

KING DAVID PART I

King David is a huge character and so this is a huge topic. I don't think we can do justice to it in one session – sorry Peter.

In a way we started on him in our last session when Samuel chose David to succeed Saul as King over Israel. David was the youngest son of Jesse and wasn't even going to be presented in the line-up to be chosen for the kingship – but, following God's guidance, Samuel chose him anyway and anointed him as king.

“Samuel did what the LORD said. When he arrived at Bethlehem, the elders of the town trembled when they met him. They asked, "Do you come in peace?" Samuel replied, "Yes, in peace; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD. Consecrate yourselves and come to the sacrifice with me." Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice. When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab and thought, "Surely the LORD's anointed stands here before the LORD." But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart." Then Jesse called Abinadab and made him pass in front of Samuel. But Samuel said, "The LORD has not chosen this one either." Jesse then made Shammah pass by, but Samuel said, "Nor has the LORD chosen this one." Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, but Samuel said to him, "The LORD has not chosen these." 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." 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." So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the LORD came upon David in power. Samuel then went to Ramah.” (1Sa 16:4-13 NIV)

Note that the Holy Spirit came on David in power, this would later enable him to defeat Goliath and give him the grace to survive many difficult years under King Saul.

David quickly became a companion of the then still king Saul:

“Saul's attendants said to him, "See, an evil spirit from God is tormenting you. Let our lord command his servants here to search for someone who can play the harp. He will play when the evil spirit from God comes upon you, and you will feel better." So Saul said to his attendants, "Find someone who plays well and bring him to me." One of the servants answered, "I have seen a son of Jesse of Bethlehem who knows how to play the harp. He is a brave man and a warrior. He speaks well and is a fine-looking man. And the LORD is with him." Then Saul sent messengers to Jesse and said, "Send me your son David, who is with the sheep." So Jesse took a donkey loaded with bread, a skin of wine and a young goat and sent them with his son David to Saul. David came to Saul and entered his service. Saul liked him very much, and David became one of his armour-bearers.” (1Sa 16:15-21 NIV)

A little later David seized the chance to make his name and win a great victory for the Israelites by engaging the Philistine champion, Goliath.

“David said to Saul, "Let no-one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go and fight him." Saul replied, "You are not able to go out against this Philistine and fight him; you are only a boy, and he has been a fighting man from his youth." But David said to Saul, "Your servant has been keeping his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock, I went after it, struck it and rescued the sheep from its mouth.

When it turned on me, I seized it by its hair, struck it and killed it. Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defied the armies of the living God. The LORD who delivered me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine." Saul said to David, "Go, and the LORD be with you." (1Sa 17:32-37 NIV)

David refused to fight Goliath wearing normal armour, he just went up against him with a simple slingshot and killed him with a stone from his slingshot, confirming this by cutting off Goliath's head with Goliath's own sword.

"So David triumphed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone; without a sword in his hand he struck down the Philistine and killed him. David ran and stood over him. He took hold of the Philistine's sword and drew it from the scabbard. After he killed him, he cut off his head with the sword. When the Philistines saw that their hero was dead, they turned and ran." (1Sa 17:50-51 NIV)

David became a close companion of Saul and achieved a high rank in the Israelite military forces.

"From that day Saul kept David with him and did not let him return to his father's house. And Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself. Jonathan took off the robe he was wearing and gave it to David, along with his tunic, and even his sword, his bow and his belt. 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." (1Sa 18:2-5 NIV)

But Saul became jealous of David.

"As they danced, they sang: 'Saul has slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands.' Saul was very angry; this refrain galled him. 'They have credited David with tens of thousands,' he thought, 'but me with only thousands. What more can he get but the kingdom?' And from that time on Saul kept a jealous eye on David." (1Sa 18:7-9 NIV)

Saul tried to kill David several times, but David eluded him. David led troops in battle successfully and had great success in everything he did and Saul was afraid of him. Saul's daughter Michal was in love with David and Saul offered her to him in marriage for a bride price of 100 Philistine foreskins – because Saul secretly hoped that David would fall into the hands of the Philistines whilst obtaining them. But David was well able to meet the challenge.

