



**Theme for September: Life Lessons**

*Life is a journey that's not smooth, but lesson-filled. Our great challenge is to be open to learn as we go. Sadly, rarely do we learn from our experiences, especially if bad, because we don't accept them. We need to ask Jesus, our Messiah, to lead us through these bad experiences as He promised, and show us how to grow from them.*

*Because we don't use these events He presents to develop us, we repeat mistakes and act daily like each outing is our first. We are busy with our priorities that spotlight urgent matters without everlasting significance, so we side-step God's messages He chooses specially for us.*

*This month we look at some journeys with several life-lessons. We will highlight a few and look at how we might apply them daily as we stay alert to Messiah's teachings. Don't miss God's faithfulness that permeates these journeys:*



- September 1-7: Egypt to Canaan*
- September 8-14: Jerusalem to Moab*
- September 15-21: The Cistern to the Mansion*
- September 22-30: Shepherd to King*

**September 22-30: Shepherd to King**



**1 Samuel 16:11-12**

So he asked Jesse, "Are these all the sons you have?" "There is still the youngest," Jesse answered, "but he is tending the sheep." Samuel said, "Send for him; we will not sit down until he arrives." 12 So he sent and had him brought in. He was ruddy, with a fine appearance and handsome features. Then the LORD said, "Rise and anoint him; he is the one."

**T**his week we take three lessons from the many in King David's journey from *nobody to somebody*—more fittingly, from *a shepherd*

*boy to a king.* In God's heart, not the externals (1 Kingdom, the following **Samuel 16:6-7**) applies:

1. God uses nobodies
2. The battle is the Lord's
3. God expects devotion not perfection

**God Uses Nobodies**

Imagine you are Samuel at Jesse's house to anoint one of his sons as Israel's next king. You don't know which one; God will tell you in time. You see Eliab who animates you. He looks *kingly*, so he must be *the one*, you think. But God says no; not him. God tells you His selection standard is different: He looks at the

Jesse presents seven sons to you but God chooses none. Startled, you think, *What's happening? God said one of Jesse's sons would be the next king. Did I miss him?* So you ask Jesse, "Are these all the sons you have?" Jesse ponders briefly then says, "There is still the youngest, ... but he is tending the sheep." Implying, it can't be him.

In human terms, how could David be God's choice as the next king? He was the youngest, had no training, and was merely a shepherd-boy. That's not logical.

Sometimes the world tells us we are nobodies; we have no skills or talents. So we become depressed, we withdraw, and we stay away from offering our services, even though we believe we can contribute. That's not how God sees us. God sees each of us as *significant* in His Kingdom. Besides, when He chooses us for a task, He knows we will be able to do it because He will give us what we need—that's a promise; look at Moses, Paul, Peter, and others whom He called and equipped for His tasks.

Then again, some of us think we have it all together, so we control people and events. We don't look to Jesus, we decide to do everything in our own strength. We think we need nobody so we trust nobody. Sadly, we end up in big trouble because that's the world's standards. Simply put, be tough, decisive, look out for number one, *just go for it!*

The world wants *somebody* with a proven track record, university degrees, and leadership skills, to be the leader. But **God has only one condition: love Him with all your heart, soul, and mind—obey Him.** That's all. He will take you as you are and will enable you to do what He needs in His Kingdom. All He wants is your love and devotion, which leads to your obedience. He doesn't want



### Memory Verse

#### Psalm 40: 13

To God belong wisdom and power; counsel and understanding are his.

somebody to help Him.

The world tells us to go to high school, university, work, marry, buy a house, start a family, and become an elder in church. Essentially, keep doing stuff to become *somebody*. The busier we are the more important folks think we are, even if we are busy doing nothing lasting.

The Psalmist, inspired by God, reminds us in **Psalms 46:1**, *God is our refuge and strength an ever-present help in trouble.* God does not want us to perform in our strength. He wants us to allow Him to work in and through us. In **Psalm 46:10-11**, the Psalmist wrote:

Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth. The LORD Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

We must learn to be still. Young David tended sheep, did not seek to be king, but had many *still* moments with his Lord. That's how he developed a heart for God. Before going to anoint David, Samuel told Saul:

But now your kingdom will not endure; the LORD has sought out a man after his own heart and appointed him leader of his people, because you have not kept the LORD'S command. — **1 Samuel 13:13-14.**

God's choice for the top job — Israel's king — was David, a *nobody* in the eyes of the world, but *a man after God's own heart.*

### The Battle is The Lord's

In God's Kingdom, there are no hierarchies: Neither bright people nor dumb people. Neither strong people nor weak people. *Believers* are God's children whom He loves unconditionally. When he calls us, He equips us. So all He wants is our love and devotion—our obedience. That's why He created us.

David took his responsibilities seriously. Though He knew he would replace Saul as king, he did not get anxious and rush beyond God, but waited on God's timing. After Samuel

anointed him, he went back to minding sheep. Do you believe this? How unlike us! We would tell the world we have arrived : we are "big shots ." But this wasn 't an issue with David.

Saul sent for David while he tended sheep, and David became Saul's armor-bearer and musician. Saul liked David and his soothing music (**1 Samuel 16:19-23**). David was loyal to Saul and calmed him with music from his harp. As he ministered to Saul, David chose to be still, and continued minding sheep as needed. In **1 Samuel 17:15** we read, *But David went back and forth from Saul to tend his father's sheep at Bethlehem.* Again, we see David's humility, loyalty, and devotion to His Lord.

