

The Bible From 20,000 Feet Part 34

1 Samuel 17:1 – 24:22

Tuesday Night Bible Study, August 18, 2009

--OUTLINE:

- I. DAVID vs. GOLIATH ... A SPIRITUAL GIANT vs. A PHYSICAL GIANT
- II. SAUL'S REPEATED ATTEMPTS TO MURDER DAVID WHILE DAVID SERVED IN HIS ADMINISTRATION
- III. SAUL'S REPEATED ATTEMPTS TO MURDER DAVID WHILE DAVID LIVED IN EXILE
- IV. KEY CHARACTER TRAITS IN DAVID THAT ARE AN EXAMPLE FOR US TO FOLLOW

--INTRO:

--in 1 Samuel ch. 17 – 24 we see the **providential rise of David to the throne of Israel** and Saul fighting the Hand of God every step of the way to prevent David's rise. The trials that result prove the godly character of David and the reason he is the one God chose to be king of Israel.

I. DAVID vs. GOLIATH ... A SPIRITUAL GIANT vs. A PHYSICAL GIANT

<ch. 17>

--Goliath...

- in that day the outcome of a battle between two armies was sometimes determined by one representative person from each side fighting each other.
 - Goliath approached Israel as a representative of the Philistine army which sent the Israeli army into a panic because everybody in the army was scared to death by the thought of facing Goliath alone.
 - symbolism in David as he fought Goliath for Israel... Christ fought for us...His victory over sin provided victory for all who trust in Him!
- the giant Goliath was probably a descendant of the giants who were present in the land of Canaan when Israel first sent spies there (Numbers 13:33).
- the weight of Goliath's armor was 156 pounds and the head on his spear was 18 pounds!

--David's brothers were in Saul's army, and David's father sent David to give his brothers fresh food and see how they were doing.

--Goliath approaches the Israeli camp and David is the only one who speaks words of faith... "Then David spoke to the men who stood by him, saying, "What shall be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel? For **who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?**" (1 Sam. 17:26)

--David's brother gets mad at David for being there and thinks he is only interfering... "Now Eliab his oldest brother heard when he spoke to the men; and Eliab's anger was aroused against David, and he said, 'Why did you come down here? And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your pride and the insolence of your heart, for you have come down to see the battle.'" (1 Sam. 17:28)

--little did he know that David would be the one who would defeat Goliath!

--David's words of faith about Goliath were reported back to Saul and then Saul called for David...

--1 Sam. 17:32-37: "Then David said to Saul, "Let no man's heart fail because of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine." 33 And Saul said to David, "You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are a youth, and he a man of war from his youth." 34 But David said to Saul, "Your servant used to keep his father's sheep, and when a lion or a bear came and took a lamb out of the flock, 35 I went out after it and struck it, and delivered the lamb from its mouth; and when it arose against me, I caught it by its beard, and struck and killed it. 36 Your servant has killed both lion and bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, seeing he has defied the armies of the living God." 37 Moreover David said, "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." And Saul said to David, "Go, and the LORD be with you!"

--David then faces Goliath on the battlefield and sees him through the eyes of faith as Israel was supposed to see

all their enemies! **In reality, David is the giant... a spiritual giant with the invincible power of God behind him!**

--1 Sam. 45 Then David said to the Philistine, "**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.**" 46 This day the LORD will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you and take your head from you. And this day I will give the carcasses of the camp of the Philistines to the birds of the air and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. 47 Then 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." 48 So it was, when the Philistine arose and came and drew near to meet David, that David hurried and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. 49 Then David put his hand in his bag and took out a stone; and he slung it and struck the Philistine in his forehead, so that the stone sank into his forehead, and he fell on his face to the earth. 50 So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone, and struck the Philistine and killed him. But there was no sword in the hand of David. 51 Therefore David ran and stood over the Philistine, took his sword and drew it out of its sheath and killed him, and cut off his head with it. And when the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled.

II. SAUL'S REPEATED ATTEMPTS TO MURDER DAVID WHILE DAVID SERVED IN HIS ADMINISTRATION

<ch. 18>

--after David's victory against Goliath, Saul recruits David to be a commanding officer in his army.

