

YOUTH



LEVEL 6

BIBLE

LESSONS



LESSON 3



David Prepares To Be King

DAVID PREPARES TO BE KING

We learned in the last lesson that the elders of Israel had gone to the prophet Samuel with a startling request. "Give us a king like all the other nations," they demanded. Dismayed, Samuel prayed to God and asked how he should answer them.

"They are not rejecting you," God told the prophet, "but they are rejecting ME, that I should not rule over them. Go and tell them what having a king will mean" (I Sam. 8:7-9).

"God will give you a king," Samuel told the elders, "but when the king drafts your sons into his army and takes your daughters to be his servants and takes your best fields, your vineyards, your sheep and cattle to be his, and requires taxes of you to support his government; when you have regretted having asked for a king, don't cry out to God because He won't hear you. You're making a choice you are going to have to live with," Samuel warned (I Sam. 8:11-18).

"That's fine," they told Samuel, "we still want a king."

Not long afterward God told Samuel to anoint a Benjamite named Saul to be the first king of Israel. At first, Saul carried out his responsibilities with a humble and an obedient attitude. But this attitude did not last. We learned in Lesson 2 that Saul began to think he was too important to obey God. He began to disobey, even when Samuel gave him specific instructions from God.

Saul was soon to learn that he could not disobey God and expect to be blessed (I Sam. 15:17-23).

Not many days later, God sent Samuel on a secret mission to Bethlehem. He commissioned Samuel to anoint a new king over Israel. But Samuel didn't tell anyone about his assignment. After all, Saul might find out and kill him (I Sam. 17:1-2).

When Samuel arrived, he found that the young man God had chosen was named David. He was the youngest son of Jesse.

David was still young when Samuel anointed him to be King over Israel. One reason he was anointed King was because God saw he had a right attitude. David had respect for the laws of God, and had love and respect for his parents

ABOUT OUR COVER . . .

The wilderness of En-gedi where David hid.

Photo by Z. Kluger

and for other people. Also, he was from the tribe of Judah which was to bear rule (Gen. 49:10).

David's life may surprise you. God knew that before he could actually rule over the nation of Israel, the young man would first have to go through certain trials and experiences. God knew that David understood and kept the Ten Commandments, but God wanted to make sure that David had the determination to continue to do what was right. Let's look at David's life and see why God said David was a man after His own heart (Acts 13:22).

DAVID MEETS KING SAUL

Saul's life was all mixed up. Disobedience to God had changed his attitude and he had little peace of mind. He didn't even have God's Spirit or His special protection any longer. Without God's help Saul began to be unhappy, sullen and depressed. And God allowed an evil spirit to trouble him (I Sam. 16:14).

Turn to Samuel 16:15-16 and fill in the blanks to see what happened to Saul.

“And Saul's servants said unto him _____ now an _____ spirit from God troubleth thee. Let our Lord now _____ thy servants which are before thee, to seek out a man, who is a cunning _____ on an _____: and it _____ come to pass, when the _____ spirit from God is upon thee, that he shall play with his hand, and _____ shalt be _____.”

Saul sighed deeply and ordered his

servants to find such a man and bring him before the King.

One of the servants spoke up and said he knew of just the man. He said David, a young man from the tribe of Judah, was a very good musician. Saul demanded that David be brought to him. David had just returned from tending sheep when Saul's servant came to the door and spoke to his father. They explained the King was not feeling well and wanted David to play for him. So David was sent with some presents for the King, and within just a short time found himself seated near Saul.

Saul ordered him to play. David played the most restful song he could



Because of Saul's disobedience to God, he became unhappy, miserable and depressed.

play. After a few minutes, the tenseness in Saul's face seemed to soften. An occasional smile even flickered across Saul's face. David, too, felt better just seeing the music's relaxing effect upon the king.

In the days that followed, Saul's affection for David grew. Soon the king selected David to be his armorbearer.

How well do you remember? Circle T for true and F for false.

