

## A Leader after God's Own Heart

**1 Samuel 16:** The LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons." <sup>2</sup>Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me." And the LORD said, "Take a heifer with you, and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.' <sup>3</sup>Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you." ...

<sup>6</sup>When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely the LORD'S anointed is now before the LORD."

<sup>7</sup>But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the LORD does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart." <sup>8</sup>Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. He said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." <sup>9</sup>Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." <sup>10</sup>Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen any of these." <sup>11</sup>Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all your sons here?" And he said, "There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here." <sup>12</sup>He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. The LORD said, "Rise and anoint him; for this is the one."

<sup>13</sup>Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the presence of his brothers; and the spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

**1 Samuel 18:** As they were coming home, when David returned from killing the Philistine, the women came out of all the towns of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with songs of joy, and with musical instruments. <sup>7</sup>And the women sang to one another as they made merry,

"Saul has killed his thousands,  
and David his ten thousands."

<sup>8</sup>Saul was very angry, for this saying displeased him. He said, "They have ascribed to David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed thousands; what more can he have but the kingdom?" <sup>9</sup>So Saul eyed David from that day on.

<sup>10</sup>The next day an evil spirit from God rushed upon Saul, and he raved within his house, while David was playing the lyre, as he did day by day. Saul had his spear in his hand; <sup>11</sup>and Saul threw the spear, for he thought, "I will pin David to the wall." But David eluded him twice.

<sup>12</sup>Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with him but had departed from Saul. <sup>13</sup>So Saul removed him from his presence, and made him a commander of a thousand; and David marched out and came in, leading the army. <sup>14</sup>David had success in all his undertakings; for the LORD was with him. <sup>15</sup>When Saul saw that he had great success, he stood in awe of him. <sup>16</sup>But all Israel and Judah loved David; for it was he who marched out and came in leading them.

<sup>17</sup>Then Saul said to David, "Here is my elder daughter Merab; I will give her to you as a wife; only be valiant for me and fight the LORD'S battles." For Saul thought, "I will not raise a hand against him; let the Philistines deal with him." <sup>18</sup>David said to Saul, "Who am I and who are my kinsfolk, my father's family in Israel, that I should be son-in-law to the king?" <sup>19</sup>But at the time when Saul's daughter Merab should have been given to David, she was given to Adriel the Meholathite as a wife.

<sup>20</sup>Now Saul's daughter Michal loved David. Saul was told, and the thing pleased him. <sup>21</sup>Saul thought, "Let me give her to him that she may be a snare for him and that the hand of the Philistines may be against him." Therefore Saul said to David a second time, "You shall now be my son-in-law." <sup>22</sup>Saul commanded his servants, "Speak to David in private and say, 'See, the king is delighted with you, and all his servants love you; now then, become the king's son-in-law.'" <sup>23</sup>So Saul's servants reported these words to David in private. And David said, "Does it seem to you a little thing to become the king's son-in-law, seeing that I am a poor man and of no repute?" <sup>24</sup>The servants of Saul told him, "This is what David said." <sup>25</sup>Then Saul said, "Thus

shall you say to David, 'The king desires no marriage present except a hundred foreskins of the Philistines, that he may be avenged on the king's enemies.'" Now Saul planned to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines. <sup>26</sup>When his servants told David these words, David was well pleased to be the king's son-in-law. Before the time had expired, <sup>27</sup>David rose and went, along with his men, and killed one hundred of the Philistines; and David brought their foreskins, which were given in full number to the king, that he might become the king's son-in-law. Saul gave him his daughter Michal as a wife. <sup>28</sup>But when Saul realized that the LORD was with David, and that Saul's daughter Michal loved him, <sup>29</sup>Saul was still more afraid of David. So Saul was David's enemy from that time forward.

<sup>30</sup>Then the commanders of the Philistines came out to battle; and as often as they came out, David had more success than all the servants of Saul, so that his fame became very great.

**1 Samuel 24:** When Saul returned from following the Philistines, he was told, "David is in the wilderness of En-gedi." <sup>2</sup>Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and went to look for David and his men in the direction of the Rocks of the Wild Goats. <sup>3</sup>He came to the sheepfolds beside the road, where there was a cave; and Saul went in to relieve himself. Now David and his men were sitting in the innermost parts of the cave. <sup>4</sup>The men of David said to him, "Here is the day of which the LORD said to you, 'I will give your enemy into your hand, and you shall do to him as it seems good to you.'" Then David went and stealthily cut off a corner of Saul's cloak. <sup>5</sup>Afterward David was stricken to the heart because he had cut off a corner of Saul's cloak. <sup>6</sup>He said to his men, "The LORD forbid that I should do this thing to my lord, the LORD'S anointed, to raise my hand against him; for he is the LORD'S anointed." <sup>7</sup>So David scolded his men severely and did not permit them to attack Saul. Then Saul got up and left the cave, and went on his way.

