

Promised Land 2 Study and Discussion Questions

Lesson Two: David's Rise from Obscurity and Saul's Death – 1 Samuel 16-31; 1 Chronicles 1-10

Read 1 Samuel 16; Skim 1 Chronicles 1-3.

- 1) Who was David? Answer this question by:
 - a) Recording the names of a few of the key figures in the genealogy in 1 Chronicles 1:1-4, 17, 27-28, 34; 2:1-5, 9-15. Adam→ Noah→ Shem→ Abram→ Israel→ Judah→ Perez→ Hezron→ Ram→ (Nahshon→ Salmon→ Boaz→ Obed→) Jesse→ David
 - b) Glancing at the genealogy in Matthew 1:1-17 and telling (from verse 17) why the Holy Spirit inspired the Bible writers to carefully record David's genealogy. The genealogies in the Bible prove God's faithfulness to His promises to Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:15), and to Abraham (Genesis 12:3), and to David (2 Samuel 7:16) that a Messiah would come through their descendants.
- 2) What lessons can you glean from 1 Samuel 16 about people God chooses? God often seems to choose unlikely people for high callings (see 1 Corinthians 1:26-28). This was true of the Patriarchs of Israel, who came from an idolatrous family (Joshua 24:2), and none of whom were firstborn sons. It was true of the apostle Paul, a former persecutor of the church. From a cultural perspective, David was also an unlikely choice, as he was the youngest of all his brothers. Apparently, his father thought he was not even important enough to be called out of the fields to attend the feast given by Samuel. Second, while people often value external appearance, "the Lord looks at the heart" (16:7). Verse 18 says that the Lord was with David. He had a vibrant relationship with the living God. Third, God trains those He uses to be flexible and willing to serve Him in various (sometimes surprising) ways. Although David may not have had much choice about being called into Saul's service to play the harp, there is no indication that he objected. While young David was a talented and experienced fighter (16:18; 17:34-37), we find him will to serve the king in a softer role.
- 3) Give examples of how David and Saul are contrasted in this chapter. The Lord rejected Saul as king and chose David to replace him. While David was chosen because of what the Lord saw in his heart (16:7) and because the Lord was with him (1:18), "the Spirit of the Lord had departed from Saul and an evil spirit from the Lord tormented him" (16:14). Saul was unhealthy (16:23), while David was "glowing with health" (16:12), likeable (16:21), and capable of soothing others with his music (16:23).
- 4) How might you use music this week to soothe and encourage yourself or someone close to you? **Personal sharing**

Read 1 Samuel 17-18.

- 5) From a human point of view, what does chapter 17 indicate that David had going *for* him and *against* him in considering a contest with Goliath? David had several things against him. His brothers (who were in Saul's army) scorned and lacked confidence in him (17:28), he was "only a boy," while Goliath had been a fighting man since his youth (17:33), and David had no experience in wearing armor (17:38-39). However, David's assets were greater than his disadvantages. He had the incentives of becoming the king's son-in-law and exemption for his father's family from taxes (17:25, 27), but a far greater motivation was Saul's defiance of the living God of Israel (17:26). David understood that his people were God's representatives (17:45) and that God's power was available to them (17:46). Although David was not experienced in military combat, he was definitely an experienced fighter, having fought lions and bears while keeping sheep (17:34). Finally, David's ability with a simple sling was exactly what was needed to successfully take down a man much larger and stronger than he (17:40).