"David and his men went out and killed two hundred Philistines. He brought their foreskins and presented the full number to the king so that he might become the king's son-in-law. Then Saul gave him his daughter Michal in marriage." (1Sa 18:27 NIV)

Now David had two of Saul's children – Jonathan and Michal – on his side and they helped him evade Saul's murderous intentions. But, Saul remained David's enemy as long as he lived.

"Saul became still more afraid of him, and he remained his enemy for the rest of his days." (1Sa 18:29 NIV)

For a while Jonathan was able to persuade his father Saul not to harm David, but this situation did not last as war again broke out with the Philistines who apparently were resurgent after the death of their champion Goliath.

“Once more war broke out, and David went out and fought the Philistines. He struck them with such force that they fled before him. But an evil spirit from the LORD came upon Saul as he was sitting in his house with his spear in his hand. While David was playing the harp, Saul tried to pin him to the wall with his spear, but David eluded him as Saul drove the spear into the wall. That night David made good his escape.” (1Sa 19:8-10 NIV)

David’s wife Michal helped him to escape.

“Saul sent men to David’s house to watch it and to kill him in the morning. But Michal, David’s wife, warned him, "If you don’t run for your life tonight, tomorrow you’ll be killed." So Michal let David down through a window, and he fled and escaped. Then Michal took an idol and laid it on the bed, covering it with a garment and putting some goats’ hair at the head. When Saul sent the men to capture David, Michal said, "He is ill." Then Saul sent the men back to see David and told them, "Bring him up to me in his bed so that I may kill him." But when the men entered, there was the idol in the bed, and at the head was some goats’ hair. Saul said to Michal, "Why did you deceive me like this and send my enemy away so that he escaped?" Michal told him, "He said to me, ‘Let me get away. Why should I kill you?’” (1Sa 19:11-17 NIV)

David went to stay with the prophet Samuel, but Saul found out and sent men to pursue David and kill him – but God protected David by sending his spirit on the men Saul sent so that they prophesied rather than carrying out their mission and even Saul had a similar experience when he pursued David himself.

“Word came to Saul: "David is in Naioth at Ramah"; so he sent men to capture him. But when they saw a group of prophets prophesying, with Samuel standing there as their leader, the Spirit of God came upon Saul’s men and they also prophesied. Saul was told about it, and he sent more men, and they prophesied too. Saul sent men a third time, and they also prophesied. Finally, he himself left for Ramah and went to the great cistern at Secu. And he asked, "Where are Samuel and David?" "Over in Naioth at Ramah," they said. So Saul went to Naioth at Ramah. But the Spirit of God came even upon him, and he walked along prophesying until he came to Naioth. He stripped off his robes and also prophesied in Samuel’s presence. He lay that way all that day and night. This is why people say, "Is Saul also among the prophets?"” (1Sa 19:19-24 NIV)

David then tried to find out if his relationship with Saul had been at all restored by these happenings using Jonathan to test Saul and entered into a solemn covenant with Jonathan to let him know the answer. Jonathan was to communicate with David by shooting arrows.

“Then Jonathan said to David: "Tomorrow is the New Moon festival. You will be missed, because your seat will be empty. The day after tomorrow, towards evening, go to the place where you hid when this trouble began, and wait by the stone Ezel. I will shoot three arrows to the side of it, as though I were shooting at a target. Then I will send a boy and say, ‘Go, find the arrows.’ If I say to him, ‘Look, the arrows are on this side of you; bring them here,’ then come, because, as surely as the LORD lives, you are safe; there is no danger. But if I say to the boy, ‘Look, the arrows are beyond you,’ then you must go, because the LORD has sent you away.” (1Sa 20:18-22 NIV)

Jonathan duly discovered that Saul was indeed angry with David and we learn at least part of the reason for his anger – he was concerned that his son would not succeed him as king.

“As long as the son of Jesse lives on this earth, neither you nor your kingdom will be established. Now send and bring him to me, for he must die!” (1Sa 20:31 NIV)
and Saul is angry with Jonathan when he defends David.