1. Disobeying God brings us happiness. T F

2. David was from the tribe of Benjamin. T F

3. David's music made Saul feel better. T F

GOLIATH'S CHALLENGE

David was still a young man when Israel's longstanding enemy, the Philistines, invaded the land of Judah. Saul gathered his troops to confront the invaders and found the Philistines encamped on a hill above a narrow valley. The Israelite army immediately took up positions on the mountain across from the enemy. Hearing of Saul's call to arms, the three oldest sons of Jesse went to Israel's camp to prepare for the battle.

The next morning a loud cry reached the Israelite camp. There, down in the valley, stomped a giant of a man. Laughing and jeering, the huge Philistine warrior roared out a challenge.

Turn to I Samuel 17:8-10 and fill in the words of the challenge the giant made to Israel's armies.

"Why are ye come out to set your

_____ in array? _____ not _____ a _____, and ye servants to _____? _____ you a _____ for you, and let _____ come _____ to me.

"If _____ be able to _____ with _____, and to _____ me, then will we be your _____: but if I _____ against him, and _____ him, then shall _____ be _____, and serve us.

"And the _____ said, _____ of _____ this day; give me a man, that we may _____ together."

As the giant's words rolled across the valley to the camp of Israel, fear gripped Saul and his men. Only silence answered the challenge.

Each morning and evening for 40 days, Goliath presented himself before the armies of Israel to taunt them.

On the fortieth day, David arrived at the camp with fresh provisions of food for his brothers. Suddenly David heard the roar of Goliath's voice once again reproaching Israel's army.

"Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the Living God?" David questioned. "I will fight this Philistine!"

When Saul heard of David's words, he tried to discourage him. But David replied, "I have slain both a lion and a bear that attacked my father's sheep, and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he defies the armies of the Living God. The Eternal delivered me out of the paw of the lion

and out of the paw of the bear, and He will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine!"

"Go," Saul commanded, "and the Eternal be with you" (I Sam. 17:37).

David moved quickly into the valley carrying his staff, a sling and five smooth stones from a nearby brook. Goliath spotted him almost immediately. He noticed David was just a young man and thought he would be a pushover.

"Am I a dog that you come to fight me with a staff?" Goliath jeered out angrily. "Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field."

Do you think David was afraid? Let's look and see. Turn to I Samuel 17:45-47 and fill in the blanks. "Thou _____ to me with a _____, and with a _____, and with a _____: but I come to _____ in the _____ of the _____ of hosts, the _____ of the _____ of Israel, whom _____ hast _____."

"This _____ will the _____ thee into _____ hand; and _____ will _____ thee, and take _____ from thee; and _____ will give the _____ of the host of the _____ this day unto the fowls of the _____, and to the _____ beasts of the _____; that all the _____ may know there is a _____ in _____."

"And all this assembly shall _____ that the _____"



Goliath's shield-bearer stared in disbelief as the stone from David's sling struck the giant between the eyes, killing him instantly!

_____ not with _____ and spear: for the _____ is the _____, and _____ will give you into _____."

Enraged, the giant Philistine bore down on David. Tossing his staff aside, David moved quickly and loaded his sling with a smooth round stone. Instantly he began to whip it around his head. Releasing the stone from the sling at just the right moment, the stone struck the giant's forehead just beneath the rim of his helmet. Instantly the mighty warrior slumped to the earth. David ran to the fallen giant, drew the

sword from the Philistine's sheath, and cut off Goliath's head!

Thousands of Philistines were killed that day as they turned and ran in defeat.

Saul and the army soon returned from the battle. People came out from every city, celebrating the victory. "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands," sang the people (I Sam. 18:7).

Saul, hearing the words, glanced at David with jealous anger. "They've credited David with ten thousands, and credited me with only thousands. What more could David have but the kingdom?" Saul muttered angrily to himself (I Sam. 18:8).

Saul eyed David. Could this be the young man Samuel had said would one day replace him as king? The memory of Samuel's words rang loud in Saul's ears. Notice Samuel's words in I Samuel 15:26, 28 and fill in the blanks.

"For thou hast rejected the _____ of the _____, and the Lord hath _____ from being _____ over _____. (Skip to verse 28.) The _____ hath _____ the _____ of _____ from _____ this day, and hath _____ it to a _____ of thine, that is _____ than _____."