--Saul's son Jonathan and David become best friends / soul mates (18:1)

--when Saul and David returned from battle against the Philistines, people esteemed David higher than Saul which made Saul greatly jealous...

--18:6-16: "the women had come out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with joy, and with musical instruments. 7 So the women sang as they danced, and said: "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands." 8 Then Saul was very angry, and the saying displeased him; and he said, "They have ascribed to David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed only thousands. Now what more can he have but the kingdom?" 9 **So Saul eyed David from that day forward.** And it happened on the next day that the distressing spirit from God came upon Saul, and he prophesied inside the house. So David played music with his hand, as at other times; but there was a spear in Saul's hand. 11 And Saul cast the spear, for he said, "I will pin David to the wall!" But David escaped his presence twice. 12 **Now Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with him, but had departed from Saul.** 13 Therefore Saul removed him from his presence, and made him his captain over a thousand; and he went out and came in before the people. 14 And David behaved wisely in all his ways, and the LORD was with him. 15 Therefore, when Saul saw that he behaved very wisely, he was afraid of him. 16 But all Israel and Judah loved David, because he went out and came in before them.

--Saul then gives David his daughter in marriage and asks for him to kill 100 philistines and bring their foreskins to him as a dowry, hoping that he will get killed in the process. (18:25)

--David and a group of soldiers under his command kill not only 100, but 200 philistine men, and brought their foreskins to Saul.

--after this plan backfired it became even more evident to Saul that the Lord was behind David...

--18:28-30: "Thus Saul saw and knew that the LORD was with David, and that Michal, Saul's daughter, loved him; 29 and Saul was still more afraid of David. So Saul became David's enemy continually. 30 Then the princes of the Philistines went out to war. And so it was, whenever they went out, that David behaved more wisely than all the servants of Saul, so that his name became highly esteemed."

<ch. 19>

--in desperation Saul comes out and plainly states to his son Jonathan and his servants that he wants David killed, but Jonathan defended David; and then Saul has a momentary change of mind and makes a vow that David should not be killed. (19:4-6)

--then Saul had David play the harp again to comfort him when the distressing spirit plagued him again; and as before Saul hurled a spear at David, but David escaped.

--then Saul sent messengers to wait for David outside his house in order to kill him, but David's wife (Michal, Saul's daughter) discovered the plot and warned David; and then David escaped and fled to Samuel in another city.

--when Saul heard of David's escape to the city where Samuel was staying, he sent an group of men to seize David...

--when Saul's men arrived there was a group of prophets headed by Samuel prophesying; then Saul's men were overwhelmed by the Holy Spirit and began to prophesy along side them rather than carry out Saul's orders. (19:20)

--then Saul sent another group of men to seize David, and when they arrived they too were overwhelmed by the Holy Spirit and began to prophesy.

--Saul sent a third group and the same thing happened to them.

--then Saul himself went and he too was overwhelmed by the Holy Spirit...

--19:22-24: "he [Saul] also went to Ramah, and came to the great well that is at Sechu. So he asked, and said, "Where are Samuel and David?" And someone said, "Indeed they are at Naioth in Ramah." 23 So he went there to Naioth in Ramah. Then the Spirit of God was upon him also, and he went on and prophesied until he came to Naioth in Ramah. 24 And he also stripped off his clothes and prophesied before Samuel in like manner, and lay down naked all that day and all that night. Therefore they say, "Is Saul also among the prophets?" (19:22-24)

--in the midst of Saul's murderous pursuit of David, Saul is stripped naked by the Holy Spirit and laid prostrate on the ground – a picture of his place in God's eyes, stripped of his royal robes and authority.

--it is ironic that people would see Saul doing this and say the same thing that they said when he was empowered by the Holy Spirit at the beginning of his kingship. (1 Samuel 10:10-11)

--Saul's obsession to kill David is frustrated by his son Jonathon, then his daughter Michal, then Samuel, and now by God Himself who is guiding all the providence in David's life.

--in reality, Saul isn't fighting against David but against God who is calling David to be king!

