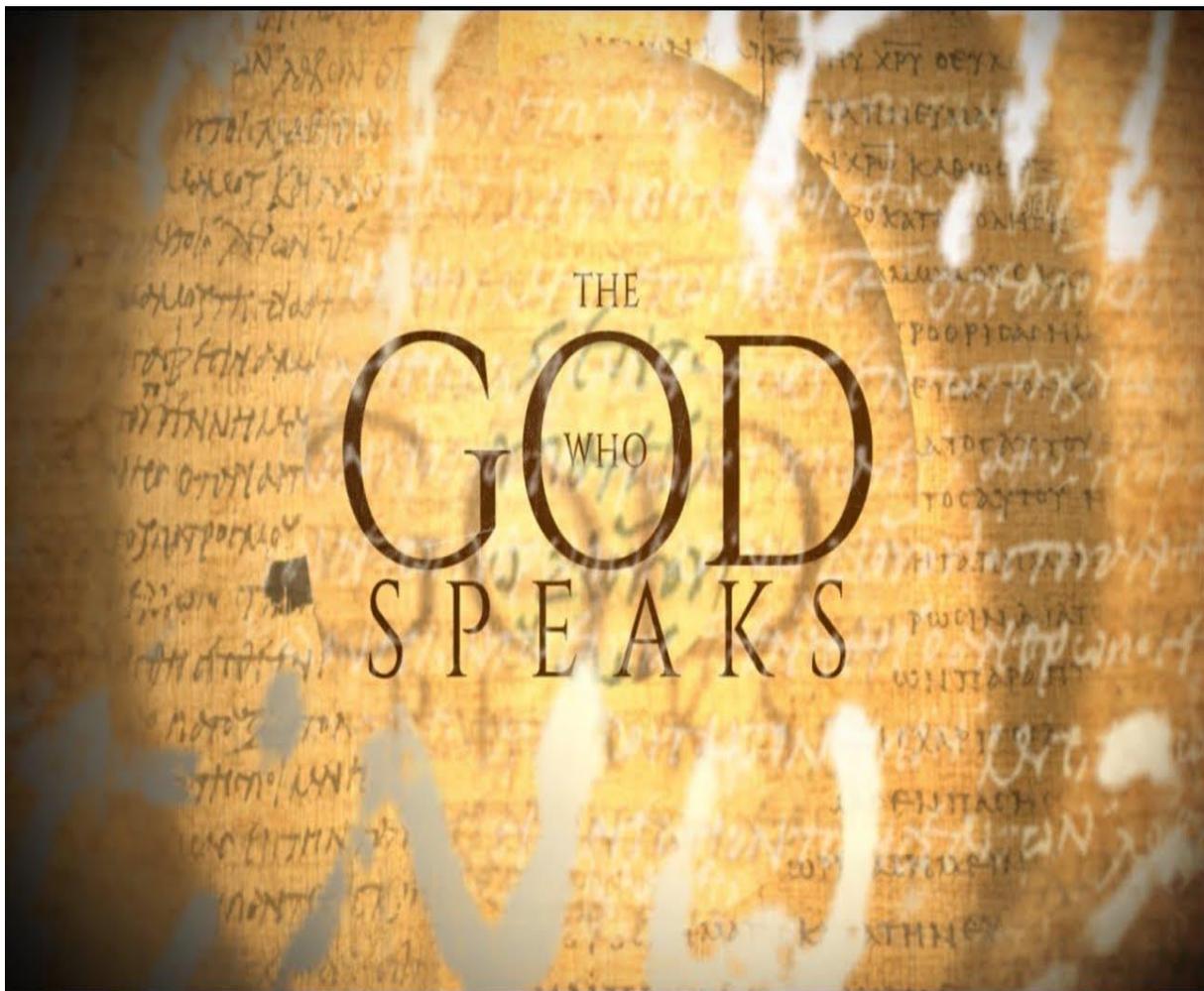




A FUTURE  
FULL OF HOPE



Session Two

King David – Hero or Scoundrel?

