

The Establishment of the Kingdom

Stage Two of Five Stages

Intermediate Notes
13-14 Years

Christadelphian Sunday School Association
www.cssa.asn.au

15. RUTH

“Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God”

READING Ruth 1-4

OBJECTIVE

As a result of learning about Ruth, you will understand the importance of loyalty in your relationship with God, with your family, and with your friends.

BACKGROUND

The story of Ruth is set in Bethlehem during “the days when the judges ruled” (1:1). The book of Ruth tells a story of loyalty, of steadfast faith, of diligence and generosity, richly rewarded by the God of Israel. It is a story of love, and is divided into four chapters which can be headed:

- Ch.1 Love’s Resolve - Ruth chooses not to leave Naomi
- Ch.2 Love’s Response - Ruth’s faithful service
- Ch.3 Love’s Request - Ruth’s tender appeal to Boaz
- Ch.4 Love’s Reward - Boaz takes the part of the redeemer and Ruth becomes a wife and mother of the kingly line.

MOAB AND DEATH

Ruth 1:1-5

At some point during the times of the judges a famine gripped the land. Beth-lehem, “the house of bread”, was empty of food. Elimelech, a resident of Bethlehem, abandoned his inheritance, and went to live in Moab with his wife Naomi and his two sons, Mahlon and Chilion (1:1-2). The following years were full of tragedy for Naomi. First her husband died (1:3). Her sons then married Moabite women, Orpah and Ruth(1:4), “strangers from the covenants of promise”, in direct contravention of a clear commandment (Deut.7:3-4). There were no children from either marriage(1:4). Then her sons died, and she was left with her two daughters in law.

RETURNING FROM EXILE

Ruth 1:6-22

Then came some good news. The famine had broken: “Yahweh had visited his people in giving them bread” (1:6). Naomi determined to return, and her daughters-in-law accompanied her loyally. But Naomi’s mind was working. She could see no point in these women leaving their home to go with her. She reasoned that they had a better chance of starting again if they stayed in Moab. With a prayer for their future happiness, she urged them to return to their parents, and kissed them goodbye (1:8-9). Upset at the thought of separation, they insisted on returning with her (1:9-10). But Naomi argued with them, “why will you go with me?” She had

no more sons to be their husbands (1:11-13). The logic was too powerful for Orpah, and she sadly said goodbye and left (1:14). But Ruth would not go, even when Naomi encouraged her to follow (1:15). Her mind was made up. “Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: Yahweh do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me” (1:16-17).

It was a wonderful confession of loyalty and love. Ruth had every reason to follow Orpah because Naomi could offer her nothing. She would even face racial prejudice and religious discrimination, for the Law prohibited Moabites from participating in Israel’s worship (Deut.23:3). She could look forward only to a lonely existence in poverty. But she had two powerful reasons for staying with Naomi: her selfless love for the ageing woman, who had suffered so much; and she had learnt from her to trust in Yahweh, the God of Israel. She would not, like Orpah, return to her people, and to her gods.

When Naomi saw how determined Ruth was, she stopped trying to persuade her; and they continued on their journey.

PRINCIPLE FOR LIVING - LOYALTY

Ruth had many admirable qualities. But it was her loyalty to Naomi, and to Naomi’s God that made the story of Ruth possible. What can we learn?

1. Loyalty is not self-centred. Ruth was prepared to remain with Naomi, even when there was no hope of a husband for her, even when she had to leave behind all that was familiar, including her family, her homeland and her religion (Ruth 1:15; 2:11). Loyalty means forgetting about what we can get out of a relationship, and focusing on what we can put into a relationship. Loyalty means recognising and meeting the needs of other people, not our own needs. This may require great sacrifices on our part, as in Ruth’s case.
2. Loyalty means supporting people whatever the circumstances. Ruth did not know what to expect when she reached Bethlehem. She would go wherever Naomi went, and live wherever she lived (Ruth 1:16). When followers of Christ wanted to go with him wherever he went, Jesus warned them that he had no place to call home (Matt.8:19-20). Loyalty to God means continuing to be faithful even when our lives are unhappy and unfulfilling, or when we face terrible pressures. “He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved” (Matt.24:13).
3. Loyalty is for life. Nothing would come between her and Naomi except

death itself (Ruth 1:17).

4. God will reward loyalty. Boaz prayed that God would give Ruth “a full reward” (Ruth 2:12), and the story records how God did just that. Those who share the difficulties of life with their Master will enjoy all the wealth of his kingdom (Matt.19:27-30; Rev.2:10).

RUTH SETS TO WORK

Ruth 2

Naomi's arrival back at Bethlehem brought a lot of attention. Tragedy had come upon her and she insisted that they call her 'Mara', meaning 'bitterness', instead of 'Naomi', meaning 'pleasant' (1:19-21). She had left with much and returned with nothing.

'When I left, I had everything,' she said: 'Now look at me'. But Ruth was determined to make the most of the situation. It was the middle of spring, "the beginning of barley harvest" (1:22). Barley was the staple grain of the poor. The Law commanded harvesters not to reap the corners of their fields, and not to pick up any stalks they might accidentally drop in gathering the sheaves but leave them for the poor and the stranger (Lev.19:9-10).

Ruth offered to go and glean in the fields around Bethlehem (2:2), picking up the occasional stalks the harvesters might drop. By God's providence she began in a field belonging to Boaz, a relative of Elimelech's. Boaz came to see how the harvesters were doing. "Yahweh be with you," he greeted them; "Yahweh bless thee", they replied. Boaz was a godly man, and that is how he ran his business.

He noticed Ruth working in the field and he asked after her, to find that she was Naomi's daughter in law. Boaz encouraged her to stay in his field, where she would be safe. Ruth was overcome with this unexpected kindness. "Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldst take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?" (2:10). Boaz told her that he had heard how much she had done for Naomi, and how she had like Abraham before her, left all that was familiar. "Yahweh recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of Yahweh God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust" (2:12). God Himself would care for her, and see that her faithfulness and kindness were richly rewarded.

He even instructed his harvesters to drop handfuls of grain in her path on purpose. At the end of the day Ruth had gathered about an ephah of barley (2:17) - 22 litres of grain. On returning home. Naomi asked, "Where hast thou gleaned to day? And where wroughtest thou?" (2:19). "The man's

name with whom I wrought to day is Boaz”, said Ruth. Naomi could not have been more pleased. “Blessed be he of Yahweh”, she exclaimed, “who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead . . . The man is near of kin unto us, one of our next kinsmen” (2:20). Naomi advised her to continue working in Boaz’s fields. She did, working through the barley harvest and until the end of the wheat harvest (v.23).

BOAZ IS ASKED TO MARRY RUTH

Ruth 3

In the meantime Naomi turned her mind to a longer-term solution for Ruth’s situation. The Law provided for the situation where a man died without children and his name was in danger of being forgotten, and his inheritance falling into the hands of others. It was the responsibility of a close relative to marry his widow, and produce children to take over his inheritance (Deut.25:5-6). This man was called the ‘redeemer’.

As a near relative, Boaz was in a position to take on these responsibilities. As Ruth listened, Naomi unfolded her plan. The first step was Ruth’s personal preparation: “Wash thyself...and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee” (Ruth 3:3). The next step was to find Boaz. Naomi knew where he would be. After harvest, Boaz would sleep in the threshing



floor. Naomi instructed Ruth to wait until Boaz had laid down to sleep, then lift the blanket that covered his feet, and lie down at his feet. After that, Boaz would take charge: “he will tell thee what thou shalt do”.

Ruth respectfully agreed to follow Naomi’s suggestion: “All that thou sayest unto me I will do” (v.5). She found the place, and when Boaz was asleep lay down. At midnight, a sudden panic gripped Boaz. Somebody was there at his feet! He sat up. In the moonlight he could see that it was a woman (v.8). “Who art thou?” he asked in surprise. He was even more surprised when he heard the response. “I am Ruth, your maidservant. Take your maidservant under your wing, for you are a close relative” (3:9, NKJV).

Boaz was delighted. “Blessed be thou of Yahweh, my daughter: for thou hast shewed more kindness in the latter end than at the beginning” (v.10). He was more and more impressed with the wonderful personal qualities of this young Moabite woman, and he agreed to do as she had asked. There was however a closer relative than himself, and he must give first

opportunity to the other man. But he would sort it all out in the morning. Early in the morning, while it was still dark, he sent Ruth on her way, heavily loaded down with yet more barley. Ruth told Naomi everything; and Naomi, confident in the reliable character of Boaz, knew that it would be sorted out that very day.

BOAZ REDEEMS RUTH

Ruth 4:1-12

Boaz went to the town gate, and took his seat. The gate was the place where business was done, law was enforced, and community decisions were made. Eventually the near relative came by. Boaz called him over, together with ten other men, who would act as witnesses.

First, Boaz spoke about Naomi's land. "Naomi, that is come again out of the country of Moab, selleth a parcel of land, ... If thou wilt redeem it, redeem it: but if thou wilt not redeem it, then tell me, that I may know: for there is none to redeem it beside thee: and I am after thee"(4:3-4). The man agreed to buy the land - but he quickly regretted his decision, for Boaz also told him that with the land came Ruth the Moabitess, and he must marry her also.

While the nearest kinsman would have bought the field, he did not want to take Ruth for his wife. He already had a wife and family. His decision was an opportunity for Boaz. He turned to the elders and said, "Ye are witnesses this day, that I have bought all that was Elimelech's...Moreover Ruth the Moabitess have I purchased to be my wife" (vv.9-10). Despite Ruth's foreign origin, the people gladly endorsed his decision. Her many virtues were the talk of the town (3:11). They added their prayer for God to bless the marriage: "Yahweh make the woman that is come into thine house like Rachel and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel" (4:11-12).

THE GREAT GRANDMOTHER OF DAVID

Ruth 4:13-22

Boaz and Ruth were married, and a son was born, named Obed. Naomi's life had taken a permanent turn for the better, and her friends were delighted to see the change in her. God had blessed her with a relative who was prepared to redeem her, and this was the happy outcome. The grandchild would be "a restorer of thy life, and a nourisher of thine old age", they prophesied.

The story of Ruth finishes with the genealogy of David. Two wonderfully faithful women are included in this story. Boaz was the son of Rahab; and Obed was the son of Ruth. So then Boaz begat Obed, Obed begat

Jesse, and Jesse begat David the king of Israel (Matt.1:5-6). So Ruth was rewarded for her loyalty, her faith, her care and her diligence. And many hundreds of years later, Jesus Christ was born into her line. She was indeed a worthy ancestor.

BASIC BIBLE TEACHING - THE REDEEMPTIVE WORK OF CHRIST

Not only does the story of Ruth have important things to say about our attitudes to God and to each other, it also foreshadows God's work in redeeming us from sin and death through Jesus Christ:

- ❑ Orpah and Ruth represent those Gentiles who hear the gospel. Orpah is discouraged by God's requirements of separation, and turns her back on the promises of God.
- ❑ Ruth represents those who cling to the God of Israel and His people Israel. These are delighted to receive the free gift of God, through His Redeemer, which is far more abundant than anything they can achieve by their own labours! (Rom.6:23). As for redemption, they must wait for him to act (cp. Ruth 3:18); just as we wait for the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.
- ❑ Boaz means 'strong one', and he is a type of our redeemer, Jesus Christ (Rom.5:6; 1 Peter 1:18-19), who seeks us for his bride (Eph.5:25-32). Although childless, he would "see his seed" (Isa.53:10).
- ❑ Like Ruth, we must prepare ourselves to marry our Redeemer by being washed from our sin (Rev. 7:14), and clothed with righteousness (Rev.19:8).

SUMMARY

- The book of Ruth tells a story of loyalty, of steadfast faith, of diligence and generosity, richly rewarded by the God of Israel.
- Apart from the powerful personal lessons that are in the story, we see in it further depth when we recognise that it foreshadows God's redeeming work in Jesus Christ, to save us from sin and death when we are utterly helpless to save ourselves, and desperately need His intervention. God calls on us to recognise and respond to His invitation: "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God and there is none else." (Isa.45:22).

FURTHER READING

The Story of the Bible, (H. P. Mansfield).

Ruth, in The Christadelphian Expositor, (H. P. Mansfield).

VERSE TO REMEMBER Ruth 2:12

PARAGRAPH QUESTIONS

1. *What attitude did Ruth show when she left Moab with Naomi?*
2. *What provisions did the Law make for those who were poor? How did Ruth respond to these opportunities?*
3. *What lessons can we learn from Ruth's attitude to Naomi?*
4. *How is Boaz like the Lord Jesus Christ?*

ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. *Describe Ruth's attitude to Naomi and how she was finally rewarded. What do we learn from this?*
2. *Describe how Boaz redeemed Ruth and how we can be redeemed by the Lord Jesus Christ.*
3. *What have you learned about loyalty from the story of Ruth?*





A series of horizontal dotted lines spanning the width of the page, intended for handwriting practice. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across most of the page's width.

16. SAMUEL: THE FIRST OF THE PROPHETS OF ISRAEL

READING 1 Samuel 1-3

OBJECTIVE

From Samuel's life we learn how important is an early training in the Truth. An appreciation of God's ways in youth develops us into godly characters who can give honour and glory to God.

BACKGROUND

It was said of Samson that he would "begin to deliver Israel out of the hands of the Philistines" (Judges 13:5), but it was left to the ministry of Samuel to complete this work. The period of the Judges was now past and through Samuel, God brought about the transition from the chaos of the Judges when "every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judges 21:25) to the establishment of the Kingdom of God with David as king. It was Samuel, who, as God's messenger, prepared the way for Yahweh's anointed.

At this time Eli was the High Priest and his two sons Hophni and Phinehas served in the tabernacle. In their wickedness they corrupted the tabernacle service.

