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WORKER



"We are workers together with Him..." (2 Cor. 6:1)

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DAVID'S PLACE IN THE STORY OF THE BIBLE

Steven Lloyd

A number of significant themes can be traced throughout the Bible. For example, the promise God gave to Abraham in Genesis 12 is repeated to Isaac, and again to Jacob. This promise plays a prominent role in understanding the Bible.

One of the major turning points in the Bible occurs in 1 Samuel 8. The prophet and judge, Samuel, appointed his sons to judge Israel, but they were corrupt. So, the elders of Israel approached Samuel with their concerns and asked for a king so they could be like the nations around them. Samuel was vexed by their request. He made his frustration known to the Lord, and the Lord said, "Obey the voice of the people in all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them" (8:7). Saul was the first man to rule over Israel. He failed.

David was the second king. One author notes that "The David story is the most extensively narrated single story..."¹ in the Bible. His name appears over 1000 times—more times than the name "Jesus," but not by much. Abraham's name appears 250 times, "Moses" 852 times, and "Jesus" 965 times. The significance of David's role in redemption history can be seen in the promise God made to him. In 2 Samuel 7 David proposes to build a house for the Lord, but the Lord promises to build a house for David. The Lord says,

I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should be prince over my people Israel. And I have been with you wherever you went and have cut off

all your enemies from before you. And I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may dwell in their own place and be disturbed no more. And violent men shall afflict them no more, as formerly, from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel. And I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house. When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come

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¹ Eugene Peterson, *Leap Over a Wall*, (New Hork: Harper One, 1997) 3.

Editor

Cody Westbrook



"We are workers together with Him..." (2 Cor. 6:1)

GIVE US A KING!

Cody Westbrook

Sometimes we have no idea what we are really asking for until we get it. But that almost never stops us from asking. Man has an acute propensity to never be satisfied, but always ask for more. "All is vanity" (Ecc. 1:2) and "there is no new thing under the sun" (Ecc. 1:9) but "the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing" (Ecc. 1:8). Solomon said, "Hell and destruction are never full; so the eyes of man are never satisfied" (Prov. 27:20). Man's hunger for more has often pushed him to selfishly seek things in gratification (Jas. 4:3) that ultimately result in pain (1 Tim. 6:10). Such could be said about the children of Israel and their desire to have a king, as recorded in 1 Samuel 8.

It had been approximately 400 years since God's people left Egypt. They had lived under the leadership of Moses and Joshua, completed the conquest of Canaan, and experienced the cyclical time of the judges. The last judge, Samuel, was growing old, and in his desire to provide leadership for the future, he appointed his sons as judges over Israel. The move seems wise and innocent enough but the problem was that "his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment" (1 Sam. 8:3). They were wicked, and, understandably, the people did not want to live under their leadership. What were they to do? Certainly, God would have provided the solution for them had they asked. Instead, they cried to Samuel, "Make us a king!" They wanted a change, but why?

Their statement to Samuel revealed their true intention—"make us a king to judge us like all the nations" (1 Sam. 8:5). The people wanted change, but not just any kind of change. They wanted to be transformed into their neighbor's image instead of God's. In fact, they were dead-set on it. Samuel pleaded passionately with them to avoid making this mistake,

nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay; but we will have a king over us; that we also may be like all the nations; and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles (1 Sam. 8:19-20).

Their demand for a king was promoted as a desire for stability and protection, but in reality it was a rejection of God—"for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them" (1 Sam. 8:7). God had provided for them in the past. It was He who delivered them from Egypt (1 Sam. 12:8), and from multiple adversaries during the time of the Judges (1 Sam. 12:9-11). He could have provided their current needs too, but regardless, the people rejected Him—

According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other gods... (1 Sam. 8:8).

Their request was nothing more than rejection.

