Be Still/ Week 5 notes/ God is Hope/ 2 Samuel 13-19/Psalm 3-5,27,42,43,55,61-63,143.

After the bleak circumstances of chapters 11-13, we need to read about HOPE. Yet hope is one of those words we often use but need to define. Biblical hope is a confident assurance that God will do what He has already promised to do. Hope will always point us to the future, and yet is also ours today. God is not the dispenser of hope. He IS our hope. And since we know God through Jesus Christ, we can agree with the Apostle Paul, Christ is our hope. Our hope is an anchor for the soul (Hebrews 7:19). Hope is not wishful thinking. It Christ Himself and everything that has been given to us because we know Christ. Surely that includes Heaven, but it also includes every promise made available to us in Christ.

David needs to see his hope! And he does even though the consequences of sin try to diminish his hope. David’s story will be filled with hardship for the rest of his life, but he has hope.

**Crisis, Chaos, and Consequences.**2 Samuel 13:1 begins with a man named Absalom. Absalom is the son of David, second in line for the throne from a human perspective. Amnon, his older half-brother is the heir apparent and his younger half-brother, Adonijah is third in line for the throne. BUT GOD has already chosen Solomon to be king after David. David knew this but had not revealed it to his other children. Solomon would have still been a child at this point in the story.

Absalom is the son of David and his fourth wife, Maacah. She is the daughter of Talmir king of Geshur. Absalom and his sister Tamar are of royal lineage from both parents. Perhaps this facilitated Absalom’s arrogance and egotism. Additionally, both Absalom and Tamar are noted as being physically beautiful (2 Samuel 14:25-26). Absalom is a smooth talker, charming, and handsome—a favored son of David. But he is shallow and rebellious.

2 Samuel 13 is filled with details, and it is interesting to read. Read it! Amnon, the oldest son of David rapes his half-sister, Tamar. She is degraded and shamed and has no place to live with the other virgin daughters of David. She lives with her brother Absalom for two years. Neither David nor Absalom do anything on behalf of Tamar. After two years of waiting for the perfect opportunity, Absalom begins to unfurl his revenge on Amnon, and his rebellion against his father David. Absalom murders Amnon and then flees to his maternal grandfather in Geshur. Absalom stays in Geshur for three years.

After three years of mourning Amnon, David is ready to deal with Absalom. He sends his general Joab to being Absalom back to Jerusalem. But in a rather passive/aggressive move, David does not look on the face of Absalom for over two years. When a reunion is arranged, David kisses his wayward son but does not correct him. Absalom bows to his father but never repents of murdering his half-brother. David is hesitant to deal with his adult sons because his own sin continues to overwhelm him.

2 Samuel 15 tells us about Absalom’s growing rebellion and subsequently usurping David’s throne temporarily. After seeing his father David, Absalom begins to worm his way into the hearts of the people while also undermining David’s capability to rule. Many scholars believe David was sick during this time. He is absent from the city gates where otherwise, he should have been each day, judging the claims and problems of the people. Absalom the opportunist seized the moment (the years) to ingratiate himself to the people. After 4 years, Absalom asks to go to Hebron to fulfill a vow. Remember, Hebron is where the tribe of Judah anointed David as their king. Hebron is where David’s rule began. Absalom remembers! And it is from Hebron he declares himself king. Much of the army and many of the people of Israel agree to follow him. Absalom sends for Ahithophel, Bathsheba’s grandfather and David’s closest advisor. Ahithophel has been urging Absalom on all along, patiently waiting for his own vengeance against David because of David’s sin against his granddaughter, Bathsheba and her husband Uriah.

David knows Absalom will make an approach to Jerusalem. To save his family, his servants, his followers, and his army, David (for the second time in his life) flees. He leaves behind 10 concubines to take care of the house. David and his people weep as they go (2 Sam. 15:30). The news that Ahithophel has joined Absalom causes sorrow and angst in David. He prays that God will confuse the advice of Ahithophel (2 Sam 15:31). God answers David’s prayer through another advisor, Hushai, a trusted friend of David’s who will become a spy in Absalom’s court and confuse the advice of Ahithophel.

Chapter 16 is a series of events that seem to beat David down to a low point. (Ziba lies and Shemei curses and throws rocks). Absalom enters Jerusalem unopposed. Ahithophel advises that Absalom defy his father David by having sex with the ten concubines left behind. Taking David’s concubines was an odious act from which there could be no reconciliation. It was a symbol of usurping the throne. Absalom pitched a tent on the roof and violated all ten women in broad daylight for everyone to see. (read Nathan’s words in 2 Samuel 12:11-12).

Chapter 17 Ahithophel wants David dead and urges Absalom to send the army to kill David without Absalom leading. Hushai say no, Absalom must go, kill his father, and secure the throne for himself. Absalom chooses Hushai’s plan. 2 Samuel 18, David gets the news the armies of Absalom are coming. Joab leads the army of David. David gives strict instructions to bring Absalom back alive. Amasa leads the army of Absalom. Even though Joab has encouraged David not to fight, David’s army wins! God is still fighting for David. In the defeat however, Joab brutally kills Absalom. (Perhaps this is why Joab did not want David in the battle.)

The news of victory comes to David, but along with it, the news of Absalom’s death. Overcome with grief, David does not acknowledge the victory. He grieves with inconsolable grief for his son Absalom (2Samuel 18:33). Joab however speaks up in chapter 19, telling the king to pull himself together and acknowledge the sacrifices made on his behalf by the army and the people (2 Samuel 19:1-7). David is escorted back to Jerusalem. He honors those who sacrificed for him. He begins to rule again although years of diplomacy and military intervention will be needed to reunite the tribes of Israel.

