

In Lesson 2, we examined one of the most well know stories in the Old Testament: David versus Goliath. This classic struggle became proverbial for any struggle between an underdog and a seemingly unbeatable foe. However, this was much more than just a story. It was a real conflict with real results: the glorification of God.

Goliath had made the fearful proposal that he would fight solo as the Philistine representative, with the losing side becoming the slave of the victorious side. The situation seemed impossible to Saul and the Israelites as they cowered in fear. David came upon the battle scene, and after hearing Goliath's challenge, made a fearless proposal to stand up against this uncircumcised Philistine who had mocked and threatened the armies of the living God. David provoked and challenged the Philistine, and then defeated him in the power of the Lord. The enemy was vanquished, and Israel walked in victory.

In this account is the parallel of how we can face the Goliaths in our own lives and trust in the Lord to defeat those things that stumble us. In this week's lesson, we will examine three important factors that developed as a result of all of this: David's growing friendship with Jonathan, Saul's growing animosity toward David, and David's growing place in the national life of Israel.

DAY 1

Building Friendships 1 SAMUEL 18:1-4

Please Read 1 Samuel 18:1-4 and answer the following questions

[1] What friendship quickly blossomed after David's heroic acts of faith (v. 1)?

[2] After this, Saul was so greatly impressed with David that he kept him permanently in his service, not letting him go back to Bethlehem.

How was the friendship between David and Jonathan also strengthened (v. 3)?

[3] How did Jonathan demonstrate his commitment to David (v. 4)?

EXPANDED QUESTIONS

[1] The friendship between David and Jonathan sets quite an example for us. In this lesson and the next lesson, we will examine elements of the types of friendships God wants us to have. Something we don't realize by reading this story is that there were significant differences between Jonathan and David, especially in their ages. It is possible that Jonathan was 25 to 28 years older than David at this point,¹ yet God did an amazing work to knit them together (literally meaning that their souls were chained together²) in deep bonds of friendship. In his

excellent book, *Quality Friendship*, Gary Inrig said: "Biblical friendship is not simply based on mutual attraction. Rather, it is based on loving others in the name of the Lord Jesus and with His love as our standard."³

Read John 15:13–15 and record your thoughts on how Jesus set the example of true friendship. What kind of results will such a friendship produce (Colossians 2:2–3)?

[2] Sadly, some with a liberal mind interpret this passage in a homosexual light. This is far from the truth. The Hebrew word for *love* here means "an ardent and vehement inclination of the mind and a tenderness of affection at the same time." Sexual love is a different Hebrew word.⁴ In fact, this Hebrew word is never used to express homosexual love or desires.⁵ Jonathan's actions of making a covenant promise with David—giving him his robe, sword, and armor—was an act of sacrifice and self-denial. It reflected that although he could have been the next ruler of Israel, he saw God at work in David. "Jonathan's act was one of honor, equality, and vulnerability."⁶ An intimate friend will both willingly sacrifice, and, as we'll see in Lesson 4, be a willing and loyal defender of their friend.⁷ Again, Jesus is our example of this.

What has Jesus done for us as our ultimate friend (2 Corinthians 5:21; Philippians 2:7–8)?

Daily Life Point: R. Kent Hughes points out that only ten percent of men will ever have any real friends.⁸ Women seem to have a much easier time in making and maintaining quality friendships. Hopefully, if you are married, your spouse is this to you, but we really need to have someone with whom we can be open, honest, and accountable. We need a quality friend of the same gender who can relate to some areas with which your spouse may not be able to as well. David needed a Jonathan in his life in view of the rough road that lay ahead of him at that time. We all need this.

What are some things you read today that can help you better understand and seek to be that kind of friend and support to a fellow believer? Start aiming toward building such a quality friendship. Please record and share some thoughts with your group.

MEMORY PASSAGE

This week we will memorize 1 Samuel 18:14. Review the passage several times throughout each day, and by the end of the week, you should have it memorized.

And David behaved wisely in all his ways, and the Lord was with him.