<sup>8</sup>Afterwards David also rose up and went out of the cave and called after Saul, "My lord the king!" When Saul looked behind him, David bowed with his face to the ground, and did obeisance. <sup>9</sup>David said to Saul, "Why do you listen to the words of those who say, 'David seeks to do you harm'? <sup>10</sup>This very day your eyes have seen how the LORD gave you into my hand in the cave; and some urged me to kill you, but I spared you. I said, 'I will not raise my hand against my lord; for he is the LORD'S anointed.'" <sup>11</sup>See, my father, see the corner of your cloak in my hand; for by the fact that I cut off the corner of your cloak, and did not kill you, you may know for certain that there is no wrong or treason in my hands. I have not sinned against you, though you are hunting me to take my life. <sup>12</sup>May the LORD judge between me and you! May the LORD avenge me on you; but my hand shall not be against you. <sup>13</sup>As the ancient proverb says, 'Out of the wicked comes forth wickedness'; but my hand shall not be against you. <sup>14</sup>Against whom has the king of Israel come out? Whom do you pursue? A dead dog? A single flea? <sup>15</sup>May the LORD therefore be judge, and give sentence between me and you. May he see to it, and plead my cause, and vindicate me against you."

<sup>16</sup>When David had finished speaking these words to Saul, Saul said, "Is this your voice, my son David?" Saul lifted up his voice and wept. <sup>17</sup>He said to David, "You are more righteous than I; for you have repaid me good, whereas I have repaid you evil. <sup>18</sup>Today you have explained how you have dealt well with me, in that you did not kill me when the LORD put me into your hands. <sup>19</sup>For who has ever found an enemy, and sent the enemy safely away? So may the LORD reward you with good for what you have done to me this day. <sup>20</sup>Now I know that you shall surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in your hand. <sup>21</sup>Swear to me therefore by the LORD that you will not cut off my descendants after me, and that you will not wipe out my name from my father's house." <sup>22</sup>So David swore this to Saul. Then Saul went home; but David and his men went up to the stronghold. [see also **1 Samuel 26:** David spares Saul a second time]

**2 Samuel 1:** After the death of Saul, when David had returned from defeating the Amalekites, David remained two days in Ziklag. <sup>2</sup>On the third day, a man came from Saul's camp, with his clothes torn and dirt on his head. When he came to David, he fell to the ground and did obeisance. <sup>3</sup>David said to him, "Where have you come from?" He said to him, "I have escaped from the camp of Israel." <sup>4</sup>David said to him, "How did things go? Tell me!" He answered, "The army fled from the battle, but also many of the army fell and died; and Saul and his son Jonathan also died." <sup>5</sup>Then David asked the young man who was reporting to him, "How do you know that Saul and his son Jonathan died?" <sup>6</sup>The young man reporting to him said, "I

happened to be on Mount Gilboa; and there was Saul leaning on his spear, while the chariots and the horsemen drew close to him. <sup>7</sup>When he looked behind him, he saw me, and called to me. I answered, 'Here sir.' <sup>8</sup>And he said to me, 'Who are you?' I answered him, 'I am an Amalekite.' <sup>9</sup>He said to me, 'Come, stand over me and kill me; for convulsions have seized me, and yet my life still lingers.' <sup>10</sup>So I stood over him, and killed him, for I knew that he could not live after he had fallen. I took the crown that was on his head and the armlet that was on his arm, and I have brought them here to my lord."

<sup>11</sup>Then David took hold of his clothes and tore them; and all the men who were with him did the same. <sup>12</sup>They mourned and wept, and fasted until evening for Saul and for his son Jonathan, and for the army of the LORD and for the house of Israel, because they had fallen by the sword. <sup>13</sup>David said to the young man who had reported to him, "Where do you come from?" He answered, "I am the son of a resident alien, an Amalekite." <sup>14</sup>David said to him, "Were you not afraid to lift your hand to destroy the LORD'S anointed?" <sup>15</sup>Then David called one of the young men and said, "Come here and strike him down." So he struck him down and he died. <sup>16</sup>David said to him, "Your blood be on your head; for your own mouth has testified against you, saying, 'I have killed the LORD'S anointed.'"

<sup>17</sup>David intoned this lamentation over Saul and his son Jonathan. <sup>18</sup>(He ordered that The Song of the Bow be taught to the people of Judah; it is written in the Book of Jashar.) He said:

<sup>19</sup> Your glory, O Israel, lies slain upon your high places!  
How the mighty have fallen! ...

