

## Lessons from David

### INTRO – TITLE SLIDE

Ok, so this has to be one of my favourite stories from the OT, and I really encourage all of you to read through 1 Samuel this week, especially the second half of the book that we are going to look at today. This is about David. **SLIDE** King David, the David that wrote the Psalms, the David that was known to have been the greatest King in Israel, the David who was the ancestor of Jesus. And he had a pretty exciting and colourful life. He wasn't perfect, although this part of the the story that we are going to look at today, he looks pretty close to being perfect.

SAUL So lets get a little of context here. **SLIDE** Saul has just messed up, and as the Bible puts it in verse 23 of chapter 15, becuase he rejected the word of the lord, the Lord has rejected him as King... pretty serious stuff for a King who people loved, and who loved being King. Saul has repented, but the position of King was not his in God's eyes. He had found a greater King... but as many other OT heroes, we see the least likely being used for greatness.

Even Samuel, God's prophet, was deeply upset at Saul's failure and was even 'mourning' Saul as if he had died. I think this verse is one of those verses that helps us realise how God really feels when we mess up. When we go our own way.

So today I want to talk about the main lessons that we can learn from David in the first half of his life. **SLIDE** The early years you could say. As I have just mentioned, David wasn't perfect, but he was a bit of a golden boy, and you could almost think that he would never put a foot wrong. And he barely does in this part of his story. So instead of just picking the stories, I though it would easier to mix it up a bit and look at the individual lessons we learn.

So reading through the story this week, I found a few main lessons that we can learn, but we can link a couple of them together.

First we have **humility**. **SLIDE** and for this we can compare David to Saul. Called in similar ways, good potential, but it went wrong with Saul. He got proud, and went it alone.

David stayed humble and knew his place under God's authority. And all through this story you will see just how humble David is.

David's calling didn't go to his head, and he got on with what he was meant to be doing until he was called. Patience. But you could just imagine his excitement... but after he was anointed, he went back to tending his sheep and growing up. But had this huge prophecy hanging over his head. Now that called for a lot of humility.

My Story, **SLIDE** I became a Christian at the end of University finishing my first degree. I jumped in feet first, and I even started looking straight away at retraining before I even had my first job, then I interviewed to do a 1 year church training project with a new frontiers church, and I got some pretty good advice to stay doing what I was doing, and gain experience in the world and working. I had a sense that God was calling me something more than what I had trained for in the theatre world, but it wasn't for then. Not that I wasn't being called then, but God was training me up for another time, giving valuable life experience, testing me, and building me up for something else. And my previous skills have come in very handy for what I am doing now, in planning events and building websites. Then I just needed the **Courage** to step out when the time came. **SLIDE**

For David, this was the Battle against Goliath. He was the youngest of 8 brothers, and while his 3 oldest brothers were on the front line of the battle against the Philistines, David was stuck back in his father's fields watching the sheep, protecting them from bears and lions, gaining his strength in the situation he was expected to be in and running errands. But God found a way to get David to the front line, as his brothers were facing a pretty scary situation.

### STORY

Because the Israelites and the Philistines, we read earlier, were lining up for battle, and the Philistines brought out a secret weapon, a weapon that had the Israelites quaking in their boots. A 3 meter high giant of a warrior, clad in armour, and even had a shield-bearer with him... as if he needed it... and offered a one on one battle, winner takes all. Who ever lost, meant that their people would become the subjects serving the victors... anyone up for that? No? None of the Israelites did either... and the Word says that every morning for 40 days they were given this challenge and no one came forward... now if I was on either side I would be getting a little bit anxious at this point. Something has to happen.

And it did, in the shape of the 'annoying' little brother of some of the soldiers who had been sent by their father to take supplies and to check they were still alive. But when David read the situation, he must have had this courage rise up inside him, because

he knew it was his time. A conventional battle would not win this, it would take something different, something unexpected. **SLIDE (SLINGSHOT)**

Saul tried to dress him up in his own armour, but David shed that, and knew exactly what he needed to do. He had fought off and killed lions and bears to protect his flock of sheep, and He knew that loosing wasn't an option. He knew this was his time, so without a sword but a sling shot and 5 stones, he faced the giant and in one shot he hit goliath between his eyes, and knocked him out so he could kill him and win the battle.

Now this wasn't just any bravery or courage, because as the bible says, the Lord was with David, David knew God's vision, and knew his plans, so knowing he had God on his side he was able to do so many more things than he could imagine. He had no fear, not in the same way as Saul and the rest of the army.

When we are scared, or afraid of what the future might bring, we can chose to rest in Jesus' love, and the fear goes and we see things from another perspective. Becuase when we see things from God's perspective, we see things that others don't. The soldiers would have been looking at the armour and the sword, but David looked at the gaps in the armour, the weak points.

And **SLIDE** here we also get a glimpse of what Paul was talking about in Philippians 4:13 when he said that in Christ we can do all things through Him who strengthens us. Even defeat our giants. I would not have been able to give up my previous career, which was going well at the time, to retrain in ministry and even come to Sweden and do what I am doing now. And it can be scary, but trusting in God's bigger plan is enough to give us courage. And we also have to remember John's famous words in his letter... **SLIDE** Perfect Love casts out all fear...

