

# Wednesday Night BIBLE STUDY

Wednesday, February 6, 2013 – First Baptist Church Buda  
Midweek Prayer Meeting & Bible Study

DAVID... A MAN AFTER GOD'S HEART  
"Aftermath of a Giant-Slaying"  
*1 Samuel 17:55-18:9*

*"After life's highest highs often comes life's lowest lows!"*

What do you think this quote is saying? Do you agree or disagree? Record your thoughts in the space provided below. \_\_\_\_\_

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If the old proverb is correct – "The darkest hour is just before the dawn" – then we might also say, "The toughest trial is just after the victory." Often it is after life's highest highs that we can experience life's low points. Scripture seems to bear this truth out... take 3 Biblical examples for instance:

### **3 Biblical Examples of Life's Highs and Lows and A Corresponding Truth:**

- 1. Noah... often after the high points in our life we let our guard down (Genesis 9:18-25) –** Noah, the great hero of the faith and builder of the ark, was faithful to God and all that He had called him to do. God preserved his life and the lives of his family, along with a sampling of all the animals God had created. Although devastating in and of itself, God's miraculous flood, the preservation of his creation through Noah, and then God's promise to Noah and future generations was a high-water mark in Noah's life to say the least. It was certainly a high point for him, as God used him to warn the people, build the ark amid much ridicule and skepticism, this float safely through the storm and seek God's mighty hand at work. Leaving the ark to once again resettle the land and begin a gain had to feel good, but from that high point Noah fell and fell hard. Notice it in Genesis 9:18-25, <sup>18</sup> *The sons of Noah who came out of the ark were Shem, Ham and Japheth. (Ham was the father of Canaan.)* <sup>19</sup> *These were the three sons of Noah, and from them came the people who were scattered over the earth.* <sup>20</sup> *Noah, a man of the soil, proceeded to plant a vineyard.* <sup>21</sup> *When he drank some of its wine, he became drunk and lay uncovered inside his tent.* <sup>22</sup> *Ham, the father of Canaan, saw his father's nakedness and told his two brothers outside.* <sup>23</sup> *But Shem and Japheth took a garment and laid it across their shoulders; then they walked in backward and covered their father's nakedness. Their faces were turned the other way so that they would not see their father's nakedness.* <sup>24</sup> *When Noah awoke from his wine and found out what his*

youngest son had done to him, <sup>25</sup> he said, 'Cursed be Canaan! The lowest of slaves will he be to his brothers.'" As if to celebrate the great victory of God wiping out and washing away all wickedness and sin, only to find that it was still present with him and in his own family. From the high of the purifying flood to the low of the waves of sin and degradation, Noah had to see that often our highs and insulate us, and falsely lead us to believe that we are above falling and falling hard. We must be careful that one victory doesn't lead us to believe that victory will not always be easy. As the Apostle Paul said in **1 Corinthians 10:12**, "<sup>12</sup> So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!" **Do you ever see evidence of this problem with David? Yes, Bathsheba**

2. **Elijah... often the highs in life can make us weary, fearful, discouraged and tired (1 Kings 19:1-5)** - From the high point in 1 Kings 18, where the Lord handed Elijah great victory over the prophets of Baal, to the low point in **1 Kings 19:1-5** we seek how our greatest victories can usher in tough times, "*Now Ahab told Jezebel everything Elijah had done and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. <sup>2</sup> So Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah to say, 'May the gods deal with me, be it ever so severely, if by this time tomorrow I do not make your life like that of one of them.' <sup>3</sup> Elijah was afraid and ran for his life. When he came to Beersheba in Judah, he left his servant there, <sup>4</sup> while he himself went a day's journey into the desert. He came to a broom tree, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. 'I have had enough, LORD,' he said. 'Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors.' <sup>5</sup> Then he lay down under the tree and fell asleep..." The lessons are prolific here really, but certainly one can come away from this whole episode with Elijah with the realization that after our highest highs we can experience some of our lowest lows, but why is that? Perhaps from Elijah we can learn that quite frankly the high points in life can be... well, exhausting and leave us with a worn out and weakened physical state. Remember that often, after Jesus had spent the day ministering to the multitudes, performing great miracles that he would retreat off by Himself for rest and recuperation physically, mentally, emotionally and certainly spiritually. **\*Just as a side note... preaching is exhausting!** And that really leads me to the next Biblical example with is...
 