**[2 Samuel 4:** David mourns and avenges the death of Saul's son Ishbaal, for two years the King of Israel after Saul. Also 2 Samuel 9, David's kindness to Mephibosheth.]

**2 Samuel 14:25** Now in all Israel there was no one to be praised so much for his beauty as [David's son by Maacah--2 Sam 3:3] Absalom; from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him. <sup>26</sup>When he cut the hair of his head (for at the end of every year he used to cut it; when it was heavy on him, he cut it), he weighed the hair of his head, two hundred shekels by the king's weight.

**2 Samuel 15:** After this Absalom got himself a chariot and horses, and fifty men to run ahead of him. <sup>2</sup>Absalom used to rise early and stand beside the road into the gate; and when anyone brought a suit before the king for judgment, Absalom would call out and say, "From what city are you?" When the person said, "Your servant is of such and such a tribe in Israel," <sup>3</sup>Absalom would say, "See, your claims are good and right; but there is no one deputed by the king to hear you." <sup>4</sup>Absalom said moreover, "If only I were judge in the land! Then all who had a suit or cause might come to me, and I would give them justice." <sup>5</sup>Whenever people came near to do obeisance to him, he would put out his hand and take hold of them, and kiss them. <sup>6</sup>Thus Absalom did to every Israelite who came to the king for judgment; so Absalom stole the hearts of the people of Israel.

<sup>7</sup>At the end of four years Absalom said to the king, "Please let me go to Hebron and pay the vow that I have made to the LORD. <sup>8</sup>For your servant made a vow while I lived at Geshur in Aram: If the LORD will indeed bring me back to Jerusalem, then I will worship the LORD in Hebron." <sup>9</sup>The king said to him, "Go in peace." So he got up, and went to Hebron. <sup>10</sup>But Absalom sent secret messengers throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, "As soon as you hear the sound of the trumpet, then shout: Absalom has become king at Hebron!" <sup>11</sup>Two hundred men from Jerusalem went with Absalom; they were invited guests, and they went in their innocence, knowing nothing of the matter. <sup>12</sup>While Absalom was offering the sacrifices, he sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor, from his city Giloh. The conspiracy grew in strength, and the people with Absalom kept increasing.

<sup>13</sup>A messenger came to David, saying, "The hearts of the Israelites have gone after Absalom." <sup>14</sup>Then David said to all his officials who were with him at Jerusalem, "Get up! Let us flee, or there will be no escape for us from Absalom. Hurry, or he will soon overtake us, and bring disaster down upon us, and attack the city with the edge of the sword." <sup>15</sup>The king's officials said to the king, "Your servants are ready to do whatever our lord the king decides." <sup>16</sup>So the king left, followed by all his household, except ten concubines

whom he left behind to look after the house. <sup>17</sup>The king left, followed by all the people; and they stopped at the last house. <sup>18</sup>All his officials passed by him; and all the Cherethites, and all the Pelethites, and all the six hundred Gittites who had followed him from Gath, passed on before the king.

<sup>19</sup>Then the king said to Ittai the Gittite, "Why are you also coming with us? Go back, and stay with the king; for you are a foreigner, and also an exile from your home. <sup>20</sup>You came only yesterday, and shall I today make you wander about with us, while I go wherever I can? Go back, and take your kinsfolk with you; and may the LORD show steadfast love and faithfulness to you." <sup>21</sup>But Ittai answered the king, "As the LORD lives, and as my lord the king lives, wherever my lord the king may be, whether for death or for life, there also your servant will be." <sup>22</sup>David said to Ittai, "Go then, march on." So Ittai the Gittite marched on, with all his men and all the little ones who were with him. <sup>23</sup>The whole country wept aloud as all the people passed by; the king crossed the Wadi Kidron, and all the people moved on toward the wilderness.

<sup>24</sup>Abiathar came up, and Zadok also, with all the Levites, carrying the ark of the covenant of God. They set down the ark of God, until the people had all passed out of the city. <sup>25</sup>Then the king said to Zadok, "Carry the ark of God back into the city. If I find favor in the eyes of the LORD, he will bring me back and let me see both it and the place where it stays. <sup>26</sup>But if he says, 'I take no pleasure in you,' here I am, let him do to me what seems good to him." <sup>27</sup>The king also said to the priest Zadok, "Look, go back to the city in peace, you and Abiathar, with your two sons, Ahimaaz your son, and Jonathan son of Abiathar. <sup>28</sup>See, I will wait at the fords of the wilderness until word comes from you to inform me." <sup>29</sup>So Zadok and Abiathar carried the ark of God back to Jerusalem, and they remained there.

