

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church - Monongahela, Pa.
Bible Study – Old Testament Heroes of Faith
Session 4 – David the King

O Master who loves mankind, illuminate our hearts with the pure light of Your divine knowledge and open the eyes of our mind to understand the teachings of Your Gospel. Instill in us also the fear of Your blessed commandments, that we may overcome all carnal desires, entering upon a spiritual life and understanding and doing all things to please You. For You are the enlightenment of our souls and bodies, O Christ God, and to You we give glory, together with Your eternal Father and You all-holy, gracious, and life-giving Spirit, now and ever and forever. Amen.

I. A MAN AFTER GOD’S OWN HEART

Our Bible Study of King David is a study of one of the greatest men in all of the Bible. There cannot be found a greater king, nor one more dedicated and committed to God. David’s life was not a perfect life. The Bible does not hide the faults of biblical heroes. What that tells us is that in spite of all the great accomplishments of David and the exalted character of this man of God, he was human and prone to sin.

A. 1 Kingdoms 16:1-3 (p. 337) (1 Samuel) God speaks to the prophet Samuel. The first king of Israel – Saul – failed to listen to the Lord’s commands and directions so God removed him as king. God now tells Samuel to anoint a new king over Israel.

B. What would this new king be like? see 1 Kingdoms 13:13 (p. 333)

C. 16:6-7 Why did Samuel initially think Eliab was the Lord’s choice for king?

Compare this to the event when Saul was chosen as king. See 10:23-24

D. How would you feel if you were one of Jesse’s sons and were passed over?

E. How do people “size up” a person?

F. What is the difference between David in 16:13 and King Saul in 16:14?

- G. In 16:14-23, King Saul has an “evil spirit tormenting him” that is only eased when someone plays a harp for him. David is brought to the king. How does Saul come to regard David? 16:21

II. DAVID AND GOLIATH

- A. The Israelites come under attack by the Philistines. A “mighty man” named Goliath from their army issues a challenge: read 17:8-11
- B. Read 17:12-26 How does David’s attitude compare to King Saul’s? (v. 11)
- C. Where did David’s confidence come from?
Why did he refuse to wear the armor?

For reflection: What “giants” are threatening me? Is my attitude more like Saul’s or David’s?

- D. To the question “*How much does God do and how much do I do in battle?*” I would say:
a. Let go and let God all the way b. trust as if it all depends on God and act as if it all depends on me c. He can train me for battle d. the enemy is never too big for God e. He’s got a good battle plan
- E. The most reassuring thing about God in this passage is: a. His weapons work b. He can fight my battles c. He can train me for battle d. the enemy is never too big for God e. He’s got a good battle plan

III. DAVID AND SAUL

- A. Read 18:1-9 What sinful passion is Saul infected with?
- B. How does this passion continue to affect Saul? 18:10-11 18:18 19:1
- C. Read 24:1-8 Why did David cut off a corner of Saul’s robe? What does this tell us about David’s character?
- D. How is David “*a man after God’s own heart*”?

From the Fathers: “The Word teaches by this story that the one who excels in virtue does not fight bravely against others but fights against the passions. The anger in both men, was destroyed by such excellence as David had when he destroyed his own anger and quenched the urge to take vengeance.”

St. Gregory of Nyssa
(On the Inscriptions of the Psalms)

E. How does Saul respond when David confronts him? 24:17

F. Is Saul sincere? see 26:1-2

G. How is David like God in this passage? a. fair b. wise c. direct d. merciful e. peaceful
f. righteous g. hard-hitting h. other

H. King Saul is eventually killed in battle. How did David react to the news?
see 2 Kingdoms 1:11-12 (p. 354)

For reflection: Is there a “Saul” in my life? Do I meet any “Sauls”? How can I react to them like David?

IV. DAVID AND BATHSHEBA

A. Read 2 Kingdoms 11:2-17 (p. 365)

What sinful passion is David infected with?

How should he have battled it?

B. An attack of a sinful passion follows a standard pattern:

1. A provocation/suggestion 2. It is accepted or rejected 3. A struggle (not always) 4. It is acted on in the heart 5. It is acted on 6. It becomes a habit 7. A person is held captive

C. How is Uriah more “after God’s own heart” than David in this passage?

D. Read 2 Kingdoms 12:1-15 Why does the prophet Nathan speak to David in a parable?

E. How is the interaction between Nathan and David similar and dissimilar to our practice of Holy Confession?

F. Does the Lord forgive David? Why v. 13-15?

How is this a *type* of an event in the New Testament?

G. How is it possible that a person is forgiven by God but the consequences of sin remain?