(1 Samuel 18:14 NKJV)

DAY 2

Building Animosity
1 SAMUEL 18:5-9

Please Read 1 Samuel 18:5-9 and answer the following questions

[1] What was the result of David's service to Saul (v. 5)?

[2] How did the people respond to the victories that God was achieving through David and Saul (vv. 6-7)?

Note: Such songs of celebration were common in Israel. This is evident in their deliverance out of the Red Sea (Exodus 15:1-21) and also in the song of Deborah and Barak after their victory (Judges 5:1-31).

[3] However, Saul's response to this wasn't exactly positive. What did it lead him to do and think (vv. 8-9)?

EXPANDED QUESTIONS

[1] In continuing our thoughts on quality friendships, we see that the support of Jonathan was a factor that allowed David to confidently go out and be successful in his every day dealings. Much like Joseph, whom we previously studied in *Back to the Beginning: Studies in Genesis*, God took David from obscurity and years of preparation to the point where he was thrust in the limelight of the nation.⁹ Having that type of friend behind him allowed him to have the help and encouragement to stand strong for the Lord. Please read the following passages, and record what they speak to you about the type of friendship qualities you should be seeking to exhibit in your relationships.

Proverbs 17:17; 18:24

Galatians 6:2; James 5:16

[2] Saul was none too thrilled with the number one hit song in Israel, topping all the charts. In fact, it made him quite angry (The NIV says, "this refrain galled him"). Saul was even burning internally with turmoil.¹⁰ From that time on, Saul kept a jealous eye on David, and animosity was building. In fact, the phrase "he eyed David" actually is a parallel to a word meaning to "transgress", implying that Saul was carefully observing David for the purpose of sinning against him.¹¹ Envy and jealousy are signs that a quality friendship is heading for shipwreck.

What did Solomon warn about this (Proverbs 14:30; Song of Solomon 8:6)? What is the best way to keep this from entering in and souring our friendships (Ephesians 4:26–32; 1 Peter 2:1–2)?

Daily Life Point: Saul should have dealt with this envy and jealousy immediately, for it truly would poison and destroy him. It will destroy our friendships and relationships as well if we let it get a foothold in our lives.

What are some practical things that you can do to prevent this from entering into and poisoning your own relationships? What are some ways you can deal with it if it has already reared its ugly head in your life? Please record your ideas and discuss them as a group so you can help each other in this.

MEMORY PASSAGE

Fill in the blanks by memory, and then review the passage several times.

And David behaved _____ in all his ways, and the Lord was _____ him.

(1 Samuel 18:14 NKJV)

DAY 3

Behaving Wisely
1 SAMUEL 18:10-16

Please Read 1 Samuel 18:10-16 and answer the following questions

[1] Saul's anger and jealousy no doubt stirred up his affliction. He had David play before him to calm him as he had in the past. But, what happened this time (vv. 10-11)?

[2] After this outburst, what emotion did Saul experience and what did he do about it (vv. 12-13)?

[3] What was the result for David despite Saul's actions and attitude toward him (vv. 14-16)?

EXPANDED QUESTIONS

[1] Saul was jealous of David because he was afraid of David and the work God was doing in his life. While we might assume that Saul did his "target practice" with David out of temporary insanity, it is just as likely that he used his condition as a cover for a deliberate attempt on David's life, and used his insanity as an excuse.¹² This proves to us how fear leads to jealousy, and if left unchecked, it will lead to severe and even murderous actions.

Where do all such problems begin (Mark 7:20-23; James 4:1-3)? How far can they lead us if left unchecked (Matthew 27:18; Romans 1:29-32)?

[2] Despite this, David didn't give up or run away. Instead, he behaved wisely, which means to be circumspect, prudent, skillful, and intelligent, resulting in being successful.¹³ How was David a living example of Joshua 1:6–9?

Daily Life Point: When you face opposition or know that someone has something against you and is causing you problems, do you act like David? Do you press on in wise actions and trust in the Lord, or do you cave in and let yourself be defeated?

How has today's study helped you gain a better focus on pressing on in life and service regardless of the circumstances? How has it helped you trust God for the results? Please share your thoughts here.