<sup>30</sup>But David went up the ascent of the Mount of Olives, weeping as he went, with his head covered and walking barefoot; and all the people who were with him covered their heads and went up, weeping as they went. <sup>31</sup>David was told that Ahithophel was among the conspirators with Absalom. And David said, "O LORD, I pray you, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness."

**2 Samuel 16:5-14:** When King David came to Bahurim, a man of the family of the house of Saul came out whose name was Shimei son of Gera; he came out cursing. <sup>6</sup>He threw stones at David and at all the servants of King David; now all the people and all the warriors were on his right and on his left. <sup>7</sup>Shimei shouted while he cursed, "Out! Out! Murderer! Scoundrel! <sup>8</sup>The LORD has avenged on all of you the blood of the house of Saul, in whose place you have reigned; and the LORD has given the kingdom into the hand of your son Absalom. See, disaster has overtaken you; for you are a man of blood."

<sup>9</sup>Then Abishai son of Zeruiah said to the king, "Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? Let me go over and take off his head." <sup>10</sup>But the king said, "What have I to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah? If he is cursing because the LORD has said to him, 'Curse David,' who then shall say, 'Why have you done so?'" <sup>11</sup>David said to Abishai and to all his servants, "My own son seeks my life; how much more now may this Benjaminite! Let him alone, and let him curse; for the LORD has bidden him. <sup>12</sup>It may be that the LORD will look on my distress, and the LORD will repay me with good for this cursing of me today." <sup>13</sup>So David and his men went on the road, while Shimei went along on the hillside opposite him and cursed as he went, throwing stones and flinging dust at him. <sup>14</sup>The king and all the people who were with him arrived weary at the Jordan; and there he refreshed himself.

**2 Samuel 18:** Then David mustered the men who were with him, and set over them commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds. <sup>2</sup>And David divided the army into three groups: one third under the command of Joab, one third under the command of Abishai son of Zeruiah, Joab's brother, and one third under the command of Ittai the Gittite. The king said to the men, "I myself will also go out with you." <sup>3</sup>But the men said, "You shall not go out. For if we flee, they will not care about us. If half of us die, they will not care about us. But you are worth ten thousand of us; therefore it is better that you send us help from the city." <sup>4</sup>The king said to them, "Whatever seems best to you I will do." So the king stood at the side of the gate, while all the army marched out by hundreds and by thousands. <sup>5</sup>The king ordered Joab and Abishai and Ittai, saying, "Deal gently for my sake with the young man Absalom." And all the people heard when the king gave orders to all the commanders concerning Absalom.

<sup>6</sup>So the army went out into the field against Israel; and the battle was fought in the forest of Ephraim. <sup>7</sup>The men of Israel were defeated there by the servants of David, and the slaughter there was great on that day, twenty thousand men. <sup>8</sup>The battle spread over the face of all the country; and the forest claimed more victims that day than the sword.

<sup>9</sup>Absalom happened to meet the servants of David. Absalom was riding on his mule, and the mule went under the thick branches of a great oak. His head caught fast in the oak, and he was left hanging between heaven and earth, while the mule that was under him went on. <sup>10</sup>A man saw it, and told Joab, "I saw Absalom hanging in an oak." <sup>11</sup>Joab said to the man who told him, "What, you saw him! Why then did you not strike him there to the ground? I would have been glad to give you ten pieces of silver and a belt." <sup>12</sup>But the man said to Joab, "Even if I felt in my hand the weight of a thousand pieces of silver, I would not raise my hand against the king's son; for in our hearing the king commanded you and Abishai and Ittai, saying: For my sake protect the young man Absalom! <sup>13</sup>On the other hand, if I had dealt treacherously against his life (and there is nothing hidden from the king), then you yourself would have stood aloof." <sup>14</sup>Joab said, "I will not waste time like this with you." He took three spears in his hand, and thrust them into the heart of Absalom, while he was still alive in the oak. <sup>15</sup>And ten young men, Joab's armor-bearers, surrounded Absalom and struck him, and killed him.

<sup>16</sup>Then Joab sounded the trumpet, and the troops came back from pursuing Israel, for Joab restrained the troops. <sup>17</sup>They took Absalom, threw him into a great pit in the forest, and raised over him a very great heap of stones. Meanwhile all the Israelites fled to their homes. <sup>18</sup>Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and set up for himself a pillar that is in the King's Valley, for he said, "I have no son to keep my name in remembrance"; he called the pillar by his own name. It is called Absalom's Monument to this day.

<sup>19</sup>Then Ahimaaz son of Zadok said, "Let me run, and carry tidings to the king that the LORD has delivered him from the power of his enemies." <sup>20</sup>Joab said to him, "You are not to carry tidings today; you may carry tidings another day, but today you shall not do so, because the king's son is dead." <sup>21</sup>Then Joab said to a Cushite, "Go, tell the king what you have seen." The Cushite bowed before Joab, and ran. ...

