

LIFE OF DAVID

A nobody, nobody noticed

Introduction

David grew up in an unstable political climate. Saul, Israel's first king had a promising start to his reign, but power went to his head. He interfered in religious affairs and ended up having a head-on-clash with his mentor, Prophet Samuel. As the marks of weak character began to scar Saul's life, God began to look for a replacement. This time, the new king would be His choice. Not long after that, Samuel was instructed by God to go to Bethlehem and pick a successor to Saul from the family of Jesse.

As the seven sons of Jesse passed before Samuel, their height and fine appearance masked the tangled and complicated family relationships which had formed their characters.

Jesse's grandfather was Boaz who had married Ruth. With his first wife, Jesse had raised a family of seven sons, of which at least three had followed Saul into the army. Late in his life, Jesse had married again either the concubine or widow of Nahash, King of the Ammonites, who had brought with her two remarkable daughters, Zeruah and Abigail. Of this second union David was born and grew up with Abishai and Joab, the sons of his step-sister Zeruah.

Man forgets, God remembers

Sent to the fields to herd the sheep, David seems to have received little attention from his father, who had to be reminded of his existence by Samuel at the sacrifice. (1Samuel 16:10-11) Nor did his older brothers treat him with much kindness or appreciation. There is evidence of a long-established pattern of sibling rivalry, jealousy, and re-primination. David had to contend with an aged father who paid him little attention, two enterprising older step sisters and their families and seven older step-brothers who disliked him.

He could have become an aggressive delinquent with a constant chip on his shoulder, used to fighting for whatever he could get and defiant of authority. But he did not because his heart was right. (1 Samuel 13:14).

David's character wasn't formed by basking in the glow of popularity and pride. No, David's heart took shape away from the limelight. It was faithfulness in the little things – the unseen, unknown, unappreciated, and unapplauded – that moulded David into a man who valued what God valued. During the long days and nights he spent caring for those smelly, stubborn sheep; David was learning what it meant to be a servant. Servants are those who are genuinely unaware of themselves – completely unconcerned about who gets the glory, what image they're projecting, or what people might say about them. The seeds of a servant's heart grow best in the fertile soil of humility.

Read 1 Samuel 16: 1-13

- What did god base his choice of David on, seeing he had little of what the world looked for?

- If David was just like the others, how would his anointing in the presence of his elder brothers affect his relationship to them?

The Path to the Throne

Through Dedicated Service and Patience

Read 1 Samuel 16: 16-23

- In this passage, David meets the man he will one day replace as king. What would be going through your mind if you were David?

- What insights do you gain from David's faithful service to the tormented Saul?

- David could have used his invitation to the palace as an opportunity to grab the throne? Is it hard for you to wait for the Lord's timing when a seemingly enticing opportunity knocks?

- Is there a King Saul in your life - perhaps someone in authority over you who needs the soothing grace you have to offer? How can you minister to this person? .

Through Conflict and Trial

Read 1 Samuel 17: 1-11, 16-19, 26, 28-30

- What was Israel's response to the ridicule from Goliath and the Philistines? (v.11)

- What does vv28-29 reveal about the relationship between David and his brothers?

- Can you notice God's providence in bringing David to the scene of danger where he had to confront Goliath - an enemy of God and of His people?
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Read 1 Samuel 17: 38-47

- What lessons can we learn from David in verses 38-39 about facing our Goliath's?
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- What perspectives to David's life and philosophy do we see outlined in verses 45-47?
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Conclusion

Goliath endures as a symbol of the giants we face daily. The following reminders not only help us confront our Goliaths but with God's strength, slay them as well.

First - facing giants is an intimidating experience. Even through the eyes of faith, Goliath's 9-foot frame still towered over David. Faith doesn't blind us to reality, but it does enable us to see beyond the externals as we draw on God's power.

Second - doing battle is a lonely experience. Your Goliaths are your Goliaths. In fact, they may not be gigantic to anyone else but you. The battle is for you and the Lord to fight together.

Third - trusting God is a stabilizing experience. It's amazing how calm David was. That's the nature of true faith- "the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1)