THE BIRTH OF SAMUEL

1 Samuel 1

Elkanah, a Levite of Ramah went yearly to worship at the tabernacle in Shiloh. With him went his two wives: Peninnah and her children, and Hannah who was childless (1 Sam.1:3-5). Hannah was deeply unhappy because she was had no children, yet despite that Elkanah loved her dearly. It has always been a cause of great sorrow for a woman not to have children, but Elkanah tried to comfort his wife with his own love, saying, "Am not I better to thee than ten sons?" (v.8). To add to her anguish, Peninnah mocked her and deliberately tried to upset her. So the family excursions to the Tabernacle, which should have been happy, were very trying times for Hannah. Yet she was a faithful woman and God was not unmindful of her suffering.

On one occasion, in great sorrow, Hannah wept and poured out her heart to God (v.10). As she prayed, she made a vow, that if God gave her a son she would "give him unto Yahweh all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head" (v.11). This was quite an amazing thing, for here was Hannah, desperate for a child of her own, vowing that she would

be prepared to part with a son and give him back to God as a Nazarite! As Hannah poured out her heart, she did not speak yet her lips moved. Eli the High Priest mistook this for drunkenness but when he rebuked her Hannah replied: “No, my lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit: I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before Yahweh” (v.15). Hannah left the tabernacle with the blessing of Eli that God would grant her desire. Believing him, she “did eat, and her countenance was no more sad” (v.18).

In process of time she conceived and bare a son whom she named Samuel - “asked of God” - because God had heard her. Hannah followed her vow and did not appear again in Shiloh until the child was weaned and could be given to Yahweh’s service “all the days of his life” (1:11). They understood that they would only have him for a short time, so it was important that they instruct him from an early age to love and respect God. No doubt when Hannah left her little son at the Tabernacle it caused her considerable personal heart-ache, for they had only spent a few early years together. But this was what she had vowed and she had no regrets: “For this child I prayed; and Yahweh hath given me my petition which I asked of him: Therefore also I have lent (margin “given”) him to Yahweh; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to Yahweh” (v.28).

THE EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF SAMUEL

Having trained Samuel in the ways of God, Hannah had confidence in Yahweh and was therefore able to leave Samuel in the care of Eli; even though she knew that his sons were an evil influence amongst the nation, even in the very worship of Yahweh. Hannah is a remarkable example of faithfulness, prayer and heartfelt gratitude toward God. Her prayer in chapter 2:1-10 demonstrates:

- ◆ her reliance in the strength of Yahweh to uphold the faithful - “he will keep the feet of his saints” (v.9).
- ◆ her belief that the power of flesh shall be overthrown - “for by strength shall no man prevail” (v.9).

CONTRAST OF FAMILIES

The record of 1 Samuel 2 contrasts two families in the ecclesia; the son of Elkanah and Hannah, contrasted with the sons of Eli.

- ◆ Samuel faithfully ministered in the tabernacle under the guidance of Eli (1 Sam.2:18).
- ◆ Hophni and Phinehas corrupted the worship of God to the point where “men abhorred the offering of Yahweh”, “they knew not Yahweh” (2:12-17).

PRINCIPLE FOR LIVING - VALUE OUR GODLY UPBRINGING

Yahweh commanded Israel that they were to instruct their children in the Law every day. Our parents try to develop a love and reverence for Yahweh in us just as Solomon advised, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Prov.22:6). Samuel's childhood is a strong contrast to the behaviour of the sons of Eli.

- ◆ The sons of Eli despised their father as well as service of God and brought shame on their father.
- ◆ Samuel was trained by his parents so that he would be a Nazarite "all the days of his life" (1:11).
- ◆ Samuel did remain faithful to the vow and he showed a great readiness to hear Yahweh's word. Like Samuel we can "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth".
- ◆ Samuel trusted in God and was not affected by the wickedness of Eli's sons.
- ◆ Samuel was affected by his godly upbringing to grow in God's way "And the child Samuel grew on, and was in favour both with Yahweh, and also with men." (2:26). Samuel's amazing aptitude for his training foreshadows the similar character of Jesus who as a youth also "increased in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and man" (Luke 2:52).

JUDGEMENT ON THE HOUSE OF ELI

1Samuel2:22-36

Eli had failed to effectively discipline his sons. As a result of their wickedness God decided that:

- ◆ Eli's family line would be cut off (v.31)
- ◆ Israel, God's inheritance, would be invaded by a powerful enemy (v.32)
- ◆ Eli would know, by the death of his two sons in one day, that God would do this (v.34)
- ◆ God would raise up "a faithful priest... and he shall walk before mine anointed for ever" (v.35).

BASIC BIBLE TEACHING - A NEW ORDER OF PRIESTS

God said He would "raise up a faithful priest, that shall do according to that which is in mine heart and in my mind: and I will build him a sure house; and he shall walk before mine anointed forever" (2:35). This refers to when Christ, the "anointed" shall reign on earth with the "faithful" out of all generations who will become "kings and priests" with him (Revelation 5:9-10). The immortal priests of the kingdom are called the "sons of Zadok" (Ezek.44:15). This is built typically on Zadok "the Just One" who ministered in the Temple of Solomon, the "King of Peace" just

as the future priests shall be with the Lord Jesus, the Prince of Peace within the Temple at Jerusalem.

THE WORK OF SAMUEL

1 Samuel 3; 7:15-17

As a child, Samuel was in the Tabernacle ready to hear. We know the story how one night God called Samuel. Thinking it was Eli calling, he “ran” (v.5) to see what the old priest wanted. Eli eventually realised that it was God who had called. So Samuel was ready the next time to respond to the divine message “**Speak; for thy servant heareth**” (v.10).

Samuel grew to manhood and learned God’s ways: “And Samuel grew and Yahweh was with him, And all Israel... knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of Yahweh” (vv.19-21).

- ◆ Samuel was both **judge** and **prophet**. Each year he would go on a circuit between Bethel, Mizpeh and Ramah. When he rebuked and warned, the people listened and changed their ways (7:3-6).
- ◆ Although not of the priestly line, he acted as a **priest** because part of his role was to offer sacrifices and offerings (7:9; 10:8).
- ◆ He was a **great man of prayer**.

In later years, David and Samuel worked together on preparing the details of the Kingdom of Israel especially the temple and the worship (1 Chronicles 24-27).

SUMMARY

- Hannah vowed, if she had a son, to give him to the service of Yahweh “all the days of his life”. So Samuel was a Nazarite from birth and honoured his mother’s vow.
- Samuel was totally dedicated to the service of Yahweh. His mother Hannah brought him to the Tabernacle after he was weaned and Eli the High Priest taught him in the worship of Yahweh.
- Samuel grew in his knowledge and understanding of the ways of Yahweh so that everyone knew that he “was established to be a prophet of Yahweh”.
- The wickedness of the House of Eli in their corruption of the worship of God brought the severest condemnation upon them.
- Following the removal of the house of Eli, Samuel acted as both Prophet and Priest throughout the nation making a circuit as he taught the people the ways of Yahweh.

FURTHER READING

The Ways of Providence, p.94. (R. Roberts)

The Story of the Bible pp.274-299. (H.P.Mansfield)

PARAGRAPH QUESTIONS

1. *Describe the faithful way in which Hannah sought a son from Yahweh.*
2. *What lessons do we learn from the training of Samuel, which commenced from a very young age?*
3. *Why did God reject Eli's priesthood?*
4. *Summarize the different aspects in the work of Samuel.*

ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. *Describe the training of Samuel and make a comparison with the training we should receive in our youth. Include in your answer the contrast made with Eli's sons.*
2. *How was Samuel successful in turning the hearts of the people to Yahweh?*



A series of horizontal dotted lines spanning the width of the page, intended for handwriting practice. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across most of the page's width.

17. SAUL: ISRAEL'S FIRST KING

“We will have a king over us: that we also may be like all the nations”

READING 1 Samuel 8 to 12

OBJECTIVE

Saul's sad life teaches us how important it is to take care in understanding what the will of God is; and then to follow His ways, putting aside our own will and what we think is sufficient to please Him.

BACKGROUND

Samuel brought about a period of peace in the nation unknown since the days of Joshua some 400 years before. When he was old he made his sons judges, however they did not walk in his ways, taking bribes and corrupting judgment (1 Sam.8:3).

MAKE US A KING

1 Samuel 8

The people loved Samuel but they were upset that his sons did not walk in his ways. So they came up with a solution for a successor to Samuel “make us a king to judge us like all the nations” (v.5). Samuel prayed to God about it but God revealed that their rejection of Samuel was actually a rejection of Yahweh himself “they have rejected me that I should not reign over them” (v.7). Like them we must not lose sight that Yahweh is our God and **King**. He alone with lovingkindness can guide and protect us if we are willing to obey Him.

THE CHOICE OF A KING

1 Samuel 9-10

God had determined beforehand that at the right time He would appoint a king to rule over them (Gen.35:11; 49:10; Num.24:7). Yahweh had made a provision for the appointment of a king in the Law of Moses (Deut.17:14-20). The error of the people was that they had taken this into their own hands -

- ◆ they had not waited for God to introduce the king
- ◆ their motive for desiring a king was wrong
- ◆ the qualities they wanted in a king were not the qualities God would choose.

God gave them a king after their own desire (Acts 13:21). Their desire was for a king who could lead them in battle. They wanted a champion warrior (1 Sam.8:20). Saul the son of Kish was appointed to rule the nation. He was the son of “a mighty man of power”, “a choice young man, ... from his shoulders and upward he was higher than any of the people”

(1 Sam.9:1-2). Just the sort of man the people would have to rule over them. God gave them just what they wanted.

We first read of Saul when he was out looking for the lost asses of his father (9:3). Saul and his servant searched for three days without finding them, and their search took them to the city where Samuel was staying. Samuel had been informed by God of Saul's coming and his appointment as king (v.15-17), and also that his father's asses had already been found (v.20). The family of Saul were well respected in Israel, and Yahweh gave the people their choice of a ruler and commanded Samuel to anoint Saul as their king (10:1).

Samuel gave Saul three signs to confirm his appointment as Israel's king.

- ◆ two men would meet them and tell them that his father's asses were found (10:2).
- ◆ three men going on their way to Bethel would greet him and give him two loaves (10:3-4).
- ◆ a company of prophets would meet him on the way, prophesying, and he would prophesy too (10:5-6).

These signs would indicate that God was with him (v.7). He would be successful as a king only if he listened to God's word and followed God's advice.

⇒ **How did Saul respond to Yahweh's help?**

Saul was never able to give himself wholly to the things of God. This reluctance was shown immediately he returned home; for when his uncle Abner questioned him concerning what Samuel had said, he did not say anything about the "matter of the kingdom" (10:14-16). He had not allowed the signs Samuel had given him to develop a confidence in the role he had been called to. This was to be the unfortunate weakness in his life as a king.

PRINCIPLE FOR LIVING - MAKE GOD A REALITY

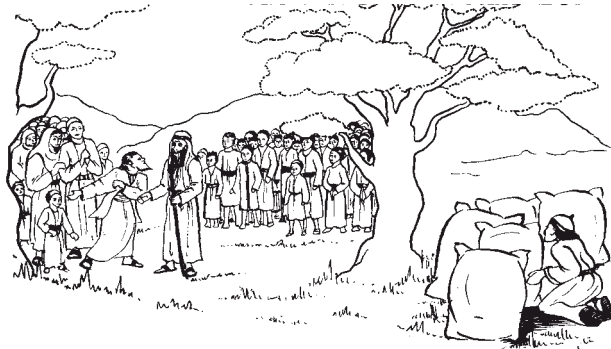
The word of God is designed to change us for the better. It really is the words of God to men! So we must read our Bible every day (Deut.6:6-7). As we do, picture the events as happening to real people like ourselves; take note of the lessons God wants us to learn; and take the wonderful men and women of faith as examples to follow.

There is often a difference between man's choice and God's choice, between man's ways and God's ways (Isaiah 55:8-9). We must learn to separate from our own ways and follow God's ways; for only then will He be a reality in our lives.

PRESENTATION OF THE KING

1 Samuel 10:17-27

Samuel called the people to Mizpeh to present their king to them (v.17). Saul however could not be found as he was hiding among the stuff (v.22). It seems that he was reluctant to accept this great responsibility. The people, however, were impressed with what they saw - "there is none like him among all the people", Samuel said (v.24). Just what they would have chosen themselves! "God save the king", was their spontaneous shout. Samuel then explained the constitution of the nation under a king and recorded this in a book as a witness before Yahweh that the people had accepted the authority of the king. Then Samuel sent the people home. Some followed Saul while others despised him (vv.26-27).



EARLY SUCCESS OF KING SAUL

1 Samuel 11

⇒ *Could Saul have been a good king?*

In this chapter we have an incident immediately following his appointment that reveals that Saul was capable of being king, when he allowed the spirit of God to influence him. He fearlessly led the nation against the Ammonites who had besieged their brethren in the city of Jabesh-Gilead. He was completely successful in overcoming them. It was the spirit of Yahweh that had moved Saul to do this (v.6). He responded with great wisdom not only in the manner of the battle but later in refusing to punish those who had not come to the battle. His reasoning was that "**Yahweh** hath wrought salvation in Israel". It was on this basis that the people now accept him as their king. They rejoiced with sacrifices and peace offerings before Yahweh.

This incident demonstrated that Saul was capable of responding to the spirit of Yahweh in leading the nation as king. However, it proved to be a rare occasion in Saul's life. Later he sought to find his own solutions that brought suffering and heartache to the whole nation. For there also lay in his heart the evil characteristics of pride, stubbornness, jealousy and envy. On later occasions when his faith was tried under pressure these wicked traits came to the fore.

Self-interest and self-preservation caused him to disobey God's word and instructions. Because of his continual faithlessness Yahweh later removed him from reigning and raised up another, a man after His own

heart “which shall fulfil all my will” (Acts 13:22).

