

# RISE<sup>OF</sup> THE KINGS

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1 & 2 SAMUEL



# DAILY READING NOTES TERM 2, 2015

## 1 & 2 SAMUEL - RISE OF THE KINGS

Week		Passage
1	Samuel's Story	1 Samuel 1-7
2	From Judges to Kings	1 Samuel 8
3	The People's Choice for a King	1 Samuel 9-15
4	God's Choice for a King	1 Samuel 16
5	Saul's Demise; David's Rise	1 Samuel 17-31
6	David's Journey to the Throne	2 Samuel 1-5:5
7	David's Rule and God's Promise	2 Samuel 5:6-8:18
8	David's Failures and Repentance	2 Samuel 9-12
9	The Consequences of David's Failures	2 Samuel 13-20
10	Epilogue: Reflections on Kingship	2 Samuel 21-24

**We want to encourage each other to be on mission to our non-Christian friends, family and contacts. Who are you on mission to?**

Make a list and start praying for them (and yourself).

**Pray for three friends, once a week, for one minute (3-1-1).**

List the names of your family and friends here:

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## How to use this book:

### 1. PERSONAL READING

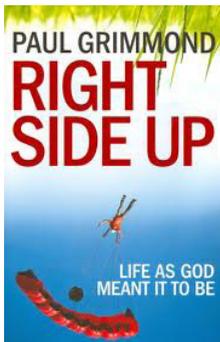
- Use this guide to help you read your Bible every day.
- Scribble down your thoughts and questions each day, and remember to pray and ask God to speak to you by His Spirit, through His Word.

### 2. GROWTH GROUPS

- Take this guide with you to your growth group each week so you can write down prayer points that come from the study that week and prayer requests from the members of your group.
- Let your group know who you are on mission to.

### 3. CHURCH

- Keep this guide with your Bible and bring it with you to church.
- Scribble down sermon notes in the space provided.



## SUGGESTED READING

### *'Right Side Up'* by Paul Grimmond

Becoming a Christian is to turn away from living life your own way and put your trust in Jesus as your Savior and King. It is to begin a lifelong journey of learning what it means to follow Jesus as your king. In many ways, your life is turned upside down. However, Paul Grimmond helpfully reminds us that it is more like turning your life 'Right Side Up' again. He writes, 'I set out to write a book for new Christians, to explain what it means to be a Christian and what the lifelong adventure of following Jesus is like. But I soon realized that what Jesus wants to say to a new Christian is really the same thing he wants to keep saying to the seasoned saint: "Whoever loses his life for my sake will find it". My prayer is that this book will persuade you of the truth of those words, and help you live like you believe them. It's a book for the brand new Christian that should challenge every believer – whether you've been following Jesus for five minutes or fifty years.'

# INTRODUCTION 1 & 2 SAMUEL

**The books of 1 and 2 Samuel, together with 1 and 2 Kings, were originally one large volume called the Book of Kingdoms. The division of this one large volume into the four books we have in our Bibles today probably occurred during the early Christian era for the purpose of making it more readable. These books record the events of an incredibly significant era of Israel's history. It was an era that saw Israel move away from being a loosely-connected bunch of 12 tribes into a nation ruled by a king.**

While we don't know who compiled the historical material into the books we have today, there is evidence that suggests Samuel contributed at least some of the material (see 1 Chronicles 29:29). However, because the books record events after Samuel's death, it must also include material from other sources as well. In contrast to the book of Judges and especially Kings, 1 and 2 Samuel have been compiled as an almost pure historical narrative, a straightforward record of Israel's history. 1 and 2 Samuel don't have an obvious structure; they contain virtually no editorial comments about the significance of events, why they happened, advice or exhortation to take from them. That said, it has been noted that there seems to be four summary sections: 1 Samuel 7:15-17; 14:47-52; 2 Samuel 8:15-18 and 20:23-26 that could help break up the narrative (Dale Ralph Davis). However, for the most part, it is the historical account of Samuel, Saul and David. We will therefore need to do some work thinking about the importance of the events within these accounts, why God has preserved them for us, and how we can apply them today.

The book of 1 Samuel picks up where Judges finishes, in the spiralling mess of Israel's almost hopeless attempts to live up to their high calling to be the people of God. Judges ends with these words, "in those days Israel had no king; everyone did as they saw fit". The days when Israel had no king were days of moral anarchy. The accounts of the Judges are largely ugly and brutal. This is what life is like when there is no king and everyone does as they see fit. But the situation was more ambiguous. It is certainly true that Israel had no king; but, critically, that was because they refused to acknowledge God as their king. The LORD was to be Israel's king; they were to live under His rule (Exodus 19-20). The real problem was not the lack of a king, but a lack of obedience to God as king.

This ambiguity continues into 1 and 2 Samuel. We will see Israel asking for a king, and we will see God regarding that as a rejection of His rule (1 Sam. 8:7). We will see the rule of the first king (the people's choice), Saul, and be left wondering how this was any advance at all. Even the rise of King David (God's choice) in the second half of 1 Samuel and his rule in 2 Samuel proves to be a mixed blessing.

David's reign is the high point in the history of Israel. He unifies Israel, establishes the capital city (Jerusalem) and completes the conquest of the land. He is the undisputed king of the nation, in the Promised Land, under God. Yet, David's story is also one of tragedy and defeat. While David is the best Israel ever gets, he still gets caught in the snare of sin just like anyone else. If anything, David's greatness makes his fall even more tragic. 2 Samuel covers some of the most ugly situations recorded in the Bible: there are rapes, rebellions, public executions, civil war, bitterness, shady politics and assassinations. Into this mix of brokenness and sin, God works to point us forward to how He will ultimately resolve this mess.

Israel's kings were anointed with oil, so they were known as "the anointed one" (1 Sam. 2:35). The Hebrew word for this is "messiah", or "christ" in the language of the New Testament (Greek). As we see the tragic and disastrous reign of Saul (the king Israel asked for) and the flawed reign of David (the king God blessed His people with), we are being pointed towards the Christ, the one who would finally rule God's people in the way God intends.

Within the overarching story of the Bible, 1 and 2 Samuel help prepare us for our need of a king, but not just any king. We are pointed forward to the coming of a great king whose reign will never end, one who will bear all the marks of David's greatness but none of his flaws. But more than simply pointing us to this king, God himself enters history and makes an unconditional covenant promise to David that one from his bloodline would reign over God's people forever (2 Samuel 7). And so the history of those first christs points us towards, and leaves us wanting for the rule of the perfect and promised Christ, the Lord Jesus. As we read 1 and 2 Samuel, we will see the 'Rise of the Kings' in Israel and within their story, we will be pointed to the coming of The Great King, Jesus.