- 6) Contrast David's leadership qualities and view of God with Saul's leadership qualities and (implied) view of God, as described in chapter 17. Saul was dismayed and terrified along with the rest of his army (17:11). Apparently he neither sought God's answer to the "Goliath problem" nor did he have confidence that God could and would deliver him. Saul showed weak leadership spiritually and militarily. Into this vacuum of leadership stepped David. He was incensed that Goliath would "defy the armies of the living God" (17:26). David showed courage and leadership by not hesitating to personally engage Goliath ("Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go and fight him" [17:32]). He did what Saul should have done forty days earlier! David held a high view of God. He knew God as the One who had delivered him in the past and encouraged the demoralized army by testifying of it (17:37). In the hearing of both armies, he told Goliath that "the Lord saves" and the battle belonged to Him (17:47).
- 7) 1 Samuel 18 reveals the fallout of David's success, contrasting the attitudes and actions of those who loved David with Saul's jealous attempts on his life.
- Which verses in chapter 18 identify the emotion behind Saul's anger and jealousy? Verse 8 says Saul was angry and galled and verse 9 says he was jealous of David, but verses 12, 15, and 29 reveal that behind Saul's anger and jealousy was fear.
 - Is there anyone in your life whom you fear? (You will not be asked to answer this in your group discussion unless you choose.) Read Matthew 5:43-44, Romans 8:28-39, and Philipians 4:6-8. What do you need to begin doing today with regard to this fear? Personal sharing (discussion leaders might say, "If you would like to share, please avoid slandering the person you fear in any way.")

Skim 1 Samuel 19-23 with Psalm 52, 54, 56, 57, 59.

- Name the people in chapters 19-23 who knowingly or unknowingly aided David, along with a word or short phrase that summarizes how each one helped him. Jonathan warned David of his father's evil intent (19:2), reasoned with his father Saul on David's behalf (19:4-7), discovered Saul's intentions at a feast (20:4), and helped David find strength in the Lord in the desert (23:16). Michal helped David escape out a window (19:12). Samuel hid David with him at Naioth (19:18). Ahimelech the priest gave David food and Goliath's sword (21:6, 9). Achish, king of Gath ignored David's feigned insanity (21:14-15). David's brothers and father's household joined him (22:1). A band of 400 misfits gathered around David (22:2). The king of Moab provided David's parents a safe haven at David's request (22:3). The prophet Gad warned David to leave Adullam (22:5). Abiathar the priest brought the ephod of the Lord to David and inquired of the Lord for him (22:20-23, 23:6, 9). Ultimately, the Lord was the One who protected David from falling into Saul's hands (23:14).
- What connection did David's family have with Moab (See Ruth 1:1-5, 4:13-17)? David's great-grandmother Ruth was a Moabitess.
- The Psalms listed above are a few of those written by David during the years he fled from Saul (according to tradition, as reflected in the titles).
 - What do you learn about David from them? David was clearly a "man's man," a warrior with a keen sense of justice. He most certainly wanted his enemies called to account; he pleaded with God to bring justice by not allowing those who sought his life to escape judgment ("On no account let them escape; in your anger, O God, bring down the nations" [Psalm 56:7]). These Psalms also show that David held an amazingly high view of God. Not only did he believe God could and would bring justice and deliverance, his concern for God's glory was as great as concern for his own personal safety. Side by side are verses that show how threatened he felt ("I will take refuge in the shadow of your wings, until the disaster has passed...I am in the midst of lions; I lie among ravenous beasts – men whose teeth are spears and arrows, whose tongues are sharp swords" [Psalm 56,1, 4]) and verses that indicate God's glory was his chief end ("Be exalted, O God, above the heavens; let your glory be over all the earth" [Psalm 57:5]). Third, David was a man of great faith. He spoke of his

deliverance from all trouble as though it had already come: “For he has delivered me from all my troubles and my eyes have looked in triumph on my foes” (Psalm 54:7). Finally, as a result of his faith, David was a man of courage: “When I am afraid I will trust in you... I will not be afraid” (Psalm 56:3-4). As with the other heroes of faith named in Hebrews 11, David “considered Him faithful Who had made the promise” (Hebrews 11:11).

- b) What aspect of David’s prayer life could you emulate in order to improve your own prayer life?
Personal sharing

Skim 1 Samuel 24-26.