THE CONSEQUENCES OF CHOOSING A KING 1 Samuel 12

If the people had patiently waited for God’s will in the matter of establishing a king then so much of the evil and sorrow to come would have been avoided. Samuel revealed the displeasure of God at their impatient action (v.17). To demonstrate God’s displeasure, he prayed for a thunderstorm. A thunderstorm at that time of year was not normal, as it was the wheat harvest. Such a storm was clearly recognised as the work of God, who could also use His power to punish them if needed. They feared greatly and asked Samuel to pray to Yahweh for them.

Samuel told them that Yahweh would not forsake them, as it had pleased Him to make them His people. “Only fear Yahweh, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things He hath done for you. But if ye shall continue to do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king” (vv.20-25).

The end result of Israel’s wickedness is testified in their history and by the captivity of the Assyrian and Babylonian kingdoms.

BASIC BIBLE TEACHING - CHRIST THE KING

The prophets spoke of one to come, **the Messiah**, meaning God’s “anointed”. The apostles knew him face to face - “We have found the Messiah” (John 1:41).

- ❑ **This king was chosen for his godly qualities.** His character exactly matches the character of God (John 14:9). Therefore he is fit to be God’s representative and to rule for Him. David spoke of him, that “he that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God” (2 Sam.23:3); and “Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity: therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee ...” (Heb.1:8-9).
- ❑ This king was **anointed**, with the **Holy Spirit** at his baptism (Matt.3:16)
- ❑ Jesus Christ is the king whom God has chosen to be “King of Kings, and Lord of lords” (Rev.19:16), to reign over God’s kingdom for a thousand years (Rev.20:6). He will reign until all the enemies of God are destroyed, even death, “the last enemy” (1 Cor.15:25-26).

FURTHER READING

The Ways of Providence, Ch.14. (R. Roberts)

The Story of the Bible pp.303-312. (H.P.Mansfield)

PARAGRAPH QUESTIONS

1. *Why was Israel wrong in asking for a king? What personal lessons can we learn from Israel's desire for a king?*
2. *Why did the people of Israel want a king? Did they get what they wanted?*
3. *Describe how Saul responded at first to his appointment as king. Include his first success at leading Israel to battle.*
4. *Could Saul have been a good king? Why did he later fail?*

ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. *Describe the events leading up to Saul's elevation to the status of king. Begin from the time he set out in search of his father's asses.*
2. *Describe the reasons behind Israel's request for a king and show the result of Israel's impatient request. What is the lesson for us in this incident?*



A series of horizontal dotted lines spanning the width of the page, intended for handwriting practice.

18. YAHWEH REJECTS SAUL

“Behold to obey is better than sacrifice and to hearken than the fat of rams”

READING 1 Samuel 15

OBJECTIVE

To show that God expects total obedience; we cannot serve Him in whatever way we think.

BACKGROUND

When Israel were journeying through the wilderness, Amalek had attacked them at Rephidim and cowardly cut off the stragglers, “the feeble, the faint and the weary” (Deut.25:17-19). Joshua won a great victory over Amalek at that time but they were not completely destroyed and God said He would “blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven”. They were a wicked people, and were a challenge to Israel spiritually. Now the time had come for this to be carried out. Saul was given a command by God to go and destroy the Amalekites.

SAUL’S COMMISSION

1 Samuel 15:2-5

Samuel spoke to Saul and said “Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass” (v.3) The directions were very clear - Saul was to destroy everything. God knew that future generations of Amalek would continue their enmity against His people, so Saul was told to kill everyone. Saul immediately acted and gathered his army to go out against the Amalekites.

HIS FAILURE

1 Samuel 15:6-9

Saul and the people had a great victory. They destroyed all the people except Agag the King, and they kept “the best of the sheep and oxen, and all that was good” for themselves (vv.8-9). But God had clearly said “Destroy **all** that they have.” Whatever Saul’s motives were it was not what Yahweh had commanded. He had disobeyed God’s clear command.

SAMUEL IS SENT TO SAUL

1 Samuel 15:10-15

The word of Yahweh came to Samuel “It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king” (v.11). Samuel was so distressed that he cried all night, but in the morning he set off to find Saul. Saul had been to Carmel, and “set up a monument for himself” (v.12 RSV); and then gone on to Gilgal. Saul greeted Samuel enthusiastically: “Blessed be thou of Yahweh: I have

performed the commandment of Yahweh” (v.13). This was the direct opposite of what God had said to Samuel in the night - He said Saul had **not** performed His commandments (v.11). So Samuel queried why he could hear the sheep and oxen (v.14). “What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?” asked Samuel (v.14). Saul was ready with his answer: “...the people...”. Saul immediately blamed the people, and said **they** had spared the animals - to offer to Yahweh.



BASIC BIBLE TEACHING - SINCERITY AND TRUTH ESSENTIAL FOR SALVATION

There are two things essential for salvation (Josh.24:14; John 4:24):

- sincerity - worshipping God with the **right attitude**
- truth - worshipping God in the way **He commands**.

Even if Saul was sincere in saving the animals to sacrifice to Yahweh this was **not** what God had asked for. He needed to obey God’s clear instructions first. There are many good living people in the world today who sincerely do lots of good works. However without the knowledge of God’s truth and His requirements, all such actions are in vain.

“The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation” (Rom.1:16). However much good we do, there can be **no** salvation without a correct understanding of the Truth of God as laid out in the Bible. Remember Cornelius - very sincere, and did good deeds for the Jews, but he lacked the Truth, and Peter was sent to preach Christ to him. So it is not enough to be kind, loving people, and very sincere in our actions; we must have a full understanding of God’s commandments and obey them.

SAUL IS REJECTED

1 Samuel 15:16-33

Samuel gave Saul the clear cause of his failure. He was once “little in thine own sight” (v.17) but Saul had become lifted up in pride. God’s way didn’t really matter, he put his own interpretation on God’s instructions. Saul protested that he had obeyed and again blamed the people but he was deceiving himself. He was the king and the people were subject under him. Samuel replied, “Hath Yahweh as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of Yahweh? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice and to hearken than the fat of rams.” “Because thou hast rejected the word of Yahweh, He hath also rejected thee from being king”

(vv.22-23). There was no acceptable excuse for disobedience. Obedience to God's command is the most important thing, not some sacrifice we think God should be happy with. Eventually Saul's excuse was that he "feared the people" (v.24). Although he was head and shoulders above the people, he demonstrated no spiritual leadership that they could respect. Samuel had revealed an end to the reign of Saul. As he had rejected Yahweh's words, so Yahweh had rejected him from being king. As Samuel turned to leave, Saul caught hold of his cloak, and it tore in his hand (v.27). Just like the torn coat, God had torn the kingdom away from Saul (v.28). For the moment Saul acknowledged his sin and wanted to worship God with Samuel, that he might be honoured before all the people!

Again, man's opinion was important to Saul (v.30). Samuel now had a work to complete and a great lesson to teach Israel. King Agag was brought to him and the old prophet "hewed Agag in pieces before Yahweh" (v.33). Samuel carried out God's word in the sight of all the people.

PRINCIPLE FOR LIVING - OBEY

"Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams".

Saul was rejected because he did not obey God. There are other examples we can look at in Scripture.

- ◆ Cain brought an offering - but not what God had asked (Gen.4:3-5).
- ◆ David went to a great effort to bring up the Ark - but not how God had commanded (1 Chron.15:13; Num.7:9).

Both these men were sincere; but God's commands are quite specific, and we must obey them if we want to be saved. Baptism is the first act of obedience.

Obedience is so important that children are commanded to obey their parents, because this is how we learn to obey God (Eph.6:1-3). Obedience to parents is a commandment of God, therefore it is service to Him. It is a command with promise, so then obedience is recognised and rewarded by God. It is acceptable behaviour which demonstrates an attitude of respect for godly principles.

SAMUEL LEAVES SAUL

1 Samuel 15:34-35

Sadly, Samuel left Saul at this point, and did not see him again. Samuel was sad that Saul had been rejected - how different it would have been if only Saul had humbled himself to obey God's words. From this point Saul's life went downhill. God withdrew His spirit from Saul because he would not humble himself. "Thus saith the high and holy one that

inhabiteth eternity...I dwell...with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit” (Isa.57:15).

SUMMARY

- ➔ Saul was commanded to fight the Amalekites and utterly destroy them
- ➔ Saul and the people saved Agag the king, and the best of the sheep and oxen.
- ➔ God sent Samuel to Saul and rejected Saul from being king.
- ➔ Saul blamed the people and did what they wanted instead of obeying God
- ➔ We must read the Bible and obey God’s commandments exactly.
- ➔ Samuel killed Agag in front of all the people

FURTHER READING

Story of the Bible (H.P. Mansfield) pp.322-328

The Visible Hand of God (R. Roberts) ch. 23

The Man David (H. Tennant) pp.16-19

VERSE TO REMEMBER 1 Samuel 15:22

PARAGRAPH QUESTIONS

1. *What was Saul commanded to do by God to the Amalekites and why was he commanded to do this?*
2. *Finish the quote - “Hath Yahweh as great delight...”. Briefly explain this verse.*
3. *How was Saul punished for his failure to destroy the Amalekites?*
4. *Why are both sincerity and truth important for salvation?*

ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. *Tell the story of Saul’s battle with the Amalekites, commencing with Samuel’s instructions to him. What lessons do we learn from this?*
2. *Finish the quote: “Behold, to obey...” and explain the principle involved, and how it applies to us.*



A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing, starting from the pencil icon and extending across the page.

19. DAVID

“He chose David also his servant, and took him from the sheepfolds” (Psa.78:70)

READING 1 Samuel 16

OBJECTIVE:

To show how David was chosen by God to be the next king over Israel, and how Yahweh is more interested in our hearts, or character, than our external appearance.

BACKGROUND:

Saul was the type of king that the people would choose. The next king would be of Yahweh’s choice, “a man after His own heart” (1 Sam.13:14) and Samuel was sent to anoint him.

SAMUEL IS SENT TO BETHLEHEM

1 Samuel 16:1-3

Yahweh spoke to Samuel and said “How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel?” (v.1). Samuel obviously loved Saul and was very sad that God had rejected him. However it was time to anoint a new king - “Fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite” (v.1). Samuel was concerned that Saul would kill him if he heard he had gone to anoint a new king. So Yahweh told Samuel to take a heifer and sacrifice with the people.

God had chosen a man from the family of Jesse - a family that was very notable for its origins. Jesse had descended from Salmon and Rahab of Jericho; and then through Boaz and Ruth the Moabitess. From these descendants would come a royal line that would come down to the Lord Jesus Christ (Matt.1:1-6). God told Samuel He would tell him which of Jesse’s sons to anoint. Jesus Christ (Matt.1:1-6).

SAMUEL COMES TO BETHLEHEM

1 Samuel 16:4-5

When Samuel arrived in Bethlehem, the elders trembled and said “Comest thou peaceably?” (v.4). When a priest visited with a heifer it meant:

- ◆ Someone in the city had committed a murder and the murder needed to be found, or
- ◆ He had come to sacrifice a peace offering

Samuel said he had come “peaceably... to sacrifice to Yahweh”. He called them all to the sacrifice, along with Jesse and his sons.

JESSE'S SONS COME BEFORE SAMUEL

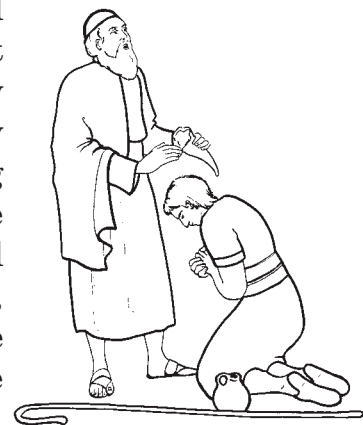
1Samuel16:6-10

First Eliab came before Samuel. He must have looked impressive because Samuel said “Surely Yahweh’s anointed is before him”. But not so, for Yahweh said, “Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him - for Yahweh seeth not as man seeth, for man looketh on the outward appearance, but Yahweh looketh on the heart”(v.7). Jesse called Abinadab, Shammah, and so on, seven sons one by one, but each time came the reply “Neither hath Yahweh chosen this” (v.8).

DAVID IS ANOINTED

1 Samuel 16:11-13

Samuel was puzzled. He asked Jesse if all his children were there. “There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold he keepeth the sheep.” David was so insignificant they hadn’t even bothered to call him. He was busy looking after the sheep - a job which was certainly preparing him, in God’s good time, for shepherding His people. Samuel insisted that David must be called before they could commence the feast. David came in and Yahweh immediately said “Arise, anoint him: for this is he” (v.12). God said “I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart” (Acts 13:22).



⇒ **What were the qualities that suited David to be the next king?**

- ◆ He was “a man after God’s own heart” (13:14) who spent hours meditating on the ways of God as he watched the sheep. He became a man of prayer from a very young age and wrote remarkable expressions of his spiritual thinking in the Psalms.
- ◆ Psa.78:70-72 says “He chose David also his servant, and took him from the sheepfold ... to feed Jacob his people”. In feeding the sheep he had learnt those qualities that would fit him for leading God’s people. He had learnt to lead the ewes with young, and look after the lambs. David showed great care and compassion for the nation over which he would reign.
- ◆ David developed a faith and trust in God which made him protective of his sheep. He was prepared to give his life for his sheep and boldly defended them against wild animals (1 Sam.17:34). He had the sort of faith needed to be king over God’s “sheep”, and would not panic when difficulties came, as Saul did.

Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him. He was now the anointed king and Yahweh's spirit came upon him (1 Sam.16:13). What a sad contrast with v.14 - the spirit of Yahweh departed from Saul. God will be with us while we seek Him. Under the Divine influence, David matured in God's ways, and his spiritual insight became sharper.