# WEEK 1: 1 SAMUEL 1-7

## DAY 1

### Read Judges 21:25

1. In what sense is this verse right in saying that Israel had no king, and in what sense is it not right? (Hint: see Exodus 19:1-6)
2. What impact does the rule of a king have on the way people live, according to this verse?
3. What insight does this verse give in to the spiritual state of Israel at the end of the book of Judges?

**Prayer:** The problem Israel faced of not wanting to live under God's rule is the story of humanity throughout the ages. We live in an age where people actively do what they want to do without regard for God. Pray that God would be gracious to those in our generation and help them see their need for Jesus. Pray for someone you know personally that doesn't know Jesus.

# DAY 2

## Read 1 Samuel 1:1-28

1. Who are the main characters in this opening chapter and how would you describe their situation?
2. The circumstances of this story should be familiar to Bible readers. Where else have we previously read about God working through seeming hopelessness to bring forth his plans for salvation? (If you are new to reading the Bible, look at Genesis 18:1-15; 25:21; 30:22-23 and, importantly, Judges 13:1-5).
3. What is it about Hannah's story that makes her stand out in a dark era of history?
4. How would you describe the expectations surrounding the birth of her son, Samuel?

**Prayer.** Pray that God helps you understand your utter hopelessness before Him because of your sin so that you might be blown away by God's mercy towards you in Jesus. The LORD Almighty has done this for us because He is able and we are not! The more we are captured by the wonder of this truth, the more freely we will tell others about it.

# WEEK 1: 1 SAMUEL 1-7

**Thinking Further:** In 1 Samuel 1:3, we are introduced to a new name for God, the LORD Almighty (LORD of Hosts, or Armies). This name refers to the LORD as having immense physical (1 Sam. 12:9), spiritual (Joshua 5:14) and celestial (Psalm 148:2) powers at his disposal – powers that he uses for His people! It is to this God, supreme King and Ruler over all, that Hannah cries out to in her distress. It is a story of the hopeless one crying out to the only one who can act to change her situation, and her faith is not misplaced!

## DAY 3

### Read 1 Samuel 2:1-11

1. Hannah's song is an amazing outpouring of her personal gratitude but it also sets the scene for what will come next in the story by highlighting important truths about God.
  - a. What do you learn about God's character from verses 1-2?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - b. What do you learn about God's character from verses 3-8?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - c. Looking at verses 9-10:
    - What is the attribute of those who are given assurance that the Lord will guard their steps?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
    - What caution are we to hear about being impressed by human strength? Where does true strength lie?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
    - What is God's promise to 'His' king (christ)?

**Prayer:** Thinking about the circumstances of your own life today, how does Hannah's song help you think rightly about yourself and about God? How can Hannah's song shape how you pray today?

## DAY 4

1 Samuel 2:12-36 is the backdrop to today's passage and focuses on the demise of Eli because of the wickedness of his sons. They were arrogant and faithless men, unfit to be priests and unwilling to listen to the rebuke from their father. So God passes judgement on the house of Eli and promises to raise up for Himself a faithful priest who will minister before God's anointed one (christ; king), Samuel.

### Read 1 Samuel 3:1-4:1a

1. What experience does Israel have of hearing from God in the opening verses? Combined with Eli's deteriorating health and his wicked sons, how would you describe Israel's current situation?
2. God's calling of Samuel as a prophet involves him speaking a very confronting prophecy to the man under whom he has served most of his life. How does Samuel handle this, and how does Eli respond?
3. Compared to where this passage started, what has changed by the end?

**Prayer:** How do we apply this passage to our setting today? Well, it's good to remember that we are not the ancient people of Israel living in a time where there is a shortage of God's revealed word. We live in an age where we have everything we need for life and godliness through the revealed word of God in the person of Jesus (2 Peter 1; Hebrews 1). However, we can be at great risk of causing our own famine by simply not making time each day to read and apply the word of God to our lives. Give thanks to God for giving us His word; read it, take it in, be nourished and shaped by it each day.



**Thinking Further:** Once the Ark is returned to Israel, we see Samuel's rise to be a godly leader and Judge over Israel. He leads them to repentance and devotion to the LORD. Because of Samuel's humble dependence on the LORD and his faithfulness to His word, the LORD's hand was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel's life. For the moment, things seem like they are back on track.

## **PRAYER POINTS AND NOTES**

# WEEK 2: 1 SAMUEL 8

## DAY 1

### Read 1 Samuel 8:1-5

1. Israel's elders came to Samuel with a question. What was it and why was it asked?
2. God had already made provision for Israel to have a king in the law given to Moses (see Deuteronomy. 17:14-20). What is it about their request that is troubling?
3. Remembering back to Hannah's song in 2:9-10, where is the place of real power, and why is the elders' request a failure to recognise this?

**Prayer.** Like Israel, we can think that the impressiveness of what we see around us is what we should model our lives on. Do you find yourself tempted to look for confidence and security in earthly things? What things in particular do you find you are distracted by? How do they hinder you trusting in God's promises? Pray about this.

# DAY 2

## Read 1 Samuel 8:6-7

1. What is the real problem in the elder's request for a king?
2. Given God has already made provision for Israel to have a king (Deuteronomy 17:14-20), why does He take this request as a rejection of Him as King?
3. As we think about applying this today, remember that in Acts 2:36 we read that through His death and resurrection, God has declared Jesus to be both Lord and Christ (King). What then does people's attitude towards Jesus say about their attitude towards God? Where do you stand before Jesus today? Are you seeking to live under His rule or are there areas in your life that you are actively rebelling against God?

**Prayer.** How can you pray about your response to Question 3?

# WEEK 2: 1 SAMUEL 8

## DAY 3

### Read 1 Samuel 8:8-9

1. It appears Samuel has taken the elders request a little more personally than he should have (8:6-7). Having reminded Samuel that it is God they have rejected, not Samuel, God then goes on to say, “listen to them”. In other words, “hear what they are saying to you and give them what they are asking for, but warn them first”. Do you find this a surprising response? Why or why not?
  
2. In Roman’s 1:18-32, we read that God hands us over to our desires so that we bear the consequences of our sin. For the Christian, while the promise that we will be transformed into the likeness of Jesus is real and wonderful (Romans 8), it is not something that happens against our will. Why is this a sobering reality to be reminded of today?

**Prayer.** Pray that God would keep your heart soft and open to both the encouragement and the rebuke you need to hear to live a life worthy of the gospel. Be careful what you wish for, God may give it to you – even if it brings you pain in order to help you see your need for Him.