David did not promote Saul's removal from the throne but remained loyal even when Saul tried to kill him (**1 Samuel 19:8-10**).

During the period when he traveled from home to the palace, his father sent him to the battlefield with food for his brothers and their leaders. There, Goliath's presence caused a stand off between the Philistines and Israelites. When David arrived, Eliab showed his jealous, mean, side. Instead of being thankful his father sent his brother with a meal from home to this risky

place, he was critical. Read Eliab's critical comments in **1 Samuel 17:28-29**:

When Eliab, David's oldest brother, heard him speaking with the men, he burned with anger at him and asked, "Why have you come down here? And with whom did you leave those few sheep in the desert? I know how conceited you are and how wicked your heart is; you came down only to watch the battle." ...

Here, David showed another important lesson. Rather than allowing Eliab's comment to distract him, he focused on the key matter at hand: Goliath, who had disgraced Israel by defying their army for forty days. Read **1 Samuel 17:26**:

David asked the men standing near him, "What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and removes this disgrace from Israel? Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?"

Goliath was a human giant, over ten feet tall. David, young, inexperienced in these battles, was no match for him, yet he fought him. This was no ordinary fight, though.

David knew he could not defeat Goliath alone. Goliath, dressed properly, was bigger, stronger, more experienced than David. But David also knew the battle was not his, but the Lord's. He was sure God would hand Goliath over to Israel.

David understood that in God's Kingdom there are no giants. So he did what he sensed he should do—he fought under the Lord's guidance: *in the name of the Lord almighty, the God of the armies of Israel.*

"... You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the LORD Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This day the LORD will hand you over to me, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head. ... and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel (**1 Samuel 17:45-46**).

David's faith and confidence in Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob's God, brought about Israel's victory. David knew he was merely God's instrument.

### **God Expects Devotion not Perfection**

Beware of exalting David! He was human. He didn't sail

through life effortlessly and challenge-free. His life was imperfect. Like us, he sinned. He committed adultery with Bathsheba then arranged her husband's murder. But he paid for his disobedience as God brought calamity on his household.

Yet, God said he was a man after His own heart. We glimpse David's heart in his Psalms. They show his willingness to accept what he did, repent, confess, and then return to the Lord.

His discussion with the Prophet Nathan whom God sent to him after he killed Uriah, Bathsheba's husband, provides great insight. In **2 Samuel 12:1-7** Nathan described allegorically, Uriah's murder. At first, David didn't connect Nathan's story with his sin but ... *burned with anger against the man and said to Nathan, 'As surely as the LORD lives, the man who did this deserves to die'* (**2 Samuel 12:5**).

Surely, David deserved to die. But read his response to this sin in **Psalm 51** that he wrote following Nathan's visit. He poured out his heart to the Lord. In verses two and ten, he writes:

Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.

Create in me a new heart, O God, and renew

a steadfast spirit within me

In verse four, he states something we believers ought to realize when we stumble: *Against You, You only, I have sinned. ...* In our legalistic society, the issue isn't, if I have committed a wrong, but did someone catch me in the act? When caught we say, *how do I get out? Can I plea bargain?*

We forget it's against our Lord we have *done what is evil.*

## Application



### Acts 13:16-23

Paul ... said: "Men of Israel and you Gentiles who worship God, listen to me! The God of the people of Israel chose our fathers; he made the people prosper during their stay in Egypt, ... he led them out of that country, ... he overthrew seven nations in Canaan and gave their land to his people as their inheritance. All this took about 450 years. "After this, God gave them judges ... the people asked for a king, and he gave them Saul ... . After removing Saul, he made David their king. He testified concerning him: 'I have found David son of Jesse a man after my own heart...

**K**ing David was a man after God's heart: always turning to Him to praise Him and to accept His Lordship. This week as you tackle the many challenges at home, work, and elsewhere, meditate on **Psalm 40:4**: *Blessed is the man who makes the LORD his trust, who does not look to the proud, to those who turn aside to false gods.*

Ponder these questions:

1. Do you feel you are a *nobody* whom God is not interested in?
  - (a) King David was an ordinary man who loved the Lord with all His heart.
  - (b) Are you available for God to use you (**Jonah 1:15-17**).
2. Are you avoiding your Goliaths?
  - (a) A difficult work assignment or personal family or other matter.
  - (b) The battle is the Lord's. Ask Him to take control of these and show you how to handle them (**2 Chronicles 20:1-30**).
3. Are you seeking perfection in your life?
  - (a) Struggling to do everything perfectly? Don't despair, take all your challenges to the Lord. All He wants is your devotion.
  - (b) Do your best and leave the results to Him.



# Daily Reflections



**September 22:**  
1 Samuel 16:  
6-12; Psalm 46:  
1-11

**September 23:**  
1 Samuel  
13:13-14;  
1 Samuel 17:15

**September 24:**  
1 Samuel 19:8-10

**September  
25-26:**  
Psalm 40

**September  
27-28:**  
Psalm 51

**September 29:**  
1 Samuel  
17:26-29

**September 30:**  
1 Samuel  
17:45-47

**C**onsidering the month's *theme*, and the period's *topic*, daily reflect on verses on the left. These questions might help your reflections:

1. Who is talking to whom, about what, and in what context?
2. How do these verses apply to me today?
3. What lessons from these verses can I start today?

U n l e s s o t h e r w i s e noted, Scripture quotations are from the New International Version (NIV) of the Bible (Copyright (c) 1973, 1978, 1984 International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Bible Publishers. All rights reserved.)