<sup>31</sup>Then the Cushite came; and the Cushite said, "Good tidings for my lord the king! For the LORD has vindicated you this day, delivering you from the power of all who rose up against you." <sup>32</sup>The king said to the Cushite, "Is it well with the young man Absalom?" The Cushite answered, "May the enemies of my lord the king, and all who rise up to do you harm, be like that young man."

<sup>33</sup>The king was deeply moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept; and as he went, he said, "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would I had died instead of you, O Absalom, my son, my son!"

# David: A Leader after God's Own Heart

## Leader's notes

Some relevant background on Saul:

1 Samuel 8: Samuel's description of a king: Lord it over, not a servant leader. The king will

- Take your sons (v11)
- Take your daughters (v13)
- Take the best of your fields (v14)
- Take a tithe of your grain (v15)
- Take your male and female slaves (v16)
- Take your cattle and donkeys (v16)
- Take your flocks (v17)

1 Samuel 9: "Kish... A man of wealth; ... Saul, a handsome young man. There was not a man among the people of Israel more handsome than he; he stood head and shoulders above everyone else."

1 Samuel 10:

- The Lord anointed Saul ruler over his people (v1). (The people remained God's, the authority was not absolute, but delegated by God. What God gives, he can take away.)
- Saul was to reign over the people and to save them from their enemies all around. (v1)
- "Do you see the one whom the LORD has chosen? There is no one like him among all the people." (v24) Perhaps at this time the Lord was looking on the outside, but later decided to try to look upon the heart (1 Samuel 16:7).
- God touched the hearts of the warriors who became loyal to Saul. (v26)
- Saul was patient with those who detracted and resented his leadership. (v27, see also 11:12-13)

1 Samuel 11:

- Saul had been plowing the field with a team of oxen, but he inquires re: the distress of fellow Israelites. (v5)
- The spirit of God comes upon Saul in power, and he becomes angry at the threats of Nahash (v6).
- He threatens Israel to send up troops to help deliver the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead (1 Samuel 8:11), and they come in force. (v7-8)

1 Samuel 15:

- God regretted that he made Saul king, because he stopped obeying God's commands. (v11)
- "Though you are little in your own eyes, are you not the head of the tribes of Israel?" Saul didn't take his own leadership position seriously, and failed to understand the consequences of what seemed a small disobedience. (v17)
- The Lord sent Saul on a mission... Yet Saul didn't obey. (v18) He justified it by saying, "The flocks and herds I didn't kill, because I planned to give them as a sacrifice in Gilgal." But God delights in obedience, more than in sacrifices. (v22)
- **1 Samuel 15: Saul engages in ends-justify-the-means disobedience.**

### Notes on the material in the study:

- 16:1: The Lord is calling the shots, not simply waiting to see how Saul's kingship will play out.
- 16:1: "I have provided for myself a king": David is God's own man, reminiscent of Jesus.
- 16:2: "If Saul hears of it, he will kill me." Illustrates Saul's jealousy... Samuel is the man most respected by Saul. This is in total contrast to Saul in 1 Samuel 10:27 and 11:12-13, where Saul specifically refuses to be

vindictive against those who opposed his kingship. Now, a few chapters later, Saul is threatening (at least in Samuel's mind) the one who would take his place.