Feeling sorry for himself, Saul's attitude again changed to one of jealousy and fear. The next day an evil spirit troubled Saul again. When the

servants saw Saul's mood growing worse they remembered David's skill on the harp, and asked that he play for the King.

As David played, Saul sulked as he ran his fingers along a javelin that he had next to his chair. Suddenly, his grip tightened on the javelin and he hurled it toward David. The spear brushed his shoulder and David quickly escaped.

Despite Saul's jealousy and anger, David and Saul's son, Jonathan, grew to be very close friends. Friends are people who help you stay out of trouble. They remain friends even when things go bad for you. David and Jonathan kept each other out of trouble. When one was sad the other would try to help out. Friends are important and selecting your friends is even more important.

David and Jonathan were really close friends. Do you have any close friends? Think about your friends. Is each a true friend or a "fair weather" friend—one who is a friend only during good times? A true friend is always a friend. Have you chosen your friends wisely? Your dad and mom can help if you're not sure someone should or should not be a friend.

Getting back to our story, David finally was forced to flee from Saul entirely. But not before he and Jonathan made a pact between them. Read I Samuel 20:12-17 and write, in your own words on the lines below, what David promised Jonathan. _____

PURSUED

David headed for the mountains and found a large cave at Adullam. He felt he would be safe from Saul there, and it was only a day's journey from his family's farm at Bethlehem. David sent word to his family of his whereabouts, and soon the entire family came to see him, bringing food, clothing and other things David might need.

Then, as word of David's hiding place circulated quietly among those who respected David, an amazing thing happened. Small groups of men, some with families, came to David to ally themselves with him. Soon the ranks of men loyal to David swelled to about four hundred.

David thought he had found a safe haven at Adullam. But before long God sent the prophet Gad to tell David to return to Judah. David left immediately with his men, their families and belongings for the forest of Hareth. He was glad that God had directed him.

About this same time, Saul was extremely frustrated at not yet having found David. "Why haven't you been doing your job?" Saul complained to his servants. "Don't any of you know where David has been?"

"I saw the son of Jesse at Nob with Ahimelech the priest," Doeg the Edomite spoke up. "Ahimelech gave him food and the sword of Goliath."

Upon hearing that, Saul was angry. "Bring Ahimelech and all the priests of Nob here to me!" he commanded. Finally the priests arrived. "Why have

you conspired against me in aiding my enemy David?" he snapped at them with a scowl.

Ahimelech was puzzled. "David your enemy?" Ahimelech questioned. "But David is your most loyal servant," the priest said.

"Those who help traitors like David are guilty of treason. Slay them!" Saul ordered. But the soldiers feared God and refused to carry out the King's command. Saul became enraged. "Doeg, you slay them!" Doeg, unlike the Israelites, did not fear God. He drew his sword and killed 85 priests of God that day. Then, at Saul's command, Doeg left for Nob to destroy the priests' families and livestock.



Doeg, the Edomite, mercilessly killed 85 priests of God at Saul's command.

Because of the aid the priests gave David, Saul became even more bitter. Meanwhile, David and his men were forced to keep on the move. God made sure that David wasn't caught by Saul.

RESPECT FOR THE KING

Saul had just returned from repelling another Philistine invasion when he was told that David was in the wilderness of En-gedi. Taking 3,000 chosen men with him, Saul was determined to capture David in the rocky En-gedi wilderness.

"We'll rest here," the Benjamite king ordered. Saul entered a cave to relieve himself. The cave was dark and extended far back into the cliff. Near the back of the cave David and some of his men were silently hidden.

"God has delivered him into your hands," several of the men whispered to David. "Now you can kill him," they urged.

David refused to even think of killing Saul. Nevertheless, he stealthily crept toward the King. Knife in hand, David knelt down behind Saul. Without Saul's knowledge, David silently cut off a piece of his robe.

Returning to his men, David's conscience suddenly began to bother him. Although he had intended no personal harm to Saul, David realized that even cutting the King's robe was an act of disrespect and was wrong in God's sight. David also knew that no one but God has the right to remove a leader from office.

A few minutes later, much to the surprise of his men, David left the cave and yelled after Saul, "My lord, the



David had the opportunity to kill evil King Saul in a cave, but refused because of his respect for God's anointed.