## **Opening Prayer**

Living God,  
you walk alongside us  
and speak to us throughout the Scriptures.  
Your Son, Jesus Christ, listens to our hopes and fears  
and shows us how to live for one another.  
Send us the Holy Spirit to open our hearts and minds  
so that we may be your witnesses throughout the world. Amen

V. Your word is our path and your truth is our light.  
R. This day and every day.

Our Lady of the Annunciation  
Pray for us

St Matthew  
Pray for us

St Jerome  
Pray for us

## **Scripture**

Afterward, David was stricken to the heart because he had numbered the people. David said to the Lord, "I have sinned greatly in what I have done. But now, O Lord, I pray you, take away the guilt of your servant; for I have done very foolishly." When David rose in the morning, the word of the Lord came to the prophet Gad, David's seer, saying, "Go and say to David: Thus says the Lord: Three things I offer you; choose one of them, and I will do it to you." So Gad came to David and told him; he asked him, "Shall three years of famine come to you on your land? Or will you flee three months before your foes while they pursue you? Or shall there be three days' pestilence in your land? Now consider, and decide what answer I shall return to the one who sent me." Then David said to Gad, "I am in great distress; let us fall into the hand of the Lord, for his mercy is great; but let me not fall into human hands."

## **Words of Pope Francis**

In order to be merciful, we need to call upon the Lord's help, since "it is a grace". And we also need to "recognize our sins and be ashamed of them" and forgive and forget the offences of others. Men and women who are merciful have big, big hearts: they always excuse others and think more of their own sins. Were someone to say to them: 'but do you see what so and so did?', they respond in mercy saying: 'but I have enough to be concerned over with all I have done'. If all of us, all peoples, all families, all quarters had this attitude, how much peace there would be in the world, how much peace there would be in our hearts, for mercy brings us peace! Let us always remember: who am I to judge? To be ashamed of oneself and to open and expand one's heart, may the Lord give us this grace!

## **Words of Khaled Hosseini**

"There is a God, there always has been. I see him here, in the eyes of the people in this [hospital] corridor of desperation. This is the real house of God, this is where those who have lost God will find Him... there is a God, there has to be, and now I will pray, I will pray that He will forgive that I have neglected Him all of these years, forgive that I have betrayed, lied, and sinned with impunity only to turn to Him now in my hour of need. I pray that He is as merciful, benevolent, and gracious as His book says He is."

## **Words from 'The Kite Runner' Khaled Hosseini**

"And this is what I want you to understand, that good, real good, was born out of your father's remorse. Sometimes, I think everything he did, feeding the poor on the streets, building the orphanage, giving money to friends in need, it was all his way of redeeming himself. And that, I believe, is what true redemption is, Amir Jan, when guilt leads to good."

## **Reflection Fr. Henry Wandsbrough OSB**

*The reflection from Fr. Henry is available to download from [cliftondiocese.com](http://cliftondiocese.com)  
Play the video clip [here](#).*

## Questions for Conversation

*Can we accept God's message if it hides David's faults?*

*How accurate do we think the history of Israel is in the Bible?*

*Does the Bible teach us about God through the sins of sinners?*

*What does mercy look like in our society?*

*Where is mercy most needed in our communities today?*

Re-read the Scripture passage for this session. You may like to follow the reading with a time of prayer and intercession after which you might prayer the **OUR FATHER**

## Final Prayer

Pilgrim God,  
you walk alongside us  
and speak to us throughout the Scriptures:  
in the message of the prophets,  
the songs of David  
and the vision of Paul.  
Your Son, Jesus Christ, listens to our hopes and fears  
and shows us how to live:  
in our love of neighbour  
our desire for justice,  
and in our dying and rising each day.  
Send us the Holy Spirit to open our hearts and minds  
so that we may be your witnesses throughout the world:  
in our protection of the vulnerable,  
our words and actions  
and in our communion with the earth.