- 11) 1 Samuel 24 and 26 record two instances in which David stumbled upon Saul and refused to harm him.
- How did David’s men view the opportunities David had to avenge himself against Saul, according to 1 Samuel 24:4 and 26:8? David not only had the opportunity to kill Saul, his men saw this opportunity as from the Lord (24:4). They looked at the immediate circumstances, considered God’s anointing of David and drew what they thought to be an obvious conclusion. In chapter 27, Abishai stated, “Today God has delivered your enemy into your hands.”
 - Why did David refuse to avenge himself, according to 1 Samuel 24:10 and 26:9-11? David’s conscience prevented him from harming Saul. In fact, he later regretted that he had even cut a corner off of Saul’s robe. David chose not to avenge himself because of God’s promise to him, because of his love and respect for the Law of God, and because he knew that killing God’s anointed king (however he might justify it) would be forcing God’s plans into his own timetable. David’s view of God was so high that he was confident God would remove Saul from power when He wanted David to be king. He refused to take matters into his own hands. He wanted God’s will for his life in God’s time and way (26:9-11). David knew he did not have the right to usurp what was God’s alone to give and take – an anointed leadership position.
 - How might you apply David’s reasoning to a situation you currently face? Personal sharing
- 12) Re-read Abigail’s wise words to David in 1 Samuel 25:30-31. From what temptation did Abigail protect David in 1 Samuel 25 (a temptation that he had resisted without any human encouragement in chapters 24 and 26)? Read 1 Corinthians 10:11-13. What temptation, which you have successfully resisted in the past, might ensnare you this very week if you think you are standing firm? David completely and triumphantly avoided the temptation to avenge himself against Saul in chapters 24 and 26, yet he determined to avenge himself against Nabal, a lesser man, in chapter 25. 1 Corinthians 10:12-13 warns, “If you think you are standing firm, be careful that you do not fall. No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.” One spiritual victory can sometimes leave us blind to other lurking temptations. Personal sharing

Skim 1 Samuel 27-31 and 1 Chronicles 10.

- 13) Chapters 27, 29 and 30 describe the period of time in which David lived in Philistine territory in order to escape Saul. In what ways did God protect David during this stage of his life? God granted him victory in his raids against the Geshurites, the Girzites, and the Amalekites. He removed David from a terrible dilemma when Achish, king of Gath, wanted David to fight alongside him against Israel. God gave David and his men strength to overtake the raiding Amalekites and regain their families and their goods.

- 14)** How does 1 Samuel 28 reveal the depths to which Saul had fallen mentally, emotionally, and spiritually (include verse numbers)? Saul was terrified (28:5). He did not consult the Lord until it was too late and then the Lord would not answer him (28:4-6). He resorted to consulting a medium rather than pleading with God (28:7). Saul “disguised himself” (the statement also seems to depict how low Saul had stooped [28:8]). He was “in great distress” and the Lord had “turned away from him” (28:15). Saul was filled with fear and “his strength was gone” (28:20) – a sad metaphor for the loss of many things in his life, especially things of spiritual consequence.
- 15)** 1 Samuel 28-31 contrasts the manner in which David and Saul each fought a battle during the same period of time.
- a)** What contrasts do you find? David fought the Amalekites, a people group whom the Lord had appointed for judgment (Exodus 17:8-16; Deuteronomy 25:17-19) but whom Saul had failed to exterminate (1 Samuel 15:2-10). Saul fought another enemy of Israel, the Philistines. David sought revelation from the ephod (30:7-8) while Saul sought help from a medium (28:7-8). David found strength in the Lord (30:6) while Saul’s strength came from the meal provided for him by the witch (28:20-25).
 - b)** How do these two battles resolve the conflict that has been building throughout 1 Samuel 16-31? The conflict that builds throughout 1 Samuel 16-31 concludes with the death of Saul and his heirs in a battle against the Philistines. By contrast, at the conclusion of 1 Samuel, David’s family is restored to him and he is positioned to be the next king of Israel.
 - c)** What conflict (or situation) do you need to wait patiently for God to resolve in His time and way (see Psalm 37:7, 40:1, Romans 8:25)? **Personal sharing**