

THE ONE YEAR BIBLE Reading for June 2:

2 Samuel 19:11-20:13:

Now that Absalom is dead David makes provision to return to Jerusalem. First, he sends word to the priests who had stayed behind in Jerusalem to help him from there during the revolt (15:24-29), Zadok and Abiathar, to request that Judah take action to bring him back (19:11-12). This action was to make sure that men from there were truly behind him and the revolt was over. Additionally, David sent word to Amasa (who had been the commander of Absalom's army and who was a nephew to David and cousin to Joab [17:25]) that he'd be the commander of David's army (19:13). This appears, in context, to be a political move designed to show good will to and mend the rift with those in Judah who had sided with Absalom. It worked, for Judah went out to meet David and bring him back as king (19:14-15).

On the way back to Judah David shows his righteous character in that he pardons Shimei (19:16-23), who had previously cursed David (16:5-13 [David warns Solomon about Shimei later on—1 Kings 2:8-9, 35-36]); he receives Mephibosheth back even though Ziba had previously lied and told David Mephibosheth had abandoned him (19:24-30); and he offers to bring Barzillai back to Jerusalem to provide for him since he had helped David (19:31-40).

All, however, was not well for there was a growing division between Judah and the rest of the tribes of Israel (19:41-43), which set the stage for Sheba, a Benjamite (remember Saul was of the tribe of Benjamin, which may suggest ill feelings that David had replaced the Benjamite), to rebel (20:1). Judah followed David and the rest of Israel followed Sheba (20:2). David ordered Amasa to gather fighting men to take care of the rebellion. When he delayed, the king sent Abishai (brother of Joab and cousin to Amasa) out in leadership of the army (20:3-7). Eventually, Amasa met up with them, after which his cousin, Joab, killed him (20:8-13).

What we are seeing in this section of 2 Samuel is the chaos in the nation at this time, a chaos which stems from David's sin. Though the son of Jesse is truly God's chosen king, nevertheless, we are also learning the devastating price sin brings with it. Additionally, we are also learning of a division that is present between the largest tribe, Judah, and the rest of Israel. This is a division that will become a split into two sub-kingdoms after the death of Solomon.

John 21:1-25:

John records a third post-resurrection appearance of Jesus to disciples (1-14). There were seven disciples together in Galilee who decided to go fishing: Peter, James, John, Thomas, Nathanael, and two other unnamed disciples. They caught nothing all night. At day break Jesus stood on the shore (though from about 100 yards away they did not know who he was) and asked if they caught anything to which they responded, "No." After Jesus told them to cast their net on the other side of the boat, they brought in a large catch of fish—reminiscent of another time when Jesus told Peter to take his boat out again after not catching anything and the result was a large catch (Luke 5:4-7). In response, "the

disciple whom Jesus loved” (in context we know this disciple is one of the seven and is most likely one of the four not mentioned by name—giving more credence to the likelihood it is John) told Peter “It is the Lord!” He knew from the previous incident this was the kind of thing only the Lord of creation could do. Peter decided not to wait for the boat to come to shore, jumped in and swam to Jesus! Jesus had breakfast prepared for them and we learn there were 153 fish in the net. Not only do readers learn in this text that Jesus truly was raised, they are reminded that He provides for His disciples in abundant ways! As learned in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 7:7-11) and in the feeding of the 5,000 (John 6:1-15), our Lord provides bread and fish to His children and in abundance. In other words, He provides what we need!

After breakfast Jesus asked Peter three different times whether or not he loved Jesus. Though older commentators often highlighted the fact that in Jesus’ first two questions He used the verb *agapao* and in the last question He used *phileo* (the same verb Peter answers with all three times), we now know that the two verbs were used interchangeably elsewhere and do not necessarily convey two types of love. The use of the two verbs, along with the interchange between “tend” and “feed,” between “lambs” and “sheep” are most likely stylistic—i.e. they are for the same reason English writers today might use synonyms in a paragraph. It is not to convey different meanings, but sounds better to have the variation of terms. There are two main points in this interchange. First, Jesus is giving Peter, the one who denied Him three times, the opportunity to reaffirm his love for Jesus three times. He wants Peter to know he is forgiven and restored. Second, one of the chief ways Peter will demonstrate his love for his Lord is to take care of, to feed the sheep (the people) of Jesus! Jesus, who Himself displayed His love for people by teaching the Word of God (Mark 6:34), now calls Peter and the other Apostles to do the same. So, in this interchange we learn of the great mercy of our Lord toward us when we sin and we also learn of the importance He places upon teaching and taking care of His people by His appointed leaders! Both of these truths must set the direction for how the Church today functions.

The book closes out by Peter asking Jesus about the disciple who wrote this Gospel (21:20-25) and, in essence, Jesus tells him what will happen with John is none of his concern. Finally, John writes that he has not recorded all the things Jesus did (see 20:30).

Psalm 120:1-7:

This psalm is the first of a larger group of psalms sometimes called the Great *Hallel* Psalms (120-136), in other words, the larger group of psalms of praise. Within this larger group is a cluster of psalms sometimes called the Psalms of Ascent (120-134) since Jewish tradition suggests that they were often sung by pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem.

Psalm 120 is written by someone who is away from the sanctuary of God and among pagan people who are seeking to hurt him (3-7). As such, he calls out to the LORD to deliver him (1-2). This short psalm, then, reminds us that in the midst of our trouble, our great gift is the presence of God who will never leave us nor forsake us (Matthew 28:20; Hebrews 13:5) and our hope is in God alone! Remember this and call to Him in the day of trouble (Psalm 50:15)!

Proverbs 16:16-17:

Wisdom (which is found in the Word of God, Proverbs 2:6) is our greatest treasure. This is a truth we read over and over again in Psalm 119. The one who follows God's wisdom and is thus upright, turns away from evil, pays careful attention to how he lives, and thus preserves his life. This is the opposite of the one who follows his own way and wisdom (Proverbs 14:12).