

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

The Books Of Samuel: God's Shift Of Israel From Apostasy Under The Judges To David's Reign

II. 2 Samuel: The Reign Of David Over Israel

W. God's Use Of Good Exemplars To Develop Good Leaders

(2 Samuel 21:15-22)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

(1) As we have before noted, our world is marked by a vacuum of good leadership: (a) It appears in the government at every level. Darlene Superville's Associated Press story, "2016 vote totals, health coverage" in the Republican-American, July 24, 2017, p. 4A, reported how Kris Kobach, vice chairman of the advisory committee President Trump created to examine the integrity of U. S. voting systems, after the committee's first meeting, admitted "'(W)e may never know' whether Trump's rival, Democrat Hillary Clinton, won the popular vote through voter fraud."

That is an amazing statement! Mrs. Clinton got millions of votes more than President Trump, but the special commission to study the integrity of our nation's voting system may never know how much voter fraud affected all those votes, reflecting a vacuum of good leadership at the local, state and federal levels of the whole voting process.

(b) The vacuum of good leadership affects families: Ernest Shappy, Jr. of Waterbury claimed in his recent letter to the paper (Ibid., p. 6A), "Teachers can't do their jobs if they are baby-sitting ill-behaved children. Parents have to be accountable and stop blaming the teachers for the children's problems."

His claim was verified by a Christian middle school teacher who recently told me essentially the same thing!

(c) The church is affected by this need, too: mission circulars and Christian magazines consistently mention the worldwide vacuum of good leadership in Christian ministry!

(2) Accordingly, we need to understand **our personal** role in the **process** of **developing** good leaders!

Need: *So, we ask, "What would God have us do to contribute toward the development of good leadership?!"*

- I. When David had gone out to fight Goliath, Israel was experiencing a grave vacuum in leadership:**
 - A. David arrived at the battlefield with supplies for his older brothers only to find the giant Goliath's taunting had sent Israel's entire army fleeing from him every day for forty days, 1 Samuel 17:1-24.
 - B. Israel's king Saul, taller than anyone else in Israel (1 Sam. 10:23), was humanly the most qualified to meet Goliath's call for individual combat (1 Sam. 17:4-9), but even he was afraid to fight Goliath, 1 Samuel 17:11!
- II. This grave leadership vacuum was entirely unnecessary in view of God's provisions for Israel:**
 - A. God had promised Israel's men in Deuteronomy 20:1 with 28:1-2, 7 that He would equip them to defeat their foes, and Moses had reminded them in Deuteronomy 3:11 how God had already enabled them to slay Og, king of Bashan, whose coffin was 13 1/2 feet long by 6 feet wide! (Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 267)
 - B. Yet, Israel under Saul was full of fear and unbelief in God and His promises found in the Mosaic Covenant!
- III. However, enabled by the Holy Spirit and believing God's Scripture promises, David gained a great victory over Goliath and began to EXAMPLE great military leadership to Israel's great blessing:**
 - A. David had been anointed by Samuel, and with the Holy Spirit enabling him from that time forward (1 Sam. 16:13), he had slain a bear and a lion, so he had dared to fight Goliath and he had won, 1 Sam. 17:34-51.
 - B. That personal victory over Goliath had led Israel's men to rally behind David to defeat the Philistine army that day and to keep following him in combat for many years to come, 1 Samuel 17:52-53; 18:16; 2 Samuel 5:1-3.
- IV. Nevertheless, decades later, a combat crisis arose when David's aging body left him vulnerable to being slain by a Philistine giant that his men had irresponsibly expected him to defeat, 2 Samuel 21:15-16:**
 - A. When David was older, he again faced war with the Philistines, and in the conflict, a giant Philistine named Ishbi-benob who was well armed and had a new weapon, said he would kill David, 2 Samuel 21:15a, 16 NIV.
 - B. Close combat with a young Philistine giant armed with a new special weapon who had said he would slay him put the combat experienced but aged David at great risk of his life. Thus, when David fought the Philistine giant Ishbi-benob, he became dangerously "faint, weary" in the struggle, 2 Samuel 21:15b KJV, ESV.
 - C. Remarkably, David's men had irresponsibly expected their valuable king who had led them from weakness to be an empire to keep on having to fight Philistine giants though aged and vulnerable to being slain by them!
- V. FINALLY, David's MEN assumed RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP to protect their king and his valuable role in Israel, THEMSELVES doing battle against the remaining Philistine GIANTS, 2 Samuel 21:17-22:**
 - A. Fearing the loss of his great but endangered, elderly king, Abishai, David's nephew and chief of his 30 mighty men (2 Sam. 23:18-19 ESV; 1 Chron. 2:15-16), came to David's rescue and slew the giant, 2 Sam. 21:17a.