  3. **Jesus... often after the highs in life the enemy will attack us (Matthew 3:16-4:1)** – This truth is really reinforced by the two previous examples. Both Noah and Elijah are evidence that after the highest highs the enemy will attack. Certainly the both felt the assault in their given situations, but know show this more specifically than the story of the temptation of Christ. Notice at end of Matthew 3 and the beginning of Matthew 4, "<sup>16</sup> As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. <sup>17</sup> And a voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.'<sup>4:1</sup> Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil." The lesson... after the life's highest highs spiritually, you better watch out. The enemy will attack. If he attacked Jesus, he will attack you and Peter even gives us the warning of such in **1 Peter 5:8**, "<sup>8</sup> Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour."*

David found this to be true in his own life. Although he was God's man and a man after God's own heart, that did not insulate him from the reality that after life's highest highs, the lows can

come us very quickly. Following Goliath's death, in the backwash of the great victory, David stepped into an arena which was almost more than he could take. Knowing that is was coming, God graciously provided him with a close, understanding friend named Jonathan... and God always provides what we need to sustain us through those lows. He did it for Noah. He did it for Elijah. He certainly did it for Jesus. He did it for David, and He will do the same you and I if we will look to Him. Perhaps it's wise for us to evaluate the events following David's victory to see how much those reflect our experience today.

## I. DAVID'S HIGH POINT... A GIANT-SLAYING

To most people, David's killing the giant was the highlight of his life. Shortly thereafter he was crowned king, being the youngest king of Israel, and without knowing his history more accurately, it would seem that his life from that point was a downhill slide. Not so! Following his victory were hard days, difficult to endure.

### 3 Things to Watch Out for in the High Points:

1. **Remarkable Achievement** – David's action was unprecedented. Not yet 20 years old... no physical match to the giant... no prior battle training or experience... he successfully faced the creature who had effectively intimidated Saul and his soldiers. One clean stroke of a small stone to the forehead felled Goliath, after which David removed his head with the Philistine's own sword. What a victory! What a remarkable achievement!

**Lesson Learned:** **Remain humble in the midst of great achievement by remembering that God did it, not you** - Don't read your own press clippings! Remember the wise truth of **Proverbs 16:18**, "***Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall.***"

2. **Flattering Accolades (1 Samuel 17:55-58)** – In this "flashback" Saul, having observed David move down the slope toward the giant, was interested in knowing the name of his father. Speaking first to Abner, commander of his army, Saul asked in vv.55-56, ***"<sup>55</sup> As Saul watched David going out to meet the Philistine, he said to Abner, commander of the army, 'Abner, whose son is that young man?' Abner replied, 'As surely as you live, O king, I don't know.' <sup>56</sup> The king said, 'Find out whose son this young man is.'"*** When David appeared before him following his victory, Saul asked again ***"Whose son are you, young man?..."*** in **verse 58**. Saul's interest was related to two possible concerns, First, it seems he was wanting the father's permission for David to remain as his bodyguard (implied in 1 Sam.18:2); and second, Saul had to award the prize referred to in 1 Samuel 17:25, which was reserved for the young victor and his father's household.

**Lesson Learned:** **Let the flattery of praise and complements only be directed toward God and never yourself** - Remember flattery will get you nowhere! **Proverbs 26:28** reminds us, ***"... a flattering mouth works ruin."***

3. **Instant Popularity (1 Samuel 18:5, 14-15, 20)** – Overnight David was a national hero. No longer was the formidable threat of the Philistines to be of concern. He was given authority over the man of war, and he prospered in all of his ways. In fact, his prosperity was so extensive that Saul began to dread this boy whom he had once loved so greatly. Also, because of his wise behavior, David became highly esteemed above all Saul's own servants.

