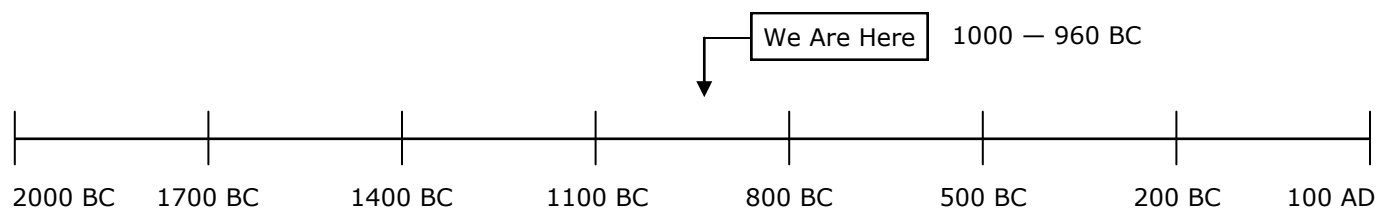


# Passing the Torch

Week 18: April 30-May 6 — *2 Sam. 19-24; 1 Kings 1, 2; Psalms* 34.2% Complete — 239 Days to Go



## Helpful Resources

Who Moved David? (p.177), Overview of Bible History (p.37)

## Making Sense of It All

- The Big Picture

King David is still on the throne, but he is nearing the end of his life. Although at times his reign was turbulent, David enjoyed forty years as ruler of God's people. He started well, as a young man who earned the reputation as a warrior, who proved to be a man of integrity, and who always demonstrated a genuine love for God. With every passing day, David's life seemed to gain momentum, and although there were a few pitfalls in his path, with the help of God he overcame them. Now, we get to see if this great king would fizzle out like Saul or finish strong by leaving a legacy of godliness. In his final days, King David took the proper steps to pass the torch to Solomon. What did David do to accomplish this important task?

1. **He Lived to Please and Glorify God:** Because David honored God, God established a covenant with David, promising that his descendants would be kings forever. Solomon was blessed because of his father's commitment to God. One of the best acts we can do as parents is model a vibrant Christian life before our kids. "A righteous man who walks in his integrity, how blessed are his sons after him" (*Proverbs 20:7*).
2. **He Did Battle With the Enemy** (*2 Samuel 8:1-14; 21:15-22*): To secure his throne and the safety of Israel, David confronted and conquered the enemies of the people. Thus, his son Solomon was able to reign in peace. As parents, we too should be aware of and confront the giants, demons, and other enemies who could cause our children eventual damage or destruction in the future.
3. **He Prepared for His Son's Success** (*1 Chronicles 22:2-5; 29:1-9*): David collected all the materials needed for the construction of the Temple. Although he was not allowed to build the Lord's sanctuary, David made sure that his son had everything that he needed to complete it. In the short time that we have with them, we should be doing everything in our power to help our children not only survive in life but to succeed in it.
4. **He Provided a Vision for the Future** (*1 Chronicles 22:6-11; 28:11-20*): To start his son's reign on the right foot, David gave Solomon a clear vision for his future as King — to build the magnificent Temple. Solomon did not have to guess what his purpose in life was or what his aim would be; Dad had given him a clear goal and pushed him in the right direction. There's no purpose in the present, if there's no plan for the future. Cast a vision for your kids, and let them know that God can and will do great things through them.

5. **He Pointed His Son to the Lord** (*1 Chronicles 22:12,13; 28:8,9*): Because David knew that the success of Israel rested on its ability to keep its covenant with God, he reminded Solomon to take it seriously as its King. He should be foremost in obeying it and in leading others to follow his example. Obedience to God brings His blessing and favor; it starts with "children obey your parents."
6. **He Established Help Around His Son** (*1 Chronicles 23-27; 28:21*): David knew that to rule as King and as God's leader before the people, Solomon would need a great deal of help; thus, David organized the many assistants who assumed the responsibilities for the Temple, the palace, the King's property, the military, etc. Build a support system of godly friends, family, and influences around your kids.
7. **He Passed Along His Wisdom** (*2 Samuel 23:1-7; 1 Kings 2:1-9*): Before he died, David gave his final instructions to Solomon; he passed along every bit of truth that he could as a fitting end to the investment that he had made in his son. Solomon could now face the daunting task of being king in the light of his father's wisdom. Better than preparing the road for our children is preparing our children for the road.