# DAY 4

## Read 1 Samuel 8:10-18

1. Samuel now returns to the people who are asking for a king and, as instructed by God, he gives it to them straight! What does he want them to be clear about?
2. Why do you think Samuel wants them to be clear about the implications of this decision?
3. To go the way of the world seems appealing but it comes at great cost. For Israel, it meant turning their backs on God, and walking into his judgment, not His blessing. They had been here over and over again (1 Samuel 8:8), but they refused to learn from their own history; they were about to willingly turn away from God's Word again! One of the most basic questions we can ask ourselves, and each other, as we consider the health of our life with God, is whether we are daily in God's Word and prayerfully seeking to live by it. Some of us don't read regularly, some read but don't act, others read and act without prayerfully depending on God – where is your weakness? What steps can you take to grow in this area?

**Prayer.** How can you pray about your response to Question 3?

# WEEK 2: 1 SAMUEL 8

## DAY 5

### Read 1 Samuel 8:19-22

1. Today we come back to the place we started in this week's readings, an affirmation of the people's request to Samuel for a king. Despite Samuel's reasoning with them about the dangers of this decision, what is their response?
2. Compare what the people want from a king in 8:20 with what Hannah says in 2:6-10. What is the great tragedy here for Israel?

**Prayer:** If we feel the gravity of this story, we will see the great tragedy of those who walk away from God. In Matthew 18:12-14, Jesus tells the story about the immense importance of the one sheep who wandered away and the urgent need to find it because God desires that none should be lost. How can you pray about this for yourself, your friends and family, and your mission partners?

# PRAYER POINTS AND NOTES



## DAY 2

### Read 1 Samuel 10:17-25 (optional: read all of chapters 9-11)

1. What is God's view of what is happening here?
2. In 8:20, we read that Israel wanted a king who would lead them and fight their battles. 1 Samuel 9:2 and 10:23 makes reference to Saul's impressive external appearance. What conclusion might we draw?
3. As a reader, we are beginning to feel a tension within the events. On one hand, Israel rejects God and wants a certain type of king; on the other, Saul doesn't seem to be merely a 'poster boy' for completely worldly leadership (see 9:2; 9:21; 11:12-15) – he 'seems' to start off ok. It is important to note that God is clearly in control. He chooses and appoints Israel's king for it is He who directs the future according to His purposes in spite of His people's sin. Why is this important to know, and how does it shape our understanding of God today?

**Prayer.** How might this influence the way you pray today?

# WEEK 3: 1 SAMUEL 9-15

## DAY 3

### Read 1 Samuel 12:1-25

1. What significant change in Israel's history does this chapter record?
2. Despite Israel now having a human king for the first time, what impact will it have on the way they relate to God?
3. In light of this chapter, what is the greatest responsibility the king has to inform his own actions, and those he leads Israel to follow?

**Prayer.** Whether Israel of old, or us today, the critical mark of a leader worthy of following is seen principally in the way they lead you to live in submission to the Word of God (John 15:9-11; 1 Cor. 15:1-11; 1 Tim. 3:14-4:5). Pray for your leaders today – growth group leaders, ministry team leaders, pastoral team leaders, missionaries, church planters and more. Pray they would give themselves faithfully to preaching and teaching the Word of God in a way that sees more and more people find life under the reign of King Jesus.



# WEEK 3: 1 SAMUEL 9-15

## DAY 5

### Read 1 Samuel 15:1-23

1. Yesterday we read about Samuel's strong rebuke of Saul for not obeying God's commands. Is Saul heeding that rebuke?
2. Samuel's words in verses 22-23 reveal how God sees Saul's disobedience – why does He take such offense and what is the outcome?
3. It is easy to think some things we do are really not that big a deal, things we know are wrong but in the scheme of things they're only small things, or so we tell ourselves. How does this passage offer a rebuke and a challenge to consider the importance of living our lives faithful to God's Word?

**Prayer:** Are there areas in your life that you need to pray about in particular, things that you know you really need to deal with but constantly put off? How might you take these seriously today?

# PRAYER POINTS AND NOTES

# WEEK 4: 1 SAMUEL 16

## DAY 1

### Read 1 Samuel 16:1-5

Previously, Israel demanded that Samuel (God) give them a king “like the nations around them” (8:20), so God provided one whose physical qualities met their request (10:23-24). But as we saw last week, that ended badly with God’s rejection of Saul.

1. In today’s reading, Samuel seems to be quite depressed until God speaks. What does he say?
  - a. Why should this be any different to the first time God chose a king?
  
2. Why would these words have given rise to hope?
  - a. Why should this be any different to the first time God chose a king?
  
3. What do we see here about God’s commitment to His promise and His people, even though they have rejected Him?
  - a. Why is that not merely a comfort for Israel, but for us also?

**Prayer:** Praise God for not abandoning His people, even though they turned their backs on Him. Thank Him for the insight into His character that shows even though His people are unfaithful. God’s faithfulness endures, so we can trust Him even in the wake of our failure. Take time to reflect on the grace of God, that He would love the unlovable, us. How does this impact you? How can you pray about that?

# DAY 2

## Read 1 Samuel 16:6-7

1. What do we learn about the qualities of a leader that God values?
2. How might these qualities differ to those we have seen in Saul?
3. Why are these words important for Samuel to hear? Why do we need to hear them today?

**Prayer.** How are you going working on your character and your attitude towards God and each other? Why is it just plain silly to think that you can fake it in the Christian life? How does this help you pray today?

# WEEK 4: 1 SAMUEL 16

## DAY 3

### Read 1 Samuel 16:8-12

1. What reasons can you see that God's choice might be a surprise?
2. Is there any confusion about whom God has chosen?
3. Why might this have been important, especially for Samuel given what we've read about his emotional state?

**Prayer:** Thank God that He doesn't make mistakes, that He sees beyond outward appearances and works all things according to His will and purpose. What is going on for you that you need to remember God is in control and doesn't always work in ways that seem to make sense? How can you pray about that today?

# DAY 4

## Read 1 Samuel 16:13

1. The description of David as “the youngest” (verse 11) is more literally, the ‘little one’ – perhaps to provide a contrast with Saul and David’s brothers who stood tall and physically impressive. What happens to David after Samuel anoints him with oil?
2. What picture do we have of this ‘little fella’ now?
3. Why might God constantly choose to work through unimpressive people and circumstances that don’t seem to make sense? Where does He want our focus to be? In whom, or in what does He want us put our trust? (Hint: Hannah’s prayer in 1 Samuel 2:1-10)

**Prayer.** It’s easier to think about trusting in God when life is going well, its another thing when things come our way that are painful and hard. Yet it’s in these times that our faith can be forged strong and our understanding of God’s glory grown large. Are there things in your life that you find hard to trust God with? How can you pray about these things?

