Liberty University
DigitalCommons@Liberty University

What You Need to Know About... | Willmington School of the Bible

11-2009

What You Need to Know About the Life of David

Harold L. Willmington
Liberty University, hwillmington@liberty.edu

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/will_know

Part of the Religion Commons

Recommended Citation
Willmington, Harold L., "What You Need to Know About the Life of David" (2009). *What You Need to Know About...*. Paper 59.
http://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/will_know/59

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Willmington School of the Bible at DigitalCommons@Liberty University. It has been accepted for inclusion in What You Need to Know About... by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@Liberty University. For more information, please contact scholarlycommunication@liberty.edu.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE LIFE OF DAVID

Introduction: The life of this man cannot be overestimated. He is referred to 1118 times in the Scripture by 19 Old Testament books and 9 New Testament books. Here is a summary of that life.

The Early Years. Israel's first king was dead. The sword-and-arrow-pierced body of Saul lay cold at the base of Mount Gilboa. What a spotted and stormy reign he had conducted!

Few if any of his surviving soldiers were even born at the time of that memorable day 40 years before when, before an adoring crowd at Mizpah, Saul was acclaimed king by Samuel. Self-confidence and courage had been his mainstays then. But all too soon self-confidence had turned into self-will, and courage into envy. Even Saul's closest acquaintances had difficulty understanding his illogical and insane hatred for David. After all, this young shepherd from Bethlehem had not only served as a loyal soldier in Saul's army, but on two later occasions, at the very time when Saul was attempting to kill him, David had spared his kingly life. Who could justify such cruelty in light of such kindness?

But all this was history. What would happen now? Who would lead Israel? The heir apparent, David, was living in Philistia. Would he return from exile? Did he command the necessary popular support, to say nothing of the ability, to rule God's people?

The Joyful Years. David's joy and sheer energy seemed boundless as he danced hour after hour to the praise and glory of God. In fact, his zeal superseded even that of the large Levitical choir, whose sole assigned ministry was to continually worship and thank the Lord God of Israel. Small wonder, however, for did any man alive have more to praise God for than David? It seemed as if heaven itself had swooped down and utterly enveloped him. First there was that fantastic three-day parade and celebration at Hebron to mark the beginning of his reign over all Israel. What memories flooded his mind as he viewed the 400,000 honor troops from all 12 tribes briskly performing their maneuvers. This occasion was certainly different from that quiet day in Bethlehem when Samuel had first anointed him king, with only his father and brothers in attendance. That was 20 years earlier when he was a lad of 17.

David had come from living off the land as a fugitive to ruling over the land as a king! But even more wonderful that this, Canaan's prize city had just been conquered by his troops. Jerusalem belonged to Israel! But wonder of wonders, that holiest of all objects, the Ark of the Covenant had been recovered and now resided in his new capital of Jerusalem! All this was why the king danced with such genuine enthusiasm before the Lord during that unforgettable night! If only this jubilation could go on forever. But it

would not. Sorrow, caused by sin, would soon replace his singing.

The Bitter Years. The terrible truth was out, and frankly, David was relieved. Whatever the consequences, surely nothing could be worse than the crushing burden of guilt he had carried for over a year. In retrospect, it seemed so out of character for him. Few leaders of men had ever demonstrated the kindness and integrity David had. Surely the one who had once shepherded sheep and spared his enemies could be fully trusted in matters of state. But not so.

A more sordid situation could scarcely be imagined. First there had been adultery with the wife of one of his loyal soldiers. Then the shocking news—she was pregnant with David's child. Finally, in a desperate and despicable attempt to cover his crime, David orders the murder of her husband so he could have his widow.

But thank God for faithful Nathan! Like a surgeon, that bold prophet exposed David's putrid and festering spiritual cancer, David soon discovered just how costly the cure would be. Reaping always involves more than sowing. But the king did the right thing. He agreed with the charge and confessed his sin.

The Final Years. How disappointed David had been when God announced through Nathan that the king would not be allowed to build the temple. That responsibility would fall to his son, Solomon. The truth was, as he soon learned, God had something far better in mind—a promise that some day the Messiah Himself would come from David's line. Who could not be awed with that? But he would be permitted to prepare for the temple's construction! And prepare David did! The Lord provided David with the actual blueprints. Given that blessed supernatural encouragement, David directed his full energies, raising the money, gathering the materials, recruiting the workers, and assigning the musicians. He even found time to build a temple army of sorts! Finally, the vast preparation were completed. He had done all he could do. He viewed the results with great satisfaction. No matter that he would not live to see the actual construction. In his mind it was already finished. But even more comforting, he would soon leave the pain and problems of earth to dwell eternally in God's heavenly temple! What more could a former shepherd lad possibly want!

David began as a shepherd boy, rejoiced as a singer, prevailed as a soldier, was sought after by Saul, became sovereign king, fell into sin, repented with sorrow, stood as a statesman, numbered the people of Israel, sponsored the building of the temple, spoke as a scribe, and was filled with the wisdom of a sage.

Copyright © 2009 by Dr. H. L. Willmington
Dean, Willmington School of the Bible
Liberty University