**2 SAMUEL 3 & 4**

***“War between Brothers”***

**Scripture:** 2 Samuel 3:1-4:12

**Memory Verse:** *“If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.”*

 Romans 12:18

**Lesson Focus:** Fighting hurts everyone and does not reflect the heart of God.

**Activities & Craft:** Coloring page, Work sheet

Craft for 1st and 2nd graders: What Would Jesus Do Coloring page and Choices Work sheet

**Introduction:** Ask the kids which do they choose (answer #1 or answer #2)?

 A kid trips you at school;

 #1 You knock him over

 #2 You walk away

 Your big sister calls you a name:

 #1 You call her a bad name right back

 #2 You tell her you love her

 Your teacher is unfair and calls you out on something;

 #1 You argue with her

 #2 You just sit quiet and pray to God

In all of these situations we have a choice. Every day we have a choice. God cares about our behavior and the choices that we make. We will not make the right choice every day but we can try to follow God’s ways with the help of the Holy Spirit. Today we will see the nation of Israel making bad choices. We will also see that when bad choices are made and brother’s fight everyone gets hurt!

**Bible Lesson:**

 **2 Samuel 3:1:** *“The War”*

 √ What does verse one tell us is going on?

 √ Who is at war? (House of Saul and the house of David)

 The house of Saul means those people who supported King Saul

 The house of David means those people who supported David

 √ Which house grew stronger? Why?

 √ Which house grew weaker? Why?

 √ Is war ever a good thing? Why? Who does it hurt?

 **2 Samuel 3:2-5: *“****David’s many Wives”*

√ How many wives do you count in these verses? (6)

 √ Do you think that it is God’s plan for men to have so many wives? What is

 God’s plan for marriage?

 **2 Samuel 3:-11;** *“Abner’s wrong move”*

 √ Who was really in control of the house of Saul; Abner or the King Ishobosheth?

Abner was in control and his strength was growing. Abner chooses to do a bad thing and Ishobosheth call’s him out on it. But Abner does not like to be told that he has done the wrong thing. Maybe he did not do this bad thing but he does not like to be blamed – but his reaction is anger. He loses his temper so badly that Ishobosheth is very afraid of him. Abner decides to go to David and make peace with him.

 **2 Samuel 3:12-21:** *“the Peace Agreement”*

√ What is Abner’s message to David? (That he will make an agreement

 with David and bring all of Israel to his side.)

I think that it is interesting that Abner knew David was to be the next king. He knew Samuel had anointed David. Why did he wait until now to offer peace and to bring the people together?

 √ What does David want back? (His first wife)

 √ Does David get her back? (yes)

 √ What is Abner’s covenant with David? (He spoke to the leaders of all of Israel

 and Benjamin and he will bring all of Israel to make David King.)

 √ Did David and Abner agree on the terms? (yes) Abner went away in peace.

 **2 Samuel 3:22-27;** *“Joab’s Revenge”*

 √ Who is Joab? (the head of David’s army)

 √ Was Joab happy when he got home? Why or why not?

 √ What did Joab think that Abner was doing? (spying on David so that he could

kill him later.) Joab did not trust Abner. You need to remember that Abner killed Joab’s brother (Asahel).

 √ What did Joab and his brother do? (they killed Abner)

 **2 Samuel 3:31-39;** *“David mourns Abner”*

 √ Was David happy about the news that Abner had been killed?

 √ How did David react? (David mourned, followed his coffin, wept, and David

 wrote a song for Abner.)

 √ What did the people think of David reacting this way? (the people were

 pleased by everything that David did.)

 √ Did the people think that David wanted Abner killed? (no)

 David realizes that Joab and his brother are too harsh for him. That

means that they execute their own judgment, without consulting God or David.

 **2 Samuel 4:1-12** (You do not need to read all of these verses – just tell the story.)

 When the King of Israel, Ishbosheth; heard that Abner had died his fear grew and

so did all of Israel. There were two of his men who decided to take things into their own hands. They went into the Ishobosheth’s bedroom and killed him. Then they went to David to report what they had done expecting that they had done David a great service. They probably expected to be rewarded for their brave deed. But David does not respond in the way that they thought he would. He tells them that he did not rejoice when Saul was killed and he does not rejoice when two wicked men kill a “righteous” person, (2 Samuel 4:11.) So David has these two men executed.

In the middle of chapter 4 we get a brief look at one of Jonathan’s sons. Mephibosheth’s story is one of sadness and fear that will turn in to rejoicing and acceptance in a later chapter in Samuel. His nurse took him and ran away with him when she heard that Saul and Jonathan had died. She feared for his safety. While she was running she dropped him causing the little boy to become lame in both feet. We are not told any more at this time – but I can promise you that Mephibosheth’s story is one of the most uplifting and hope filled stories in the Bible. You will just have to wait for the rest to the story…..in chapter 9.

**What do we learn in these chapters that we can apply to our lives?**

 **David as a Leader:**

 We see in these two chapters the type of leader that David is.

1. David seeks peace. David knows that God had Samuel anoint him as the next king of Israel. David knows at this time the kingdom is divided and David is waiting for God’s timing to make him the “official” king of Israel. David knows that the fighting that is going on at this time is not what the heart of God wants. So when Abner comes to him and offers peace David listens. Peace is more important to David than seeking revenge for all of the fighting.
2. David had the heart of mercy, compassion and forgiveness
3. David does not like it when others seek their own revenge
4. David makes mistakes like all of us (his many wives.)
5. David does not show mercy when others do the wrong thing

**The Effects of War:**

1. **Division:** Israel had been chosen to be God’s people. God raised them up from Abraham and God brought them out of slavery into the Promised Land. They were 12 tribes and one people group called Israel. But they became divided during Saul’s reign - there first king brought division. Fighting among brothers is an ugly thing. As we studied last week – the heart of God is one of unity. Jesus prayed in the garden (before He went to the cross) that His believers would be one (united) as He and the Father where one.
2. **People getting hurt:** In this story many people died needlessly. When people war or fight – people get hurt. Fighting causes pain in those around you.

**Romans 12:17-21:** (read)

 *“Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of men. If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, ‘Vengeance in Mine, I will repay, says the Lord.’*

*Therefore if your enemy is hungry, feed him;*

 *If he is thirsty, give him a drink;*

*For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head.’*

*Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”*

The story of the division of Israel started with the people wanting a king. God gave them the king that they wanted and it went downhill from there. God may allow us to have what we want – but that does not mean it is the best thing for us.

The best thing for us it to live like Jesus and the verse above shows us how.

1. Don’t repay evil
2. Look for the good things in dealing with people
3. Live in peace
4. Overcome evil with good

When we take things in our own hands we mess things up like the children of Israel did. Choose peace – choose goodness – choose forgiveness.