# WEEK 4: 1 SAMUEL 16

## DAY 5

### Read 1 Samuel 16:14-23

1. David's receiving of the Spirit (verse 13) is now contrasted with Saul's experience. How is God using these events?
2. God's ways are often unconventional! Saul, the rejected king, experiences God's judgment yet also His comfort but that comes through God's anointed king. At the same time, God moves David closer to the throne through humble service to God's rejected king. How does this foreshadow the coming of Jesus to His throne? (See Philippians 2:5-11)
3. David's example points us to Jesus, but Jesus said that His disciples would follow him in the same manner – through humble sacrificial service (Luke 9:21f). Does your life reflect the kind of humble service we see here of David, or Jesus?

**Prayer.** How can you pray about that today?

# PRAYER POINTS AND NOTES

# WEEK 5: 1 SAMUEL 17-31

**This week we will look at a selection of readings that focus on Saul's demise and David's rise. I encourage you to read the whole account if you can; however, our readings will only cover certain sections aiming to give you a big-picture sense of what's happening.**

## DAY 1

### Read 1 Samuel 17:1-11; 32-37; 45-49

1. By all accounts, Goliath is a monster of a man, physically superior and not to be trifled with – if your eyes are limited to an earthly external perspective that is! However, Hannah's prayer (1 Samuel 2) calls for a very different perspective, one where externals do not impress God at all because He looks upon the heart (16:7). This tension runs right throughout these chapters.
  - a. Looking at verses 17:1-11, what is Saul's response to seeing Goliath's external appearance?
  - b. Looking at verses 32-37 and 45-49, how does David's perspective shape his view of Goliath? How do things go for David?
2. What do you think we are meant to be observing in this story? What is the big message?

**Prayer:** Genuinely facing the gravity and consequences of your sin is like facing Goliath – a superior and undefeatable foe. We need a saviour like David to fight on our behalf because we are powerless on our own. This story prepares us for Jesus, God's saviour King, sent to rescue us from our sin. Give thanks that God sent Jesus to defeat sin, Satan and death, and open the way for us to trust in Him, to find forgiveness and life, to be rescued from an undefeatable enemy.

# DAY 2

## Read 1 Samuel 18:1-16

1. How does this account describe David's progress?
2. What impact is David's progress having on Saul?  
(See also verses 19:1-2)
3. If Saul understood the reason for David's success, what cause would he have had for being angry, afraid and jealous of David?
4. We need to remember the bigger application of this passage – David's example points towards Jesus. It foreshadows the type of king Jesus will be, the power and success He will have as God's anointed one, and the futility of trying to oppose it. But there is a caution here for us also. Have you found yourself guilty of comparing yourself to someone else's ministry success?

**Prayer.** Like Saul, we can risk having a wrong perspective and therefore a wrong response to other's ministry successes. How can you pray about this today? Is there an attitude to repent of? Is there someone you can pray for in a way that asks God to grow the fruitfulness of their ministry for God's glory?

# WEEK 5: 1 SAMUEL 17-31

## DAY 3

The intensity of Saul's aggression towards David is now increasing to the point of pursuing him in order to kill him. However, David has found a friend and ally in Jonathon (Saul son!) and now Saul's wickedness becomes more exposed and more extreme.

### Read 1 Samuel 22:6-23

1. What does Saul perceive is happening that is driving him to such rage? What do the LORD's priests say ought to have caused Saul some caution?
2. How are we to think about Saul following the counsel of Doeg, an Edomite (he is not an Israelite)? More troubling than this, when Saul finally acts in the manner he should have from the beginning, who does he target and whom does he empower to act on his behalf?
3. Last term we looked at the final chapters of Luke's gospel. There, we saw the religious leaders together with the surrounding nations conspiring together to kill God's anointed one, Jesus. Can you see how the story of Saul, Doeg, and their pursuit of David should have been a firm warning in Israel's history that this happened once before to help them recognise the day when God's anointed would finally come?

**Prayer.** In John 5, Jesus says that the Scriptures testify about Him so that those who study them might see the one they point to, come to Him and find life. Can you see how today's reading prepares us for Jesus? For many, they don't recognise the coming of Jesus as the extraordinarily gracious act of God to rescue those hopelessly lost in sin. Who do you know like this? Will you pray earnestly for them today? Will you also pray for our mission partners and their work to see people come to know Jesus?

# DAY 4

## Read 1 Samuel 24:1-22

1. Why are David's actions here so powerful?
2. How might David have known the difference between this as an opportunity to claim the kingship he had been anointed for, and a temptation to take what was not yet his to have?
3. Saul was a man who did not heed the word of God; he did what he wanted without consulting God. As we've recently seen, he ended up defending his paranoid ego by the violent murder of God's priests while hunting God's anointed in order to kill him. Had this situation been reversed, Saul would have surely killed David. However, David is a man after God's own heart. He is given opportunity to take the kingship but it was not yet his to have. So David showed Saul mercy and honoured God. Saul then acknowledges David as God's anointed and soon-to-be king. God's kingdom does not come with coercion, lording it over people, or the abuse of power. It comes as people genuinely and repentantly submit to the truth of God's anointed, Jesus. The urgent task we have while God grants us time is to declare to this world that Jesus is LORD; He is the King. For a day will come when Jesus returns, and that day will be the final act when all will see the King but that day will be a day of judgment. Today is the day of salvation (2 Peter 3). How will you use this day God has given you?

**Prayer.** How does Question 3 stir you to pray?

# WEEK 5: 1 SAMUEL 17-31

## DAY 5

### Read 1 Samuel 28:3-25; 31:1-6

1. The scene is set: Samuel the prophet is dead, Saul has already conspired with Doeg, the Edomite, to have Israel's priests killed (22:6f) and he has been rejected by God as king – he is increasingly on his own! So, where does he turn for counsel when facing the insurmountable might of Philistia?
2. Deuteronomy 18:9-22 explicitly condemns engagement in sorcery or divination, because God will speak to His people through a prophet that He Himself will raise up to remind the people of God's commands. It is clear that Saul's actions are wicked and an offence to the LORD. Yet God does choose to bring a word to Saul (albeit in the most unusual way!). What message does God give Saul, and how does he respond?
3. Looking at 1 Samuel 31:1-6, the message the editor wants us to hear seems clear – what is it? (See also 1 Samuel 2:6-10)
4. A major theme in 1 and 2 Samuel is that God does not just rule over Israel, but over all things – so He doesn't need anyone to fight His battles. Because He sovereignly rules over all things, we are to trust in His Word, regardless of what things look like around us. Today we have seen that Saul's failure to listen and obey God's Word ultimately led to his death. This is a picture of where a rebellious life towards God ends. However, in the New Testament, human rebellion does not just lead to physical death, but a second death, which is a final and eternal separation from the presence of God in Hell (Rev. 20:11-15). God's Word warns us not to go the way of the world, not to follow its values, engage in its evil practices, or seek after its counsel in place of God's – Saul's story warns us of this. How are you going making good decisions about being 'in the world but not of it'?