Sometimes we have no idea what we are really asking for until we get it. The people asked for a king and God gave them one. He warned them about what it would entail. The king will take, take, take, take, take, and take (vss. 11; 13-17). Israel's sons would be drafted into military service and her daughters would be utilized in government work. Fields and crops would be confiscated, taxes would be levied, and servants would be taken. In fact, Samuel warned that the burden would become so heavy that the people cry out to God in regret, but He would not hear. All of this came true, and more. Some great kings would rule God's people, David for example, but they would also see the throne become their ruin. Burdens would become heavy

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Cody Westbrook ----- Editor

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DAVID THE FRIEND

Bill Burk

(1 Kings 12:4), the kingdom would split (1 Kings 12:16), idolatry would be introduced (1 Kings 12:28-30), abominations of unspeakable proportions would be committed (e.g. 2 Kings 16-17), and destruction would come upon God's people (1 Chron. 5:26; 2 Kings 24:1), and all of it would be tied to the throne in one way or another. Would they have still asked for a king if they had known what the ultimate results would be? Had they listened to God, they would have known.

What can we learn from the events of 1 Samuel 8? Briefly, it should remind us of the need to "perfect holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor. 7:1). God requires His people to live their lives in a holy manner (1 Pet. 1:16). That, by definition, makes us different (1 Pet. 2:9). Israel's desire for a king was based in part in their desire to be like the world around them. Such desires always end in destruction. Therefore, our greatest desire should be our transformation into the image of Christ (Rom. 12:1-2; 2 Cor. 3:18), and strengthening of our relationship with our Father (Col. 1:9-11). This chapter should also stand as a perfect illustration of the need to depend on God's wisdom and not our own. Jeremiah said, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer. 10:23). Israel rejected God's will in favor of their own and it resulted in their ruin. Though He pleaded with them, they rejected Him. Today, He continues to plead with us to listen to and obey Him (e.g. Matt. 11:28-30). Solomon counseled,

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths (Pro. 3:5-6).

Those who commit their lives to His care and trust in His will have no need to say, "Give us a king!" They already have One.

CW



Friendship is one of life's sweetest gifts. Scripture declares, "A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity" (Pro. 17:17), and in the same way, "A man who has friends must himself be friendly, but there is a friend that sticks closer than a brother." The greatest friend ever is Jesus. He loved us enough to leave glory, enter a world of sin and die on behalf of us all (Jn. 15:13; Phi. 2:5-11, et. al). We shouldn't be surprised then, that David, a man after God's own heart (1 Sam. 13:14; Acts 13:22), who was a type of our Lord, also showed himself to be a great friend, especially to his comrade, Jonathan, the son of Saul.

To begin, let's focus our attention on Jonathan and his affection for David. Let's note these ideas that help us to understand him.

- Jonathan the commander. He was Saul's son and heir to the throne (1 Chr. 8:33). He, along with his father, oversaw the Israelite army (1 Sam. 13:2)
- Jonathan the courageous: Once we are introduced to Jonathan, we see him defeating twenty Philistines with only the help of his armor bearer (1 Sam. 14:1-14). This triumph set the stage for greater Israelite victory (1 Sam. 14:15-23).
- Jonathan the comrade: A rash oath sworn by Saul almost cost Jonathan his life (1 Sam. 24:14) but the people prevailed in saving him. The brave actions of Jonathan proved he wasn't worthy of death. In summing up what Saul's son did, the people said, "... He has worked with God this day" (1 Sam. 14:45). Jonathan was God's comrade.

The partnership and loyalty shown by Jonathan to God and his people is also seen in his relationship to David. Saul wanted to kill David to preserve his kingdom. Jonathan, like John the Baptist, was willing to step aside and let David arise to power in God's own time. These verses speak of his loyalty to David.

- ... The soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul... Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved

him as his own soul (1 Sam. 18:1, 3).

- Then Jonathan spoke well of David to Saul his father, and said to him, “Let not the king sin against his servant, against David because he has not sinned against you, and because his works have been very good toward you” (1 Sam. 19:4).
- So, Jonathan said to David, “whatever you yourself desire, I will do it for you” (1 Sam. 20:4).
- Then Jonathan, Saul’s son, arose and went to David in the woods and strengthened his hand in God. And he said to him, “Do not fear, for the hand of Saul my father shall not find you. You shall be king over Israel, and I shall be next to you. Even my father Saul knows that” (1 Sam. 23:16-17).

