

# SAUL REJECTED; DAVID CHOSEN

*United Kingdom*

1 Samuel 16-18

## STRUCTURE

**Key-persons:** Saul, Jonathan, David

**Key-locations:** The house of Saul at Gibeah, David's home in Bethlehem.

**Key-repetitions:**

- Fear: Saul and all the Israelites were terrified when they heard Goliath's challenge (17:11); the Israelites ran from Goliath in fear (17:24).

- Events that raised up David: Samuel anointed David (16:1-12); he was empowered by the Spirit of the Lord (16:13); he played the harp for Saul (16:14-23); he killed Goliath (17:1-57); he developed a friendship with Jonathan (18:1-5); David was successful in everything Saul sent him to do (18:5); Saul gave David a high rank (18:5).

- David's conquest: he killed both a lion and a bear (17:36); he killed Goliath (17:51); he was successful when Saul sent him into battle (18:5).

- Spirit: the Spirit of the Lord entered David when he was anointed (16:13); the Spirit of the Lord left Saul and an evil spirit tormented him (16:14); Saul's attendants suggested that they find someone to play the harp for Saul when an evil spirit tormented him (16:15-17); David would play the harp whenever an evil spirit came upon Saul (16:23).

**Key-attitudes:**

- The grief Samuel felt for Saul.
- Fear of Saul and the Israelites of Goliath.
- David's confidence in God and courage to confront

danger.

- Love felt for David.

- Friendship between Jonathan and David.

- Conflict.

**Initial-situation:**

Israel's leaders requested for the prophet Samuel to give them a king. The Lord led Samuel to anoint Saul king. Saul attacked the Philistines and defeated them.

On two occasions, Saul disobeyed the Lord. 1) Saul himself offered the whole-burnt-offering even though God's Law required that only priests offer burnt-offerings. 2) Samuel gave Saul the Lord's command to attack the Amalekites and destroy everything that belonged to them as an offering to the Lord. Saul did not kill their king nor the best of the sheep and cattle.

Samuel informed Saul that since he had rejected the Lord's command, the Lord had rejected Saul as king. Samuel never saw Saul again all the rest of his life. Samuel grieved for Saul. The Lord was sorry that he made Saul king over Israel.

**Initial-problem:**

The Lord asked Samuel how long he would mourn for Saul. The Lord told Samuel that he had rejected Saul as king and had chosen one of Jesse's sons to be king.

**Final-situation:**

Jonathan, Saul's son, loved David. David was successful in different battles and Saul gave him a high rank in the army. This pleased all the people.

## BIBLE STORY

### David, a Servant of Saul

The Lord told Samuel, "How long will you mourn for Saul? I have rejected him as king of Israel. Fill your flask with oil and go. I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem. I have chosen one of his sons to be king."

Samuel went to Bethlehem and invited Jesse and his sons to sacrifice to the Lord.

Jesse had seven of his sons pass before Samuel, but Samuel told him, "The Lord has not chosen any of these. Are there no more sons?"

Jesse answered, "There is the youngest, but he is out tending the sheep."

Samuel requested, "Send for him; we will not sit down until he arrives."

Jesse sent for the youngest, who was named David. He was the picture of health, tanned and good looking.

Then the Lord told Samuel, "Get up and anoint him; he is the one."

Samuel took the flask of oil and anointed David with his brothers watching. The Spirit of the Lord entered David and empowered him for the rest of his life. Samuel returned to Ramah (16:1-13).

Now the Spirit of the Lord left Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord tormented him (16:14).

Saul's advisors sought someone to play the harp for Saul when the evil spirit tormented him. One servant mentioned that Jesse of Bethlehem had a son who played the harp. Saul sent messengers to Jesse and said, "Send me your son David."

David went to Saul and entered his service. Whenever the evil spirit came upon Saul, David got out his harp and played. Saul would feel better, and the evil spirit would leave him (16:14-23).

The Philistines prepared for war. Saul called up his troops to oppose them. The Philistines were on one hill and the Israelites on the opposing hill, with the valley between them (17:1-3).

The hero of the Philistine camp was Goliath, a giant who was over nine feet tall. He had a bronze helmet on his head and was dressed in bronze armor. He wore bronze shin guards and carried a bronze sword. His spear was like a fence rail; the spear tip weighed over fifteen pounds. Goliath shouted a challenge to the army of Israel, "No need for the whole army to fight. Choose one man and have him fight me. If he kills me, the Philistines will become your slaves; but, if I kill him, you will become our slaves. I dare the army of Israel: Send one of your men to fight me!" When Saul and his troops heard Goliath's dare, they were terrified (17:4-11).

Jesse's three oldest sons went with Saul to war. David, the youngest, went back and forth from helping Saul to tending his father's sheep at Bethlehem (17:12-15).

Each morning and evening for forty days Goliath came forward and made his speech.