**Prayer.** Are there things you could share with your growth group this week to be praying about together? Pray about those things now.

## **PRAYER POINTS AND NOTES**

# WEEK 6: 2 SAMUEL 1-5:5

## DAY 1

### Read 2 Samuel 1:1-16

1. This man's account of Saul's death differs to that recorded in 1 Samuel 31:4-6, but David doesn't know this. While we have cause to be suspicious about the integrity of this man, David also has issue with him. What question does David ask that exposes the heart of this messenger? (See verses 13-14)
2. How does David's response show that he is not like this man?
3. This Amalekite man sought to find a place of privilege and protection with God's king through deceit. But as we have already seen, God's Kingdom does not work like that – this much David knows too well. In what ways do people mistakenly think they can manipulate, or earn a way into God's Kingdom today?

**Prayer.** Most of us have a natural bent towards working to finding favour with God even though we don't often see it in ourselves. We do get to see it when we stumble into some kind of sin. Many people feel guilty and seek to quickly make things right again by doing a bunch of things without fully grasping that the primary problem is one between us and God, one that we can't fix on our own. Have you ever felt like this? How might you remind yourself of the gospel today in a helpful way? Pray about your responses.

# DAY 2

## Read 2 Samuel 1:17-27

1. While God is not explicitly mentioned, what clues are there to suggest that David's lament not only includes heartfelt grief for the loss of Jonathan and Saul, but also for the LORD's name?
2. How does this song help to confirm that David's heart is not driven by the desire for position, power, or the throne?

**Prayer :** Genuine love, care and concern are always beautiful things to watch, even more so to experience personally. David's heartfelt grief for Jonathon and Saul is a picture into the heart of Jesus for His people. We see similar moments when Jesus wept for the loss of His friend, He weeps for Israel, and even on the cross when He is pierced and dying He cries out to God to forgive those who have put Hm there for they know not what they have done – incredible!

In Ephesians 5:22ff, we read that Jesus' love for His people, those He is in a covenant relationship with, is so perfect that it is model for the closest of all human relationships, marriage. It helps us see that there is nothing on earth more amazing than to be loved by Jesus.

As you reflect on David's song of lament for Jonathon, his closest friend, brother in law, and one with whom he stood in a covenant relationship, take time to reflect on the love of Jesus for you. What amazing love that He lays down His life for you that you might have life! How might you pray offering thanks to God for this wonderful gift?

# WEEK 6: 2 SAMUEL 1-5:5

## DAY 3

### Read 2 Samuel 2:1-7

1. What significant event takes place here? Why is this only a partial good-news story?
2. Who set the timing for this event to take place?
3. On the surface, David's rise to the throne is 'front and centre' in the story, yet there's a more exciting truth behind it all. What is that truth, and why does it matter that we see it?

**Prayer.** Praise God for His purposes in bringing His king to the throne in His timing, by His power. Over and over again we are given reason to confidently trust God as we see His faithfulness in history. Pray that you would trust God today regardless of whatever you are facing.

# DAY 4

## Read 2 Samuel 3:6-21

(The wider reading for today is 2:8-4:12, which records a series of events describing the civil unrest between the house of David and the house of Saul.)

1. Up until now, David's reputation has been pretty good; he demonstrates largely that he is a man after God's own heart. In today's passage we meet Abner, the commander of Saul's army, and the one who anointed Saul's son, Ish-Bosheth, king over Israel. This was the cause of some heat as David moves towards the throne. In today's passage, Abner is found to have come to an agreeable place before David's rightful place as king. In the midst of these negotiations, David makes a demand for Michal, daughter of Saul. How does this demand reveal a sad reality that David isn't all we might hope he could be?
2. Why would God choose someone who would end up like this?
3. What might God be preparing us for in this story?

**Prayer.** Even the best of those who serve and lead us will fail us at some point because they, like David, are human – sinful and fallen. Thank God for your leaders, pray they would be godly and faithful in His service. But most of all, pray they would be clearest in pointing us all to the great need we all have for a king who will not let us down, Jesus.

# WEEK 6: 2 SAMUEL 1-5:5

## DAY 5

### Read 2 Samuel 5:1-5

1. After the civil unrest has been squashed, what finally happens?
2. Who is present for this event? Why is that important?
3. With God's king finally in place, anointed and acknowledged by all Israel – what expectations might we have in the story now? (Remember Deut. 17:14-20)

**Prayer:** Thank God that His control over history is more powerful than human opposition. We can be confident in God's promises because He is sovereignly all-powerful to bring them to fulfilment.

# PRAYER POINTS AND NOTES

# WEEK 7: 2 SAMUEL 5:6-8:18

## DAY 1

### Read 2 Samuel 5:6-25

1. Today's reading is not an account of events in chronological order, but rather a grouping of events recorded together to show the powerful impact when God's king takes the throne. What great achievements take place in these verses and why are each of them significant?
2. Among the great things, did you notice the blemish in the story? (Hint: Deuteronomy 17:17)
3. What does the blemish in the story help us see about David?

**Prayer:** Thank God for the hope that is stimulated in seeing God's king come to the throne – enemies are conquered, God's people return to their homeland, surrounding nations acknowledge His rule and we see God's promises are being realised! Yet we also see that as good as it is, David is flawed by sin and so he is clearly not the answer we are looking for. Through David's story we are pushed back to God to reveal His perfect king, one not tainted by sin, not flawed by compromise. We are pointed forward to Jesus. How does this work bolster your faith as you see the details of God preparing the way for you to understand why we needed Jesus? How can you pray in light of this?

# DAY 2

## Read 2 Samuel 6:1-23

1. The coming of the Ark to Jerusalem is no small moment because it symbolised the Holy presence of the LORD with his people. God's king had come to rule, now the Ark was about to come also! Yet, there is tragedy within the story. What makes Uzzah's death hard to read?
2. In Numbers 4, God gave instructions for how the 'Holy' things were to be transported: "they must not touch the holy things or they will die" (4:15, 20). If God's instructions were given for the people's safety and care, what does this tell us about Uzzah's actions that led to God's anger burning against him?
3. We've seen already that the real hero in this story is the LORD. He is the rightful king of Israel (and the world!), He is to be feared and His Word obeyed for He is Holy. Why did Israel need to be reminded of this fact? What is your response to being reminded about this aspect of God's character?

**Prayer.** Thank God for making it possible for sinful people to come into His presence without fear because of the sacrifice of Jesus on our behalf. How might your growth in understanding about God's holiness and your own sin help you delight in the gospel? Take time to reflect on these things today and praise God in response to your growing awareness of God and yourself –through which you get to see the wonder of the cross more clearly.