Jonathan knew David would reign. Kings would solidify their thrones by killing any rivals. Had it not been for Saul’s disobedience (1 Sam. 13:13-14), Jonathan would have succeeded his father as king (1 Sam. 20:30-31). Rather than choosing to rival David, Jonathan chose loyalty. David and Jonathan, in the form of a covenant (1 Sam. 18:3), swore to always show steadfast love toward one another. This meant that not only would David show loyalty and kindness to Jonathan but also to his descendants (1 Sam. 20:11-23). Because of his love for him, and because it was the right thing to do, Jonathan was forever loyal to David.

Having considered Jonathan’s role in this, let’s consider David. Why do we say that David was a great friend? We say it, because like Jonathan, David remained loyal to the end.

At the end of 1st Samuel, Saul and Jonathan die in battle against the Philistines. As the story progresses, we see David rise to reign over all of Israel (2 Sam. 1-8). Once David is solidly sitting on the throne, we read this interesting statement.

- Now David said, “Is there still anyone who is left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan’s sake” (2 Sam. 9:1).

David was determined to keep the covenant he made with Jonathan. He chose to take in Jonathan’s physically challenged son, Mephibosheth. David commanded Ziba, and the other servants of

Saul’s house, to care for Mephibosheth’s land, but Mephibosheth would dwell with David.

- As for Mephibosheth, said the king, “he shall eat at my table like one of the king’s sons...” So, Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem, for he ate continually at the king’s table. And he was lame in both his feet (2 Samuel 9:11, 13).

David’s friendship to Jonathan never wavered. Jonathan’s and David’s friendship forever stands as an example of loyalty and devotion. David declared, in the Song of the Bow, which he wrote after hearing of Jonathan’s death, that their fraternal love for one another was greater than that of a wife and mother for her husband and children (2 Sam. 1:26). The relationship of these two help us to see how we, as brothers and sisters in Christ, ought to love and care for one another (Rom. 12:10). The greater truth regarding David and friendship is this; his life foreshadows the life of Jesus who was a greater King and a greater friend (Lk. 1:32-33).

SW

DAVID THE PROPHET

Daniel F. Cates

David is known for many things; some are negative (e.g., adulterer [2 Sam. 11:4] and murderer [2 Sam. 11:15-17]), some are neutral (e.g., king [1 Kings 2:11] and military leader [1 Sam. 22:2]), and others are positive (e.g., courageous youth [1 Sam. 17:45-50], faithful friend [1 Sam. 23:18], “sweet psalmist” [2 Sam. 23:1], forerunner of Jesus [Matt. 1:1] the Christ [Matt. 22:42], and man after God’s “own heart” [Acts 13:22]). These are the things which readily come to mind when one considers David, and all certainly are remarkable! Interestingly, however, none of these is the most important thing concerning David; rather, his role as prophet--a role often forgotten--is his most important attribute. Why would this be?

First, because of the placement of the prophecies. When Jesus referred to those things which pointed to Him, he said,

These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me (Luke 24:44).

Notice that Jesus included these works of David with the law of Moses and the prophets; David's writings were on equal footing both inspiration-wise and importance-wise and would be fulfillment-wise!

Second, because of the prolificacy of the prophecies. Numerous Psalms of David, including but surely not limited to Psalms 2, 8, 16, 18, 22-24, 27, 31, 34, 35, 38, 40, 41, 45, 67-69, 93, 96-99, 102, 107, 109, 110, 118, are to some degree Messianic [numerous other Psalms are also Messianic, but are not included here due to their likely non-Davidic authorship]. Some of these Psalms contain one Messianic verse, others a Messianic section, still others are wholly Messianic, and yet others are even included in Messianic sections covering numerous Psalms.

