 23:1-7

(2 Samuel 23:1) Now these are the last words of David: The oracle of David, son of Jesse, the oracle of the man whom God exalted, the

anointed of the God of Jacob, the favorite of the Strong One of Israel:

Throughout history, the last words of a dying man have seemed important to many. The writer expressed how very important David's words were because of who he was. David was king of Israel. He was identified by his relationship to his father, Jesse. Notice that David was not primarily described for or by his many famous exploits, but by his relationships. He was identified in three ways according to God's relationship with him. First, God exalted David. David never exalted himself. Second, God made David a king "the anointed" over Israel (Jacob). David did not try to overthrow or kill King Saul to take his place. God told Samuel to anoint David as the king to replace King Saul, and David waited for the right time to become king (after King Saul died in battle). Third, God gave David the strength to succeed in fighting the enemies of Israel and possessing the Promised Land.

(2 Samuel 23:2) The spirit of the LORD speaks through me, his word is upon my tongue.

To some people, these words of King David may make him seem to be bragging or making himself more important than others. If a lesser man than King David said words like these about himself, it might make some people wonder and look and listen for evidence that what he said might not be true. The Psalms David wrote are evidence that God often

inspired him to sing God's praises, which gave people comfort and inspired others to praise God too. In actuality, David's words here express his humility. He says these truths because God really spoke through him and gave him strength, not because he thought he was wise, strong, super spiritual, or better than others as a human being.

(2 Samuel 23:3) The God of Israel has spoken, the Rock of Israel has said to me: One who rules over people justly, ruling in the fear of God,

In addition to God being described as the God of Jacob (in verse 1), David described God as the God of Israel, the "rock" or "foundation" upon which the kingdom rested and found support. God changed Jacob's name to Israel. The nation or kingdom that David ruled was called Israel, until the kingdom divided into Israel and Judah after the death of King Solomon. The God of their ancestor Jacob, Who is the God of the kingdom of Israel, spoke to King David, and he ruled them according to godly principles and the law of God (though not perfectly). The God of Israel was also the rock that would crush Israel's enemies. Israel and King David were special to God, God ruled over them justly and God punished them justly when they sinned. Therefore, the one who disobeys God has good reason to fear God's just punishment and the one who loves God has good reason to reverence God for His justice and His just

rule over all the earth. God also expects leaders, rulers, or kings to rule over people justly and fear the consequences for refusing to lead or rule justly over others.

(2 Samuel 23:4) is like the light of morning, like the sun rising on a cloudless morning, gleaming from the rain on the grassy land.

Verses 3 and 4 describe the way David ruled, though with a few tragic exceptions. They describe how the person who loves God and puts God first in their lives would rule, and how people led or ruled by such a person would feel under his leadership. The subjects of such a king (or the citizens in a country with such leaders), will rejoice to see each new day, for they will trust in their leader and trust in God, Who rules over all of the universe, and Who will help their leader to do right and rule justly. A leader who fears will obey God according to God's word, and bless those he leads.

(2 Samuel 23:5) Is not my house like this with God? For he has made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and secure. Will he not cause to prosper all my help and my desire?

God justly punished King David for his sins during his lifetime, but God also forgave David and reestablished a right relationship with him for eternity. David was

known for his desire to obey God in everything and rule with justice and mercy. He became the standard by which the Biblical writers judged those kings who followed him. Though David may not have known all the details of God's everlasting covenant with him, God intended Jesus the Messiah to be born in the line of David. Jesus Christ brings order and security into the lives of those who love and trust Him. Jesus gives believers the desire to live godly in Him and He helps believers do so.

(2 Samuel 23:6) But the godless are all like thorns that are thrown away; for they cannot be picked up with the hand;

The godless (godless kings, leaders, teachers, and others) are the opposite of what King David had become by the time of his death. The godless create horrendous problems in the world. The godless are those who do not love and serve the God of Abraham, Jacob, and Isaac. David's last words indicate that the godless are so harmful that the godly must never get so close to them as to pick them up or touch them or adopt their ways. The godless are only good for throwing away.

(2 Samuel 23:7) to touch them one uses an iron bar or the shaft of a spear. And they are entirely consumed in fire on the spot.

The godly must keep the godless far away from them, as far away as the end of a spear and not touch them at all (unless justly with a spear). Keeping them at the end of a spear means that we should always be ready to defend ourselves and others should they attack. David desired to serve God and help others, and God made David's desire prosper even in battle [see verse 5]. David's last words indicate that the godless do so much evil that the godly must oppose them. The godly may need to justly use an iron bar to get the attention of the godless in order to tell them the truth of God, and this may help some become godly. Some must be thrust through with a spear to keep them from spreading the evil that makes so many suffer (and some suffer for eternity if they come to believe and follow the teachings of the godless or the ways of the godless). David says that when a godless person dies (perhaps by a spear or iron bar) that they are spiritually consumed in fire at that instant. David gives good reasons to reverence and fear God. The godless person does not simply "not believe," he or she can destroy the lives and ruin the future of others, so they must be stopped by people such as David, the divinely anointed King of Israel.

1 Chronicles 18:14

(1 Chronicles 18:14) So David reigned over all Israel; and he administered justice and equity to all his people.

King David reigned 40 years and was noted for serving God as a just king and for being fair to all people as God's representative sitting on the throne of Israel. He was just to everyone and not to just a favored few. Later, some of Israel's unjust kings listened to a favored few and ruled unjustly, and for this reason David's kingdom was divided after the death of King Solomon. King Solomon's son, Rehoboam, chose to listen to a favored few, and because he was not equitable toward ten of the tribes of Israel, they broke away and became the Kingdom of Israel. Rehoboam was left as King of Judah, formed by the tribes of Judah and Benjamin.

Five Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

1. What is more important, people's deeds or their relationship with God? Give reasons for your answer.
2. What would you think or say to someone if they said to you, "God told me to say this to you" Or, "God told me that He wants you to"?
3. What difference does a godly leader make to godly people? What difference might a godly leader make to ungodly people?
4. What difference might an ungodly leader make to godly people? How should Christians treat the godless?

5. Give some reasons why leaders in businesses, churches, families, and governments should lead justly and treat all people fairly?

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