# WEEK 7: 2 SAMUEL 5:6-8:18

## DAY 3

### Read 2 Samuel 7:1-17

1. What does David want to do for God? What is God's response to David?
2. Why is God's promise to David extraordinary?
3. God has already made a massive promise to Abraham, that through him He would establish a people, bring them to God's land and bless them so that through them God's blessing would flow to the world (Genesis 12 and 15). By God's grace alone, He has determined that He will once again create for Himself a people who will live again in right relationship with Him; they will be His people and He their God. Did you know that David is one of Abraham's descendants? God now adds even more to His gracious promise! We've just read that through David's line, God promises to establish a king and a kingdom that will have no end! Read Matthew 1:1-17, who is this great King?

**Prayer.** The fulfilment of God's promises point clearly to Jesus, and these are so much more than a fanciful story or well-intended legend. We are talking about promises made to Abraham 2,000 years before Jesus, to David 1,000 years before Jesus, and building all the time before finding their climactic fulfilment in the coming of Jesus. It's simply not possible to have made all this up! It's the amazingly gracious actions of God in history to show us how we can again know Him by coming to Jesus – the one to whom all His promises point! Thank God for so clearly preparing us for Jesus through the life of David and His promise to him.

# DAY 4

## Read 2 Samuel 7:18-29

1. Today, let's take time to consider the way David responds to hearing what God promises to do and turn it into a prayer of praise (similar to David's). How can you take David's words about God and make them your own today? (Noting of course that they find their fulfilment in Jesus)

# WEEK 7: 2 SAMUEL 5:6-8:18

## DAY 5

### Read 2 Samuel 8:1-18

1. What do these verses confirm about the power of God's enemies when they come face to face with His anointed one?
2. While we can marvel at David's achievements, who is it that grants him the victories over his enemies?
3. How do David's victories over his enemies give us confidence that Jesus would also find no enemy that can stand against Him?

**Prayer:** Pray that God would continue to grow your confidence in the fact that there is no enemy that can stand before Him. Because of His sovereign rule over all things our confidence ought to be stirred to trust Him and take His words seriously. How confident are you to live a life intentionally seeking to serve Him with your whole heart? What areas of your life do you need to grow in confidence to serve God? How can you pray about that today?

# PRAYER POINTS AND NOTES

# WEEK 8: 2 SAMUEL 9-12

In these chapters, the story is a mixture of extraordinary victories and gut-wrenching failures, of God's gracious faithfulness and human sinfulness. Chapter 9 shows David was a man of deep compassion for those in need and victorious in battle, but as we hit chapter 11 our jaws drop and we are left with our mouths open in shock! In these chapters, we see a range of important truths about what God's Kingdom is like.

## DAY 1

### Read 2 Samuel 11:1-27

1. Last week we noticed a blemish in David's story when he took many wives and concubines against God's commands (2 Samuel 5:13; Deuteronomy 17:17). But in today's passage we see David's weakness for women escalates to a whole new level! What did he do?
2. What seems to be his motivation as he organised Uriah's movements?
3. What insight are we given into the human heart when it comes to sin? What does this mean for the way we should think about human leaders in God's Kingdom?

**Prayer:** In the same way that we are given to see David's sinful heart in this passage, we see our own – not only to do what he knew to be wrong, but to think he could cover it up and make it go away! What secrets do you have in your life that you work hard to never let into the light of day? Ask God to help you face those things and find forgiveness and healing from the guilt they hold over you.

# DAY 2

## Read 2 Samuel 12:1-12

1. How does God confront David's sin?
2. God's law was clear that if a sheep was stolen restitution must be paid, four sheep were to be returned for the theft of one (Exodus 22:1). Yet hearing this story, David's response is far more extreme (verse 5). His response is more in line with Exodus 21:12-14. What does this law prohibit and what is the consequence for breaking this law?
3. How does David's extreme response to hearing the injustice of Nathan's story powerfully prepare him to feel the gravity of his own sin?
4. The judgment of God upon David's sin is just and right, in the same way his judgment on all humanity for their sin is just and right. In Romans 3:23 and 6:23 we see that everyone has sinned and that the wages of our sin is death. When was the last time you felt the gravity of your sin before God?

**Prayer.** Thank God that He will not let sin go unpunished because He is a just and righteous God. Pray that God helps you see your sin clearly so you may know the wonder and depth of His grace towards you in Jesus.

# WEEK 8: 2 SAMUEL 9-12

## DAY 3

### Read 2 Samuel 12:13-14 and Psalm 51:1-19

1. David's response recorded in 2 Samuel is brief but to the point. We've already seen that he should be put to death because of his sin yet he is shown amazing grace (although not without consequences). Psalm 51 provides a wonderful insight into David's repentant heart (because he wrote it). How does David describe the problem of his sin before God in this Psalm?
2. While it's possible to think he should 'do stuff' to make good for his sin, David very helpfully identifies the total waste of time sacrifices would be because God takes no pleasure in us pretending to be ok when we are not. How does David describe the way he came before God when faced with his sin?
3. What does he want God to do for him?
4. How does Psalm 51 reveal God's grace as the only answer for sin? How does that impact you today?

**Prayer:** Take some time today to reflect on David's Psalm and turn it into a prayer of your own.

# DAY 4

## Read 2 Samuel 12:15-25

1. What is motivating David's actions given he's already been told by God that the child will not live (verse 14)?
2. Why might David think that God would be gracious towards the child?
3. In what sense does what we ask of God reveal how we understand the character of God?

**Prayer.** Ask God to increase your understanding of His grace towards you so that your heart might be stirred to pray earnestly for others to experience the same grace you have come to find through Jesus.

# WEEK 8: 2 SAMUEL 9-12

## DAY 5

The series of events we've been reading these past few days began in chapter 10 with an issue with the Ammonites. Instead of making sure this matter was completely resolved, David was at home on his rooftop checking out Bathsheba, which led to him sleeping with her and then using the Ammonites to kill her husband to try and cover up his sin. We now find ourselves back with David dealing with the Ammonites.

### Read 2 Samuel 12:26-31

1. Despite David's victory, a cloud now looms over the story. While this battle against the Ammonites was won, another more significant battle was lost – the battle for David's godliness. How does this battle impact the way we read about this victory?
  
2. God's grace might cover our sin, but the consequences of sin can cause a real mess, one that lasts. How does this motivate you towards facing your sin and living a godly life today?

**Prayer:** Where do you need to grow in godliness? How can you pray about that today? What steps can you take towards putting sin to death and growing in godliness?