Third, because of the precision of the prophecies. The Psalms provide exact prophecies which were accurately fulfilled. By order of their appearance in the Psalms, some of these with the passages showing their fulfillment include, but again are not limited to, Jesus' role as begotten Son (Ps. 2:7; John 3:16), Jesus' not remaining in the Hadean realm (Ps. 16:10; Acts 2:27), Jesus' words on the cross (Ps. 22:1; Mat. 27:46), Jesus' being mocked (Ps. 22:6,7; 109:25; Matt. 27:39), the piercing of Jesus' hands and feet (Ps. 22:16; Matt. 27:35; John 19:37), the gambling over his garments (Ps. 22:18; John 19:25), the not breaking of Jesus' bones (Ps. 34:20; John 19:36), Jesus' silence in trial (Ps. 38:13; Matt. 26:62-64; c.f. Isa. 53:7), Jesus' betrayal by a friend (Ps. 41:9; John 13:18), Jesus' being given gall and vinegar to drink (Ps. 69:21; Matt. 27:34,48), Jesus' speaking in parables (Ps. 78:2; Matt. 13:34,35), Jesus' being after the order of Melchizedek (Ps. 110:4; Heb. 7:17), and Jesus being the rejected stone (Ps. 118:22; Matt. 21:42).

Fourth, because of the perspective of the prophecies. David reigned from 1011-971 B.C. and Jesus was not born until 4 B.C. or perhaps just prior. The vast majority of men today cannot speak with any authority

regarding the Battle of Hastings which took place in 1066 B.C. although it was an extremely important battle in English, and, therefore, Western history. Why? Because it was around 950 years earlier than today. David, on the other hand, could speak with great exactness concerning not an event, but a person and countless events surrounding his life roughly the same amount of time later. Assuredly, none today can tell what the world will be like in the year 3000 (if the world yet stands). David also spoke from the position of king writing about one whom even he called Lord (Ps. 110:1; Matt. 22:41-46); this was a recognition of David's comparative inferiority to the One Who would follow him. David also wrote from the perspective of one who was in the lineage of the One who was to come. David's prophecies, and others, required that the One of Whom he was writing be a direct descendant of David (Ps. 132:11; Luke 1:69,70; Acts 2:30).

Fifth, because of the power of the prophecies. Fulfilled prophecy is one of the many great weapons in the believer's arsenal to be able to silence critics. Conversely, if just one prophecy of Scripture went unfulfilled, the whole Bible could be rejected. The Bible's authority is directly tied to its prophetic accuracy. Scripture is replete with prophecies fulfilled by Jesus; David's Psalms are just some among many such. How? "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Pet. 1:20-21).

CW

DAVID THE GIANT SLAYER

Kevin Cauley

David was known by many epithets: The Sweet Singer of Israel (2 Sam. 23:1), A Man After God's Own Heart (1 Sam. 13:14), and A Mighty Man of War (1 Sam. 16:18). It was this last moniker that the ladies sang about when they said, "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands" (1 Sam. 18:7). David's reputation as a warrior started with killing Goliath. The basic story is of a young

shepherd boy going to the battle site to give his brothers some food. When he arrives, he finds God's people being challenged to combat by a Philistine named Goliath who was around nine feet tall. David, no more than a boy at the time, accepts the challenge, and faces Goliath with nothing more than a sling and five smooth stones. He defeats Goliath with a single stone to the forehead, and the Philistine army is routed by the Israelites. How did David become the Giant Slayer? He realized who the real enemy was, and went after him with his faith in God.

David's fight began not with Goliath, but with his own brother Eliab who said that he was being proud and insolent (1 Sam. 17:28). David's reply was simply, "Is there not a cause?" In other words, there was a good reason for him to be there. By that time, David had heard Goliath's challenge and asked, "who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?" (1 Sam. 17:26). Oftentimes, our hardest fought battles begin with our own brothers! If Eliab did not have faith in God, then he should have just gotten out of the way instead of being a hindrance to David. Fortunately, David did not let his naysaying brother discourage him, but continued to press the cause. Shame on ungodly and faithless brethren who care more about what other people think instead of God!

David continued to make a stir until word came to King Saul that someone was volunteering to go up against Goliath. He said to Saul, "Let no man's heart fail because of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine" (1 Sam. 17:32). David could see the damage that Goliath was doing to the morale of God's people. It was time someone faced this giant to bolster their faith in God. When Saul told David he was too young to do such, David replied,

The Lord, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine (1 Sam. 17:37).