### **Obedience**

Now the next lesson we learn from David is a biggy. And it's not only what we learn here, but a common lesson from almost every story of the bible, and in our role in God's plan, and it can often be the hardest lesson to really learn, as this is where Saul failed...the lesson is **SLIDE** Obedience.

**ONLY IF I HAVE TIME** *Story of David after Goliath*

*When Saul was rejected, an evil spirit came on him, or the more accurate term was a harmful spirit. And David playing the harp would relax him. Not sure what that meant with having an evil spirit. It could have meant that Saul was just so distressed with having God's spirit leave him that it was seen as being an evil spirit... But either way, it was David who could calm him. But even before the battle, Saul was in contact with David, but didn't really know who he was... but after the battle, Saul kept him on and trained him to be the best warrior... and he still played the harp. But it was one day when they came back from battle and Saul's people were lifting David up higher than Saul. And he didn't like it. David just doing his job but Saul saw competition. So Saul tried many times to try and kill David. So much it became an obsession.*

There are many times when David was about to go to battle, but instead of going in with a blood thirsty warrior head... he prayed and asked God if he should attack an enemy. We see through these history books that God's plan isn't always attack and conquer.

It might have been safe to assume that God would have been behind it, but there is a difference between just doing the right things, and doing them in relationship with God. David knew the presence of the Lord was with him, so he knew to consult the Lord before doing it... When we assume things, many things can go wrong, people can get hurt, and relationships break down. I know I have just assumed things recently and taken things for granted which I have to apologise for. But if this happens in human relationships, then how much more would assumptions break down our relationship with God. Even though we might know right from wrong in the doing, we still need that relationship with God, that peace in our hearts. That is what David had, and he could go forwards and serve the Lord in confidence.

He also found obedience a lot easier. Even when He faced rejection. because David had been accepted big time into Saul's household, been given Saul's daughter as a wife, favoured warrior in the army, and so David, knowing that his future held greatness must have been very confused when Saul suddenly got jealous and turned against him. **SLIDE** He had gone from hero to pretty much zero, being an exile from his own people, eating scraps from caves. A part of him must have been very angry at God, and I think we can see that from some of the Psalms. But actually we learn that no matter what he might be feeling, his actions and his choices were important.

He didn't seek revenge, he knew that wasn't the answer, but he cried out to God for

help, and he cried out to Saul, asking for mercy, and showing that he hadn't done anything wrong, and that Saul's hunt for him was unjust... he didn't seek revenge, and when you read through these passages for yourself, you'll see that David stayed loyal to Saul, despite the threats to his life. He was wise... he knew when to run and hide and when to confront Saul, but but he stayed loyal. He even had 2 opportunities to kill Saul when 'Saul was given into his hands', and this was a few times when David was being tempted, and resisted. But he showed his loyalty and strength that he was the bigger man.

**IF I HAVE TIME** *Because Saul was a father figure to him, and David poured out his heart to him in those moments. You see we all need father figures. Yes we have Father God in heaven, but we still need father figures in the church, people to look up to. The world is very short of role models right now, and this is a call for any adults in here to raise up and be the role models for the young people and children in the church. And youth, this is a call for you guys to think about which role models you are choosing to follow. Where are they leading you? Choose the role models that are leading you in the right direction.*

The bible describes David as a man after God's own heart. if we go right back to the first chapter of the section I am looking at today, and this is the verse I want you to take home with you. Humans look on the outside, but God is not interested in any of that, God is interested in the heart of a man. **SLIDE**

God sees the heart, and calls people to big things if they have the right heart, the right desire... but even if that happens, there is still the choice to remain obedient to God to the end. Saul and David were both called in similar ways, and samuel saw their similarities I think, but the difference was their actions when they were faced with temptation and pride. Saul let it get to his head, when David stayed humble and kept it about the Lord, he stayed faithful and even stayed loyal to his King in this situation. It was about God's plan, not his own.

Whether there is good there or bad, God sees it, and this is a challenge to us all this morning.

God probably saw the same in Saul when he called him to be the King of Israel. But our hearts don't always stay good. They can get damaged, broken, corrupt, lost on the world. As happened with Saul. So we need to make sure that doesn't happen. We need to keep following Jesus, daily, in relationship with him. Even if its 5 minutes in the morning to ask God to guide us, and humble us for the day ahead, then its a step

to staying on the right track. We just need to look at Saul to see what could happen if we try to go it alone. Staying obedient is a whole lot easier when we have a relationship with Jesus, and are active in that.

**SLIDE** I want to be a man like David, I want to be a man after God's own heart. But I also know I need to change. And that's ok, because I am still a work in progress. But I am not satisfied with just being a work in progress. I need to look for the end, look for the hope in Jesus, keep my eyes on him. I want us to be a people after God's own heart. A people who are humble, courageous, obedient, loyal, wise, and blameless before Jesus... but we can only get there with Jesus' help. And when we accept what He did for us on the cross, we take a step to accepting his help, and we become blameless, but for real change, it takes daily commitment to Jesus.

I think there maybe someone here who has been moved by something they have heard this morning and they want that, they want to be a man like David, but they don't have Jesus in their heart, and haven't accepted that yet. And if that's you here, I want to pray for you this morning that you will accept Jesus in to your heart for the first time.