David was anointed three times, here in Bethlehem, and much later in Hebron and finally in Jerusalem. He was to wait many years until he became the king.

PRINCIPLE FOR LIVING - GOD LOOKS ON THE HEART

⇒ **What a contrast there is between the first two kings of Israel.**

- ◆ The people were impressed with Saul's appearance.
- ◆ God was impressed with David's character.

Samuel saw Eliab and thought he must be the next king because of his physical appearance. But God said no - He was not interested in physical appearance, but instead chose a man after His own heart. The Bible speaks of the "hidden man of the heart" and speaks against the "outward adorning" (1 Pet.3:3-4). God delights to see a beautiful character, fashioned by His Word. This is where our energy should be directed, in developing a mind that reflects the principles of truth in daily life.

Excessive attention to our physical bodies, the clothes we wear and the fashion accessories are all satisfying the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. They give glory to man at the expense of giving glory to God. In Isaiah 3:16-23 God says He will take away the outward show of the daughters of Zion. The apostle Paul warns us that physical exercise is of no value compared to the development of godliness (1Tim.4:8). So rather than being centered on what we **look** like, we need to concentrate on what we **are** like. As young people, it's very easy to become absorbed with our personal appearance, but really as Peter says "all flesh is grass" (1 Pet.1:24). We do wither as the years pass. But what survives? "... the word of the Lord endureth for ever" (1 Pet.1:25). We need to take that word into ourselves so that we will endure.

All of that doesn't mean it doesn't matter what we wear - the very things we choose to wear show what our thinking is like. Let our appearance reflect "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price" (1 Pet.3:4).

BASIC BIBLE TEACHING - MESSIAH or CHRIST - THE ANOINTED

David's anointing points forward to Messiah's (English "Anointed One"; Greek "Christ"). Under the Law both kings and priests were anointed to office (Lev.8:12) with oil which was a combination of pure olive oil and sweet smelling spices (Ex.30:23-25). Oil symbolises the spirit of God, which David received soon after his anointing (v.13). The oil was poured on the head to recognise the separation of that person to a special purpose. The oil in this context represents to us the Word of God which separates us for a special work (John 6:63).

In the fullest sense it is Jesus who is the Christ - the anointed one. Jesus was anointed with the spirit at his baptism (Matt.3:16-17); God said "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased". When Jesus was resurrected, God made him "both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36). He was "anointed" with immortality, and elevated to the Father's right hand: "anointed ... with the oil of gladness" (Heb.1:9). As God's anointed, he sits in heaven awaiting the time when he will return to reign over all the earth in the Kingdom of God.

DAVID COMES BEFORE SAUL

1 Samuel 16:14-23

As time went on, Saul became more and more morose and fretful. He knew God had left him, but he refused to humble himself and turn back to God. He became envious of others as he desperately tried to hold on to the throne. His servants, seeing the change in Saul, suggested he should find someone to play music to calm him. Saul agreed to this (v.17), and David was brought to the palace. At this stage it was unknown to Saul that David was to be the next king of Israel.

Notice the servants' comments in observing David: "cunning in playing, and a mighty valiant man, and a man of war, and prudent in matters, and a comely person, and Yahweh is with him" (v.18). What a great tribute to David's character. David brought the peace of God with him, and played the harp to quieten Saul's restless spirit. We read that Saul loved him greatly, and he became his armour bearer (v.21). David's nature was such that Saul was drawn to him, in spite of his wretchedness.

SUMMARY

- Samuel was told to stop mourning for Saul and go to Bethlehem to anoint the next king
- Jesse's eldest 7 sons were all rejected; David was called from the sheep to stand before him.

- Man looks on the outward appearance but God knows the heart.
- Samuel anointed David in the presence of all his brethren; so too Christ was anointed by God to be the king of the world.
- Saul could not humble himself to turn back to God, so his life went steadily downhill.
- We need to trust and have faith in God like David, then our lives will be a witness to the things we believe.

VERSE TO REMEMBER 1 Samuel 16:7

FURTHER READING

The Ways of Providence (R.Roberts) ch.15

The Visible Hand of God (R.Roberts) ch.23

The Story of the Bible (H. P. Mansfield) Vol.2 pp.330-333

The Man David (H.Tennant) pp.19-23

PARAGRAPH QUESTIONS

1. *Why did God send Samuel to Bethlehem to seek out the family of Jesse?*
2. *How does David's anointing point forward to Christ?*
3. *What were the qualities in David that made him suitable as the next king?*

ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. *Describe the events surrounding the anointing of David by Samuel, making reference to the lesson for us today.*
2. *Finish the quote: "Look not on his....." and explain its meaning for us today.*

DAVID	CHRIST
David was born in Bethlehem.	Christ (the son of David) was born in Bethlehem (Luke 2:4)
Samuel whose work parallels John the Baptist	He was revealed as Messiah by John the Baptist (John 1:29)
David was a shepherd	Jesus is the Good Shepherd (John 10:11)
Prepared as a shepherd to lead God's people (Psa.78:70-72).	He would lay down his life for the sheep
David was least esteemed among his brethren.	Jesus' brethren did not believe on him (John 7:5).
David was anointed with the Spirit	Jesus was anointed with the spirit at baptism (Matt 3:16-17) and with immortality at his resurrection (Acts 2:36).



A series of horizontal dotted lines spanning the width of the page, intended for handwriting practice.

20. DAVID AND GOLIATH

“The Lord saveth not with sword and spear”

READING 1 Samuel 17

OBJECTIVE

This well-known story will show us how faith in God can help us overcome all obstacles and help us appreciate the ultimate victory of Christ over sin.

BACKGROUND

The Philistines had once again become oppressors of Israel in the time of Saul. They had even forbidden Israel to make their own instruments of agriculture or weapons (1 Sam.13:19-20). In time of battle there was neither sword nor spear amongst the people (v.22). The Philistines gathered their army together and sent out a challenge to Israel.

THE PHILISTINE CHALLENGE

1 Samuel 17:1-3

The Philistines were invading and conquering Israel as they went. Saul gathered the men of Israel together against the invasion. The two armies met at the Valley of Elah and each army camped in the mountains on opposite sides of the valley. A stalemate was reached, for neither side would leave their strong defensive position to descend into the valley and attack their enemy from beneath them.

GOLIATH, THE MAN OF FLESH

1 Samuel 17:4-11

Goliath, the Philistine champion, came forward with a challenge to solve the deadlock. He would fight any soldier of Israel in single combat to decide the battle. The nation of the losing warrior would then become the servants of the winning side (v.9). Goliath was a terrifying sight (v11): around 3 metres tall, with armour made of brass covering his body. His mighty cry struck terror in the hearts of the men of Saul’s army: “they were dismayed and greatly afraid” (v.11). Day after day for forty days he bellowed his challenge and scorn across the valley (v.16).

Saul, as king and champion of the people should have accepted the challenge. The people had said to Samuel: “...we will have a king over us. . . that our king may judge us, and go out before us and fight our battles” (1 Sam. 8:19-20). Where now was the king who stood head and shoulders above his people (10:23)? Even the mighty warriors among the troops of God were afraid to take up the challenge. In defying the armies of Israel Goliath had defied the God of Israel (v.26) but no one had the faith to go out and fight with Yahweh’s help.

⇒ **What does Goliath represent ?**

In this chapter the words “six” and brass” are used frequently in describing Goliath.

- ◆ He was “six cubits and a span tall” (v.4)
- ◆ He had six items of armour (vv.5-7)

His armour of brass included:

- ◆ his helmet
- ◆ his coat of mail
- ◆ greaves of brass on his legs
- ◆ a target of brass between his shoulders

His weapons were a spear and sword, with his shield carried by a shield bearer (v.7).

Both “six” and “brass” are symbols used of the flesh as the source of sin. Goliath represented the strength of the flesh and the power of sin which boasts itself against the ways of God.

DAVID COMES TO THE BATTLE

1 Samuel 17:12-37

Although David had played the harp in Saul’s presence, he was still too young to be part of Saul’s army and had returned home in the time of battle to care for his father’s sheep. Jesse again sent him back with food for his brothers (vv.17-18), and so at that time he heard the boastful challenge of Goliath (vv.23-25).

⇒ **How did David react to the challenge of Goliath ?**

David was ashamed that for forty days no one in Israel had dared to stop this “reproach”: “for who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?” (v.26). Eliab, his eldest brother, was angry when he heard David’s bold words. No doubt he was ashamed of his own cowardice and tried to hide behind a rebuke. But David’s heart was full of faith that his God would help him.

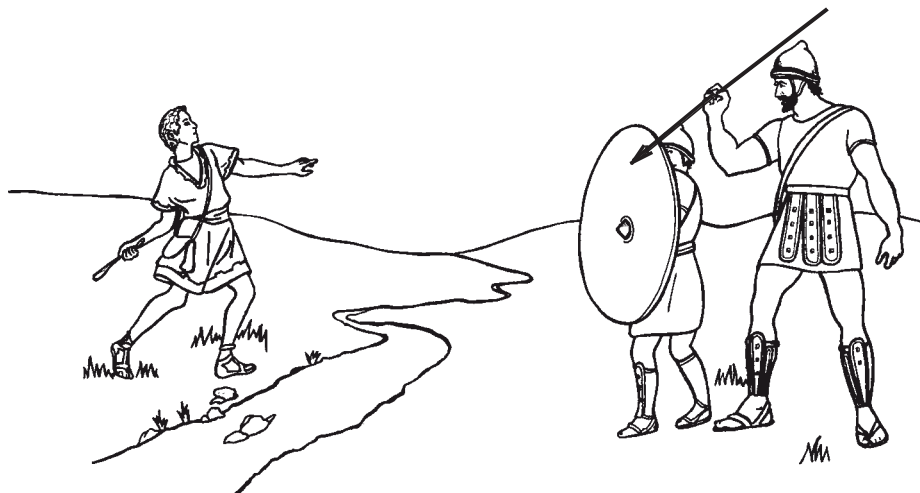
News of David’s words reached the ears of the king and he sent for him (v.31). “Let no man’s heart fail because of him.” David fearlessly announced: “thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine”(v.32). Saul thought that David had misjudged the situation. What chance had a mere stripling against such a warrior? To Saul it was a foolish offer. But it was Saul who had misjudged David’s God. Nothing is impossible with Him. David recalled that twice before Yahweh had helped him save his flock from the attacks of a lion and a bear - and this fleshly Philistine shall be as one of them (vv.34-36). Now with this attack on God’s “flock”, surely Yahweh would be with him again. David’s main concern was that this

man had dared to defy the living God of Israel and this insult must be wiped out. “Yahweh that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine” (v.37).

DAVID PREPARES TO MEET GOLIATH 1 Samuel 17:38-40

Saul made an attempt to prepare David for a man to man combat. He put his armour on David but this was not the weapons and armour he was used to. He had not proved them. The preparation needed for this contest was not to be in the strength of armour or weapons, for no human could conquer the power of this giant.

So David excused himself and set out in shepherd’s clothes to find Goliath. His confidence was in Yahweh, but he knew that he must play his part. Taking his staff and sling and five smooth stones out of the stream he drew near to the Philistine.



⇒ **What was David thinking as he went out to meet Goliath?**

In Psalm 144 (see Septuagint heading) we have the thoughts of David recorded as he went out to battle. Although he was probably only a little older than you, he was a young man of great spirituality. These were some of the ideas that came into his mind:

- ◆ It was Yahweh who would teach his fingers to fight (v.1), he would sling the stone, but Yahweh would be with him.
- ◆ Goliath, though a giant, was vanity and his days would pass as a shadow (v.4)
- ◆ He sought Yahweh to help him and deliver him from Goliath whose mouth spoke “deceit” (NASB) (vv.5-8).

- ◆ David would give all the praise to Yahweh (vv.9-10).
- ◆ There would be great blessings for Israel, when Goliath (and sin) was defeated (v.12-14).
- ◆ There was great happiness for him and his people because Yahweh was their God (v.15).

With this total reliance on Yahweh; how could David fail?

THE CONFLICT

1 Samuel 17:41-54

The champion could hardly believe his eyes as David came out. “Am I a dog that thou comest to me with sticks!... and he **cursed David by his gods**” (v.43). It was this issue alone which would decide the contest. It was not a struggle between one man and another, but between the power of the gods of the Philistines and the power of the living God.

David knew that God’s honour must be upheld and it was this that gave David the courage to fight: “Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of Yahweh of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied” (v.45). The Philistines must learn this and all Israel must acknowledge “that Yahweh saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is Yahweh’s and He will give you into our hands” (vv.46-47).

Goliath of Gath was now forced to meet the challenge. David ran to meet him. He chose a stone from his bag and, taking aim, struck the giant in the only exposed and vulnerable part of his body, his forehead. He crashed to the ground. David continued to run towards him, drew out Goliath’s own sword and killed him by cutting off his head (v.51). A great shout went up from the men of Israel. What a change of heart now as they chased the fleeing enemy down the valley killing and wounding them, and came back to collect the spoil from their tents.

Goliath’s monstrous head was eventually buried near Jerusalem. The site where sin itself was destroyed by the crucifixion of Christ was called Golgotha, which means **the place of “the skull”!**

BASIC BIBLE TEACHING: CHRIST’S VICTORY OVER SIN

David’s experiences make him a type of Christ. His contest with Goliath types, (or “acts out” as in a play), the contest between Christ and the power of flesh. “Flesh” is the Bible term for the mortal nature we bear, which is inclined to sin. Jesus had human nature the same as ourselves (Heb 2:14). “He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin” (Heb.4:15).

David struck Goliath in the head – the very place where thoughts of sin begin. It is in the mind where we determine to serve ourselves or serve God. In Rom.8:6-8 we have described the mind of the flesh and the mind of the spirit. The mind of the flesh is against God, so Jesus Christ gained the victory over sin in his mind.