--another Saul (who later became the apostle Paul) in the book of acts had a similar experience in his murderous rage against the church... "And I fell to the ground [*on the road to Damascus*] and heard a voice saying to me, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?' So I answered, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said to me, 'I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting.'" (Acts 22:7-8)

III. SAUL'S REPEATED ATTEMPTS TO MURDER DAVID WHILE DAVID LIVED IN EXILE

<ch. 20>

--after Saul was stopped dead in his tracks by the Holy Spirit, he tells David not to tell Jonathan about the recent events so that Jonathan doesn't get mad at him (because Saul had sworn before Jonathan that David would not be killed – 19:4-6)

--then David tells Jonathan (his close friend and confidant) about the recent events and that Saul's determination to kill him; but Jonathan still thinks that Saul won't kill David, so they decide to give Saul one more chance to see whether or not he can be trusted... David purposely skipped one of the royal meals while Jonathan attended to see what Saul's reaction to David's absence would be...

--1 Sam 20:24-34:24 "Then David hid in the field. And when the New Moon had come, the king sat down to eat the feast. 25 Now the king sat on his seat, as at other times, on a seat by the wall. And Jonathan arose, and Abner sat by Saul's side, but David's place was empty. 26 Nevertheless Saul did not say anything that day, for he thought, "Something has happened to him; he is unclean, surely he is unclean." 27 And it happened the next day, the second day of the month, that David's place was empty. And Saul said to Jonathan his son, "Why has the son of Jesse not come to eat, either yesterday or today?" 28 So Jonathan answered Saul, "David earnestly asked permission of me to go to Bethlehem. 29 And he said, 'Please let me go, for our family has a sacrifice in the city, and my brother has commanded me to be there. And now, if I have found favor in your eyes, please let me get away and see my brothers.' [*this was the excuse David instructed Jonathan to tell Saul*] made up. Therefore he has not come to the king's table." 30 Then Saul's anger was aroused against Jonathan, and he said to him, "You son of a perverse, rebellious woman! Do I not know that you have chosen the son of Jesse to your own shame and to the shame of your mother's nakedness? 31 For as long as the son of Jesse lives on the earth, you shall not be established, nor your kingdom. Now therefore, send and bring him to me, for he shall surely die." 32 And Jonathan answered Saul his father, and said to him, "Why should he be killed? What has he done?" 33 Then Saul cast a spear at him to kill him, by which Jonathan knew that it was determined by his father to kill David. 34 So Jonathan arose from the table in fierce anger."

--from this point forward David lived in exile.

<ch. 22>

--Saul becomes suspicious of all the servants in his royal court and starts to make accusations against them that they are conspiring against him; then the head of his servants said, "I saw the son of Jesse going to Nob, to Ahimelech the son of Ahitub. And he inquired of the Lord for him, gave him provisions, and gave him the sword of Goliath the Philistine." (22:9-10)

--in 1 Samuel 21:7 Doeg the Edomite appears in Nob where he could have spied on David.

--then Saul sends for the priest that helped David, kills him and 85 other priests and slaughters the entire city of Nob...

--1 Sam 22:13-19: Saul told the priest... "Why have you conspired against me, you and the son of Jesse, in that you have given him bread and a sword, and have inquired of God for him, that he should rise against me, to lie in wait, as it is this day?" 14 So Ahimelech answered the king and said, "And who among all your servants is as faithful as David, who is the king's son-in-law, who goes at your bidding, and is honorable in your house? 15 Did I then begin to inquire of God for him? Far be it from me! Let not the king impute anything to his servant, or to any in the house of my father. For your servant knew nothing of all this, little or much." 16 And the king said, "You shall surely die, Ahimelech, you and all your father's house!" 17 Then the king said to the guards who stood about him, "Turn and kill the priests of the LORD, because their hand also is with David, and because they knew when he fled and did not tell it to me." But the servants of the king would not lift their hands to strike the priests of the LORD. 18 And the king said to Doeg, "You turn and kill the priests!" So Doeg the Edomite [the one who informed Saul about how Ahimelech helped David] turned and struck the priests, and killed on that day eighty-five men who wore a linen ephod. 19 Also Nob, the city of the priests, he struck with the edge of the sword, both men and women, children and nursing infants, oxen and donkeys and sheep — with the edge of the sword. 20 Now one of the sons of Ahimelech the son of Ahitub, named Abiathar, escaped and fled after David. 21 And Abiathar told David that Saul had killed the LORD's priests. 22 So David said to Abiathar, "I knew that day, when Doeg the Edomite was there, that he would surely tell Saul. I have caused the death of all the persons of your father's house. 23 Stay with me; do not fear. For he who seeks my life seeks your life, but with me you shall be safe."

