

Bi235 Old Testament 2

Lesson Bi235-19 David Becomes King of Israel

God has called you to do something for him. Don't be surprised or discouraged if it doesn't happen immediately. As a young man David was anointed to follow Saul as King of Israel. Several years went by before he reached the throne. And the amazing truth is that Yahweh was with him the whole time.

As a boy David learned responsibility by taking care of his family's sheep. As a musician and armor-bearer for King Saul, he learned patience. He also learned the routine of life in a palace and the habits of Saul. The king was often quick-tempered and moody. As you saw in the previous lesson, the king became jealous of David and tried many times to kill him. But David "behaved himself wisely in all his ways; and the Lord was with him" (1Sam18:14, KJV).

During this time, his friendship with Jonathan was his great comfort. Jonathan tried to soften the jealousy of his father, but was unsuccessful.

Saul's jealousy drove David from the palace into the wilderness. For several years he moved from place to place in the south of Israel. He gathered a following of other men who were also out of favor with the king. They survived by protecting landowners from bandits, and being paid for their services. He and his men were even hired by the Philistines! They provided the same service of protection for Philistine border towns.

During these dangers David composed songs of prayer and praise. "Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me, for my soul trusts in thee: in the shadow of thy wings I will make my refuge, till the storms of destruction pass by" (Ps 57:1, KJV). "I cry to you, LORD; I say, 'You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living.' Listen to my cry, for I am in desperate need; rescue me from those who pursue me, for they are too strong for me" (Ps 142:5-6). "When I am afraid, I put my trust in you. In God, whose word I praise—in God I trust and am not afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?" (Ps 56:3-4).

When Saul and Jonathan were killed in battle with the Philistines, David's time in the wilderness ended. David was 30 years old. The men of Judah chose David as their king and he made Hebron his capital city. This city was associated with events in the lives of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Caleb. David's first act as king was to send thanks to the town of Jabesh for burying Saul and his sons. "May the LORD now show you kindness and faithfulness, and I too will show you the same favor because you have done this" (2Sam 2:6).

Saul's general, Abner, and Saul's other son still had the loyalty of Israelite tribes in the north. These tribes proclaimed Saul's son king, but Abner was the real power in the north. There was fighting back and forth. Finally, Abner decided to be loyal to David, and came to Hebron to proclaim David king over all the tribes. David was pleased to accept, but one of David's men treacherously murdered Abner. David, however, had no part in the murder of Abner.

At last, all the tribes sent representatives to David in Hebron. They said, "We are your own flesh and blood. In the past, while Saul was king over us, you were the one who led Israel on their military campaigns. And Yahweh said to you, 'You will shepherd my people Israel, and you will

become their ruler” (2Sam 5:1-2). David made a covenant with the tribal leaders at Hebron before Yahweh, and they anointed him king over Israel.

David’s first act as king over all Israel was to establish a new capital city. The city of Jerusalem had never been under Israelite control. It was on the border between Judah and Benjamin. Hebron was too far south to be acceptable to all the tribes, while Jerusalem was a more central location. The local residents—non-Israelites—believed that their city could not be conquered. “Even the blind and lame in our town can keep you out,” they said. But David and his men took the city. After he conquered it, he called it the ‘City of David.’

David enlarged the city and had a palace built for himself and his many wives and children. “He became more and more powerful, because Yahweh Almighty was with him” (2Sam 5:10). At the same time, he was acting like a typical Eastern king by marrying many wives. Moses had warned Israel that their kings should not marry multiple wives.

David wanted to establish Jerusalem as the religious center of the nation, as well as the political center. Years earlier the ‘Ark of the Covenant’ had been captured in battle by the Philistines. God sent judgment against them for this, and they sent the ark back into the hills. There it had stayed, because the sanctuary at Shiloh had been destroyed. David decided to bring the ark to Jerusalem. He did so with great rejoicing and dancing. The ark was placed in a tent on Mount Zion, one of several hills surrounding Jerusalem.

David wanted to build a temple to house the Ark. He said to the prophet Nathan, “Here I am, living in a house of cedar, while the ark of God remains in a tent” (2Sam 7:2).

Nathan agreed, but that night Yahweh spoke to him, “Go and tell my servant David, ‘This is what Yahweh says: Are you the one to build me a house to dwell in? Did I ever ask any of Israel’s leaders to build me a house? Now I am going to make your name great. And I will provide a place for my people Israel, so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed. Yahweh declares to you that Yahweh himself will establish a house for you. Your successor will build a house for my Name, not you. I will be his father, and he will be my son. My love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul. Your throne will be established forever” (from 2Sam 7:3-16).

Nathan reported to David all the words of the message. Then David worshiped Yahweh with a long prayer. He praised Yahweh for all that he had done for Israel. “You have established your people Israel as your very own forever, and you, LORD, have become their God” (2Sam 7:24). David also praised God for blessing him and pledging support for his successors forever.

We remember that Yahweh made four promises when the tribes were still in Egypt--two or three hundred years in the past. He promised them a land of their own. He promised them deliverance and rescue from evil forces. He promised to teach them about his own nature. And, he promised to create a community that loved him and loved one another. God was fulfilling his promises through leaders like prophets, priests, and kings. They were God’s appointed servants on earth.

Now Yahweh was committing himself to David and David’s descendants forever. This is called the ‘Davidic Covenant.’ David now became the greatest leader in Israel since Moses.

The New Testament refers to David 58 times. Our Lord Jesus is called, the ‘Son of David.’ The apostle Paul states that Jesus is “of the seed of David according to the flesh” (Rom. 1:3). As King of kings and Lord of lords, Jesus fulfills God’s promise that a descendant of David would be king forever.

This story is **important** because Saul turned out to be a poor example of a godly king, and David at long last became a good example of a godly king.

The **main truth** of this lesson is that God’s promise through Samuel to David finally came true. Through many hardships and dangers David had learned to honor God and trust him. God honored David by preserving his life and bringing him to the throne.

Let’s **review** this lesson—

1. How did David survive while out of favor with King Saul? [Pause]
A. If you said, “He gathered a group of people around him and offered protection to landowners and towns in the south of Israel,” you are correct.
2. Why did David at first rule over Judah from his capital in Hebron? [Pause]
A. If you said, “Saul’s son and his former general continued to rule over the northern tribes, and resisted David,” you are correct.
3. After he became king over all Israel, why did David establish his capital in Jerusalem? [Pause]
A. If you said, “Hebron was too far south, and Jerusalem was a more central, neutral site for his capital,” you are correct.
4. What is the ‘Davidic Covenant’? [Pause]
A. If you said, “God pledged to support David and his descendants as kings of Israel forever,” you are correct.

Your **assignment** for this lesson is to listen to it at least three times. As you hear the story each time, imagine how it happened. See the events in your own mind. Then tell the story in your own words as you remember it. You should spend at least 45 minutes in learning the story. You may need to have someone check that you are telling the story correctly. Ask your friend the same review questions you answered when you first heard this summary. Perhaps God has given you a call or a dream that has been delayed in coming. Spend some time in prayer, seeking God to help you to be faithful while you wait for his timing.