**Lesson Learned:** God causes us to fall into the favor with men for His purposes and His glory. Remember the only one we really have to please is Him - Earthly popularity is fickle and fleeting at best. Those who are for you one moment can quickly turn against you in the next breath. Just ask Jesus!

## II. DAVID'S RELATIONSHIPS... FOUR DIFFERENT EXPERIENCES

In the aftermath of the "giant-killing," David's life was to change. The relationships he encountered show a turn in his life, a turn God would use to further shape this man after His own heart, David.

### 4 Relationships God Used in David's Life:

1. **A relationship of willing submission (1 Samuel 17:55-58)** – This is a picture of David's relationship under King Saul. As David submitted to authority, God lifted him above his peers. He served Saul graciously and with sincerity. He had been chosen for Saul's service because of his courageous defeat of Goliath, yet his courage did not keep him from bending to authority. The Bible tells us in 1 Samuel 18:5, *"<sup>5</sup> Whatever Saul sent him to do, David did it so successfully that Saul gave him a high rank in the army. This pleased all the people, and Saul's officers as well."* Little did David realize that a painful era of his life was ahead of him: a time that though painful, hard and trying would also shape and make him the man God could use.

**Lesson Learned:** Scripture tells us that we are to have a humble submission to those He allows to be authority over us. Titus 3:1-8 tell us why, *"<sup>1</sup> Remind the people to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready to do whatever is good, <sup>2</sup> to slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate, and to show true humility toward all men. <sup>3</sup> At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. <sup>4</sup> But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, <sup>5</sup> he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, <sup>6</sup> whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, <sup>7</sup> so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. <sup>8</sup> This is a trustworthy saying. And I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone."* Paul also tells in Romans 13:1-2, *"Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. <sup>2</sup> Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves."*

**Why do you think this particular relationship would be so important with what David was about to face?** *He was blameless and had always treated Saul with total allegiance and respect.*

2. **A relationship of fond affection (1 Samuel 18:1-4)** – This speaks to David with King Saul's son, Jonathan. One of the closest friendships to be found in Scripture existed between David and Saul's son, Jonathan. Jonathan had observed his father's inquiry of

David following the giant-killing, and was instantly impressed with what he saw and heard. He came to cherish his deep bond and friendship with David and loved him “as himself” according to 1 Samuel 18:3. The friendship bond was mutual... there was a kindred spirit shared by the two young men; their souls were “knit” together (v.1). Four qualities marked the friendship as it matured. Let’s observe them:

**Why do you think this particular relationship would be so important with what David was about to face? *David was going to need the support and encouragement of a friend to stand beside him and be in his corner. We need each other.***

#### **4 Qualities of True Friendship:**

- (1) **A voluntary willingness to sacrifice on behalf of another (1 Samuel 18:3-4)** – At the time of this first recorded contact, Jonathan gave his new friend his robe, armor, sword, bow, and belt. He did not feel imposed upon... rather, his action was purely unselfish.
- (2) **A loyal defense of one before others (1 Samuel 19:4-5)** – When Saul had turned on David, Jonathan pleaded his friend’s case. His plea was not made as a son to his father, but as a man to his friend’s enemy... Notice **verse 4-5 of chapter 19, “*Jonathan spoke well of David to Saul his father and said to him, ‘Let not the king do wrong to his servant David; he has not wronged you, and what he has done has benefited you greatly. <sup>5</sup> He took his life in his hands when he killed the Philistine. The LORD won a great victory for all Israel, and you saw it and were glad. Why then would you do wrong to an innocent man like David by killing him for no reason?’”***
- (3) **A complete freedom to be oneself. (1 Samuel 20:41-42)** – David was broken with grief. Taking the threat on David’s life seriously, Jonathan arranged an escape for David. Moments prior to separating, their emotions surfaced. David fell repeatedly on his face to the ground. Both kissed, wept, and parted. They were able to be unthreateningly transparent and expressive with each other.
- (4) **A source of constant encouragement and building up (1 Samuel 23:15-17)** – Knowing that Saul was out in the wilderness of Ziph pursuing David, Jonathan got to his friend first and **“*helped him find strength in God*” (1 Sam.23.16).**