**Facing it all with Hope.** What a heartbreaking and discouraging sequences of events. The consequences of David’s sin have come to pass just as God said through the propjet Nathan. While 2 Samuel 13-19 records David praying only once during the entire ordeal, the Psalms, however, tell us the bigger story. The psalms listed at the top of your outline are attributed to this difficult season of David’s life. There are other psalms that could possible fit into these Absalom chapters in 2 Samuel--- psalms of lament during times of great difficulty and oppression. We learn from the psalms that David did pray—and he prayed often. He sets a pattern for us as well as we pray during seasons of duress.

**Pray**. Every psalm is a prayer, reminding us that David prayed often during the Absalom years. He prays constantly and confidently even in times of questioning and brokenness. I encourage you to read each of the psalms listed at the top of the outline.

Psalm 3, *O Lord how my adversaries have increase. Ps 4:1 Answer when I call, O God of my righteousness. Ps 4:3 The Lords hears when I call. Psalm 5:1, Give ear to my words o Lord. Consider my groanings. Psalm 6:2, Br gracious. To me, O Lord for I am pining away. Psalm 6:9 The Lord has heard my supplication. Psalm 55:16 I shall call upon God and the Lord shall save me.*

David encourages his readers/singers to do the same thing. *Psalm 55:22, Cast your burden upon the Lord, and He will sustain you.*

Prayer is our greatest privilege as children of God. Hebrews 4:16 tells us the throne of grace is always available and our high priest Jesus is always interceding for us.

Psalm 13 is a weary psalm—a lament. The last two verses however give us a pattern for praying that will help us in times of difficulty. Psalm 13:5-6 speaks about remembering the past faithfulness of God and also looking ahead to the hope of His promises. “*But* ***I have trusted*** *in your lovingkindness” (past). “My heart* ***shall rejoice*** *in your salvation” (future). “I* ***will sing*** *to the Lord “(future).” Because* ***He has dealt*** *bountifully with me” (past).*

**Recall God’s Faithfulness (past and present)** Isaiah 43 warns us about looking back at our failures. But we are encouraged to look back to see the faithfulness of God throughout our lives. *1 Samuel 12:24, “Only serve the Lord and serve Him in truth with all your hearts, for consider what great things He has done for you.”* Think back over the past five weeks of this study and remember God’s faithfulness to David. God was faithful in the early years. Faithful to choose David, to equip and train him, to fight for David. In the years when David was on the run from Saul, God delivered David from Saul over and over, He guided David’s steps, provided for David, cared for David. Psalm 34:18 David says, *God is near to the broken hearted and the crushed in spirit.* After Saul’s death, God elevated David to be king. God was with David. He brought all of Israel together under David’s leadership, and God gave David the promises of 2 Samuel 7. Even in the sinfulness of 2 Samuel 11 and 12, God forgave David. God never removed His Spirit from David or took the kingdom away from David. God’s mercy and grace and redemption continued to work in David’s life. Now in week 5 of this study, God remains faithful to David. David writes *Psalm 3;3; Thou O Lord are a shield about me, my glory and the lifter of my head.*

Examine your own past. How has God proven Himself faithful to you? Joshua 4 is about remembering what God has done. The people of Israel construct a monument to God’s faithfulness with stones from the Jordan River. They are memorial stones, reminding the people to remember and tell what God has done. We too need memorial stones in our lives. Markers that remind of God’s faithfulness—a verse, a note in your Bible, a memory recorded so as not forget.

**Remember God’s Promises (future)** When David looked ahead, he wrote “*my hope is in* *You* (Psalm 38 and 39). Hope is forward facing. *Psalm 27:13 and 14, I would have despaired unless I believed I would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait (hope) for the Lord. Be strong and let your heart take courage. Yes, wait (hope)for the Lord.”*

*Psalm 62:5, My soul, wait in silence for God only, for my hope is from Him.*

What had God promised? Review the covenant God made with David in 2 Samuel 7:9-16. Psalm 89 reviews this covenant as well. David understood that these awful circumstances were not the determining factor in David’s future. God was. His promises are true. He is the promise keeping God. Psalm 43:2, *Hope in God, for I shall again praise Him.*

Our hope is the Lord Jesus. Knowing Him gives us access to every promise God has for us. Ephesians 1: 3 says we are blessed with every spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus. Certainly, we have heaven, but we have hope today as well. As you read and study God’s Word, mark the promises that are your hope. Promises like, *I will never leave you or forsake you. My God shall supply all your needs. Nothing can snatch you from the Father’s hand. I am sending you a Helper, the Holy Spirit. God will supply wisdom. Peace I give to you.*

**Praise.** Every psalm David penned has a note of praise, a turning toward God. David knew the circumstances might not change immediately, but he understood the faithfulness of God. God would keep His promises to David. The recalling and remembering elicited praise from David. It will do the same for us as we change our focus from the difficulty of life to our faithful God who is also our God of hope. AS you read each psalm of lament, notice the turn in each psalm—a turn toward praise.

Even though David would continue to reap consequences of his sin, even though he would stumble yet again in different ways, David lived and ruled as God directed him. He did not let the defeats of the past overshadow his hope in God. David remained a man after God’s own heart. And God remained for David and remains for us, the God of all Hope.