““Why should he be put to death? What has he done?” Jonathan asked his father. But Saul hurled his spear at him to kill him. Then Jonathan knew that his father intended to kill David. Jonathan got up from the table in fierce anger; on that second day of the month he did not eat, because he was grieved at his father’s shameful treatment of David.” (1Sa 20:32-34 NIV)

Jonathan duly warned David with the arrow shooting as they had agreed and David fled to Ahimelech the priest at Nob where he obtained food for himself and his companions by deception. The food was actually consecrated bread which was not strictly lawful for them to eat and this incident would come to be mentioned by Jesus when he was disputing with the Pharisees (Mark 2:26). David had no weapon, but Ahimelech gave him the sword of Goliath – a nice ironic twist. However, these kindnesses by Ahimelech were later to prove disastrous for him and his family, because Saul’s servant Doeg was present and would later tell Saul.

David knew he would not be safe in territory controlled by Saul and so he fled to Gath and wanted to enter into the service of Achish king of Gath, but became afraid of that king – because he David had killed many Philistines – and feigned insanity to make good his escape. “David took these words to heart and was very much afraid of Achish king of Gath. So he feigned insanity in their presence; and while he was in their hands he acted like a madman, making marks on the doors of the gate and letting saliva run down his beard. Achish said to his servants, “Look at the man! He is insane! Why bring him to me? Am I so short of madmen that you have to bring this fellow here to carry on like this in front of me? Must this man come into my house?”” (1Sa 21:12-15 NIV)

David left Gath and went to the cave of Adullam where his brothers and others from his father’s household joined him. Those who were in debt or discontented also came to join him and he eventually gathered 400 men to support him.

David then approached the king of Moab and left his father and mother there for safety, but the prophet Gad told David he must return to Judea. When David returned to Judea his presence was quickly discovered by Saul and Saul incited his men against David. “Now Saul heard that David and his men had been discovered. And Saul, spear in hand, was seated under the tamarisk tree on the hill at Gibeah, with all his officials standing round him. Saul said to them, “Listen, men of Benjamin! Will the son of Jesse give all of you fields and vineyards? Will he make all of you commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds? Is that why you have all conspired against me? No-one tells me when my son makes a covenant with the son of Jesse. None of you is concerned about me or tells me that my son has incited my servant to lie in wait for me, as he does today.”” (1Sa 22:6-8 NIV)

Saul’s servant Doeg then reported what the priest Ahimelech had done for David and Saul had Ahimelech and his family put to death – although his own officials would not kill the priests and he had to depend on Doeg to commit this unworthy act. Doeg also organised the butchery of the other inhabitants of Nob where Ahimelech had lived. Only one son of Ahimelech, named Abiathar, escaped and he went to join David and told him what had occurred.

Some time later the Philistines attacked the Israelite town of Keilah, but David went to the rescue of Keilah and inflicted heavy losses on the Philistines. But, when Saul heard about this, all he could think of was that David was now effectively trapped in Keilah and he called the Israelite army to go to Keilah and besiege David and his men. This prompted David to

enquire of God what would happen. On learning he would be handed over to Saul he fled with his men, now about 600 in number. Saul heard this and did not go to Keilah.

David wandered about in the desert and at Horesh learned that Saul was again pursuing him. Jonathan met with David at Horesh.

“David stayed in the desert strongholds and in the hills of the Desert of Ziph. Day after day Saul searched for him, but God did not give David into his hands. While David was at Horesh in the Desert of Ziph, he learned that Saul had come out to take his life. And Saul’s son Jonathan went to David at Horesh and helped him to find strength in God. "Don’t be afraid," he said. "My father Saul will not lay a hand on you. You shall be king over Israel, and I will be second to you. Even my father Saul knows this."” (1Sa 23:14-17 NIV)

A wonderful expression of humility and acceptance by Jonathan.

The Ziphites now offered to help Saul capture David. Saul heard David was in the desert of Maon and went to pursue him there but had to break off when he heard the Philistines were raiding Israel. David then went to live in En Gedi, but Saul heard of this when he returned from fighting the Philistines and he took 3,000 men to pursue David.

Saul unknowingly found David and his men in a cave and David could have taken advantage of this against Saul, but he absolutely refused to do so.