- B. David's men then took an oath not to let him fight again lest he needlessly be slain and quench the "lamp of Israel," the nation's prosperity embodied in David's role, 2 Sam. 21:17b; *Ibid.*, p. 632; *B. K. C., O. T.*, p. 477.
- C. The Hebrew text at 2 Samuel 21:18-22 **then describes how David's men shouldered the responsibility of gaining future victories, especially heeding David's example in his initial victory over the giant Goliath:**
1. Verses 18-21 report of three consecutive combat episodes involving David's men and Philistine giants:
 - a. Each episode begins with *watehi-'od*, "and there was again [war] . . .", to signal **consecutive** episodes.
 - b. The first appearance of this phrase in verse 18 in turn follows the introductory phrase, *wayehi 'aharey-ken*, "afterwards . . .", that expresses a "temporal transition formula" from the verse 17 combat episode about David's combat crisis, Kittel, *Bib. Heb.*, p. 494; B. D. B., *A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T.*, p. 30.
 - c. So, these verses explain that **after** David's men refused to let him fight with them any more due to his waning strength (v. 17), three **consecutive** combat episodes occurred in vs. 18-21 in which **David's men SUCCEEDED in SLAYING PHILISTINE GIANTS, and that WITHOUT DAVID!**
 2. However, they **also** show how **they heeded David's example of fighting Goliath in their combat episodes:**
 - a. The first episode involved Sibbechai of Hushah, a town in **David's tribe** of Judah, and he slew the giant Saph, 2 Sam. 21:18; *The MacMillan B. At.*, 1968, map 94. Sibbechai was **not** one of David's **mighty** men (*Ibid.*, *B. K. C., O. T.*, p. 478-479), **so he slew his giant by faith like David had once slain Goliath!**
 - b. The second episode involved Elhanan, son of Jaareoregim from **David's hometown** of Bethlehem, and he slew Goliath's brother! (2 Sam. 21:19; 1 Chron. 20:5) Also, **this** Elhanan is **not** listed with David's **mighty** men (*Ibid.*), **so he slew Goliath's brother by faith like David had once slain Goliath!**
 - c. The third episode involved Jonathan, **David's nephew** and son of David's brother, Shimeah. Jonathan slew a Philistine of great size who had 6 fingers on each hand and 6 toes on each foot, 2 Sam. 21:20, 21b. This giant defied Israel as Goliath had once done, **so Jonathan slew his Philistine giant in one-on-one combat to decide that Israel's army would win like his uncle David before had slain Goliath**, 2 Sam. 21:21a,b; 1 Sam. 17:10, 23-25. Also, **this** Jonathan is **not** listed with David's **mighty** men (*Ibid.*), **so David's nephew Jonathan slew his own giant by faith like his uncle David had once slain Goliath.**

Lesson: *Enabled by God's Holy Spirit and trusting in God and His Word, David single-handedly exemplified great military leadership in Israel beginning with his slaying of Goliath and continuing for many years until his aging body could no longer successfully serve him in combat. At that point, David's men finally fully applied his military example in their lives so they themselves could responsibly confront and slay Philistine giants by faith in God!*

Application: *To contribute toward the development of good leadership, (1) may we first trust in Christ for salvation and equipping of the Holy Spirit for power in living, John 3:16; Romans 8:9; Galatians 5:16-24. (2) Then, may we like David (a) rely on the Holy Spirit to (b) trust God and (c) obey His Word so as to (3) example in life and service (4) for as LONG as it TAKES for others to see their need to apply our example in their lives as did David's men!*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

Earlier this month, I attended a wedding that involved one of the families of our Church who have been at Nepaug Church for several decades. While sitting at a table with the parents in this family at the reception that followed, I heard them testify how the Lord had led them to witness by example to a lot of the people who were in the room, and how a number of these people were being positively affected for Christ because of the "non-pushy" witness the family had presented in seeking to be an example first followed by a gentle explanation of their faith.

What was especially rewarding to hear from these parents was how one of their sons had been witnessing to an atheist who was at the reception, and how the atheist had been running out of arguments for his atheistic view! The son had learned from his parents not to push his witnessing effort, but to give time for the Lord to work.

This news was heartwarming! For many years here at Nepaug Church, we have promoted the need to "sell" our Christian faith by exemplary lives **first** followed by a humble explanation of that example as the Lord provides the opportunity to share our faith with others. To see the fruit of that effort show up not only in the first generation, but also in the next generation of believers was very rewarding!

Leadership development by exemplifying works! It may take a long time as it did in David's case, but it works!

(1) May we trust in Christ for salvation. Then, (2) enabled by the Holy Spirit, (3) may we trust the Lord and heed His Word to follow in the footsteps of the examples of godly folk before us to finish the task we face as David's men did in following his example. Then, (4) as we continue to rely on the Spirit to example godliness in life and service, (5) the Lord can motivate others over time to follow our example for His glory.