Jesse told his son David, "Take food to your brothers in Saul's camp. Check on them and bring me back some news."

Early the next morning David loaded up and set out. He arrived at the camp just as the army was moving into battle formation. Israel and the Philistines were forming their lines facing each other. David left the food with the keeper of supplies. Then he ran to the battle line and greeted his brothers. While they were talking, Goliath stepped forward and shouted his usual dare, and David heard it. When the Israelites saw the man, they fell back in terror.

The Israelite troops talked among themselves, "This man keeps coming out to challenge Israel. The king will give great wealth to the man who kills him. He will also give him his daughter as a bride and will exempt his father's family from paying taxes."

David asked the men standing near him, "Who does this uncircumcised Philistine think he is, defying the armies of the living God?"

David's remarks were overheard and reported to Saul. Saul sent for him.

David told Saul, "I, your servant, will go and fight this Philistine."

Saul replied, "You can't fight this Philistine; you're only a boy. Goliath has been a warrior since his youth."

David answered, "I have been tending my father's sheep. Whenever a lion or a bear took a sheep from the flock, I chased it, attacked it and rescued the sheep. I have killed both a lion and a bear. I will do the same to this uncircumcised Philistine who is challenging the armies of the living God. The Lord delivered me from the lion's teeth and the bear's claws. He will also deliver me from this Philistine."

Saul told David, "Go, and the Lord be with you."

Saul outfitted David in his own armor.

David told Saul, "I cannot move with all this stuff; I am not used to it." So he took it off. Then David took his shepherd's staff, selected five smooth stones from the creek, put them in his shepherd's pouch and with his sling in his hand, approached the Philistine.

Meanwhile, Goliath kept coming closer to David. He saw that David was only a boy. He ridiculed David, "Do you think I am a dog, that you come after me with a stick?" Goliath cursed David and said, "Come here, and I'll give your flesh to the buzzards and the beasts of the field!"

David answered, "You come against me with sword, spear and battle-ax. I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you curse. Today the Lord will give you over to me. Then all the world will know that there is a God in Israel. It is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves; the battle belongs to the Lord."

Goliath moved closer to attack; David ran toward the Philistine, took a stone from his pouch, slung it and hit Goliath in the forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell face-down on the ground. David ran to the Philistine, took Goliath's sword and cut off his head (17:1-51).

The Philistines saw their hero dead! They ran for their lives. The men of Israel rushed forward, chased the Philistines and left many dead scattered along the roads (17:52-58).

After this, Saul kept David with him and did not let him return to his father's house. Friendship developed between Saul's son Jonathan and David. Jonathan loved David as much as he loved himself. He made a covenant with David and gave him gifts: his royal robe and weapons including his armor, sword, bow and belt (18:1-4).

Saul sent David to fight in different battles. David was so successful that Saul gave him a high rank in the army. This pleased all the people, and Saul's officers as well (18:5).

## GENERIC DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

1. What catches your attention in the story?
2. Is there anything in the story that is hard to understand?
3. Who are the main characters in the story?
4. What problems did the characters face?
5. How did the characters face their problems?
6. How have you faced similar problems?
7. Is there someone in the story who is similar to you or who is different from you?
8. What does the story tell about God?

## SPECIFIC DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How was David chosen to become the future king of Israel?
2. Contrast the spirit that tormented Saul to the Spirit that empowered David.
3. How did Saul and the Israelites respond to Goliath's challenge?
4. What gave David confidence to face the giant Goliath?
5. What can you learn from David that will help you face the "giants" in your life?

## LIFE-LESSONS

1. The person who once served the Lord and was empowered by the Spirit of the Lord, but begins to disobey the Lord, faces the risk that he may be giving evil spirits freedom to torment him. At one time Saul was empowered by the Spirit of the Lord (11:6). But he disobeyed the Lord (15:23), and later an evil spirit tormented him (16:14).
2. The person who understands but disobeys the Word of God, risks being responsible for his self-destruction. That happened with Saul (15:17-19);

31:4). It also happened with Judas (Ac 1:17-18) and Ananias and Sapphira (Ac 5:1-10).

3. God's servant, who is empowered by the Spirit of God, has the capacity to do anything that God desires. David was empowered by the Spirit and could do everything that God wanted him to do (16:13).
4. Viewing difficult situations from God's point of view helps a person put giant problems in perspective. When Goliath challenged the Israelites, the soldiers saw a giant, while David

saw a mortal man defying almighty God (17:26).

5. A few resources, in the hands of the person committed to God, produce great results. To fight Goliath, David had in his hands a slingshot and some stones; however, with his head he believed in God, with his mouth he confessed confidence in the Lord Almighty, and with his hands he used the slingshot and a stone to kill Goliath (17:45-52). A child with only two fish and five pieces of bread was the instrument Jesus used to produce a miracle (Jn 6:5-13).