# PRAYER POINTS AND NOTES

# WEEK 9: 2 SAMUEL 13-20

## DAY 1

### Read 2 Samuel 13:1-39

1. It is important to remember that this passage is an account of history in all its ugliness. At no point are these events given God's endorsement, quite the opposite! The violence committed against Tamar is set in a context where all the men in the story are anything but godly. How do these men dishonour God and fail Tamar?
  - a. Amnon
  - b. Jonadab
  - c. David
  - d. Absalom
2. How do these horrific events show the fulfilment of God's judgment on David and his house (see 12:10-12)?
3. Tamar can easily become the lost voice in this story, yet her voice is the only one pleading for godliness in this mess. Sexual perversity seems to be part of the human story regardless of what era we are in. Today, we live in an overly sexualised and pornographically influenced culture. How might you hear and heed Tamar's voice today? (See also Galatians 5:16-21)

**Prayer:** How can you pray about your answer to Question 3?

# DAY 2

## Read 2 Samuel 14:1-33

1. Today's passage records the partial reconciliation between David and Absalom through the wisdom of Joab and a wise woman from Tekoa. However, today we are interested in the section beginning at verse 23. What comments are made about Absalom after David agrees to his return?
2. Who does this description of Absalom remind us of in the story, and why might that be alarming?
3. If we thought Absalom's goal was to achieve genuine reconciliation with David, what insight are we given into his character as we consider how he went about achieving it?

**Prayer:** Have you ever felt tempted to compromise your actions for a greater good, or a greater gain? Lying, cheating, stealing, manipulation, dishonesty... Do you genuinely trust in the LORD to meet your needs as you pursue a path of godliness? How can you pray about that today?

# WEEK 9: 2 SAMUEL 13-20

## DAY 3

### Read 2 Samuel 15:1-18

1. What do we learn about Absalom's real motives for coming back to Jerusalem? How are the people responding to him?
2. In Absalom, we have another worldly type of leader, physically impressive in every way and a cunning political player. However, in 1 Samuel 2, Hannah's song taught us that God's kingdom would not be established or maintained that way. Hannah called for a leader that trusted in the sovereignty of God, not human impressiveness. David once understood this; we saw it when he faced Goliath with a mere sling and some small stones in the name of the Lord. What does David's response to Absalom reveal about his spiritual state now?
3. Here we are helped to see that when worldly values are held, worldly fears follow – and God's kingdom does not flourish where the fear of men is greater than a trust in God. The Apostle writes "For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God." (1 Corinthians 1:18). Where are you at risk in fearing worldly things at the expense of trusting God?

**Prayer:** Pray about those things today.

## DAY 4

Yesterday set the scene for Absalom's challenge to David's rule. Because of David's sin, the private mess of his family will impact the whole nation! The darkness of civil war shapes the following chapters and David seems to be a different man than the one we first met and admired. He no longer seems confident and doesn't regularly enquire of God, just in rare moments of desperate hope. In today's passage, we find David a broken man again, with the news of Absalom's death.

### Read 2 Samuel 18:19-19:8

1. How does David react to hearing of Absalom's death?
2. David's response to Absalom's death seems quite extreme with him taking on a very big responsibility for how things ended. Why might David be responding like this? (Hint: 1 and 2 Samuel record a number of godly fathers who neglected their sons resulting in them turning away from the Lord. Eli's sons were wicked men and even Samuel's sons were ungodly.)
3. Once again David seems to genuinely feel the weight of his failure, particularly as it impacted his son, Absalom. It is worth reflecting today on the importance of raising children to know and love the Lord Jesus, the rightful king over all things who will never let us down. This may not apply to you yet, or it may feel too late as yours have already grown up. For others, you may be right in the thick of it. While we accept there is no guarantee, will you give them every chance to hear and know the gospel?

**Prayer.** Who can you pray for about this today?

# WEEK 9: 2 SAMUEL 13-20

## DAY 5

### Read 2 Samuel 19:9-23

1. Today's passage wonderfully describes the return of Israel to acknowledge David's rightful rule as God's king. But for many of them that means fronting up to a king they've rejected! How does Shimei come before David?
2. While acknowledging that he deserves death for his sin and rebellion, on what basis is Shimei granted restoration before the king?
3. How does this whole scene foreshadow the way all people will come back before Jesus?

**Prayer.** Praise God for the way He prepares us for the coming of Jesus. Pray that many more would come back to Him by trusting in His words and find life! Pray for those you have identified in your 3-1-1 (on page 2), pray for the ministry of the Life series at EV, and pray for our mission partners – that many more people would come back to Jesus and live with him as King.

# PRAYER POINTS AND NOTES

# WEEK 10: 2 SAMUEL 21-24

**Our readings this week begin a final section in the account, an epilogue that reflects on kingship in Israel.**

## DAY 1

### Read 2 Samuel 21:1-14

1. In Joshua 9, we read of a covenant between Israel and the Gibeonites (made before the Lord) that should have ensured their safety. What do we learn about Saul's attitude to this covenant? (A covenant is an agreement made before God, often with oaths that ensure if the covenant is broken there are agreed consequences that must take place to atone for the breach of covenant.)
2. How does God bring this matter to a head?
3. What was the cost of David honouring God in this matter?
4. How does this shape our understanding of the type of king God intends for His people?

**Prayer:** In David we see a shadow of Jesus, one who honoured God above his comfort. Jesus faced the problem of our sin and provided atonement for it so we might be able to live as God's people under His blessing. The cost of atonement in this passage is high; it gives us an insight into the cost of Jesus' death on our behalf to atone for our sin. How does this stir you to pray today?

# DAY 2

## Read 2 Samuel 21:15-22

1. How are the four Philistine warriors described here, and how do they fair against God's king and His armies?
2. How is this account of David's victories an endorsement of him as the type of king described in Hannah's song? (See 1 Samuel 2)
3. Why is it important that we grasp this for a clear understanding of Jesus and the nature of His power?

**Prayer.** Praise God that His sovereign power stands behind His king, that no enemy can stand against Him, and because of that, His promises will always come to fulfilment. Pray that your confidence and trust in God's King, Jesus, might keep growing and deepening so that you become increasingly confident in declaring the good news about Jesus.

# WEEK 10: 2 SAMUEL 21-24

## DAY 3

### Read 2 Samuel 22:1-51

Today we read a long song of praise by David as he reflects on his experience as king. It can be broken up into three main parts: 22:2-20 is a bold and confident declaration of praise to God; 22:21-31 reflects on the importance of righteousness and faithfulness of God's king; and the final section, 22:32-51 declares the invincibility of God's kingdom?