MEMORY PASSAGE

Fill in the blanks by memory, and then review the passage several times.

And David behaved _____ in all his _____, and the Lord was _____ him. (1 Samuel 18:14 NKJV)

DAY 4

Behaving Humbly
1 SAMUEL 18:17-24

Please Read 1 Samuel 18:17-24 and answer the following questions

[1] Saul had not fulfilled his promise of giving his daughter to the one who defeated Goliath. When he recalled this, how did he try to use it to his advantage? What was David's reaction, and what were the results of all this (vv. 17-19)?

Note: Merab meant "compensation" or "substitute."¹⁴ She was given to this man, Adriel, with whom she had five sons, who ironically were all later killed by the Gibeonites as a lingering result of the sins of Saul (2 Samuel 21:8-9).¹⁵

[2] After this, Saul saw another opportunity to get to David. What was it, and how did he put on the pressure to do this (vv. 20-22)?

Note: Michal meant, "Who is like God?"¹⁶

[3] How did David demonstrate humility in his response to all of this (vv. 23-24)?

EXPANDED QUESTIONS

[1] David was not puffed up by his promotion, because his heart had been prepared and humbly surrendered to God. He took God's calling of Saul as seriously as his own, and wanted to humbly respect the office that he held. How can we do the same in our dealing with those that are in authority over us, even if we are in disagreement with them?

Romans 13:1-3

1 Timothy 2:1-4

Hebrews 13:7

Daily Life Point: How easy it would have been for David, as a young man seeing victory and popularity, to let his success go to his head. But David humbled himself in the sight of God, knowing that in due time he would be

exalted to the position God had for him, and entrusted all his struggles and anxieties to Him (1 Peter 5:5–7). Satan will often come along with his little ploys to bring us down into compromise in subtle ways-like Saul was trying to do with David to let the Philistines do his own dirty work and kill him off. How can this help you in your daily life and decisions? What can you do to guard yourself against similar deceptions and traps of the enemy?

MEMORY PASSAGE

Fill in the blanks by memory, and then review the passage several times.

And David _____ in all his _____, and the Lord was _____ him." (1 Samuel 18:14 NKJV)

DAY 5

Behaving Valiantly **1 SAMUEL 18:25–30**

Please Read 1 Samuel 18:25–30 and answer the following questions

[1] Saul wouldn't take no for an answer. Since Saul knew David couldn't afford a dowry common in those days, what strange "dowry" did he ask for, and how did David more than fulfill this (vv. 25–27)?

[2] What unintended impact did this have on Saul (vv. 28–29)?

[3] What was the result of this for David (v. 30)?

EXPANDED QUESTIONS

[1] The customs of the day within this passage seem strange to us, but the main point here is that Saul's plans were frustrated. This is just like how Satan's plans will be frustrated as we behave wisely and valiantly in the power of the Holy Spirit. "Because of his harmony with heaven, David had a tremendous power and influence upon others."¹⁷ Unfortunately, Saul became David's enemy all the more from then on, but David became highly esteemed.

How does 1 John 3:10–14 address the opposition of those like Saul, and what are the differences in their lives compared to ours?

[2] Ivor Powell well pointed out that David's experiences are a living example of 1 Corinthians 10:12–13:¹⁸

Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

How do the following passages also encourage you to stand strong when you are under the kind of pressures that David was?

James 5:10–11

1 Peter 1:6–9; 5:8–10

2 Peter 2:7–9

Daily Life Point: Perhaps this is a time of struggle or compromise for you. Many great Christians over the centuries who have made a major impact for the kingdom of God have also faced such times of discouragement and struggle. People like Martin Luther, William Carey, J. Hudson Taylor, C. H. Spurgeon, John Calvin,¹⁹ and even the Apostle Paul faced times of great discouragement, but they never allowed it to rule them (2 Corinthians 1:8–11).

David certainly could have done so with the opposition of Saul, but he trusted God and behaved wisely, humbly, and valiantly.

How has this personally inspired and helped you to do the same in your life and circumstances?

