

King David the Community Man

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David is being referred to as the greatest king Israel had and it is not difficult to figure out why. He was a brave warrior, an upright ruler, in touch with his people and a real child of God. David was not perfect, but still God called him a man after his own heart. Let's look today at how David was as a community person in his journey becoming king, that is, how did he act against the people around him.

When David was a boy he attended to his father's sheep. A shepherd was one of the lowest jobs you could find in Israel, yet David did not complain. He protected the sheep even when a lion and a bear came and put his own life at risk to save the sheep.

Points of learning: David was...

1. Honouring his father's wishes (5th Commandment – read Exodus 20:12 and note the promise for a future. His dad did not regard him as important, because he was not even called when Samuel came to anoint a new king.
2. Had a good attitude and did not complain, but took his job seriously. He was faithful in little, so God could appoint him over much (This reminds of the parable of the talents.)
3. He had faith in God – the type that completely surrenders. This is the same faith that Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego had when they were thrown into the fire – all or nothing.

Today we are quick to complain, but if we want to get promotion from God should we not think of having a similar attitude as David?

When David took on Goliath, he first came to the camp with food for his brothers. He did not come looking for a fight, he was minding his own business. When he heard Goliath, he responded immediately. His response was one of faith in 1 Sam 17:26. David then asked around to ensure that he had his facts right, before he offered to take on the giant. He did not ask three times because of the reward, he wanted to know if they were really looking for one person to fight on behalf of the entire nation.

Learning Points: David did...

4. Not come with a big show that "I am the man who can kill the giant". He was humble.
5. Take on the giant with faith and not based on his own competence. David was in the Spirit during this big life or death battle. Remember what they said to each other in 1 Sam 17:44-47.
6. Respond saying in 1 Sam 18:23, that he did not feel justified to become the king's son-in-law. David did not have a poor self-image, because he could not have defeated the giant, this was true humility.

Do we really trust God for miracles today, or only in human excellence? When God helps us and we achieve something good, do we boast around to everyone or do we carry on serving others as normal?

When Saul appointed David over the other soldiers he did not walk around with a chip on his shoulder. He fought fearlessly and killed many Philistines. The bible states numerous times from 1 Sam 18 that the people loved him. The ladies sang a song honouring him above king Saul. The soldiers respected him and when Saul had an evil spirit coming to him, David worshipped to give Saul relief. David could see Saul was not loved by God, but he knew it was not his place to dishonour him. However, Saul tried to kill David.

Learning Points: David...

7. Never rebelled against Saul.
8. Believed that God is on his side and that His plan would happen for his life. David never had a pity party about his circumstances, even though he was the #1 hunted man in Israel.

9. David did tell a white lie to the priest Ahimelech to try and protect him in 1 Sam 21, because David wanted to keep the priest innocent.
10. David fled to Achish, the king of Gath but was not well received. He pretended to be crazy to get out of their alive. He humiliated himself instead of causing trouble.
11. Then David ended in the cave at Adullam. All the washouts, losers and helpless then came to David, as if he could help each of them with their own personal issues. David had a really bad day and then all these people wanted him to help them. He welcomed them.
12. David brought his family to Moab, making sure that they were safe. Afterwards a prophet told him to go back to Juda and he complied, even though it was dangerous.

Today we like to give up and feel sorry for ourselves when things get tough and then we give up. We say "this was not God's plan and that person who prophesied was false". When we have a bad day we treat other people poorly. If God gives us an instruction to do something that may look like it will make our situations worse, do we comply or find excuses?

After Saul killed the entire priesthood city of Nob, except for the priest Abiathar who escaped to David. David accepted the responsibility for their deaths. He delivered the city Keilah from the Philistines, yet they were unthankful as they would not harbour them. David and his people had to go and live in the desert, wherever they could, in hiding from king Saul. His only true friend Jonathan came to encourage him. Again the tattletales led Saul to capture them, but God saved them. The climax came when Saul was sleeping in a cave with David and his men at the back and he cut off the seam from his garment but did not harm him. This was God ordained and David as an anointed by God could kill Saul for his murdering of the priests.

Learning Points: David...

13. Did not shy away from accepting responsibility for being the reason for the massacre in Nob.
14. Was never bitter against the people in Keilah
15. Never gave up when they were fleeing for his life from Saul. He had to continue remain strong as his men looked upon him for guidance and strength.
16. Did not give in to temptation or pressure from his own people to kill Saul in the cave. God gave David the option to kill Saul, yet David chose blamelessness. Because he insisted that Saul was anointed as king and therefore he would not touch him. God had to kill Saul himself.
17. David tried to get Saul to excuse him by showing humility and Saul lied by saying that he would.

Again Saul came to kill David, but the latter sneaked into the camp and took a spear and water jar. Note the words spoken in 1 Sam 26:7-12. Again David tried his best to show Saul that he is not his enemy by returning the items. Saul recognized his defeat in verse 25. David was living in Philistine country and went to join the army as everybody was called up for war, but fortunately was sent back before the big battle that killed Saul. King Jesus is patient, but it is clear that he arranged the battle to end Saul's lives and to cut off his inheritance. Whilst David was away his home town Ziklag was attacked and burnt and his men were thinking of mutiny and killing him. Read 1 Sam 30:6.

Learning Points: David...

18. Did not budge from his principles even though his actions did not make sense to his followers.
19. At his lowest point still did not give up, but look to God for strength.
20. When he prayed to ask God whether he should go after the attackers he probably did not even know where to find them. Still he trusted God for an outcome for a seemingly impossible situation.

Today when we do the right thing and the tables turn against us, do we not say "it doesn't help to do the right thing. Now it is even worse!" If we compromise and give up, how can we expect God to bless us?

There is much more to discuss about the character of the greatest king of Israel in subsequent scriptures. What we should do today is to compare our attitude to his. May God help us to mature and to help others despite our circumstances, so that He might say: "Well done my child, over little were you faithful and over much will I appoint you." Let us pray and align ourselves to the Word in repentance.