1. Looking at each of these sections, how does David understand the reason for his success?
  - a. 22:2-20
  - b. 22:21-31
  - c. 22:32-51
2. David knew he was sinful (e.g. 2 Samuel 12:13; Psalm 51), just as Saul was, so how is it that he can reflect on himself so positively here (especially verse 21-31)?
3. How are we helped to reflect on David's life by not focusing on the particulars of his sinful actions, but on how he responded to God in spite of them (e.g. verse 22)?

**Prayer:** In his sin, Saul wandered further and further away from God. When confronted with his sin, David was broken, humbled and he came back to God to find forgiveness, cleansing and salvation. David is the model for how to come before God; he is a man after God's heart. How quickly do you come before God in repentance after you have been made to realise your sin? How can you pray about this today?

# DAY 4

## Read 2 Samuel 23:1-7

1. This prophecy focuses on the fulfilment of God's promise to David to establish His eternal kingdom through one of his descendants (2 Samuel 7).
  - a. How is life under this godly king described?
  - b. How likely is this kingdom to come, and why?
  - c. Can everyone expect a place in this kingdom?
2. How does David's prophecy help point us to Jesus? (See Revelation 22:16-17)

**Prayer:** How does this stir you to pray for people who have not yet come to Jesus? How can you pray for our mission team at EV (through Life, schools ministry, EV Kids etc) and our external mission partners?

# WEEK 10: 2 SAMUEL 21-24

## DAY 5

### Read 2 Samuel 24:1-25

1. There are some layers to this story that make it an intriguing one with which to end our series. Compare 24:1, 24:10 and 1 Chronicles 21:1. Who is responsible for the decision that leads to such a sobering outcome?
2. We're not clearly told the reason that this was such a bad thing to do. However, it is likely that in counting the number of fighting men, David was tempted to boast in, and therefore trust in, the might of his armies rather than the Lord. Hannah's song (1 Samuel 2) revealed the type of king Israel needed to see the land flourish. It wasn't a king who trusted in worldly might, but in the Lord's thundering power and sovereign rule. Having become aware of what he had done, how does David respond?
3. Why is 24:17 such a powerful picture that helps prepare us for the type of King Jesus would be?

**Prayer:** There's a wonderful old hymn called, "Come Thou Fount" that has the words, "prone to wander Lord I feel it, prone to leave the God I love". It's an insightful line about the true nature of the human heart; a heart King David knew all too well. Sin demands a great price, as today's passage shows. However, God shows us that our sin is met by His glorious grace in the person of Jesus (the great shepherd) who gave His life for us (the sheep) to pay the price for our sin. The books of 1 and 2 Samuel have explored the rise of the kings in Israel. Through their stories we have seen our need for God's perfect king, Jesus. What can you give thanks for from this series?

# PRAYER POINTS AND NOTES

# EV MISSION PARTNERS



## **Derek and Anna - Southeast Asia (OMF)**

Derek and Anna (Liam, Jasmine and Juliet) are currently on Home Assignment from ministry in Southeast Asia. There Derek teaches in a local college, training workers who will go back to their towns as leaders bringing the message to those with whom they live. Recent law changes mean Derek's role is in doubt and they ask for prayer in order for them to return.



## **Colin and Jill Bakon - SIM: Latin American Ministry**

Colin trains and mentors Christians in Latin America to mobilise their churches through Kairos. He has a new role with SIM International working with a team to help refocus the mission into Unreached People groups. Pray for wisdom and understanding in this new role.



## **Kirstin Hawkshaw - CMS Missionary in Nepal**

Kirstin works as an Occupational Therapist in Pokhara, Nepal seeking to be salt and light as she trains locals and cares for people with disabilities through a community rehabilitation program. She is praying for many more opportunities through church, work and life to be a witness to Jesus and to be discipling Christians in the relatively young though vibrant church of Nepal.



## **Paul and Sandra King - Strasbourg, France (CMS)**

Paul and Sandra recently returned to France and their university ministry in Strasbourg. They serve with French Christians in the University Bible Group (GBU). Their ministry with uni students involves evangelism, discipling, and training students to teach the Bible. Sandra is looking at new ministry opportunities. Pray for them as they settle back in and for their children who are all now living in Australia.



## **Martin and Jen Shadwick - AFES Newcastle Uni**

Martin and Jen work full time with AFES at Newcastle Uni, engaging in evangelism as well as discipling and training Christian students. Martin leads the AFES staff team who work with both local and overseas students, and a ministry to Muslim students. Pray for wisdom in balancing ministry and family life and for new partners to help them continue in this important ministry.

## **Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches**

A fellowship of independent churches and pastors across Australia. These churches are committed to praying for one another and continuing to promote planting of evangelical churches throughout Australia. Their pastors seek to provide support and encouragement to one another. FIEC is aiming, with God's help, to plant 100 churches across Australia during the next 15 years.





### **Jono and Amy Vink - Tanzania (CMS)**

Jono and Amy, along with their children are working in Musoma, Tanzania. Jono trains church leaders, grounding them in Biblical theology and in practical exegetical skills at Bunda Bible College equipping local pastors to teach the Bible and lead God's people. Amy works with local women through "Rehema" which is an income generating project – café and crafts, seeking to train local women to be able to provide for their families as well as all profits going to helping other needy women and children.



### **Jono and Grace Wright - (AIM)**

Jono and Grace Wright, with their kids, are working amongst Aborigines in Camooweal and the surrounding communities along the Sandover Highway. They are with Australian Indigenous Ministries (AIM). Their ministries include preaching at Sunday meetings, weekly Bible study groups, weekly prayer meetings, Sunday School, Scripture in the local primary school, weekend Bible schools and also an itinerant ministry.



### **The Geneva Push**

Geneva provides a means by which they pool their energies to fuel a whole new generation of church planting that might see thousands of Australians saved to know Jesus. It has set in place a high quality assessment process to find the best guys, and provides ongoing support and training through coaching structures, mentoring and ongoing conferences to best ensure planters have the biggest impact they can as planters.



### **Liam and Lucy Doyle - Lake Mac Church**

Liam and Lucy Doyle head up the church plant in Lake Macquarie and are now mentored through the Geneva program. There is a great range of ages, and despite differences like age, education and nationality, they enjoy a real sense of warmth, friendship and love as they hear God's word together and help each other follow Jesus. Pray for a good mentor relationship with Dave Sheath from Lakes Evangelical Church.



### **Jai and Jay-Ellen Wright - MAKE Church, Mackay**

Jai and Jay with their four children, Amber, Ebony and Kade and little Jett are planting the MAKE church in Mackay. This year will see the development of a team of leaders, and they ask for prayer as they prepare the members to serve in leadership.

The New Testament teaches us to give generously, regularly and joyfully. Please join with us in bringing solid hope to the coast – Jesus. For more info on giving account details, see [evchurch.info/missionpartners](http://evchurch.info/missionpartners).