**Lesson Learned: God did not create us to be disconnected and isolated islands unto ourselves. We need each other. We need friends and a support group. We need the church.** Proverbs 18:24 says, **“*A man who has friends must himself be friendly, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.*”**

3. **A relationship of witness and influence (1 Samuel 18:5-7)** – David before the people of Israel is the example here. Remember that no matter who we are others are always watching us. David had a variety of audiences observing him. Note them:
  - (1) **Saul (1 Sam. 18:5)** – David was his attendant and officer.
  - (2) **Men of war (1 Sam. 18:5)** – David was their commander.
  - (3) **Servants (1 Sam. 18:5)** – David was observed by them as he performed his duties in Saul’s court.

(4) **Women (1 Sam. 18:6-7)** – David was the hero for whom they sang their song in the street.

**Why do you think this particular relationship would be so important with what David was about to face?** *David was God's man, called to God's purposes and he need to remember that others were watching Him to see who His God was.*

**Lesson Learned:** As long as we are in this world, we will have some kind of **relationship with the world... one of witness and influence** – Remember that someone is always watching you and you are either drawing them to Christ or pushing them away from Him in some way (blinding them) by your witness and influence.

4. **A relationship of strong opposition (1 Samuel 18:8-9, 15)** – This is seen in David's relationship with Saul following David's defeat of Goliath and the Philistines. The turning point of David's life is reported by Samuel in 1 Samuel 18:9, *"<sup>9</sup> And from that time on Saul kept a jealous eye on David."* What had young David done to warrant Saul's mistreatment? Nothing. He had done no wrong. However, what occurred with David, though unfair, is not uncommon as an occurrence in believers' lives today. God seizes these kinds of opportunities to shape the hearts and characters of His faithful ones. The worst David had done was to kill a giant. Saul became jealous... his joy and admiration turned to fear and worry. In worry, suspicion was germinated. God was on David's side, and Saul dreaded him. Literally the Bible says in 1 Samuel 18:15, *"<sup>15</sup> When Saul saw how successful he was, he was afraid of him."*

**Why do you think this particular relationship would be so important for David to understand with what He was about to face?** *Know your enemies, be aware of the challenge ahead.*

**Lesson Learned:** We will be opposed in this life. Jesus tells us in Matthew 10:22, *"<sup>22</sup>...you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved."* In other words, you will be opposed. Your life will rub some people the wrong way. And His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus told us these things at the end of His Beatitudes in Matthew 5:11-12, *"<sup>11</sup> Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. <sup>12</sup> Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."*

### III. DAVID'S LOWS.... THEIR RELEVANCE FOR OUR LIVES TODAY

Those who today are struggling with situations similar to David's should cling to three truths observed from this study.

1. **Inspiration and courage** - The high points in our lives are meant to serve as moments of inspiration for courage and strength we need to face the difficulties that are often sure to follow in real life and every day living.
2. **Trust and reliance** – We don't always understand why the lows hit us, but they do. David was perhaps not prepared for the reaction he received from Saul following his

defeat of Goliath and the Philistines, but he trusted God and throughout the next several episodes of David's life we see him relying fully on God. Not knowing the future really forces us to live one day at a time and trust God to take care of us.

3. **Help and provision** – God always faithfully provides what we to weather the lows in our lives. For David having a Jonathan made all the difference in the world to him and was a source of comfort and encouragement. Having a friend and friends... a church family... a support group helps us face whatever comes our way.
4. **Staying wise and positive** – Stay in God's Word and rely on His promises. Cling to the truths that He reveals in His word and lean fully on those. We really do get to ready the "enemies plans and strategies" in God's Word. He tells us! Being positive and wise is the best reaction to an enemy