In Jesus Christ, God's way of thinking always prevailed. He never allowed the natural thinking of the flesh to distract him from doing God's will. He overcame every temptation to sin (1 Pet.2:22). This is what was meant back in the Garden of Eden when it was said that the seed of the woman would bruise the head of the serpent (Gen.3:15). Christ overcame every thought that was not truth. His life was a victory over sin.

He was so convinced that God was right, that he submitted to everything God required of him, even to death by crucifixion. So **“for the joy that was set before him [he] endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God”** (Heb.12:2). The promised joy of being completely at one with his Father strengthened the faith of the Lord to overcome. In Christ's victory over sin, the way was opened for all those who are baptised into Christ to partake of the promise of life eternal (Mark 16:16; Gal.3:27-29).

PRINCIPLE FOR LIVING: THE WARFARE OF FAITH

We do not have to go out and fight a battle of the flesh like David did. But every day we have to go out and fight the battle against sin. We all know the feeling - “the good that I wish, I do not do: but I practise the very evil that I do not wish” (Rom.7:19 NASB). Sin is anything which is in opposition to God - and so often our thoughts are!

⇒ How can we learn from the victory over Goliath?

Because our warfare is fought in the mind our weapons are those of the spiritual warrior: “the whole armour of God” (Eph.6:13-17). Faith is our essential piece of armour: “Taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked” (Eph.6:16). Those “fiery darts” aim to destroy us, though we may not realise it. Our faith will be our defence. We need to follow the faith of the teenager David who believed that: “If God be for us, who can be against us?” (Rom.8:31). He believed it and demonstrated it in his actions.

We have the equivalent of a “Goliath” in the world about us with all its allurements. The world boasts of its might and human achievements. It provides a lifestyle that is for self satisfaction and fleshly appeal. Like

David we need faith to defeat it. Do we have the faith to say no to its offers of satisfaction of our lusts? Can we resist the temptation to be involved in immorality? When we get invited to night clubs, movie theatres and spectator sporting events do we have the courage to say no? We can only overcome by faith. “And this is the victory that overcometh the world even our faith” (1 John 5:4). We will only develop the faith that overcomes all by applying our minds to the word of God like David did. Daily meditation and prayer are essential in increasing our faith.

SUMMARY

- Saul and the men of Israel lacked the faith to go out and meet the Philistine warrior.
- It was the youth, David, who was able to trust in Yahweh to help him as He had in past experiences.
- David’s victory points forward to the great victory of Christ over sin.

REFERENCE LIBRARY

The Man David (H. Tennant) pp.24-32

The Story of the Bible (H.P.Mansfield) Vol. 2 pp.334-345

The Ways of Providence (R.Roberts) ch.15

The Historical Geography of the Holy Land (George Adam Smith)-1966 Ed., pp.160-162

PARAGRAPH QUESTIONS

1. *Describe the invasion of Israel by the Philistines and their challenge to Saul and his army.*
2. *What did Goliath and his armour represent?*
3. *Why did David respond quite differently from Saul and the rest of the army to Goliath’s challenge? What made David so confident that he could win?*
4. *What was the real issue in the contest between David and Goliath? Describe Goliath’s challenge and explain David’s words.*
5. *The contest between David and Goliath provides a principle that helps us in daily life. State and explain this principle.*

ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. *Tell the story of the actual battle between David and Goliath and explain:*
 - (a) *Why David would not wear Saul’s armour.*
 - (b) *The weapons David had both physical and spiritual.*
 - (c) *Goliath’s reactions to the challenge of David.*

21. DAVID AND JONATHAN

“And Jonathan spake good of David unto Saul his father”

READING 1 Samuel 18-20

OBJECTIVE

- ◆ To show us the basis of true and lasting friendship.
- ◆ To illustrate the evil of jealousy by looking at Saul’s attitude to David.
- ◆ To demonstrate how probation must go before exaltation.

BACKGROUND

Having defeated Goliath, and still carrying the head of the Philistine champion in his hand, David was taken to speak with Saul (1 Sam.17:57-58). The events of this lesson happened immediately after their conversation.

DAVID AND JONATHAN BECOME LIFELONG FRIENDS

1 Samuel 18:1-4

Jonathan was deeply affected when David displayed such absolute faith in God, in his victory over Goliath. This was the same faith and courage that Jonathan himself had shown on an earlier occasion when he single-handedly attacked a Philistine garrison (1 Sam.14:6). This basis of mutual trust and love of God formed one of the closest friendships in the Bible: “the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul” (1 Sam.18:1).

A short time later, Jonathan and David entered into a covenant of friendship. Jonathan gave David his royal robe, his armour, his sword, his special weapon of the bow, and his girdle (v.3). Though heir to the throne of Saul, he gave away those symbols of his right to the throne to David, recognising him as the anointed king. Jonathan acknowledged that God had prepared a person greater than himself to rule the people, and showed no envy or jealousy to Yahweh’s anointed; he “esteemed other better than himself” (Phil.2:3).



SAUL'S LOVE FOR DAVID TURNS TO HATE **1 Samuel 18:5-11**

With God's help, David went from strength to strength. Saul appointed David captain of his army. David was accepted by the army, the people and Saul's servants. No one seemed resentful or jealous of him (v.5) and, even "Saul loved him greatly" (1 Sam.16:21).

As David came home with the victorious Israelites, the women of Israel came out to meet them, dancing and singing, "Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands" (18:7). Samuel had made it plain to Saul that Yahweh would rend the kingdom from him and give it to a neighbour better than he (cp. 13:13-14; 15:28). The prophecies suddenly became more real. Saul put the words of Samuel together with the events before his eyes and came to a conclusion: "What can he have more **but the kingdom?**" (18:8). For years Saul had watched for the successor God said would come. Now he was more and more suspicious that it was David, the people's favourite.

Saul watched David from that day onwards (v.9). His love for David gradually began turning into hatred. As the thought that David would succeed him grew in his mind, Saul became more moody and tense. Saul quickly became very disturbed. As David played the harp to relieve Saul's depression, he suddenly lifted his javelin and hurled it at David, not once but twice (vv.10-11).

Jealousy of other people is an ungodly characteristic:

- ◆ "Jealousy is the rage of a man" (Prov.6:34)
- ◆ "Jealousy is cruel as the grave" (Song.8:6)

Jealousy is a result of discontentment, whereas "godliness with contentment is great gain" (1 Tim.6:6).

SAUL PLOTS DAVID'S DEATH **1 Samuel 18:12-30**

Regardless of these threats to his life, David remained loyal to the king and stayed in his court. David "behaved himself wisely" and it was clear that "Yahweh was with him"(v.14) and not with Saul.

⇒ **How could Saul get rid of David?**

Saul became so jealous of David that he made a plan whereby the Philistines would be David's executioners. The plan was to have David killed in battle. He offered David Merab, his eldest daughter, to be his wife, on the condition that he be valiant and "fight Yahweh's battles" (v.17). When sent to the battlefield, David defeated the Philistines instead of being killed. However when the time came for David to receive his

reward the marriage arrangement was dishonoured (v.19).

Then Saul discovered that his younger daughter Michal, loved David. Saul again plotted David's death by telling him that he could marry Michal if he slew 100 Philistines (vv.20-25). "Saul thought to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines" (v.25), but David slew 200 Philistines, and married Michal (vv.26-27). Saul's hatred increased as even in the most difficult circumstances, "David behaved himself more wisely than all the servants of Saul; so that his name was precious" (v.30 see margin). Note the number of times in this chapter that David's wise and godly behaviour is mentioned, which made him "highly esteemed" (v.30 RSV) by the people but was a cause of increasing fear in Saul.

Saul became a victim of his own pride. He refused to accept the will and actions of God. He knew that God was with David (v.12, v.28); but would not grant him any respect or honour. Pride had blinded his eyes, and he was the victim of envy (v.8), anger (v.11) and fear (v.29).

JONATHAN PLEADS FOR DAVID

1 Samuel 19:1-7

Saul revealed his feelings to Jonathan and to all his servants - "they should kill David" (v.1). Jonathan, as a true friend, immediately warned David. He needed an opportunity to reason with his father and persuade him that his treatment of David was unfair. He spoke earnestly to his father of David's loyalty and faithfulness. Saul listened and made Jonathan a promise: "As Yahweh liveth, he shall not be slain" (v.6). Such an oath before God was binding, but Saul was not one to keep his word. So David returned to the court (v.7) and for a while everything settled down.

PRINCIPLE FOR LIVING: THE VALUE OF TRUE FRIENDSHIP

The Bible tells us that both Saul and Jonathan loved David (1 Sam.16:21; 18:1).

- ◆ Saul's love however, was shallow and selfish and did not stand the test of trial. Saul loved David for what he could do for Saul. Saul loved David because of his soothing music, and his courage and ability in battle. However, true friends are those who like us for what we are, and what we believe, not what we can do for them.
- ◆ Jonathan's love for David was far different from Saul's. He knew David would be the future king, and was glad! He willingly stepped aside. The basis of true friendship is a common love for the things of God. It was this that broke down the barriers of age, wealth and rank between Jonathan and David. He was a genuine friend who demonstrated the attitude Paul speaks of: "Be kindly affectioned one

to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another” (Rom.12:10). As David found with Jonathan, true friends will not fail us in times of trouble. “A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.” (Prov.17:17).

Friends play a big part in our lives and they can influence us for good or evil. The friends we choose and the things that occupy our time should assist us to walk worthy before our God, and not hinder our development as disciples of Christ. The wrong friendships can be bad for us: “Do not be deceived: evil company corrupts good habits” (1 Cor.15:33 NKJV). We should choose friends in the Truth as our companions, and be able to say -”I am a companion of all them that fear Thee, and of them that keep Thy precepts” (Psa.119:63).

DAVID FLEES TO SAMUEL

1 Samuel 19:8-24

Saul’s hatred was becoming progressively worse. When David returned victorious from war, it was too much for the king. He again tried to kill David with his javelin, but David fled from his presence (vv.8-10). David went to his home, but Michal advised him to leave immediately, and he escaped down through a window. After this she hid an image in David’s bed. Saul sent men to David’s house to take him, but Michal pretended that David was sick in bed. They returned with instructions to take him anyway, only to find the image. Michal alleged that David had in the meantime threatened her life and so she had no alternative but to let him go (vv.12-17).

Meanwhile David fled to Samuel for comfort and instruction. They left the prophet’s home at Ramah and went to the school of the prophets at Naioth. But there was no peace for David there. When Saul learned of his whereabouts, he sent messengers to take David. But the Spirit of God stopped them and they began prophesying. Three times this happened to Saul’s men as God intervened to protect David. Then Saul went himself and the same thing happened to him as happened to his servants. Yahweh would not allow Saul to kill David.

COMFORT FROM JONATHAN

1 Samuel 20

David returned to Gibeah, and sought out Jonathan. He was amazed that Saul was so angry with him: “What have I done? ... What is my sin before thy father that he seeketh my life?” (v.1). Jonathan could not believe that his father would break his word and plan David’s death. David was convinced... “there is but a step between me and death” (v.3).

⇒ **How could they find out Saul's attitude to David?**

David suggested that they test Saul's attitudes. David would not attend the feast of the new moon with the excuse of attending a family feast at Bethlehem. Jonathan would assess his father's response to David's absence and let David know by the way he would shoot arrows in the field. Jonathan knew that David would be king and all he wanted was that David would continue to be kind to him and his children. On this basis they made a covenant between themselves (vv.14-17).

The test of Saul's attitudes went into operation. On the first day Saul assumed David was unclean. On the second day, Saul asked Jonathan why David wasn't there. Saul told Jonathan: "...send and fetch him unto me, for he shall surely die" (vv.30-31). Saul became so angry that he cast a javelin at his son! Jonathan left, burning with fierce anger (v.34). The following morning Jonathan followed the arranged sign. He shot his arrows long and David knew it was the signal to flee. Full of grief, the two friends parted, confirming the covenant they had made between themselves with God as their witness (v.42).

David was now an exile - fleeing from the hatred of the king. Only once again did David and Jonathan briefly meet when he sought to strengthen David as he fled from the army of Saul.

BASIC BIBLE TEACHING: FAITH IS TESTED IN TIMES OF TRIAL

In this period of David's life he faced great trials. But this was all in the knowledge and purpose of God.

⇒ **Why do people need such a severe testing of their faith?**

God could have created men as robots to do His will. However that would not have satisfied God's character or brought Him any honour. Instead He gave us **freewill**, so that we can **choose** to serve and obey Him. Such service is based on **love** and that is what God wants above all else, our love as a response to His goodness (Deut.6:4-5; Mark 12:29-30). God provides opportunities for us to demonstrate our faith and love. Character is developed when we are faced with situations which require us to choose right from wrong. God allows those circumstances and making the right choice glorifies God. The wrong choice is sin. So life is a refining process that purges out our bad characteristics, and brings out the image of Christ in characters that are being prepared for immortality.

God uses different circumstances to develop the characters of His people:-

- ◆ David the shepherd boy was being prepared for the highest honour as King of Israel (Psa.78:70-72).

◆ Even Jesus “learned obedience by the things which he suffered” (Heb.5:8).

No-one can enter the kingdom without trials - “we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God” (Acts 14:22).

SUMMARY

- ➔ Jonathan loved David for his godliness, and was content that it was God’s will that David should be king after Saul.
- ➔ Saul initially loved David; but became jealous of his popularity, and jealousy soon turned to hatred, and hatred to attempted murder.
- ➔ Jonathan remained true to David and was distressed that David had to flee from Saul’s presence to save his life.