- 16:6: Samuel judges Eliab the way he viewed Saul: by looking at the outward appearance of a fine, handsome, tall, authoritative young man. Compare with 1 Sam 9 and 1 Sam 10:24.
- 16:13: David is honored among his peers and elders. A destiny item, which can give David plenty of patience and faith when being chased by Saul.
- 18:1: "... when David returned from [famously] killing the Philistine..."
- 18:7: Comparisons between older and younger leaders: David makes Saul look bad by comparison, even though (apart from David's conquest of Goliath) Saul still has an impressive record. Saul has been at it (killing Philistines) over the long haul--David hits one home run and he gets lead mention in the song.
- 18:8: Saul is threatened by the song about David. **How are we susceptible to feeling threatened by extreme gifting in others? younger staff?**
- 18:8: "What more can he have but the kingdom?" Saul is guilty of zero-sum, economy of scarcity thinking: "If David increases, Saul must decrease." Yet it didn't have to be this way. Saul thinks of David as an enemy, while David's sense was always to be a loyal subject and servant of Saul. Saul could have gloried in David's successes. Sensing God was on David's side, he could have gotten on David's side also: become a mentor, a sponsor to David. But instead he was threatened. Saul is King, and can easily threaten David. But Saul is the one who is afraid of David, and not vice versa.
- 18:10: When Saul first became King, he was patient with his detractors (1 Sam 10:27; 11:12-13) but now he's threatened. He has grown too attached to his position of influence and leadership. It is addictive.
- 18:11: It is interesting that Saul threw the spear but David eluded Saul twice: that means not only did David not throw the spear back at Saul, but he made himself vulnerable to Saul's outbursts again after the first spear-throwing incident. This is very remarkable. Perhaps because of a confidence in God and God's promises to him he is able to (warily) put himself in harms way again. This continues in 18:27 when David goes out to kill Philistines thinking he will win Saul's approval and with it his daughter. He gets Michal but doesn't win Saul's affection.
- 18:11: "I will pin him to the wall." A very understandable--but sinful--desire to pop the bubble of the extremely successful. Saul is threatened, envious, and now murderous.
- **What spears do we throw? How can we be tempted to want to "pop the bubble" of success our younger leaders experience? Withhold encouragement, constantly critiquing without acknowledging strength, never being satisfied; to entrusting the ministry to others, holding on too tightly to power, influence, the affection of others. We can become threatened at the success of people we lead--zero sum thinking--rather than rejoicing at their success which enhances our own.**
- 18:16: "All Israel and Judah loved David": he is well beloved. Saul is jealous of the affection of the people for David.
- 18:18, also v23: David sincerely believes himself not to be worthy of being son-in-law to the king, even though he himself is the Lord's anointed, and it is he of whom the ladies of Israel sing and swoon. David hasn't begun to believe the publicity, or to lose his humility because of the adoring crowds. David could have thought, "I am anointed the next king in Israel, a very fitting King's son-in-law indeed." He could have thought that this was the break that God was giving him. David honors Saul always, even when Saul is a dishonorable king and leader.
- 18:19: Saul breaks his promise to David, the first of many such broken promises.
- 18:20: Even Saul's daughter falls in love with David. **Sometimes the people we care about are drawn into the influence of people we might easily consider our opponents or competitors: a high-powered, very with it church or pastor, etc. It can be threatening. We stop thinking about what is best for them and think about the threat the new influence is to the affections of the person we care about. Application: Students of ours who become leaders in a church and then call into question what we've given them: eg. Vineyard.**

- 18:23: “of no repute”: yet David does have a huge reputation (18:7). But his family doesn’t and he cannot pay the bride price. So Saul gives him a bride price he’s only too happy to raise: 100 foreskins of Philistines.
- 18:26: David took Saul’s offer to him naively, thinking the best of Saul, even though it was a trick.
- **18:30: What happens when a young leader becomes more famous and successful than their nominal leader? Older one is threatened, younger one often becomes impatient and over-eager. (See Absalom.)**
- 1 Samuel 24:4: The men with David remind him of God’s promises to him. They have a sense of God’s destiny and are in a hurry to get where they think David is supposed to be going... to eliminate Saul and become King. Yet David isn’t willing to get the kingship by killing the Lord’s anointed. Among other things, David knows that the way David treats the king is the way he will be treated as king. David himself dies of old age, not by the sword. David knows a principle that serves him well: **“What goes around comes around!” How we treat our leaders will indicate how we will be treated by those we lead and who follow us.**
- 24:5: David even feels a pang of guilt for cutting off a piece of the cloak. Very sensitive conscience. David saw the same facts as did his loyal men, but he interpreted them very differently. He did do to Saul “as it seemed good to” him, which was simply to let Saul go and then plead with Saul to cease treating David as a threat.
- **How am I tempted to “cut off the corner of the robe” of my anointed leaders? Not trying to slay them, just chip away at their glory, their reputations. Mention a bad sermon on the part of a local pastor, or pass on gossip on a local church. Say things in minor ways that erode confidence in students’ leaders in other settings: parents, faculty and administrators, chaplains and pastors, or even in national leaders within IVCF. Zero-sum thinking: when they are diminished, I am enhanced. David’s conscience was acutely aware of this behavior as sinful. Is mine?**
- 24:6: David will wait to receive what God wants to give him in God’s timing. God removed his sponsorship of Saul’s kingship because of Saul’s “ends justify the means” thinking (1 Samuel 15). David won’t be guilty of that also. David knows that God is in control.
- **24:6: How am I tempted towards “ends justify the means” thinking? Especially with my own authority?**
- 24:12: David appeals to God to vindicate and judge. He doesn’t try to force God’s hand.
- 24:14: “A dead dog? A single flea?” either sarcasm (“Don’t think of me as a single vulnerable flea!”) or else extreme humility (“I would never hurt even a flea! let alone a king!”).
- 24:15: David knows that God is able to overcome the barrier that stands in the way of David’s becoming king. **Often I feel that I am being thwarted in some measure of my leadership, but David is peaceful that the guarantor of his rightful and fruitful destiny is God himself. This attitude would replace anxiety with peace and deep confidence in God’s goodness and timing.**
- 24:21: Even Saul recognizes that David’s destiny as king is not in doubt. The only question is “What kind of king will David be?” After the order of Saul, or after God’s own heart?
- 24:22: David makes a promise to Saul, which he keeps, even though Saul doesn’t keep his promises to David.
- 2 Samuel 1:11: How can David sincerely mourn Saul’s death? By the time Saul died, I imagine that he wasn’t mourned by many people. Lots of folks were glad to see him gone, eager to see him replaced by David. But David himself sincerely mourns the loss of a great one.
- 1:14: “Were you not afraid to lift your hand against the Lord’s anointed?” David too is the Lord’s anointed. He wants to set a clear precedent. David himself did not die by the sword.
- 2 Samuel 4: David also mourns and avenges the death of Saul’s son Ishbaal.
- 2 Samuel 9: David’s kindness to Mephibosheth, thus fulfilling the promise he had made to Saul.