MEMORY PASSAGE

Fill in the blanks by memory, and then review the passage several times.

1 Samuel 18:14

DAY 6

Pursuing God's Heart

[1] Charles Swindoll well said,

Intimate friendships are like precious jewels, extremely valuable and hard to find. If polished consistently with the soft cloths of commitment, encouragement, and honesty, they will glisten and shine the invaluable worth of love.²⁰

The following are a list of things to ask yourself about the type of friend you are and friendships you are seeking. Think through them, answer them prayerfully, and discuss with your group how you all can seek to build quality friendships.²¹

• To what extent am I willing to expand the limits of my friendship, sacrificial love, and lay down my own life for the other person?

• Have I been a force of change in my friend's life for the kingdom of God, and are they more like Jesus because

of my influence in their life?

- Do I take risks to be open, or do I let my friend penetrate the barriers I put around myself? Have I verbally expressed my love and appreciation for my friend and shown it in practical ways?

- Do I initiate with others or do I wait to have them reach out to me? Do I choose friendships with others because I am looking to meet their needs or want my needs met?

- How is my friend reaching more of their potential in their life, or bearing more spiritual fruit in their life because of my impact?

[2] Ivor Powell well said,

There is no deeper despair than that found in the soul for whom there is no hope. When a man has experienced God's blessing in life, the loss of that hallowed benediction leads to an indescribable emptiness within his soul. Saul's knowledge that God had rejected him filled him with frustration, bitterness, helplessness, and a deepening anger.²²

What are some of the things you have learned through the negative example of Saul and the positive response of David and his spirituality in handling these problems? How can this make a real difference for you in some of the things you have been going through? Please record some thoughts here to share with your group, and pray for one another in these areas.

[3] Lastly, is there anything else that you'd like to share that you have been learning through this week's study? Please record it here.

MEMORY PASSAGE

Fill in the blanks by memory, and then review the passage several times.

I Samuel 18:14

PARTING THOUGHTS

Psalms 37 was not written around this time of David's life, but it certainly summarizes the principles he learned through this time of growing opposition and temptation to fret, worry, and lose his focus. It is an acrostic psalm. This means that each stanza of the double verses starts with the next letter of the alphabet, from A to Z if you will, and in this psalm are many of the best loved thoughts in the Old Testament.²³ Although David wrote this in his old age, it certainly reflects the struggles he went through at that time. "It is a Psalm in which the Lord hushes most sweetly the two common repinings of his people, and calms their minds as to his present dealings with his own chosen flock."²⁴ Enjoy meditating on this awesome psalm and putting its truths to practice in your life.

Psalms 37 (NKJV)

A Psalm of David

Do not fret because of evildoers,
Nor be envious of the workers of iniquity.
For they shall soon be cut down like the grass,
And wither as the green herb.

Trust in the LORD, and do good;
Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness.
Delight yourself also in the LORD,
And He shall give you the desires of your heart.
Commit your way to the LORD,
Trust also in Him,
And He shall bring it to pass.
He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light,
And your justice as the noonday.

Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him;
Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way,
Because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass.
Cease from anger, and forsake wrath;
Do not fret-it only causes harm.

For evildoers shall be cut off;
But those who wait on the LORD,
They shall inherit the earth.
For yet a little while and the wicked shall be no more;
Indeed, you will look carefully for his place,

But it shall be no more.
But the meek shall inherit the earth,
And shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

The wicked plots against the just,
And gnashes at him with his teeth.
The Lord laughs at him,
For He sees that his day is coming.
The wicked have drawn the sword
And have bent their bow,
To cast down the poor and needy,
To slay those who are of upright conduct.
Their sword shall enter their own heart,
And their bows shall be broken.

A little that a righteous man has
Is better than the riches of many wicked.
For the arms of the wicked shall be broken,
But the LORD upholds the righteous.

The LORD knows the days of the upright,
And their inheritance shall be forever.
They shall not be ashamed in the evil time,
And in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.
But the wicked shall perish;
And the enemies of the LORD,
Like the splendor of the meadows, shall vanish.
Into smoke they shall vanish away.
The wicked borrows and does not repay,
But the righteous shows mercy and gives.
For those blessed by Him shall inherit the earth,
But those cursed by Him shall be cut off.

