

# Israel's New King Chosen

Key Verse:

**“The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”**

1 Samuel 16:7

Level 5 lesson 21

Extra: What was the difference between David and his brothers?

**Read: 1 Samuel 16:1-13**

**Further: 1 Samuel 15:22-26**

**THE CALL** Despite Saul's obvious weakness and failures, it was a real disappointment for Samuel to realise that God had rejected him as King, and he was sad. Finally God called him saying, "How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him as King over Israel?" Then God told Samuel to fill his ram's horn with olive oil and go to Bethlehem. There he was to find a man named Jesse, for "I have chosen one of his sons to be King," said the Lord. Samuel was worried, "How can I do that?" he asked. "Saul will kill me when he hears about it!" The Lord responded to these fears with some further instructions. "Take a heifer with you, and say, "I am come to sacrifice" ... and I will show you what you shall do. You shall anoint the one whom I name."

So Samuel obeyed, and set off for Bethlehem with his horn of oil and young heifer. When he arrived, the elders of the town were afraid, wondering why he had come unexpectedly. Were they about to be punished? Samuel assured them that his mission was peaceful. "I've come to sacrifice to the Lord," he said. "Purify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." Then he sent a special invitation to Jesse and his sons to be present at the ceremony

Finally, everyone was gathered at the place of sacrifice. The townspeople, along with Jesse and seven of his sons, were no doubt curious as to what Samuel had in mind. Of course the prophet himself did not know the Lord's choice yet!

**THE CHOICE** Samuel looked at Eliab, Jesse's eldest son; a fine young man, tall and handsome. He said to himself, "Surely this must be the Lord's anointed!" However, Samuel is directed by the Lord; "Don't consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." So Eliab was passed by. The next was Abinadab, but again Samuel said, "Neither has the Lord chosen this one." Shammah the third son was brought forward, then another, then another; until finally, the last son present had been rejected. Somewhat perplexed, Samuel asked Jesse, "Are all your sons here?" Jesse replied, "There is still the youngest, but he is looking after the sheep."

"Go and get him," Samuel insisted, "for we will not sit down till he comes here." So they sent for him and he was brought to stand before Samuel.

David was his name - a fine young man glowing with good health from his outdoor life, keen bright eyes, and handsome features. Immediately, the Lord said to Samuel, "Arise, anoint him; he is the one!"

**THE CHOSEN** David, it seems, was almost despised by his other brothers. After all, he was not even included initially, in the family group! He was only considered good enough to look after sheep. However, the Lord thought otherwise – and HIS opinion matters! Obediently, Samuel took his horn of oil, and anointed David as Israel's future King. As always, there are lots of things to learn from our reading today, but the main lesson is this: the condition of the human heart is what really matters with God. Of course there is nothing wrong in being good-looking or athletic or talented in some way; in fact, David was all of these things as we will learn, but he was chosen to be King because God found him to be "a man after His own heart" [ch 13:14]. What a wonderful compliment! As a young shepherd-boy David was responsible for looking after his father's sheep - but he also knew who was looking after HIM. He could write in that most famous of psalms, "The Lord is MY shepherd!" (Psalm 23:1) We know that he loved his flock and cared for them diligently and bravely. Once he even killed a bear and another time a lion, when they attacked his sheep! Yet he knew that God had helped and protected him both times. And all the time, his shepherd heart was being prepared to protect and lead God's people, the Children of Israel.

How do our hearts compare? Could God say that you and I have a heart like His? Are we right, pure, and clean within? By nature we are all unclean, and need the precious blood of Christ to cleanse us from sin. If we accept Jesus as our Saviour then His blood, shed on Calvary's cross, "cleanses us from all sin." [1 John 1:7] Great!

But how do we keep our lives pure and right? Psalm 119:9 tells us clearly, "By living according to your [God's] Word." Spending time each day, reading the Bible and in prayer with God will keep our hearts 'in tune' with Him.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

1. Why did God tell Samuel to go to Bethlehem?

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2. Why was he hesitant to go there?

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3. What main lesson are we taught in this reading?

.....

4. Why was David chosen as King?

.....

5(a) How can we be made clean and right before God?

.....

5(b) How can this be maintained in daily practice?

My Name is ..... Age .....