--Saul's murder of the priests highlights how far he had fallen... as king his role was to simply lead the entire nation in following the Lord's will, and now he is killing 85 Levitical priests who were God's chosen instruments for revealing his will!

--before the slaughter of the priests and the city of Nod, David fled to a cave near the city of Adullam. (22:1)

--here a small group of people gathered under David's leadership, which essentially marked the beginning of his kingship (in exile). God providentially paved the way from humble beginnings to his reign over the entire nation of Israel.

--1 Sam 22:1-2: "So when his brothers and all his father's house heard it, they went down there to him. 2 And everyone who was in distress, everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was discontented gathered to him. So he became captain over them. And there were about four hundred men with him."

<ch. 23>

--the Philistines attacked the city of Keilah (about 18 miles south of Jerusalem), and then God leads David and his informal army to rescue the city...

--again a sharp contrast between David and Saul is seen... Saul stopped seeking direction from the Lord, while David sought direction from the Lord... "Therefore David inquired of the LORD, saying, "Shall I go and attack these Philistines?" And the LORD said to David, "Go and attack the Philistines, and save Keilah. 3 But David's men said to him, "Look, we are afraid here in Judah. How much more then if we go to Keilah against the armies of the Philistines?" 4 Then David inquired of the LORD once again. And the LORD answered him and said, "Arise, go down to Keilah. For I will deliver the Philistines into your hand." 5 And David and his men went to Keilah and fought with the Philistines, struck them with a mighty blow, and took away their livestock. So David saved the inhabitants of Keilah." (1 Sam 23:3-5)

--when Saul hears about David at Keilah he has a delusional idea that David is trapped there and that he'll therefore be able to capture David...

--1 Sam 23:7-8: "And Saul was told that David had gone to Keilah. So Saul said, "God has delivered him into my hand, for he has shut himself in by entering a town that has gates and bars." 8 Then Saul called all the people together for war, to go down to Keilah to besiege David and his men."

--David then seeks direction from the Lord again, and the Lord tells him to leave the city which causes Saul to go back to the drawing board in his pursuit of David.

--by this time David's army had grown to 600 men. (23:13)

--Jonathan meets David in the wilderness to encourage him and said, "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." (23:17)

--David and his men then move from one hideout in the wilderness to another as Saul and his army pursue them until they had to return to defend Israel from the Philistines again.

<ch. 24>

--after Saul and his army fought off the Philistines, they returned to search for David in the wilderness of En Gedi where David and his men hid in caves.

--En Gedi is one of only two locations on the western shore of the Dead sea where there are fresh water springs (most have high salt content).

--En Gedi literally means "the spring of the goat" and to this day wild goats live in the area near the fresh water springs.

--while hiding in the caves David has an opportunity to kill Saul but David restrains himself because God did not lead him to take Saul's life. Even though Saul has completely forfeited his right to be king, David leaves the matter of forcing him off the throne in God's hands...

--1 Sam ch. 24: "Now it happened, when Saul had returned from following the Philistines, that it was told him, saying, "Take note! David is in the Wilderness of En Gedi." 2 Then Saul took three thousand chosen men from all Israel, and went to seek David and his men on the Rocks of the Wild Goats. 3 So he came to the sheepfolds by the road, where there was a cave; and Saul went in to attend to his needs [*in other words, go to the bathroom*]. David and his men were staying in the recesses of the cave. 4 Then the men of David said to him, "This is the day of which the LORD said to you, 'Behold, I will deliver your enemy into your hand, that you may do to him as it seems good to you.'" And David arose and secretly cut off a corner of Saul's robe.

--Saul must have taken off his robe and set it aside while he went to the restroom.

--the corner of Saul's robe would have had a symbol that signified his authority as king, much like symbols of rank are placed on the collar or shoulder in the military today.