“He came to the sheep pens along the way; a cave was there, and Saul went in to relieve himself. David and his men were far back in the cave. The men said, "This is the day the LORD spoke of when he said to you, ‘I will give your enemy into your hands for you to deal with as you wish.’” Then David crept up unnoticed and cut off a corner of Saul’s robe. Afterwards, David was conscience-stricken for having cut off a corner of his robe. He said to his men, "The LORD forbid that I should do such a thing to my master, the LORD’s anointed, or lift my hand against him; for he is the anointed of the LORD." With these words David rebuked his men and did not allow them to attack Saul. And Saul left the cave and went his way.” (1Sa 24:3-7 NIV)

I think this incident speaks volumes about David’s integrity. Saul had been pursuing him with murderous intent for a long time, but David still respected Saul as king, the Lord’s anointed.

David further expressed his integrity by confronting Saul.

“Then David went out of the cave and called out to Saul, "My lord the king!" When Saul looked behind him, David bowed down and prostrated himself with his face to the ground. He said to Saul, "Why do you listen when men say, ‘David is bent on harming you’? This day you have seen with your own eyes how the LORD gave you into my hands in the cave. Some urged me to kill you, but I spared you; I said, ‘I will not lift my hand against my master, because he is the LORD’s anointed.’ See, my father, look at this piece of your robe in my hand! I cut off the corner of your robe but did not kill you. Now understand and recognise that I am not guilty of wrongdoing or rebellion. I have not wronged you, but you are hunting me down to take my life. May the LORD judge between you and me. And may the LORD avenge the wrongs you have done to me, but my hand will not touch you. As the old saying goes, ‘From evildoers come evil deeds,’ so my hand will not touch you. "Against whom has the king of Israel come out? Whom are you pursuing? A dead dog? A flea? May the LORD be our judge and decide between us. May he consider my cause and uphold it; may he vindicate me by delivering me from your hand."” (1Sa 24:8-15 NIV)

This apparently led Saul to some degree of repentance and David agreed not to avenge himself against Saul's house.

"When David finished saying this, Saul asked, "Is that your voice, David my son?" And he wept aloud. "You are more righteous than I," he said. "You have treated me well, but I have treated you badly. You have just now told me of the good you did to me; the LORD gave me into your hands, but you did not kill me. When a man finds his enemy, does he let him get away unharmed? May the LORD reward you well for the way you treated me today. I know that you will surely be king and that the kingdom of Israel will be established in your hands. Now swear to me by the LORD that you will not cut off my descendants or wipe out my name from my father's family." So David gave his oath to Saul. Then Saul returned home, but David and his men went up to the stronghold." (1Sa 24:16-22 NIV)

David then had dealings with a stupid, mean man called Nabal (his name actually means 'fool') and his intelligent and beautiful wife Abigail. Nabal treated David and his many men meanly and David was going to kill them, but Abigail intervened and averted this revenge. Ten days later Nabal died, apparently of natural causes and David invited Abigail to become his wife and she voluntarily agreed. David had another wife Ahinoam, but Saul had given David's wife Michal to another man.

Now the Ziphites re-emerge (you'll remember they had promised to help Saul find David) and tell Saul that David was in the desert of Ziph. Saul forgets all the forgiveness David has shown towards him and sets out to pursue David with 3,000 men. David finds out where they are encamped and goes down to Saul and again has the chance to kill him but refrains.

"David then asked Ahimelech the Hittite and Abishai son of Zeruah, Joab's brother, "Who will go down into the camp with me to Saul?" "I'll go with you," said Abishai. So David and Abishai went to the army by night, and there was Saul, lying asleep inside the camp with his spear stuck in the ground near his head. Abner and the soldiers were lying round him. Abishai said to David, "Today God has given your enemy into your hands. Now let me pin him to the ground with one thrust of my spear; I won't strike him twice." But David said to Abishai, "Don't destroy him! Who can lay a hand on the LORD's anointed and be guiltless? As surely as the LORD lives," he said, "the LORD himself will strike him; either his time will come and he will die, or he will go into battle and perish. But the LORD forbid that I should lay a hand on the LORD's anointed. Now get the spear and water jug that are near his head, and let's go." So David took the spear and water jug near Saul's head, and they left. No-one saw or knew about it, nor did anyone wake up. They were all sleeping, because the LORD had put them into a deep sleep." (1Sa 26:6-12 NIV)

here David spoke prophetically, for Saul would indeed come to die in battle by falling on his own sword.