King." Saul looked behind him. There, bowing to show respect, was David holding a piece of Saul's robe. What did David say? I Samuel 24:10.

"Behold, this _____ thine _____ have seen how that the Lord had _____ thee to day into _____ in the _____: and _____ bade [told] _____ kill _____: but _____ eye _____ thee: and _____ said, _____ will _____ put forth _____ against my lord; for he is the _____."

Saul cried upon hearing David's words. What did Saul say? Did he know David was right? Read verses 16

through 22 of the same chapter. Did Saul see that David was right? Yes _____ No _____ (check one). Did Saul want David to make a promise? Yes _____ No _____. Did David make the promise? Yes _____ No _____. On the lines below write in your own words what Saul asked for. _____

Saul and his troops left. David looked at the men standing around him. He knew that Saul would return and so did they. Saul often expressed remorse, but David knew he couldn't be trusted.

GOD CORRECTS A VENGEFUL ATTITUDE

Breaking up camp at En-gedi, David and his followers moved to the wilderness of Paran, near Carmel. There, a wealthy man by the name of Nabal grazed his sheep and goats. The herd was huge and, at David's instructions, some of his men stayed near them to protect the animals and shepherds from marauders.

When Nabal sent his men to round up the sheep for shearing, David sent 10 young men to Nabal. "Explain to him that we have watched over his flocks and would like to be paid," David instructed. But Nabal was ill-tempered and selfish. "Do you think I'm going to give bread and water and meat to men I don't even know?" he sneered at them.

David's men left and reported what Nabal had said. "Gird on your swords,"

David ordered 400 of his men. "I protected all that Nabal had and that's how he thanks me," he proclaimed in an angry voice!

Meanwhile, one of Nabal's servants rushed to Nabal's wife, Abigail, to tell her what had happened. "David's men were very good to us," said the servant, "they protected us while we were keeping the sheep. I'm afraid David will not take our master's remarks kindly."

Realizing the mistake her husband had made, Abigail instructed her servants to pack 200 loaves of bread, 100 clusters of raisins, 200 cakes of figs, two bottles of wine, the meat of five sheep, and five measures of parched corn.

"Hurry and load the donkeys," she urged. "If David and his men are on their way in anger, we must meet them on the trail before they reach Nabal."

David and his men were near the ranch when they spied the donkeys and riders approaching. Dismounting a short distance from David, Abigail hastened a few steps toward him, then bowed herself. Read verses 18 through 31 of I Samuel 25 and write down what happened. What did she give David? What did David say? How do you think he felt? _____

What was David's reply? "Blessed be the mighty God of Israel for sending you to meet me. Because of your words, you have kept me from shedding blood in vengeance."

David accepted Abigail's gift and sent her back to her house in peace. When Abigail told Nabal what she had done, he became sick and 10 days later he died.

When David found out about Nabal's death, he realized that God had judged Nabal for his evil ways and had taken his life. David knew that God would fight his battles for him.

Can God fight battles for you today? What about when you ask your teachers to get off from school for the Feast of Tabernacles? What about when you're sick and God heals you? On a separate sheet of paper write down four or five other things that God can help you with if you ask Him.

SAUL'S FATE IS SEALED

Next, David traveled to Gath in the land of the Philistines. There Achish, the king, trusted David and welcomed him and his men. David dwelt there for more than a year when the Philistines once again prepared to attack Israel. Intending to attack the Philistines from within their own ranks once the battle began, David and his men were eager to accompany the Philistine army. But fearing that David would turn against them, the captains of the army refused to let him and his men go with them.

When Saul saw that the Philistines had gathered a great army for the

invasion, he became afraid. Desperate, Saul turned to God for help, but God would not answer him because of his sins.

In desperation, Saul ordered his servants to find a woman who could contact the spirit world. "There is a witch at Endor who can help," came the reply.

Knowing that it was a sin because God forbade the practice of witchcraft, and the fact that he himself had done away with it in the land, Saul didn't want to be seen going to the sorceress. He disguised himself and went to the woman's home by night, accompanied by only two of his men. Keeping his identity secret, Saul told the woman, "I want you to bring the spirit of Samuel the prophet up from the dead."