- 2 Samuel 14:25-26: Absalom, like David and Saul before him, was very good looking. Perhaps Absalom was the best looking. One thing is for certain. Neither Saul nor David grew up as sons of kings, but Absalom did. He was very spoiled and proud.
- 2 Samuel 15:4: Absalom is ingratiating. He tells people what they want to hear. He was a duplicitous, scheming people-pleaser. He was a very good politician, in that regard. Absalom grew up in a royal court: he knew how to use words to impress, to create feelings of approval and popularity.
- 2 Samuel 15:4: Absalom says, "If only I were judge in the land!" My temptation, "If only I were in charge---" of ONS, Spring Meetings, RSC, etc.
- 2 Samuel 15:14: Whether David and his company were in mortal danger, it is hard to know. They flee rather than fight Absalom, even though David eventually does fight and win against the rebellion. But David, man of action, not a coward in the face of a lion, a bear, or an uncircumcised Philistine giant, flees in the face of Absalom, who is not a man trained in the art of war. David gives God a chance to speak, to show that he has finished with David's rule, and that Absalom really should be king, even though I am sure David probably suspected that Absalom wouldn't make a very good king.
- 15:15: "Your servants are ready to do whatever our lord the king decides." An invitation to enter straightway into battle with Absalom, but David instead flees.
- 15:19-23: A touching scene. In the midst of the greatest battle for his kingship, when he himself is in mortal danger, his concern is for Ittai the Gittite. *Yet Ittai knows the kind of leadership that it pays to be loyal to*, and so regardless of the fact that he is not an Israelite, he stays and throws his lot in with David.
- 15:24-29: Again, a remarkable scene. We know from earlier (2 Sam 6) how much David appreciates and honors the ark--it represents the very presence of God. Yet he doesn't want to try to co-opt the ark or use it as a totem (the way the Philistines tried to do). He wants God's will and God's blessing more than he wants to retain his position of kingship. David knows that if God is for him, he doesn't need the ark, and if God is not for him, the ark will do no good at all. David knows God cannot be manipulated. And yet, in face of the uncertainty of his situation, he seems very much at peace.
- 15:31: "Turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness." Seeing that Ahithophel had joined Absalom must have been a huge blow, since Ahithophel's wisdom must have seemed like a great weapon and advantage for Absalom. So David prays a very bold, remarkable prayer, which God grants. David depends on God to defeat Absalom, even in the face of extraordinary odds. Only after David hears God's reply to this prayer (Ahitophel's counsel is defeated, so Ahitophel hangs himself) does David go into battle against his son. Having heard from God that he is granting his prayers, he is encouraged to defend his throne.
- 2 Samuel 16:5-14: Again, another remarkable scene. David is being chased by his son & enemy, Absalom. The cursings of Shimei could just be the straw that breaks the camel's back, bringing all of David's hostility and wrath down upon himself. But David once again will not be goaded (once again by Abishai, see 1 Samuel 26, the second time David refuses to kill Saul) into vengeance. David asks, once again, that God would repay good for the evil he had received from Shimei.
- 2 Samuel 18:7: The civil war killed 20,000 people! Huge negative effect of Absalom's rebellion.
- 18:14: Joab, willing to strike down Absalom, isn't trusted by David. David eventually asks Solomon to kill Joab (his death-bed wish, 1 Kings 2:6).
- 18:18: Absalom was concerned for his own legacy: living in the shadow of Israel's greatest king would make it easy for any son to mope that he won't have a legacy of his own. This is the dynamic of talented people living and doing ministry in the shadow of deeply gifted and extraordinary people. Somewhat similarly, I know this dynamic as I mope that I won't be allowed to have this or that influence because I am a white male in an age of concern for gender and ethnic minority balance. This is unfair, yet I do this.
- 18:31: "Good tidings": Once again people misunderstand David's heart. David would rather have died (18:33) than hear that his son had died. People continue to assume David is just like any king, eager to retain power, threatened by and vindictive towards those who would challenge that power.
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Selections taken from *A Tale of Three Kings*, by Gene Edwards:

P15: “When someone throws a spear at you, David, just wrench it right out of the wall and throw it back. Absolutely everyone else does, you can be sure.”