PARAGRAPH QUESTIONS

1. *Describe the making of the covenant between David and Jonathan immediately after the killing of Goliath. Mention the basis for making the covenant, what Jonathan gave to David, and what they symbolized.*
2. *Describe the incident that first made Saul think David might be his successor as king and how it affected Saul.*
3. *Explain how the friendship of David and Jonathan gives us practical instruction on what type of friends we should choose.*
4. *Contrast the characters of Jonathan and Saul as revealed in their attitude to David.*

ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. *Describe how Jonathan and David tested Saul at the feast of the new moon to find out his real intentions concerning David, and the final parting of David and Jonathan.*
2. *Explain how faith is tested in times of trial. Give examples from the life of David of how his faith was developed.*



A series of horizontal dotted lines spanning the width of the page, intended for handwriting practice. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across most of the page's width.

22. DAVID IN EXILE

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble”

READING 1 Samuel 21-24

OBJECTIVE

To show how God cared for David all the time that Saul sought his life, because David trusted in Him. “And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee; for thou Yahweh hast not forsaken them that seek thee” (Psa.9:10).

BACKGROUND

David had been anointed as the king of Israel and his throne would be established when God was ready. David did not seek to take it for himself but waited on Yahweh. Saul had become so obsessed with killing David that he gathered his army together against him and chased David throughout the region of Judah.

DAVID FLEES FROM SAUL

1Samuel21-22:5

In fear of his life, David had to keep moving to avoid Saul and his army.

- ◆ David fled to Nob, a city of the priests, where he felt safe. The priest Ahimelech gave him bread and Goliath’s sword. But he was seen by Doeg the Edomite, a servant of Saul (v.7).
- ◆ David fled to the Philistine camp of Gath, the very home town of Goliath (v.10). David was recognised and immediately realised his mistake (vv.11-12). He made himself out to be a madman, so Achish the king threw him out (vv.13-15).
- ◆ David escaped to the cave of Adullam, where he was joined by 400 men. “Every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him” (22:2). David became their captain; but they were without David’s godly character.
- ◆ On the advice of the prophet Gad, David moved from the cave and hid in the forest of Hareth (v.5).

SAUL DESTROYS NOB

1Samuel22:6-23

Saul was consumed with self pity and accused his servants of conspiring against him, “There is none of you that is sorry for me” (vv.7-8). Doeg the Edomite stepped forward with an accusation that Ahimelech had helped David. He falsely accused Ahimelech of enquiring of God for him (vv.9-10). In Nob, Ahimelech assured Saul that he had no part in a conspiracy with David (v.15), but Saul was beyond listening to reason. In a rage he ordered

all the priests killed (v.16). His servants refused to carry out this command, except Doeg. He arose and slew 85 priests, and smote every man, woman, child and animal of the city (vv.18-19). Only Abiathar the priest escaped and fled to David (vv.20-22).

THE UNGRATEFUL MEN OF KEILAH **1 Samuel 23:1-12**

News came to David that the Philistines were robbing the people of Keilah, in Judah, of their newly gathered harvest. He did not act in haste but enquired of Yahweh, “Shall I go and smite these Philistines?” (v.2). When David told his men what he intended, they were afraid of adding to their present troubles by taking on the Philistines (v.3). So David again prayed for direction and God reassured him: “Go down to Keilah; for I will deliver the Philistines into thine hand” (v.4). David went with confidence and “smote them with a great slaughter” and took their cattle as spoil (v.5). Saul heard that David was now at Keilah. To him it was foolish of David to allow himself to be trapped inside a town, for towns have “gates and bars” where they could easily be captured. Saul even convinced himself that God was helping him to corner David and kill him (v.7).

Again David enquired of Yahweh. He was told that Saul would come to Keilah and that the men of Keilah would betray him into the hands of Saul. With the dreadful slaughter of the whole population of Nob, Saul was plainly stating his intolerance to anyone who supported David. This made the men of Keilah nervous about Saul’s approach (v.10-12). So David and his men departed from Keilah.

Perhaps David would have been justified in feeling angry towards the men of Keilah for their ingratitude. But walking in faith means that we must accept the problems of life:

“What glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God” (1 Pet.2:20).

IN THE WILDERNESS OF ZIPH **1 Samuel 23:13-18**

Although Saul did not go to Keilah (v.13), he continued his daily hunt for David, who had fled to the wilderness of Ziph. All Saul’s attempts came to nothing because God was protecting His chosen king (v.14). It would not have been easy for David. By now he had more than six hundred men to care for (v.13).

One brief encounter gave David great encouragement. While he was

hiding in a forest, Jonathan came to see him (v.16). How remarkable it was that Saul was searching everywhere for David and never found him but his trusted friend could. Jonathan's sole purpose was "to strengthen his hand in God" (v.16). They looked to the future, for they both believed the promises of God. "Fear not: for the hand of Saul my father shall not find thee; and thou shalt be king over Israel, and I shall be next unto thee; and that also Saul my father knoweth" (v.17). So the two friends parted, never to see each other again until the resurrection.

David wrote Psalm 54 in memory of this incident. Of Jonathan he wrote; "Yahweh is with them that uphold my soul" (Psa.54:4).

THE TREACHEROUS MEN OF ZIPH **1 Samuel 23:19-28**

The men of Ziph were eager to please Saul. They came up to Gibeah especially to tell the king that they knew where David was and offered to "deliver him into the king's hand" (v.20). Saul was grateful. "Blessed be ye of Yahweh", he said to them, but God was not in Saul's thoughts at all. Again in Psalm 54 David's thoughts are recorded "oppressors seek after my soul: they have not set God before them" (Psa.54:3). He asked them to monitor David's movements and report back when they knew his exact position (vv.22-23).

By this time David had moved again, to the wilderness of Maon (vv.24-25). On one occasion, David found himself on the opposite side of the same mountain as Saul (v.26). Just as Saul's men surrounded David, a messenger appeared with an urgent message for the king! "Haste thee, and come; for the Philistines have invaded the land!" (v.27). So Saul had to hastily return.

Here was the providential hand of God at work. Little did the Philistines know that their invasion at this critical time saved the future king of Israel. God intervened to bring about His purpose. David saw that God's hand had saved him and wrote of his gratitude and praise: "God is mine helper ... I will praise thy name, O Yahweh, for it is good. For he hath delivered me out of all trouble" (Psa.54:7).

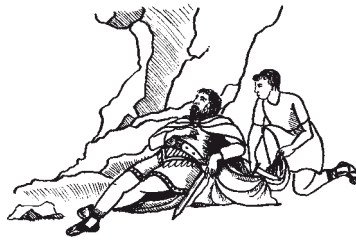
DAVID SPARES SAUL'S LIFE **1 Samuel 24**

When he had dealt with the Philistines, Saul continued hunting for David with the help of "three thousand chosen men out of all Israel" (v.2). Saul found out where David was and set out after him with his troops.

David kept on the move - travelling east from Ziph across to the edge of the

Dead Sea, to Engedi. Here among the rugged rocks, where the wild goats lived, were many large caves. As Saul and his army approached, David and his band of men hid in one of these huge caves. While they waited anxiously, Saul stepped into the very cave where they were hiding (v.3). What a moment! In the eyes of David's men here was a God-given opportunity to seize his enemy (v.4).

Saul did not see the men silently watching him from the dark depths of the cave. David crept forward and cut a piece off the robe of the unsuspecting king. Immediately David regretted what he had done (v.5). Returning to his men he said, "Yahweh forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, Yahweh's anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of Yahweh" (vv.6-7). With these words David put an end to any suggestion of harming Saul and they all waited till he left.



After Saul had walked away a short distance, David went out and called to him, "My lord the king". Amazed, Saul turned and found David, his enemy, bowing before him. Why, David asked, did the king take notice of men who said, "David seeketh thy hurt" (v.9).

DAVID'S DEFENCE

1 Samuel 24:10-15

David wanted to prove this was false and show the king that he had nothing to fear from him. So he spoke to the king in words of appeal:

- ◆ Yahweh delivered you into my hands in the cave and you were at my mercy (v.10).
- ◆ My men told me to kill you but I would not because you are Yahweh's anointed.
- ◆ I have evidence to show I could have killed you - see, here is part of your robe (v.11).
- ◆ This shows I have no evil intentions towards you, even though you want to kill me.
- ◆ I am as harmless to you as a dead dog or a flea (v.14).
- ◆ Let Yahweh judge what is happening between us and do what He thinks is right (vv.12,15).

Note the warm and beseeching tone of David's words as he addresses Saul - "my lord", "my father". David's words moved Saul deeply and he responded, "Is this thy voice, my son David?" Saul wept (v.16).

SAUL'S REPLY TO DAVID

1 Samuel 24:16-21

- David, you are more righteous than I, you showed me good when I showed you evil (v.17).
- Yahweh delivered me into your hands and you did not kill me - "if a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away?" (v.19).
- I know that you will certainly be king and the kingdom of Israel will be established in your hand.
- Promise me you will not cut off my descendants or destroy my name from my father's house.

David promised all that Saul wanted and they parted, Saul to his home, "but David and his men went up to the hold" (v.22).

⇒ **Why did David go back into hiding immediately and not return home with Saul?**

David knew what man was like and he did not trust that Saul had really had a change of heart. The rest of Saul's life shows us that he returned to his old feelings of hatred towards David. He had cut himself off from God and allowed pride and jealousy to eat away at his heart. His evil thoughts consumed him.

PRINCIPLE FOR LIVING: PATIENCE and SELF-CONTROL

David's action in the cave at Engedi is a wonderful example of patience and self-control.

⇒ **What made David able to resist the temptation to kill Saul?**

- ◆ He had the chance to end his life as a fugitive and seize the kingship God had promised him; but his faith prevented him from killing Saul. In the midst of strong temptation and the urging of his company he had to remind himself that God was in control. **Faith** made him see things from God's point of view.
- ◆ David's character was upright. He could not further his own ends by foul means. If God promises us something, then we must wait and be patient till He is ready to give it. It is not necessarily a matter of sitting idle, but any action we take must be upright and not break any of God's commands.

David has some good advice for us: "Rest in Yahweh, and wait patiently for him" (Psa.37:7). Paul tells us to be "patient in tribulation" (Rom.12:12). It is very hard to control ourselves when dealing with mean and spiteful people. We must resolve to honour God, for only then will we be able to control our actions and not do anything rash. It takes years of "patient continuance in well-doing" to develop a character pleasing to God (Rom.2:7). It takes seconds to destroy the work of a lifetime. "Self-

control” (“temperance” AV) is part of “the fruit of the spirit”, that is, it is a characteristic of one who has a spiritual mind (Gal.5:22-23). It is a quality of Jesus Christ.

SUMMARY

- David enquired of Yahweh and was told to go and help the men of Keilah from the Philistines. God revealed to him that the men of Keilah would prove treacherous, if given the opportunity.
- Saul sought David every day but only his friend Jonathan found him.
- When the men of Ziph helped Saul find David, God delivered him from the hand of Saul by sending the Philistines just at that moment.
- When David could have killed Saul at Engedi he did not; trusting that God would give him the kingdom in His due time.

REFERENCES

The Story of the Bible Vol.2, pp.365-372 (H.P.Mansfield)
The Ways of Providence, Ch.15-16 (R.Roberts)
The Man David , pp.46-66 (H. Tennant)
Elpis Israel, pp. 74-76 (J.Thomas)

VERSE TO REMEMBER 1 Peter 2:20

PARAGRAPH QUESTIONS

1. *Tell how David helped the men of Keilah and how God helped David escape from Saul again.*
2. *Describe how the men of Ziph helped Saul in his efforts to capture David and how God intervened.*
3. *Jonathan found David when he was in hiding. Tell what happened.*

ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. *Describe what happened in the cave at Engedi. Show how David used this occasion to try to persuade Saul that he had no thought of harming him.*
2. *David exposed himself to great danger at Engedi. Explain the lessons we learn from his attitude of patience and self-control.*



A series of horizontal dotted lines spanning the width of the page, intended for handwriting practice.

23. THE DEATH OF SAUL

“Saul died for his transgression which he committed against Yahweh, even against the word of Yahweh, which he kept not”

READING 1 Samuel 26-31; 2 Samuel 1

OBJECTIVE

This lesson shows us how Saul refused to obey the word of God. This brought shame upon himself and the nation of Israel. The story of Saul shows us a man forsaken by God because of his continued rebellion. We need to learn to trust and obey God. If we draw near to God, He will draw near to us (James 4:8).

THE MEN OF ZIPH - TREACHEROUS AGAIN **1 Samuel 26**

The men of Ziph betrayed David again by going to Saul with the details of David's present hiding place. Saul set out with his 3,000 chosen men, but again his plans came to nothing. The army of Saul had pitched camp for the night in the hill of Hachilah and David has a similar incident as at the cave of Engedi. David makes his way through the sleeping army right to the place where Saul lay.

Note the following parallels with the incident at the cave at Engedi.

We see:

- ◆ David's nephew Abishai wanting to kill Saul because of the chance God had provided (v.8)
- ◆ David refusing to kill Saul because he is Yahweh's anointed (v.9)
- ◆ David taking Saul's spear and water bottle as evidence that he could have killed Saul but did not (v.11)
- ◆ David calling out and reasoning with Saul (vv.17-20, 22-24)
- ◆ Saul admitting he had done wrong (v.21)
- ◆ Saul and David go their separate ways (v.25)

In despair, David felt forced to leave “the inheritance of Yahweh” (v.19) and come to a decision. “David said in his heart, I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul: there is nothing better for me that I should speedily escape into the land of the Philistines.” (27:1). The struggle to avoid Saul had brought David to the point where he hardly felt that it was possible that he could ever become king; and he took refuge amongst the Philistines.

DAVID IN THE LAND OF THE PHILISTINES **1 Samuel 27:1- 28:2**

David's desperation caused him to act irrationally. He had once before

retreated to the city of Gath in a mistake which could have cost him his life. This time however, David was accepted by the king of Gath, who considered David's exile from his own people, and believed David would be servant to him.