David then lets Saul and his men know what he did.

"Then David crossed over to the other side and stood on top of the hill some distance away; there was a wide space between them. He called out to the army and to Abner son of Ner, "Aren't you going to answer me, Abner?" Abner replied, "Who are you who calls to the king?" David said, "You're a man, aren't you? And who is like you in Israel? Why didn't you guard your lord the king? Someone came to destroy your lord the king. What you have done is not good. As surely as the LORD lives, you and your men deserve to die, because you did not guard your master, the LORD's anointed. Look around you. Where are the king's spear and water jug that were near his head?" (1Sa 26:13-16 NIV)

Saul appears to repent and David asks that the Lord would spare his (David's) life.

“Then Saul said, “I have sinned. Come back, David my son. Because you considered my life precious today, I will not try to harm you again. Surely I have acted like a fool and have erred greatly.” “Here is the king’s spear,” David answered. “Let one of your young men come over and get it. The LORD rewards every man for his righteousness and faithfulness. The LORD gave you into my hands today, but I would not lay a hand on the LORD’s anointed. As surely as I valued your life today, so may the LORD value my life and deliver me from all trouble.” Then Saul said to David, “May you be blessed, my son David; you will do great things and surely triumph.” So David went on his way, and Saul returned home.” (1Sa 26:21-25 NIV)

But David didn’t trust Saul and fled with his men back to Achish king of Gath and joined the Philistines so that Saul would give up searching for him and this plan appears to have worked.

“When Saul was told that David had fled to Gath, he no longer searched for him.” (1Sa 27:4 NIV)

Achish gave David the country town of Ziklag for his own domain and it remained part of Judah thereafter. So David lived in Ziklag for about one and a half years and raided various other people groups. Achish trusted David and thought that he would be his servant forever.

Eventually the Philistines gathered an army against Israel and Saul tried to consult the Lord, but he received no answer. So he tried to consult a medium, the witch of Endor, who brought up a spirit claiming to be Samuel – we read about this when we studied Samuel. Saul was told that the kingdom was being torn from his hands.

“Samuel said, “Why do you consult me, now that the LORD has turned away from you and become your enemy? The LORD has done what he predicted through me. The LORD has torn the kingdom out of your hands and given it to one of your neighbours—to David. Because you did not obey the LORD or carry out his fierce wrath against the Amalekites, the LORD has done this to you today.” (1Sa 28:16-18 NIV)

The Philistines gathered all their army together at Aphek with David and his men in the rear. Achish had confidence in David and his men but Achish’s leaders would not allow David and his men to join them in the battle as they were afraid they would turn on them during the battle. So David and his men went back to Ziklag. When they got there they found the Amalekites had raided the town and burned it, capturing their wives and children.

David’s men were very angry with him, but he enquired of God and was told that he could pursue the raiding party and succeed in a rescue mission. David pursued them, although some of his men were too tired to come along, and caught up with them, coming upon them whilst they were eating and drinking, and killed almost all of them. David recovered everything including his two wives, the children the plunder and the flocks and herds.

As they returned some of David’s men wanted to deprive the men who’d been too tired to come of their share of the plunder, but David wouldn’t allow that. This is another example of David’s generous and righteous heart.

After his return to Ziklag, David sent some of the plunder to the elders of Judah.

Meanwhile the Philistines had been in battle with the Israelites and killed many of them including Saul – who died by falling on his own sword – when he saw that he would be captured by the Philistines. A few days later news of Saul’s death reached David via an

Amalekite messenger who brought Saul's crown to David. David and his chief men tore their clothes at this news.

"Then David and all the men with him took hold of their clothes and tore them. They mourned and wept and fasted till evening for Saul and his son Jonathan, and for the army of the LORD and the house of Israel, because they had fallen by the sword." (2Sa 1:11-12 NIV) and they killed the messenger because he had killed Saul the Lord's anointed and David sang a lament.

David then enquired of the Lord whether or not he should return to Judah – notice how every time David is faced with an important decision he seeks the Lord's help and guidance. The Lord told David to go to Hebron and he duly went with his two wives and was anointed king over the Southern part of Israel - Judah.

"Then the men of Judah came to Hebron and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah." (2Sa 2:4 NIV)

David was only initially king over Southern Israel.