The woman should have known that the dead know nothing and couldn't talk with the living, but either out of ignorance or deceit she asked the demons, whom she was actually dealing with, to "bring back" Samuel from the dead. A demon, posing as Samuel appeared and said to Saul, "Why have you disturbed me?"

And Saul answered, "I am afraid because the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me. I want you to tell me what I should do."

God, who can hear and see all, knew what Saul was doing. Because God is the ruler of all things, even fallen angels must obey Him. Also, the demon world has knowledge of many things God plans to do. So God may have either told

the demon what to say, or allowed him to tell Saul what was going to happen in battle the next day.

“God has taken the kingdom from you and has given it to your neighbor David because you did not obey Him,” said the demon impersonating Samuel. “Also, when you go into battle tomorrow against the Philistines, God is going to deliver you into the hands of the Philistines and you and your sons will be killed,” the demon told Saul.

The battle the next day was fierce. Wave after wave of Philistine soldiers hurled themselves at Israel’s front line. Sensing victory, the Philistines closed in hard. Overrunning Saul’s forces they killed Jonathan, his two brothers and many thousands of the men of Israel. Saul was wounded and retreated with the rest of his men. The Benjamite realized that he was too badly hurt to outrun the pursuing Philistines. He also knew what would happen if he were to fall into enemy hands. “Kill me,” Saul ordered his armorbearer. But the armorbearer had respect for Saul and wouldn’t kill him. Saul then took a sword and killed himself.

Three days later, a man from Saul’s camp, an Amalekite, came to David with word of the battle.

“Saul and Jonathan are dead,” he told David.

“How do you know that?” asked David.

The man, hoping for a reward of some kind, then invented a story that he thought David would be pleased to hear.

“We were in retreat,” he told David, “and the Philistines were coming at us from every side. It was then that I saw Saul. He was wounded, and the Philistines were closing in on him, so he called to me and said, ‘Slay me, end my life for I am badly wounded.’ I saw that his wounds were such that he certainly could not live, so I killed him,” he added smugly.

Hearing that the king of Israel was dead, David and his men mourned the death of Saul and Jonathan with weeping and fasting until evening.

Afterward David said to the man, “How was it that you were not afraid to destroy the King of Israel, the anointed of God?” David, once again showing his respect for Saul, ordered the man slain because he said that he had killed the King of Israel. David was so remorseful that he composed a song of lament to honor both Saul and his son Jonathan.

After Saul’s death, God instructed David to return to Hebron in the land of Judah. When David and his men reached the city, the men of Judah came and anointed David king over the tribe of Judah. But Abner, captain of the army of Israel, took Ishbosheth, a son of Saul, and made him king over the rest of Israel. Even though Abner had no authority from God to do so, God permitted it.

Again God was testing David. Would David now try to take matters into his own hands? Or would David be patient and trust God to make him king over all of Israel? We’ll find out in the next lesson.

BIBLE MEMORY Psalm 23

“TOUCHDOWN”

Fill in the blanks with the correct answers. Then, check your answers by looking them up in the lesson. Next, move the ball 5 yards for each correct answer in each blank. See if you can score a touchdown by crossing the goal line.

1. They are not rejecting _____,” God told the prophet, “but they are rejecting _____.” Answer on page 2.
2. _____ the prophet warned the _____ of Israel what a king would do to them. Answer on page 2.
3. _____ was the first king of Israel & Judah. He was from the tribe of _____. Answer on page 2.
4. _____ was the Philistine giant that young David killed with a _____. Answer on page 5.
5. David was not afraid of the giant. God had helped him kill a _____ and a _____ once before. Answer on page 4, 5.
6. Saul became jealous and angry. The people were singing, “Saul has slain his _____ and David his _____.” Answer on page 6.
7. While David played his _____ Saul hurled a _____ at him. Answer on page 6.
8. _____ was ill-tempered and selfish. _____ his wife took food to David. Answer on page 9.
9. After Saul’s death, God instructed David to return to _____ in the land of _____. Answer on page 11.
10. _____, captain of Israel’s arms, took _____, Saul’s son to rule over Israel. Answer on page 11.