Church leaders should take note of Saul's attitude and David's attitude. David was not "the leader" of Israel, but he was acting much more like a leader than Saul was at the time. Simply because one is not "the leader" does not mean that he or she cannot lead. Church leaders need to be mindful that they are responsible for listening to God's people and serving them; that is the kind of leader Jesus desires (Matt. 23:11).

After trying Saul's armor and finding that it did not fit, David advanced against the Philistine Goliath with a sling and five smooth stones. Goliath said, "Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?" (1 Sam. 17:43). David's reply was simply,

You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.... All this assembly shall know that the Lord does not save with sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord's, and He will give you into our hands (1 Sam. 17:45-47).

David's faith in God propelled him to face the real enemy of God's people. Having ignored the false accusations of his brother, bolstered the army with his courage, and convinced the King of Israel to let him fight, David was finally able to face the true enemy, Goliath. God's people have a true enemy, Satan. He is the adversary that we need to be fighting, not one another. It is such a shame when brethren target other brethren due to their sinful desires such as pride, envy, covetousness, selfish ambition, and boastfulness (Jas. 3:14-16).

David's faith brought him to the real conflict, and through God's help, he slew the giant and won the victory. The apostle Paul wrote,

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places (Eph. 6:12).

It is for this reason that we need to take up the spiritual armor of truth, righteousness, the gospel, faith, salvation, the word of God, and prayer to fight against these evil spiritual giants. May God help us to understand who the true enemy is, and seek to fight him every day. By so doing, we will be true giant slayers.

CW

from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son. When he commits iniquity, I will discipline him with the rod of men, with the stripes of the sons of men, but my steadfast love will not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you. And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever (2 Sam. 7:8-16).

Psalm 89 takes for its theme the steadfast love of the Lord. An example of His steadfast love is found in the promise God makes to David:

You have said, I have made a covenant with my chosen one: I have sworn to David my servant: I will establish your offspring forever, and build your throne from all generations (Ps 89: 3, 4).

Much more is said concerning David in this Psalm but the Poet also says,

I will not remove from him my steadfast love, or be false to my faithfulness. I will not violate my covenant or alter the word that went forth from my lips. Once for all I have sworn by my holiness; I will not lie to David. His offspring shall endure forever, his throne as long as the sun before me. Like the moon it shall be established forever, a faithful witness in the skies (Ps. 8:33-37).

Significant words to consider in Psalm 89 are: steadfast love, covenant, establish, faithful—all of which point to the promise God made to David (2 Sam. 7).

When you couple these two texts with other texts in the Old Testament relating to the kingdom², a reader of the Old Testament cannot help but be instilled with some kind of expectation for a kingdom to come—related to David. This is precisely what we find in the New Testament, and Jesus of Nazareth is the One who fulfills these expectations.

The opening line in the New Testament reads like a

title. Matthew begins: “The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham” (Matt. 1:1). This line is followed by a highly structured genealogy that begins with Abraham, includes David, and ends with Jesus “who is called Christ.” I find it significant that the two names highlighted in the opening line are Abraham and David—two men to whom two significant promises are made (Gen. 12:1-3; 2 Sam. 7).

John tells the story of Philip introducing Jesus to Nathanael (John 1:43-51). Nathanael marvels at Jesus’ knowledge and says, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!” There are many things Nathanael could have said about Jesus, but he highlights “Son of God!” and “King of Israel.” Why?

Peter, on the day of Pentecost, connects Jesus’ resurrection, ascension and coronation with being seated on David’s throne. He says of David,

Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his throne, he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption (Acts 2:30, 31).

Peter emphasizes the fact that this could not have been written about David because his grave was still with them. He concludes his sermon with these words, “Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified” (Acts 2:36).

So, the significance of the massive narrative we find on David is not to be found in David alone. To get lost in the individual episodes recorded about his life would be to miss the point of the entire narrative relating to him. His significance is found in the role he plays in redemption history. God made a promise to establish David’s throne forever. Jesus Christ is the One through whom God fulfilled this promise.

CW

² Isaiah 2, Daniel 2 and 7, Joel 2, Micah 2.



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