



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

God's Leader Series: David, Shepherd - Warrior

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*The events in this study take place between 1025-1011 BC. During this period, Israel was transforming from a loosely organized group of tribes in a "theocracy" under "judges" to a united nation under a monarchy. It seems that Jehovah God had weakened the great empires of the ancient world (Assyria, Babylon, and Egypt) during this period to enable His chosen nation to be firmly established. However, the hostile nation of the Ammonites, to the east, and the Philistines, to the west, were a constant harassment during King Saul's kingship and the beginning of David's reign. The main themes here are **1) God's covenant with David; connecting the royal line to Jesus, the Messiah. 2) God is sovereign; nothing could frustrate His plan to have David rule over Israel. 3) God's Holy Spirit empowers His chosen ones. 4) There are personal and national impacts of sin.**¹*

INTRODUCTION

Israel's first king, Saul, was tall, talented, handsome, and had a pleasing personality. These are great leadership traits even today! However, Saul proved to be unstable, proud, jealous, and irresponsible. God chose Saul to serve Him by leading His people. When Saul rejected God's Word, by not obeying it, God rejected him as king. The LORD is merciful and long-suffering. He gave Saul a faithful son in Jonathan, and a loyal friend in David. Saul rejected both and also spurned the warnings of God's priest. God sent Samuel to Bethlehem to anoint a teen-age shepherd boy as the next king. Next, the LORD raised up the Philistine army to confront Saul.

A CHALLENGE IS GIVEN

*1 Samuel 17:8-11 Goliath stood there and called out to the Israelite troops, "Why bother using your whole army...pick your best fighter and pit him against me. If he gets the upper hand and kills me, the Philistines will all become your slaves. But if I get the upper hand and kill him, you'll all become our slaves and serve us. I challenge the troops of Israel this day. Give me a man. Let us fight it out together!" When Saul and his troops heard the Philistine's challenge, they were terrified and lost all hope.*²

The Philistine army entered Judah and camped on the mountain west of the valley of Elah, and the Israelites drew up positions on the mountain to the east. Goliath was nearly ten feet tall and was clothed in scale-armor, including bronze shin-guards, and helmet. He was armed with a spear and a sword. Goliath came out every morning and evening to taunt Israel over a period of forty days. This terrorized the already demoralized army of King Saul. No Israelite took the challenge, and we note that their leader, King Saul, was "a head taller than other men" (10:23). What man sees as a disaster, God may intend as an opportunity!

A CHALLENGE IS ACCEPTED

1 Samuel 17:26 David asked the men who were near him, "What will the man get who kills this Philistine and frees Israel from this disgrace? After all, who is this heathen Philistine to defy the army of the living God?"³

Jesse had sent his teen-age son to carry provisions to the older brothers who were in Saul's army. David loved the LORD, and could not bear to hear His Name dishonored or defiled by the heathen Philistine. David had communed with the living God during the long days and nights tending sheep. The King sent for David after hearing of his bold comment about Goliath. The familiar story climaxes with the boy taking out the giant, using a sling and a small stone. We make three powerful conclusions from David's triumph and deliverance of Israel: **1) David's confidence came from his previous experience of God's help.** Our wealth of confidence grows when we exercise our faith during increasingly greater life challenges. Examples were the bear and the lion (17:35-36) which David had killed to protect his sheep. **2) David refused Saul's armor.** It did not fit; he had "not tested it" or the weapons offered him (17:39). In a crisis or test, we cannot use another person's methods, skill set, knowledge or talent. Use what God has let you "prove" or test and experience. **3) David believed God before the fight began.** He dared yell to Goliath that the "battle was the LORD's." Faith grows into confidence that nothing can shake (17:41-44).

BIBLE STUDIES

LEADERSHIP STUDY WEDNESDAYS: 7 TO 7:50AM, CAPITOL ROOM 142 SOUTH

STAFF/GUESTS: WEDNESDAYS: 12:05 TO 12:55 PM, GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE ROOM – CAPITOL 264WEST

Kansas

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THE YOUNG WARRIOR IS EXALTED

1 Samuel 18:6-7 When the victorious Israelite army was returning home after David had killed the Philistine, women from all the towns of Israel came out to meet King Saul. They sang and danced for joy with tambourines and cymbals. This was their song: "Saul has killed his thousands, and David his ten thousands!"⁴

The young shepherd/warrior was acclaimed as a national hero, made commander of a thousand soldiers, married the king's daughter, and bonded with Jonathan, heir to the throne. In wisdom, David was obedient and loyal to Saul, humble in expression, and friendly to the people. He was loved by all (18:5). Most importantly, both friend and enemy recognized that God was with David (1 Samuel 18: 12, 14, 28, 30). Is God recognized in you?

UNJUST SUFFERING IN GOD'S SERVICE

1 Samuel 18:12 And Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with him, and was departed from Saul.⁵

King Saul was envious, even jealous of David. Without the Holy Spirit, Saul viewed David as a personal threat rather than a blessing to Israel. He persecuted and pursued David over the next fourteen years. Saul threw his spear at David three times, tried to have him killed in battle, ordered him assassinated, forced him to live in exile in the nation of their enemy, and chased him and his band of men over the years with the army of his beloved nation. God allowed all this to shape "a man after God's own heart," while protecting him through it.

DAVID MADE KING OVER JUDAH

2 Samuel 2:4 Then the men of Judah came to Hebron and appointed David king over Judah.⁶

Israel's army was defeated by the Philistines on Mount Gilboa. Saul and three of his sons were killed. David, his band of men and their families, settled in Hebron. David was made king of Judah, and after seven years of strife and civil war, appointed king of Israel.

CONCLUSION

Following are valuable lessons that we should learn from the early life of David, a shepherd boy God was shaping to lead a nation and point a people to the promised Messiah (1 Samuel 16:1-3).

1. God looks at the heart; man looks only for outward appearance, personality, talent and accomplishments. Jesse's seven older sons were rejected as king-elect. God prompted Samuel to anoint the youngest who was later equipped to lead. Do we look for inner qualities as we vote for, appoint, or hire people (1 Samuel 16:7)?
2. David's early life was a time of communion with the LORD, seeing God's provision through trials and tests. Do we occupy our quiet times with prayer and praise, strengthening us in our current trial (Philippians 4:13)?
3. Opportunity typically comes in crises and if avoided, may mean the loss of our best opportunity for greatness. Young David did not run or hide from the bear or the lion. He used those victories to step out in faith, trusting God to defeat a defiant giant. Are you alert for opportunities to prove God's Word, seeing situations in life from God's viewpoint (1 Samuel 17:4-25, 17:11, 24)?
4. Leaders are often put in difficult situations and must be able to discern character in others. Do you invest time in God's Word and pray for guidance by His Holy Spirit? Leadership is a high-stakes adventure with great opportunity for loss (Psalm 8; 16:5-8; 27:4).
5. David suffered unjustly for years being shaped for greatness! Like Joseph, Moses, Job, Daniel, and Paul, we must trust the LORD to bring us through. David made hundreds of lifelong friends through those trials, comforting them and inspiring us (Romans 8:25-39).

¹ John MacArthur, The MacArthur Study Bible. (Thomas Nelson Inc.). 2005 p369.

² The Holy Bible, The Message. (Eugene H. Peterson). 2002.

³ The Holy Bible, Good News Translation. (American Bible Society). 1992.

⁴ The Holy Bible, New Living Translation. (Tyndale House Publishers). 2007.

⁵ The Holy Bible, King James Version. (Public Domain).

⁶ The Holy Bible, New Century Version. (Thomas Nelson Inc.). 2005