And in doing this small feat of returning thrown spears, you will prove many things: You are courageous. You stand for the right. You boldly stand against the wrong. You are tough and can't be pushed around. You will not stand for injustice or unfair treatment. You are the defender of the faith, keeper of the flame, detector of all heresy. You will not be wronged. All of these attributes then combine to prove that you are also, obviously, a candidate for kingship. Yes, perhaps you are the Lord's anointed.

After the order of King Saul.

There is also a possibility that some 20 years after your coronation, you will be the most incredibly skilled spear thrower in all the realm. And, most assuredly, by then...

Quite mad.

P38: Saul was everything men today are seeking to be... empowered with the Holy Spirit... able to do the impossible... for God. A leader, chosen by God with power from God. ... He was also eaten with jealousy, capable of murder and willing to live in spiritual darkness.

P47: “My king has never threatened me as does yours. Your new king has begun his reign with laws, rules, regulations and fear. The clearest memory I have of [King David], when we lived in the caves, is that his was a life of submission. Yes, David showed me submission, not authority. He taught me, not the quick cures of rules and laws, but the art of patience. That is what changed my life. Legalism is nothing but a leader's way of avoiding suffering.

“Rules were invented by elders, so they could get to bed early! Men who harp on authority only prove that they have none. And kings who make speeches about submission only betray twin fears in their hearts: they are not certain they are really true leaders, sent of God. And they live in mortal fear of a rebellion.... “My king did not fear rebellion because he did not mind if he was dethroned!”

P78: “But you know that Absalom should not be king! Replied Abishai in frustration.

“Do I? No man knows. Only God knows, and He has not spoken. I will not fight to be king or to remain king. May God come tonight and take the throne, the kingship, and ...” David's voice faltered, “and his anointing from me. I seek his will, not his power. I repeat. I desire his will more than I desire a position of leadership. He may be through with me.”

### **Application questions/angles:**

- David knew that God was in charge of his own career development. He was patient even though he must have had a sense of destiny: just because God had indicated to him that he would be King, David did not take matters into his own hands.
- Comparisons between experienced leader and gifted young leaders: can create jealousy, envy, threatenedness. How should we lead gifted leaders? we want to lead in a way to demonstrate an economy of abundance, that there is more than enough influence and authority to go around, and that having gifted folks on my team helps us all do better. One way envy or jealousy comes up: when I hear that someone younger and (I perceive) less gifted or successful is given a plum speaking assignment, say, at Urbana. I can be tempted to think that gender and ethnic concerns will make it hard for me to fulfill my “Urbana speaker” dream.
- Spear throwing, bubble popping: Temptation to threaten and be threatened by gifted, successful, popular, famous young leaders. So we want to pop their bubble, bring them down a couple notches, find the chinks in the armor, etc.
- Temptation to return spear throwing: verbal assaults on non-servant leaders. I used to think that if people weren't servant leaders, they didn't need to be followed or honored. I used harsh language to describe my evaluations of people in Madison, for example, mostly from ignorance. David, rather, honored a dishonorable Saul, consistently and without fail, all the way up to his death and afterwards, with Saul's kin.

- Another way this shows up is as a temptation to speak as if I have no debt to those who came before me. (Again, David honors Saul's memory and legacy: "How the mighty have fallen!") I used to speak of John Ratichek's ministry at Harvard by talking about the pathetic fellowship before Lisa and I arrived on the scene in 1989. I have done better with Doug--not insincerely, I believe, speaking of his leadership of the region as experienced, expert, not incompetent.
- How am I tempted to listen to the voices of impatience (1 Sam 24, 26) which tell me that the ends justify the means? These may be my own voices, or the expedient thinking of others? Tempted to grasp to fulfill promises I may think I have received from God (sense of destiny or self-importance) rather than wait and let God give any honor he may in his own time.
- The temptation of Absalom: living life in the shadow of greatness, how is it tempting to want to take matters into my own hands to create my own legacy? to grab for power or leadership? to steal influence and affection from its rightful place in others, say by speaking slyly about my pastor or others in influence around me? Temptation to be jealous of the success of others while I work in relative obscurity.
- The temptation (eg., with Shimei) to demand respect as the Lord's anointed. David doesn't.