So David went to live with Achish king of Gath (v.2) and Saul stopped chasing him (v.4). He asked Achish for a place to live and was given a city called Ziklag. From here David continued to fight battles for Israel against the Canaanites that still remained in the land. He organised a series of raids into the land south of Judah "even unto the land of Egypt (v.8). When Achish asked where they had been, David replied "against the South of Judah" (v.10). Achish believed that David had actually attacked the people of Israel, and said to himself, "He has made himself hated by his people Israel and so will be my servant forever" (v.12). Achish trusted David to the point where he would have taken him into battle against Israel (28:1). Achish also made David his personal bodyguard. "Therefore will I make thee keeper of my head for ever." Imagine how David felt when he heard those words. The man who had fought Goliath **and cut off his head**, was now guarding the "head" of a Philistine king!

SAUL AND THE WITCH OF ENDOR

1Samuel28:3-25

When Saul saw the Philistine army "he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled" (v.5). He asked God for advice but got none. His prayer was motivated by fear for himself and not trust in God. Saul was desperate. Samuel was dead (v.3) and he had no prophets to help him. Saul had commanded to "put away those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards out of the land" (v.3). Now in sheer desperation he asked his men to find him one. These were people who pretended to communicate with the dead. Saul was willing to believe and try anything!

He found one, the witch of Endor. Saul disguised himself and came to her in the darkness of night. Not only was Saul a hypocrite, but God had commanded Israel not to use the services of these people (Lev.19:31). "For all that do these things are an abomination unto Yahweh" (Deut.18:10-12). The witch was reluctant at first and suspected a trap that would lead to her death (v.9). Saul then swore an oath to her in the name of God that no harm would come to her (v.10). If only Saul had had enough faith to believe that God was alive there would have been no need for him to have sought the services of a witch. The witch agreed to help by asking "who shall I bring up" and Saul said "bring me up Samuel".

In a great show of surprise the woman revealed that she knew it was

Saul before her (v.12). He assured her she had nothing to fear and asked her what she could see. She described Samuel (vv.13-14). God then uses this pitiful scene to reveal the future events to Saul through the voice of Samuel.

Saul knelt down with his face to the ground and said “I am sore distressed: for the Philistines make war against me, and God has departed from me” (v.15). Saul’s worst fears now came true as the voice told him in precise detail what would happen. Saul heard that:

- ◆ God had departed from him and become his enemy (v.16)
- ◆ God had taken away his kingdom and given it to David (v.17)
- ◆ This was happening because of his disobedience concerning Amelek (v.18)
- ◆ He and his sons would die in battle tomorrow (v.19)
- ◆ The army of Israel would fall “into the hand of the Philistines” (v.19)

Saul collapsed onto the ground as the hopelessness of his situation became real.

SAUL’S DEATH

1 Samuel 31

The events of the next day at Mount Gilboa happened just as Saul had been told. The Philistines were too strong for the Israelites and “the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines” (v.1). Saul’s son Jonathan and his two brothers were killed and “the Philistines followed hard” (v.2). They chased Saul and “he was sore wounded of the archers” (v.3). Saul, not willing to be slain by the Philistines, asked his armour-bearer to kill him. “But his armourbearer would not ... therefore Saul took a sword and fell upon it”, and there he died (v.4).

The remainder of Saul’s army and the people of the nearby cities fled. When the Philistines found the body of Saul (v.8) they cut off his head and “fastened his body, (and the bodies of his sons v12), to the wall of Beth-shan.” Sadly the Philistines saw the death of Saul as a victory for their gods (v.9).

When the people of Jabesh-gilead heard what the Philistines had done to Saul “all the valiant men arose and went all night” to recover the bodies (v.12). Saul had saved these people from the Ammonites years earlier (1 Sam.11), but they had not forgotten. They cremated the bodies of Saul and his sons and “took their bones and buried them under a tree at Jabesh, and fasted seven days.”

PRINCIPLE FOR LIVING - REJECTING GOD ONLY BRINGS DESPAIR

In 1 Chron.10:13 we are told that “Saul died -:

- for his transgression which he committed against Yahweh
- against the word of Yahweh, which he kept not
- and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit
- and enquired not of Yahweh”

This summarises the case against Saul - **he rejected God.**

“Therefore He (Yahweh) slew him and turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse” (v.14).

Saul did not listen to God, he did not seek God’s will through prayer, and did not act as God had told him through His word and through the prophet Samuel. Saul was a good king to begin with (1 Sam.15:17) but he changed as his lack of faith became evident in the mistakes he made. He blamed God and gradually turned from His ways. The experiences of life in the truth must develop our characters to make sure we are walking with God. If we do not learn from our mistakes and make these small changes they develop into major problems. The life of Saul is a classic example of this gradual downhill slide. Saul’s slow rejection of God’s ways brought him total despair and the loss of his life.

This final tragedy need not have happened, if only Saul had turned to God and leaned upon His mercy. In all his extremities David learned that “God is ...a very present help in trouble” (Psa.46:1). Even in our greatest trials God will help.

DAVID RETURNS TO ZIKLAG

1 Samuel 30

The princes of the Philistines had not wanted David in their army to do battle against Israel (1 Sam.29:4). David and his men returned from their short time in the Philistine army and arrived at Ziklag to find it empty and burned. The Amalekites had attacked the city, taking everyone and everything away with them. “And David was greatly distressed; for the people spoke of stoning him”(v.6). This was a test of his faith “David encouraged himself in Yahweh his God.” “David enquired at Yahweh, saying, shall I pursue after this troop, shall I overtake them?” Yahweh answered immediately, telling David to leave straight away and all would be recovered (v.8).

They found the Amalekites rejoicing at the great spoil they had taken (v.16). David smote them and recovered all their goods, including David’s

own two wives, and returned to Ziklag (v.18-19).

DAVID HEARS OF SAUL'S DEATH

2 Samuel 1

On the third day after returning from chasing the Amalekites, a man wandered into the camp at Ziklag. He had all the signs of great distress and mourning. He had torn clothes and earth on his head. He was an Amalekite and came to David from the camp of Israel with news of the battle.

The man told David that Saul and Jonathan were dead. David immediately asked how the man was so sure. He claimed to have killed Saul at his own request and gave David the king's crown and bracelet as proof. David and his men were very distressed. They "mourned, and wept, and fasted until even, for Saul and for Jonathan his son, and for the people of Yahweh, and for the house of Israel" (v.12). David was angry at the report that this man had killed Yahweh's anointed (v.14). He was unaware at this time that the report was false and ordered the smiting of this Amalekite (v.15). David recalls this incident later saying that the Amalekite thought his story would have been rewarded by David, but his lies had cost him his life (4:10).

The true and sincere character of David is seen in his very moving lamentation for Saul and Jonathan. Two mighty warriors had fallen and David felt this disaster very personally. Saul and Jonathan had been "lovely and pleasant in their lives". He described them as "swifter than eagles and stronger than lions" (1:23). The final words that David said of his beloved friend Jonathan: "I am distressed for thee my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me; thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women"(v.26).

BASIC BIBLE TEACHING - JUDGMENT

The story of Saul's life teaches us a valuable lesson. Our mortal existence now is our only opportunity to present our lives as living sacrifices before God. Our Father is "not willing that anyone should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pet.3:9). "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (Luke 12:32). But only those who have tried to please Him will be graciously given a place in His kingdom.

The time of judgment will come when each responsible person will have to stand and give account of the things they have done (2 Cor.5:10). Two classes will be revealed. Those who have continued in patient well doing will be rewarded with eternal life, but those who have not obeyed the truth will feel the wrath of God to suffer tribulation and anguish (Rom.2:5-9).

SUMMARY

- ➔ David again spares Saul's life in the hill of Hachilah.
- ➔ David seeks refuge in the Philistine city of Gath.
- ➔ At a visit to the witch of Endor, Saul learns of his imminent death in battle and the defeat of Israel.
- ➔ David grieves at the death of Saul and his beloved friend Jonathan.

PARAGRAPH QUESTIONS

1. *Why did David flee and dwell with the Philistines. Describe his stay there.*
2. *Why was Saul's visit to the witch of Endor wrong and hypocritical?*
3. *Explain the purpose of our lives now and the purpose of judgment. What will happen to the faithful and the unfaithful?*
4. *1 Chronicles 10:13 summarises God's judgment on Saul. State why he failed and what we can learn from this.*

ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. *Tell the story of Saul's visit to the witch of Endor. What lessons do we learn from this?*
2. *Describe how David came to hear of the news of Israel's defeat on Mount Gilboa. Tell how David reacted.*



A series of horizontal dotted lines spanning the width of the page, intended for handwriting practice. There are 25 lines in total, evenly spaced from the top of the page to just above the footer.

24. DAVID THE KING

“they anointed David king over Israel”

READING 2 Samuel 2-5

OBJECTIVE

- ◆ To show how Yahweh delivered the kingdom into the hand of David.
- ◆ To demonstrate the importance of Jerusalem in God’s purpose.

BACKGROUND

Following the death of Saul, it might have been thought that David should have immediately become king over the nation. It was now probably more than twelve years since David had been anointed as king by Samuel, and now Israel had to be prepared to accept their new king, chosen of God.

DAVID, ANOINTED KING IN HEBRON

2 Samuel 2:1-7

Following his lamentation over Saul and Jonathan, David turned his mind to what he should do next. Although he was anointed king he knew that there would be many still following the house of Saul. As was almost always his custom he asked counsel of Yahweh. He received the answer that he should go to Hebron, in the territory of Judah, his family tribe. The men of Judah came to him and anointed him as king over Judah (v.3). They would have known of David’s previous anointing by Samuel and patiently waited for the time to acknowledge it. But David was still to wait longer to become the king over the whole nation. Over the many years from his anointing by Samuel until his acceptance by the whole nation David learned many principles, the most important being the need to faithfully continue through trial:

- ◆ “tribulation worketh patience and patience experience and experience hope” (Rom.5:3-4)
- ◆ “... he that endureth to the end shall be saved” (Matt.10:22)

The men of Judah told David that the men of Jabesh-Gilead had buried Saul. David’s first act as king was typical of this godly man - he sent a note of thanks to them for their “kindness” to their dead king and offered them “kindness” in return (vv.5-6).

WAR BETWEEN THE HOUSE OF DAVID AND THE HOUSE OF SAUL

2 Samuel 2:8 - 4:12

Abner, the captain of Saul’s host, would not accept David as king. Contrast what Abner did with what happened in Judah.

David	Ish-bosheth
“the men of Judah” (v.4) unitedly anoint David	one man (Abner) appoints the king
come to Hebron which means fellowship	goes to Mahanaim “two camps”
king David - “the beloved of Yahweh”	king Ish-bosheth - “man of shame”

Surely Yahweh was with David and not with the house of Saul. However seven and a half years of trouble were to follow before the whole nation accepted David. Some of the events in this time were:

- ◆ the “play” fight at Gibeon where 24 young warriors died (2:12-17). This show of strength revealed the ruthless and callous attitude of Abner and Joab which led to needless deaths.
- ◆ the death of Asahel (2:18-24) - Asahel was a fast runner, “as light as foot as the wild roe” (v.18) but lacked wisdom in his relentless pursuit of Abner and met his end.
- ◆ “a long war” (3:1) - a state of constant hostility.
- ◆ the murder of Abner (3:22-27) - Abner came to Hebron to “set up the throne of David over Israel and Judah” (3:10). But Joab used it as an opportunity to seek revenge and killed Abner in cold blood (3:22-27). David was revolted by Joab’s callous act.
- ◆ the death of Ish-bosheth (4:1-8) - his murderers thought David would be pleased. They found that this godly man justly punished them with death.

PRINCIPLE FOR LIVING - arguments and fights can be destructive

It is very easy for us to stand up for our rights and fight. Although Yahweh had appointed David as king, the house of Saul continued to fight for the legal right of the throne. In so doing they allowed the nation to go on for another seven and a half years of fighting and lack of leadership. There are times when we must stand up for **what is right, but we need to avoid contentions and strivings.**

Consider the following passages:

“From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence even of your lusts that war in your members?” (James 4:1).

“And the servant of the Lord must not strive: but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient” (2 Tim.2:24).

“Now I beseech you ... that there be no divisions among you, but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the

same judgment” (1 Cor.1:10).

“Now I ... beseech you by the gentleness and meekness of Christ” (2 Cor.10:1)

The philosophies of the world encourage self assertion and human rights, often with disrespect for the principles of truth. We have considered the attitude of David who, from a human perspective, had every right to demand a better deal. Instead he patiently waited for God to achieve His own plan. Our whole purpose is to develop characters that reflect glory to God, and sometimes that may require trials that we feel are unnecessary – but God knows best, so endure the trials in confidence of His overshadowing hand. Strivings and contentions can be an attitude that forbids God to work in our lives. Always avoid being contentious - there is usually a better way. Listening to mum and dad is far better than getting angry and stubborn. In the future you will realise that they were nearly always right.

DAVID ANOINTED KING OVER THE WHOLE NATION

2 Samuel 5

The assassinations of Abner and Ishbosheth left the northern tribes without an obvious leader. There was a man who was an obvious choice - one man who could unite Israel and Judah and bring peace and stability to the nation. David had become king of Judah at the age of thirty. Seven and a half years later the nation finally were ready to accept David as their king. They came to him at Hebron and anointed him king of Israel (v.1-3). He then reigned for thirty three years (v.4-5), to unite Israel and Judah as one nation in peace and stability.