"Meanwhile, Abner son of Ner, the commander of Saul's army, had taken Ish-Bosheth son of Saul and brought him over to Mahanaim. He made him king over Gilead, Ashuri and Jezreel, and also over Ephraim, Benjamin and all Israel. Ish-Bosheth son of Saul was forty years old when he became king over Israel, and he reigned two years. The house of Judah, however, followed David." (2Sa 2:8-10 NIV)

David was king just over the Southern part of Israel for seven and a half years. David and his men confronted Ish Bosheth and his men in battle and defeated them, but initially this defeat was not decisive. David had a number of children during this time.

"Sons were born to David in Hebron: His firstborn was Amnon the son of Ahinoam of Jezreel; his second, Kileab the son of Abigail the widow of Nabal of Carmel; the third, Absalom the son of Maacah daughter of Talmai king of Geshur; the fourth, Adonijah the son of Haggith; the fifth, Shephatiah the son of Abital; and the sixth, Ithream the son of David's wife Eglah. These were born to David in Hebron." (2Sa 3:2-5 NIV)

Some time later Ish Bosheth offended Abner, still the commander of his army, and Abner tried to make an agreement with David to bring the rest of Israel over to him. David demanded first the return of his wife Michal and Ish Bosheth sent her, taking her away from her second husband, Paltiel. Abner came to see David, but as he was leaving after his visit Joab – commander of David's army – treacherously stabbed Abner to death without David's knowledge. David cursed Abner and his family for the treachery. David attended Abner's funeral and fasted afterwards so that all Israel knew he had no part in Abner's death.

The news of the death of Abner made Ish Bosheth lose heart and two of his men who were leaders of raiding bands killed him, cut off his head and brought his head to David at Hebron. David ordered them both killed for treacherously killing their leader in his own house and buried Ish Bosheth's head in Abner's tomb.

After Ish Bosheth's death, David was anointed king over all Israel.

"All the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and said, "We are your own flesh and blood. In the past, while Saul was king over us, you were the one who led Israel on their military campaigns. And the LORD said to you, 'You shall shepherd my people Israel, and you shall become their ruler.'" When all the elders of Israel had come to King David at Hebron, the king made a compact with them at Hebron before the LORD, and they anointed David king

over Israel. David was thirty years old when he became king, and he reigned for forty years. In Hebron he reigned over Judah for seven years and six months, and in Jerusalem he reigned over all Israel and Judah for thirty-three years.” (2Sa 5:1-5 NIV)

David’s first great act as king was to capture the city of Jerusalem from the Jebusites. David took up residence in the fortress and called it the city of David and everything he undertook went well.

“David then took up residence in the fortress and called it the City of David. He built up the area around it, from the supporting terraces inward. And he became more and more powerful, because the LORD God Almighty was with him.” (2Sa 5:9-10 NIV)

David built a palace and took more wives and concubines and had more sons.

“Now Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, along with cedar logs and carpenters and stonemasons, and they built a palace for David. And David knew that the LORD had established him as king over Israel and had exalted his kingdom for the sake of his people Israel. After he left Hebron, David took more concubines and wives in Jerusalem, and more sons and daughters were born to him. These are the names of the children born to him there: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon, Ibhar, Elishua, Nepheg, Japhia, Elishama, Eliada and Eliphelet.” (2Sa 5:11-16 NIV)

So I think we’ll leave David there in comfort in his palace with his wives and concubines and offspring for this session and look at the rest of his kingship – and indeed his life for he was king almost until he died – for this time. I think what comes through the stories we’ve been looking at is firstly that David was a warrior, he killed Goliath and moreover he was good at leading fighting men in battle. Indeed the fact that he had so much blood on his hands was why the Lord wouldn’t allow him to build a temple in Jerusalem (1 Kings 8:19). Secondly, I think David’s enormous loyalty and integrity shine through. He refused to kill King Saul because he was the Lord’s anointed even though Saul was trying to kill him for no good reason. He never rebelled against king Achish and refused to take advantage of the commander of Ish Bosheth’s army, Abner. As we shall see David was the first real king over Israel – Saul was more of a tribal military leader – and, in spite of his many faults, a man after God’s own heart.