The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD,
And He delights in his way.
Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down;
For the LORD upholds him with His hand.

I have been young, and now am old;
Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken,
Nor his descendants begging bread.
He is ever merciful, and lends;
And his descendants are blessed.
Depart from evil, and do good;
And dwell forevermore.
For the LORD loves justice,
And does not forsake His saints;
They are preserved forever,
But the descendants of the wicked shall be cut off.
The righteous shall inherit the land,
And dwell in it forever.

The mouth of the righteous speaks wisdom,
And his tongue talks of justice.
The law of his God is in his heart;
None of his steps shall slide.
The wicked watches the righteous,
And seeks to slay him.
The LORD will not leave him in his hand,
Nor condemn him when he is judged.

Wait on the LORD,
And keep His way,
And He shall exalt you to inherit the land;
When the wicked are cut off, you shall see it.
I have seen the wicked in great power,
And spreading himself like a native green tree.
Yet he passed away, and behold, he was no more;
Indeed I sought him, but he could not be found.

Mark the blameless man, and observe the upright;
For the future of that man is peace.
But the transgressors shall be destroyed together;
The future of the wicked shall be cut off.

But the salvation of the righteous is from the LORD;
He is their strength in the time of trouble.
And the LORD shall help them and deliver them;
He shall deliver them from the wicked,
And save them,
Because they trust in Him.

NOTES

- 1 Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Successful* (Colorado Springs: Victor, 2001), p. 100.
- 2 Gene A. Getz, *David, Seeking God Faithfully* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1995), p. 74.
- 3 Gary Inrig, *Quality Friendship* (Chicago: Moody, 1981), p. 20.
- 4 *The Complete Word Study Old Testament* (Chattanooga, Tenn.: AMG, 1994), p. 2298.
- 5 Ronald F. Youngblood, *1, 2 Samuel in The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, F.E. Gaebelstein, ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1992), p. 706.
- 6 R. Kent Hughes, *Disciplines of a Godly Man* (Wheaton: Crossway, 1991), p. 61.
- 7 Charles R. Swindoll, *David, A Man of Passion and Destiny* (Dallas: Word, 1997), p. 53.
- 8 Hughes, *Disciplines*, p. 58.
- 9 If you would like to obtain a copy of our series on Genesis, please contact Harvest Christian Fellowship Men's Bible Fellowship at the address below, or go to www.Harvest.org, where you can download a copy of these studies for your use.
- 10 Swindoll, *David*, p. 57.
- 11 Robert D. Bergen, *1, 2 Samuel in The New American Commentary*, E. Ray Clendon, ed., vol. 7 (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1996), p. 201.
- 12 Joe O. Lewis, *Layman's Bible Book Commentary*, vol. 5 (Nashville: Broadman, 1980), p. 51.
- 13 *The Complete Word Study*, p. 2373.
- 14 John MacArthur, ed., *The MacArthur Study Bible* (Nashville: Word, 1997), p. 406.
- 15 Bergen, *1, 2 Samuel*, p. 203.
- 16 MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible*, p. 406.
- 17 Alan Redpath, *The Making of a Man of God* (Old Tappan, N.J.: Fleming H. Revell, 1962), p. 36.
- 18 Ivor Powell, *David, His Life and Times* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1990), p. 49.
- 19 Robert J. Morgan, *Nelson's Complete Book of Stories, Illustrations, and Quotes* (Nashville: Nelson, 2000), pp. 228-233.
- 20 Charles R. Swindoll, *David, A Man after God's Own Heart* (Fullerton: Insight for Living, 1988), p. 36.
- 21 Inrig, *Quality Friendship*, p. 23.
- 22 Powell, *David*, p. 52.
- 23 James M. Boice, *Psalms, vol. 1* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994), p. 315.
- 24 C. H. Spurgeon, *The Treasury of David, vol. 1* (Nashville: Nelson,), p. 170.