# A Musician and a Giant

Key Verse:

**“Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy, the Devil, prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.”**

1 Peter 5:8

Level 5 lesson 22

Extra: Give some reasons for David being called a ‘spiritual giant’.

## Read 1 Samuel 16:14-23

Further reading: 1 Samuel 17:1-11

**A SPIRITUAL GIANT** We mentioned in the last lesson, that David, the newly anointed King of Israel, was a man of many talents. Our reading today, reveals he was an excellent musician and could play the harp beautifully. Not only that, he was a very good composer of spiritual songs, or ‘Psalms,’ as they are known in the Bible. He would set them to music and sing them in the fields while looking after the sheep. His skill as a musician, one day brought him to King Saul’s attention. Saul, after his rejection as King by God, had become a very miserable man. In fact, God had removed His Holy Spirit, and ‘an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him.’ No wonder he was miserable! This was in response to his unrepentant attitude and rebellious determination to resist God. We should not overlook a very important lesson here. Genesis 6:3 tells us that God’s spirit “...will not always strive with man.” It is a terrible thing to repeatedly reject the gracious calling of God in ones’ life; to spurn the salvation and forgiveness of sin so freely offered in Jesus Christ. It is infinitely worse when Almighty God one day accepts that answer, and the offer is withdrawn! The Bible warns, “Don’t count on tomorrow - you don’t know what will happen today!” Don’t be like Saul; when God’s Spirit brings conviction to your heart, act in obedience and know His blessing. Saul’s servants, concerned at the troubled state of the King’s mind, suggested he should, “find someone who can play the harp.” They knew the beautiful, soothing music would bring him some relief. Saul agreed, and David was brought before him to play. Saul was impressed with him and grew to love him dearly, even making him his armour-bearer. From then on, whenever the evil spirit troubled King Saul, David would play his harp “causing the evil one to depart.” How interesting that Scripture records this fact! Yes friends, music can be a powerful force for good; uplifting and exhilarating when used as God intended. However, our enemy the Devil, is also aware of its ability to affect us as humans. He is busy at work in our world today, using music to pollute the minds of millions of people with disgusting lyrics, and enticing many into sin through the combination of drugs and sensual music.

We need to be very careful what we choose to listen to, and where we go for our ‘entertainment.’ For many, the loss of self-control brings temporary relief from the problems and emptiness of their lives. However, when the music stops, the problems are still there, often worsened by their ‘out of control’ behaviour. How much wiser and better to put our lives in God’s hands, and know the peace of sins forgiven, a clear conscience and true fulfillment in life!

**A PHYSICAL GIANT** Now let’s look at Goliath, the giant mentioned in Chapter 17. This cruel and arrogant man was the champion of the Philistine army. And what an imposing physical specimen of manhood he was! He stood nearly 3 metres tall and was enormously strong. He wore a suit of metal armour which alone weighed about 57kgs! In addition, he had a brass helmet and carried a bronze javelin slung over his shoulder. His spear was like ‘a weaver’s beam;’ the head alone weighed about 7kgs! He also carried an enormous sword. He was a truly formidable opponent!

And now he stood to represent the Philistine army. They were evidently recovered from their shameful defeat by Jonathan some time previously – and itching for revenge! Goliath advanced to the edge of the ravine and roared his defiant challenge. “I defy the armies of Israel this day; pick someone to come and fight me. If he wins, we will be your servants. But if I win, you will be our servants,” he cried. He went on to blaspheme and insult the God of Israel. Yet there was not a movement in the Israelite camp! Saul and all his supposedly brave soldiers, including David’s elder brothers, could hear Goliath alright - but they were too frightened to move! What a terrible disgrace for Israel, and worse still, how dishonouring to God!

In the face of such a foe, Saul’s faith in the Living God, and ability to lead and inspire the Children of Israel was seen to be woefully inadequate. Was there no-one in the whole of Israel who would stand against this pagan giant who had defied the Living God? In our next lesson we will see how God raised up a man to bring this powerful enemy of the people of God down into the dust!

## QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

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|--|-------|
| 1. What punishment was inflicted on Saul according to this lesson?             | ..... |
| 2. What method was suggested to him to get relief from his depression?         | ..... |
| 3. What is better than temporary distraction from life’s problems?             | ..... |
| 4. How does music influence your life?   | ..... |
| 5. Why was Israel’s failure to accept Goliath’s challenge dishonouring to God? | ..... |

# David and Goliath

Key Verse:

**“Therefore, put on the full armour of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground...”**

Ephesians 6:13

Level 5 lesson 23

Extra: How did God prepare David for this battle?

## Read 1 Samuel 17:15-50

### Further reading: Ephesians 6:13-18

**FAITH** Back at home, Jesse anxiously waited for news of his three eldest sons who had gone to fight in Saul’s army. Finally, he sent David off with some cheese, meat and bread to give them and to find out how they were.

Unbeknown to Jesse, the battle had been at a stalemate for over a month, as Goliath issued his defiant challenge each day. So early next morning, after arranging a shepherd to care for the sheep, David packed his supplies in a bag and set off to where the army was camped. He arrived just in time to witness the army marching off to the battle line, shouting their war cry. On the other side of the valley, the Philistines were also lining up ready for battle. Quickly, David ran to greet his brothers. While he was still talking to them, Goliath’s voice suddenly boomed out once more across the valley. To David’s surprise the men of Israel began to run, terror-stricken. He is soon told, how for over a month, this giant Goliath had struck fear into the heart of the Israelites, and no-one was brave enough to take up his challenge. David was full of indignation and patriotic fervour. Indignantly, he asked, “What will the man receive who kills this Philistine and removes this disgrace from Israel? Who is this Philistine that he should defy the armies of the Living God?” He was told that in fact, King Saul had offered a huge reward to the man who would fight him - yet there were no takers! David was angry that no-one would fight for the honour of their country, but even more disturbed that Goliath should openly despise and defy the Living God. Eliab, David’s eldest brother, overheard him talking to the men and angrily tried to put him down as just a conceited ‘showoff’; a mere shepherd boy who was ‘way out of his depth’ and who should go home. This faithless, nasty attack on David’s character may give a glimpse as to why God “had rejected” Eliab earlier. David simply replied, “What have I done? Can’t I even speak?”

Soon the news of young David’s stand reached Saul, and he sent for him. David stood before him and bravely declared, “Let no man’s heart fail because of him (Goliath). Your servant will go and fight with the Philistine!”

Saul we know from our previous lesson, loved David; and while impressed with his bravery, he chided him, “You can’t do that! You’re just a boy - and he has been an experienced soldier for years.” (v33)

David then told King Saul of his own experience and how God had delivered him from a lion and a bear which had attacked his sheep, and enabled him to kill them. Then he added forcefully, “And this Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he has defied the armies of the living God!” David’s faith and confidence were not in himself, but in the Almighty, Living God! At this, Saul could only say, “Go and the Lord be with you!” He offered David the protection of his own armour, but after trying it on David discarded it. “I can’t go with this – I’m not used to it,” he said.

**FURY** So taking his staff, and his sling, David set out across the valley toward Goliath. He picked five smooth stones out of the stream in the valley, and armed with these, approached the giant Philistine. “Am I a dog?” roared Goliath in a contemptuous rage, “that you come to me with sticks?” Then he “cursed David by his gods.” “Come here to me,” he boasted, “and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air, and to the beasts of the field!”

I’m sure even the bravest soldier would have been intimidated by the sight of Goliath and his angry outburst - but not David! With the courage of his convictions and the certain knowledge of God’s presence with him, he responded with this magnificent reply. “This day THE LORD will hand you over to me, and I’ll strike you down and cut off your head! Today I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth, and the whole world will know there is a God in Israel. All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves; for the battle is the Lord’s, and HE will give all of you into our hands!” David’s main concern was that the Lord’s name be glorified; that the whole world would know and acknowledge there is but one Living, Almighty God! Confidently he stepped towards Goliath and drew out his first stone. Fitting it into his sling, he swung it around and let it fly at the seemingly invincible giant. It struck him right on his forehead and he fell face down in the dust - DEAD! David rushed forward and with Goliath’s own sword, cut off his head and raised it in triumph. At this, the Philistines fled for their lives and Israel had a mighty victory.

## QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

1. Why was David so upset at Goliath’s taunts?	.....
2. What did King Saul’s initial response to David’s offer reveal about him?	.....
3. David took his staff, sling and five stones to face Goliath. What else did he have?	.....
4. Why was David confident of victory over Goliath?	.....
5. What was David’s main concern in this whole incident?	.....

# David and Jonathan

Key Verse:

**“But this is to fulfill what is written in their law. ‘They hated Me without a cause’.”**

John 15:25

Level 5 lesson 24

Extra: What similarities do you see between David and Jesus?

**Read 1 Samuel 18:1-22; 28-30**

**Further reading: Job 28:20-28**

**DAVID PREPARED** The life of David provides us with some wonderful lessons in our lives as Christians. He was not born into a family of privilege or wealth; rather, the youngest in a poor family. Consigned to caring for sheep, he spent much of his youth outdoors, enduring extremes of heat and cold, often with only the sheep as companions. Yet with the right attitude towards God, all of this was turned to his advantage. Instead of growing bitter and resentful at his lowly position and the harsh demands of his job, David used all of it to develop his talents and grow in godly character. He honed his outdoor survival skills, and developed his musical talent by singing and playing the harp. He learnt responsibility and compassion as he cared for the sheep and lambs. He developed courage, and faith in God; defending them against the attacks of wild animals. Perhaps most importantly, he learnt to treasure his relationship with the Living God, and spent his days in communion with Him and in meditation on His Word.

It is not hard to see how God was preparing him for his life’s work; to be ‘Shepherd’ over God’s chosen people! Already, we have seen how his character of heart had seen him chosen by God and anointed as the future King by Samuel. Saul however, refused to abdicate the throne (which he had forfeited by his sin) even though he had been rejected by God.

Although David could not occupy the throne immediately after his anointing, in His own perfect timing, God was bringing him to a place of prominence in the nation. Initially, his musical ability had seen him called to the palace to serve King Saul. Now his complete faith in God along with his courage and expertise with a slingshot had seen him become a national hero in Israel through his defeat of Goliath.

**DAVID LOVED** At this point, both King Saul and Jonathan, his son, were very fond of David.

There was an attractiveness in his integrity and strength of godly character; an exuberance and zest for life about him which would eventually endear him to the whole nation. Saul wanted him permanently at the palace, and Jonathan ‘loved him as his own soul.’ In a very touching demonstration of his love and devotion to David, Jonathan gave him some of his own princely robes and clothing. In those days, this was the highest honour that royalty could confer on a subject.

Jonathan and David also made a strict covenant with each other, vowing to be friends forever - even to care for each other’s family should one of them die. It appears Saul didn’t realise that David was to displace him as King yet, but following David’s slaying of Goliath, something happened which changed all that.

As the victorious soldiers paraded through the streets of Jerusalem, the women of Israel were singing and dancing in celebration of the victory over the Philistines. However, as King Saul passed by at the head of the procession, he heard the words they were singing; “Saul has slain his thousands, And David his ten thousands!” In an instant, his affection for David changed to jealousy and cruel hatred.

**DAVID HATED** From that moment, Saul realised that David had won the hearts of the people and now posed a big threat to his throne. This jealousy and hatred soon consumed him and he became more and more melancholy and depressed. Twice, as David played before him, the evil spirit which tormented Saul, drove him to pick up a javelin and hurl it at David, hoping to kill him. But David was able to avoid it both times and flee to safety. We read that Saul “was afraid of David because the Lord was with him.” But how could he get rid of him when he was so popular? Under the guise of a ‘promotion’ Saul removed David from the palace and made him a captain over a thousand men. However, verse 17 records his ulterior motive very clearly. “I will not raise a hand against him. Let the Philistines do that!” However, this only served to make David more popular and beloved by the people, as with God’s blessing, he led them to victory after victory! However, Michal, Saul’s second daughter, fell in love with David, and Saul saw another chance to destroy David. David’s being hated without a cause, is one of a number of ways that David was a ‘type’ of the Lord Jesus. He too, as our Key Verse tells us today, was hated by His enemies, “without a cause.”

## QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

1. What was the most important thing David learnt as a young man?

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2. How did Jonathan show his love for David?

.....

3. In what way did Saul’s feelings change towards David?

.....

4. What brought about this change?

.....

5. What was Saul’s real intention behind David’s promotion?

.....

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