The nation recognised their need and also recognised David as God’s choice:

- ◆ He was an Israelite; their “bone and ... flesh” (v.1)
- ◆ He had led the nation in the days of Saul (v.2)
- ◆ Yahweh had commanded that David should be their shepherd and king (v.2)

So finally the nation was united under David’s wise leadership. They now had a king who cared for his people and was able to lead them in battle as well as lead them to appreciate God’s ways. In His wisdom, God had directed his years of preparation and now he was king of God’s people. Yahweh’s plan of many years before had now been fulfilled.

DAVID SECURES JERUSALEM AS HIS CAPITAL

2 Samuel 5:6-10

As the king, David set about cleansing the land of the Canaanitish inhabitants that still remained. The first thing David did was to take the city of Jebus as his capital and called it Jerusalem. It was essential to have a central capital for the nation and David knew that this was the place. On the death of Goliath he had brought his skull to this very place (1 Sam. 17:54). He therefore from an early age appreciated the significance of the city. The inhabitants of Jebus refused to submit to David and did not believe that their city could be taken.

David offered a challenge to his army that “Whosoever smiteth the Jebusites first shall be chief and captain” (1 Chron. 11:4-6). Any man who could do such a thing was undoubtedly a man of courage, and Joab accepted that challenge. He was a man of courage but Joab lacked the spiritual qualities of his uncle David.

So Jerusalem was established as the capital of the kingdom of Israel. It was called the “city of David” (5:9), from where he would rule the nation. The next important thing for David was to bring up the ark and set up a place of worship in Jerusalem. David then had a centre of government and a place of worship - he pointed forward to the one who would come, the Messiah (“Christ”, the anointed), as both king and priest; and Yahweh was with him (5:10).



BASIC BIBLE TEACHING - Jerusalem - the centre of God's kingdom on earth

Jerusalem was the city chosen of God that He might dwell among men, and David understood its importance. The role of Jerusalem in Yahweh's purpose is seen from the following quotations:

- It was important in the days of Melchizedek the king of Salem (Gen. 14:18).
- Jerusalem is in the same area as the land of Moriah, where Abraham was directed to offer his son Isaac (Gen. 22:2).
- Under the law of Moses, Jerusalem was to become the place of their worship (Deut. 12:5, 11; with Gal. 4:25). A place for God to dwell amongst His people.
- The sacrifice of Isaac pointed forward to what the Father would accomplish in this same place with the crucifixion of His Son at

Golgotha (Matt.27:33).

- ❑ Jerusalem is the city of the great King (Matt.5:35). Eventually it will be the centre of divine worship and government in the kingdom of God (Isa.2:1-3).
- ❑ Jerusalem was a type of the “new Jerusalem”. New Jerusalem is a “city” of people amongst whom God will dwell forever (Rev.3:12).

SUMMARY

- ➔ Upon Saul’s death, David was made king only of Judah in Hebron it was to be another seven and a half years until he was king of the whole nation.
- ➔ After years of conflict with supporters of the house of Saul, David became king of the whole nation.
- ➔ David immediately took Jerusalem and made it his capital of a united Israel.

FURTHER READING

The Man David (H.Tennant)

The Story of the Bible (H.P.Mansfield) Vol.3

PARAGRAPH QUESTIONS

1. *Briefly explain the conflict which occurred between the house of David and the house of Saul.*
2. *What persuaded the tribes of Israel to finally come to David and ask him to be their king?*
3. *What lessons do we learn from the conflict before David was anointed as king over the whole nation of Israel?*

ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. *David patiently waited until he was made king over all Israel and Judah. Describe the steps which brought him to the throne. How was his character developed by this process, and what can we learn from this?*
2. *Describe how and why David captured Jebus. In your answer include the importance of the city in the past and its future glory.*



A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing, spanning the width of the page.

25. THE PROMISE TO DAVID

“Yahweh telleth thee that He will make thee an house”

READING 2 Samuel 7

OBJECTIVE

- ◆ To show the meaning of the promise that Yahweh made to David
- ◆ To explain why resurrection is the essential doctrine of the promise to David.

BACKGROUND

David now dwelled “at rest” in Jerusalem (2 Sam.7:1). His own palace was complete and now one thing troubled him - the ark of Yahweh was still in the tent that David had set up for it (2 Sam.6:17). He wanted to build a permanent house for Yahweh to dwell in.

DAVID REQUESTS TO BUILD A HOUSE

2 Samuel 7:1-9

David felt uncomfortable about the contrast between his own “house of cedar” and the “curtains” within which the ark of God dwelt (v.2). He explained his concern to Nathan. Seeing David’s enthusiasm he encouraged him - “Do all that is in thine heart, for Yahweh is with thee” (v.3). But Nathan had responded on the spur of the moment, and that night Yahweh told Nathan that He did not want David to build a house for Him (v.5), but rather that Yahweh intended to build a house for David (v.11). However, David’s desire certainly pleased Yahweh “thou didst well that it was in thine heart” (1 Kings 8:18).

Nathan’s message stated that Yahweh had never asked for a solid dwelling but had been content with “a tent and ... a tabernacle” (2 Sam.7:6-7). He also reminded David that it was Yahweh who had done everything for him, bringing him from a shepherd to be the leader of His people (v.8-9). Could a man really make a dwelling for the God of the universe? When Solomon eventually built a temple, he realised that the heavens could not contain Yahweh, “how much less this house I have builded?” (1 Kings 8:27).

The real dwelling of Yahweh is with the humble who tremble at (have reverence for) His word (Isa.66:1-2). It is these people that God is building up into a “house”.

⇒ **Why did Yahweh not want David to build Him an house?**

It was later explained that David could not build a house because he had shed much blood (1 Chron. 22:8-10). It was therefore left to his son Solomon, whose name means “peace”, to build the house. He represents (or is a type of) Christ, the prince of peace, who shall build and enter the glorious house of prayer.

⇒ **What house would Yahweh build David?**

The house that Yahweh was to build David was a line of descendants (or seed) to sit upon his throne. The great seed of David is Christ, who will reign over David’s throne for one thousand years. The promise then applies to all of the seed of David, to:

- ◆ Solomon; whom Yahweh chose to be His son (1 Chron.22:10, 28:6) and built a house for Yahweh’s glory.
- ◆ David’s descendants who reigned upon his throne from Solomon to Zedekiah.
- ◆ Christ - who would be the seed who would finally fulfil the promise.

THE KEY ELEMENTS OF THE PROMISE 2 Samuel 7:10-17

There are seven key elements to this promise:

1. Israel to be settled in the land and at peace with all nations.

Yahweh promised that he would “appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more” (v.10). This has never been the case. Although Israel have been partially re-gathered they do not live in peace although hundreds of years after David, the prophets repeated the same words:

- ◆ “I will perform that good thing which I have promised ... Judah shall be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely ...” (Jer.33:14-15).
- ◆ “they shall dwell safely and none shall make them afraid” (Ezek.34:28-29).
- ◆ “and I will plant them upon their land” (Amos 9:14-15).

Solomon reigned over Israel in a time of rest from war, with their enemies conquered in the reign of David (1 Kings 5:2-3).

2. David’s own seed would be established in his kingdom v.12

“When thy days be fulfilled”, that is, after David’s death Yahweh would set up David’s literal seed (“out of thy bowels” (v.12)) as king. Peter taught the people that “of the fruit of his loins according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne” (Acts 2:30). The apostle Paul plainly tells us that of David’s seed “hath God according to his promise raised

unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus” (Acts 13:23).

Under the reign of Solomon, the kingdom of Israel at that time was the kingdom of Yahweh (1 Chron.28:5).

3. The seed to build an house for God’s name v.13

David’s seed would “build a house for my name” (v.13). There are two houses referred to:

- ◆ a **spiritual** house of people who as “lively stones” (1 Pet.2:5) are “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone” growing “unto an holy temple in the Lord” (Eph.2:20-22).
- ◆ a **literal** building which will be built as “a house of prayer for all nations” (Isa.56:7). Solomon built a house which pointed forward to the one to be built by Christ (1 Kings 5:5).

4. God (as well as David) to be his Father v.14

This seed would be different from all other men. In Hebrews 1:5 these words are quoted of Jesus Christ “I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son”. When the angel Gabriel came to Mary he told her that her seed would be “the Son of the Highest and the Lord God would give unto him the throne of his father David” (Luke 1:30-33). Jesus was (as David’s flesh and blood descendant) a mortal man, with all the natural tendencies to sin that we have. But he was God’s own son, and so he was able to triumph over sin and death. David thought about this part of the promise and prophesied the resurrection of Christ that “his soul was not left in hell [the grave]” (Psa.16:10).

Solomon was also called the son of God (1 Chron.28:6).

5. God works with David’s seed despite their iniquities v.14

David’s “seed” started with Solomon and followed right down to Christ. Yahweh knew that some of them would be wicked men, and yet He would continue to work with David’s house to achieve His purpose despite the iniquity of David’s seed. In the Psalms this idea is explained further: “If his children forsake my law ... If they break my statutes ... Then I will visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes” (Psa.89:29-32).

Christ did no sin. It was necessary for him to be sinless for the purpose of his Father to be effective. Therefore these thoughts of committing iniquity and chastisement do not apply to Christ personally. We must again take up the picture of the son of God; as Christ being the head and the ecclesia being the body. Unlike the head, those who make up the body are not sinless.

They are prone to sin and require the chastening of a father to develop godly characters. “Whom the Lord loveth He chaseneth” (Heb.12:5-7).

6. God’s mercy to stay with David’s son v.15

God’s mercy would not be taken from this son as it was taken from Saul. God rejected Saul because of his unfaithfulness. This son was sure to be faithful. Those who make up his “body” and follow the example of the “head” will not be rejected.

Christ was raised from the dead to receive immortality. Acts 13:33-34 tells us that this was “the sure mercies of David”. His resurrection confirmed that the promises to David would be fulfilled. All the faithful in Christ will also receive “the sure mercies of David” when Christ returns (Isa.55:3).

7. David’s throne to be established forever before him v.16

This was a wonderful promise to David - that he would be there to see his seed set up on his throne. The restoration of David’s throne becomes a clear teaching of the Bible:

- ◆ “Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David ...” (Isa.9:7).
- ◆ “... will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David ...” (Jer.33:15).

BASIC BIBLE TEACHING - RESURRECTION

An essential teaching of the promise to David is the resurrection of Christ and David.

- ❑ In the promise David was told that his seed would sit on his throne after his death (v.12) but it would be in his presence (v.16). How could this be? Only through David being raised from the dead to see Christ reigning as king and so he wrote: “Thou ... shalt quicken me again and bring me up from the depths of the earth” (Psa.71:20-21).
- ❑ As he thought about the promise he realised that for the promises to be fulfilled his seed (Messiah) must be raised from the dead. If he was David’s seed “according to the flesh” (Acts 2:30) then he must be mortal, and yet he will reign forever. How can this be? Only through Christ being raised from the dead. David thought this through carefully and then “being a prophet” he “spake of the resurrection of Christ that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption” (Acts 2:31).

WHY CHRIST MUST BE THE SEED WHO FULFILS THE PROMISE

This promise could not have been fulfilled in Solomon and his descendants because:

- ❑ Many years later the prophets still spoke of the fulfilment of the promises (Amos 9:11, Jer.33:14-26).
- ❑ The terms of the promises to David are quoted in the New Testament of Christ (Heb.1:5).
- ❑ The last descendant of the line of David to reign from David's throne was Zedekiah who was a profane and wicked prince. He was deposed and the kingship remains empty until he comes whose right it is and Yahweh will give it him (Ezek.21:25-27).

PRINCIPLE FOR LIVING - APPRECIATE GOD'S PROMISES

Peter speaks about God's promises as "exceeding great and precious promises" (2 Pet.1:4). David was overawed at the promise that Yahweh had given to him, and felt his own unworthiness: "Who am I, O Lord God?" (2 Sam.7:18). Not only did he feel the privilege of knowing the promise (v.21) but he felt the privilege for his people Israel "whom God went to redeem for Himself" (v.23). Yahweh had shown Himself to be their God and they to be His people (v.24).

The promises we have received should make us wonder at the love of God towards His Son and to us. Everyday we must think of the blessings to be called to the promises. Through the promises we can "escape the corruption of the world" and have a hope of receiving the "divine nature" (2 Pet.1:4). The knowledge of the promises should humble us to continually appreciate the greatness of the blessing.

SUMMARY

- ➡ David wanted to build Yahweh a house but Yahweh's plan was to build David a house.
- ➡ Yahweh promised David that he would have a seed who would reign over David's throne forever.
- ➡ The promise requires that Christ be raised from the dead not to see corruption and that David himself would be raised from the dead. David was moved by the greatness of the privilege that Yahweh had placed upon him that he would see his seed reigning for the Kingdom age on his throne restored.

FURTHER READING

"The Ways of Providence" (R. Roberts) Ch.17.

“Elpis Israel” (J.Thomas) pp.302-307.

“Christendom Astray” (R.Roberts) pp.197-212.

“The Story of the Bible” (H.P.Mansfield) vol.3 pp.55-64.

“The Man David” (H.Tennant) pp.119-124.

VERSES TO REMEMBER 2 Samuel 7:12-16

PARAGRAPH QUESTIONS:

- 1. In Yahweh’s promise to David what details are given of Israel’s future?*
- 2. Show how resurrection is necessary for the promises to be fulfilled.*
- 3. Describe how the promise to David was only partly fulfilled in Solomon and why it must be fulfilled in Christ.*

ESSAY QUESTIONS:

- 1. Explain the key points of the promise to David.*
- 2. Describe the events of 2 Samuel 7 including*
 - ♦ David’s desire to build a house*
 - ♦ Nathan’s response*
 - ♦ The giving of the promise and David’s response.*
 - ♦ What lessons do we learn from this narrative.*

FURTHER LOOK AT

It is good to have the promises marked into the margin of your Bible, or the back note pages. If you would like a set of these notes, please download the Family Bible Studies from www.cssa.asn.au