### **The Result of David's Time and Investment?** *1 Kings 2:12*

"Solomon was firmly established on the throne." Enough said.

David passed the torch to his son, and he did not fizzle out but, rather, he finished well.

- Personal Application
  1. **Serving the King:** Did you note that when David organized his volunteers and assistants, everyone had a place to serve? God has gifted us for a place of service in His kingdom. All of us have been called to serve the King in some capacity; He has asked us to give of our time, our treasures, and our talents for His work. When we do, we are just giving back what God has already given us! See *1 Chronicles 29:14-16*.
  2. **Passing the Torch:** If we drop our torch and never get it to our children, their path will be destroyed by fire. If we don't have a torch to pass, they will wander in the dark. However, if we hand it off successfully, they will have a guide to lead them in the way! Make sure that they know what you've invested in them, that they have the torch, and must pass it on next. Our momentum should sling them farther than we ever reached in our own lives (*1 Chronicles 29:23-25*).

### **The Bottom Line**

We must be *intentional* to pass the torch of our *faith* to the next generation.

### **Questions to Consider**

1. Have you identified your spiritual gifts? Are you using them in the service of the King?
2. What is "the torch" that we discussed anyway? What all does it entail?
3. What torch was passed to you? How well are you doing with passing on your torch?
4. What are some ways (not discussed) that we can pass the torch to the next generation?

## The Sin of the Census

In the New Living Translation, we find an unfortunate rendering of *2 Samuel 24:1*, "Once again the anger of the Lord burned against Israel, and He caused David to harm them by taking a census. 'Go and count the people of Israel and Judah,' the Lord told him."

The unfortunate part of this translation is that "the Lord told him" to take the census, which would seemingly incriminate God for David's actions. Later in the chapter, God punishes David and Israel for taking the census. Why would God punish someone for doing what they were told to do? Does this mean that God caused David to sin? Does this mean that God tempts people and is capable of evil? No, not at all.

When *2 Samuel 24:1* is viewed in more literal translations, the scenario is understandable.

"Now again the anger of the Lord burned against Israel, and *it incited David against them* to say, 'Go, number Israel and Judah' " (NASB).

"The anger of the Lord was aroused against Israel, and *He moved David against them* to say, 'Go, number Israel and Judah' " (NKJV).

"The Lord was angry at Israel, and He made David think it would be a good idea to count the people in Israel and Judah" (CEV).

The partner of this passage is found in *1 Chronicles 21:1*, which says, "*Satan rose up against Israel and caused David to take a census of the Israelites*" (NLT).

For reasons we are not told, God was angry with Israel, perhaps for some sin or disobedience. As a result, God judges the people through the prideful action of their king, a needless census during peace time, to measure his own strength and glory, so as to trust in it rather than God.

However, the question still remains, who moved David to take the census — God or Satan? The answer is both. God permitted Satan to attack Israel through the taking of the census, so in essence both God and Satan were involved. It is the doctrine of concurrence taking place here as in other Scriptures. Concurrence is when two or more participants are involved in a scenario and, yet, the purposes of God are accomplished.

This truth is evidenced in many places in the Bible. For example, who attacked Job? Who hardened Pharaoh's heart? Who threw Jonah overboard? Who betrayed Jesus? Who crucified Jesus?

The bottom line is this: we know that God is incapable of evil and cannot or does not tempt man. Although the words may sometimes indicate otherwise, God is not at fault for causing one to sin.

However, everything must be permitted by God to occur, so He is involved with every situation in His universe; but, often-times to allow evil to take place, He must permit the evil one, Satan, to take part. Many times, what God permits, He is said to have caused; but, that truth does not incriminate God for the choices and sins of man.

"No prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God."

*2 Peter 1:20, 21*