5 Now it happened afterward that David's heart troubled him because he had cut Saul's robe. 6 And he said to his men, "The LORD forbid that I should do this thing to my master, the LORD's anointed, to stretch out my hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the LORD." 7 So David restrained his servants with these words, and did not allow them to rise against Saul.

--this shows David's sensitivity to the Spirit's leading.

--later David would say, "As the LORD lives, the LORD shall strike him, or his day shall come to die, or he shall go out to battle and perish. 11 The LORD forbid that I should stretch out my hand against the LORD's anointed." (1 Sam 26:10-11)

--in other words, God put Saul on the throne (thus making him the Lord's anointed), and David saw God as the only one who had the authority to take him off the throne.

--another probable reason why God did not lead David to kill Saul was because He didn't want the kingship to pass from one person to another through bloodshed.

And Saul got up from the cave and went on his way. 8 David also arose afterward, went out of the cave, and called out to Saul, saying, "My lord the king!" And when Saul looked behind him, David stooped with his face to the earth, and bowed down. 9 And David said to Saul: "Why do you listen to the words of men who say, 'Indeed David seeks your harm'?" 10 Look, this day your eyes have seen that the LORD delivered you today into my hand in the cave, and someone urged me to kill you. But my eye spared you, and I said, 'I will not stretch out my hand against my lord, for he is the LORD's anointed.' 11 Moreover, my father, see! Yes, see the corner of your robe in my hand! For in that I cut off the corner of your robe, and did not kill you, know and see that there is neither evil nor rebellion in my hand, and I have not sinned against you. Yet you hunt my life to take it. 12 Let the LORD judge between you and me, and let the LORD avenge me on you. But my hand shall not be against you. 13 As the proverb of the ancients says, 'Wickedness proceeds from the wicked.' But my hand shall not be against you. 14 After whom has the king of Israel come out? Whom do you pursue? A dead dog? A flea? 15 Therefore let the LORD be judge, and judge between you and me, and see and plead my case, and deliver me out of your hand." 16 So it was, when David had finished speaking these words to Saul, that Saul said, "Is this your voice, my son David?" And Saul lifted up his voice and wept. 17 Then he said to David: "You are more righteous than I; for you have rewarded me with good, whereas I have rewarded you with evil. 18 And you have shown this day how you have dealt well with me; for when the LORD delivered me into your hand, you did not kill me. 19 For if a man finds his enemy, will he let him get away safely? Therefore may the LORD reward you with good for what you have done to me this day. 20 And now I know indeed that you shall surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in your hand. 21 Therefore swear now to me by the LORD that you will not cut off my descendants after me, and that you will not destroy my name from my father's house." 22 So David swore to Saul. And Saul went home, but David and his men went up to the stronghold."

--Saul's repentance was only momentary, as in times past, and he would soon again seek to kill David.

IV. KEY CHARACTER TRAITS IN DAVID THAT ARE AN EXAMPLE FOR US TO FOLLOW

--1 Samuel ch. 17 began with 20 year old David facing the giant Goliath, and by the time we reach ch. 24 we see over and over again that David is the real giant of the story.

--RESTRAINT...

--it would take a spiritual giant to face Saul as David did at En Gedi – to face the one who had been trying to kill you for years and honor him for the person God originally called him to be rather than the monster that he had become... David didn't base his respect on Saul's failures but on the person he was before his failures, and in that kindness David gave Saul opportunity to repent, and thus David became the hands and feet and voice of the Lord to Saul... "the kindness of the Lord leads us to repentance". (Romans 2:4) But unfortunately Saul's repentance was only momentary.

--PATIENCE...

--the Lord gave the throne to David, but David patiently waited 10 years to receive it while being hunted by Saul.

--DIVINE GUIDANCE...

--while Saul completely abandoned seeking direction from the Lord, we see David being sensitive to the leading of the Spirit and seeking His direction.

--FAITH...

--in his restraint, patience, and seeking of divine guidance, David exemplifies faith... seeing reality from God's perspective, seeing God in the middle of reality, seeing God as the person on the throne... as it was written about Moses so it could be written about David: "by faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible" (Hebrews 11:27)