

Unit Three: Sacred Living: Saints as Mentors

Lesson 2

David: God's Success Story



Pray Together

Hanoon Hor, yev Vortvo, yev Hokvooyn Surpo, Amen.

You are my king and my God, who decrees victories for Jacob. Through you we push back our enemies; through your name we trample our foes. I do not trust in my bow, my sword does not bring me victory; but you give us victory over our enemies, you put our adversaries to shame. In God we make our boast all day long, and we will praise your name forever.

Psalm 44:4-8

Quick Quiz

Write the correct answer in the space.

1. Peoples' understanding of God is sometimes described as "head knowledge" and "_____ knowledge."
2. Jesus' work on the _____ is the sole source of our salvation.
3. Romans 3:23 says "for all have sinned and fall short of the _____ of God."
4. St. Gregory of Narek wrote the long poem called the _____.
5. According to Psalm 46, the world will _____ when God lifts his voice.

Words to Live By

"See, I am sending you out like sheep in the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves."

Matthew 10:16



No Fear of the Philistine

For weeks the army of the Philistines had camped on one side of the Valley of Elah. The Israelites, trying to find the best time to attack, watched from the other side with Saul, their king. The Philistines had a soldier named Goliath, who was a giant of perhaps nine feet. Each day, Goliath stepped out from the Philistine lines and mocked the Israelites. He challenged them to send a soldier to kill him, but each time the Israelites ran from him in fear because of his great size.

David, a local shepherd boy, had brothers serving with the Israelite forces. David's father sent him to deliver food to his soldier brothers. David heard the insults of Goliath. He was offended that anyone would dare to mock the army of the living God.

Though the giant Goliath was very well armed and in full armor, David

was determined to strike down the Philistine. He declined the armor that was offered to him by King Saul because he could not move around comfortably, and David faced his opponent with only his sling and five stones.

David said to Goliath, "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." (1 Samuel 17:45). Goliath moved to attack David, but the shepherd boy killed the giant with a stone from his sling. David placed his confidence in God, not in weapons or armor.

Read 1 Samuel 18:6-9. Discuss these questions:

- David killed the enemy that was bothering King Saul the most. What was Saul's response to David's victory?
- Why do you think Saul reacted this way?
- What are some situations where you have felt jealous of someone?
- Have you ever been the object of jealousy? How did it feel?

WHAT IS SUCCESS?

As God judged David by what was inside his heart, so will he judge our thoughts, words, and actions. He wants to see what we can do with the abilities he has given us. A successful life is one lived for him.

The world has very different standards for measuring success than does God. How would you define success?



Beyond Goliath

When David was anointed king he was very young and a mere shepherd. But God saw his potential and guided Samuel to the right choice by telling him that while “others look at the outward appearance, the Lord looks on the heart.” (1 Samuel 16: 7) David loved God’s law and for a long time worked hard to do his will. In Acts 13:22 Paul tells the people of Antioch that God called David “a man after my own heart.” During his reign, David wrote many of the psalms. He was also a fine musician, and he set many of the psalms to music.

As king, David won battle after battle. He kept God first in his heart and was thankful for his blessings. One spring day, however, David took his eyes off God and turned them on Bathsheba, the wife of another man. His love for her led to more disobedience and many tragedies, including the murder of Bathsheba’s husband (he was purposely sent off to war). God finally sent an angel to destroy David’s people until David admitted to God that all the problems were because of his sin. David repented and turned back to God.

If you read the psalms of David, you can clearly see the depth of his relationship with God. He came to God with all his joys and sorrows, inspired by his experiences as a warrior, a poet, a simple shepherd, a king. God was David’s best friend, even when David was distracted by sin. Some psalms are full of joy and gratitude, while others sound like a person who is complaining to the only friend who will listen.

Read Psalm 55:1-11. What is the mood here?

Read Psalm 133. What might have been going on in David’s life when he wrote this psalm?



Did You Know?

When David was helping prepare for the construction of God’s Temple, he provided around 3750 tons of gold, along with many other valuables! *[1 Chronicles 22:14]*

Is Your Heart in the Right Place?

David's life is a rich and dramatic history. We see his rise, fall, and restoration to God. It may seem odd, though, that God loved David so much even though he committed much bigger sins than most average humans ever will.

There are three things we may take away from David's example. First, God saw something in David's heart that greatly pleased him. It may have been David's unshakeable faith in him, or the way David looked upon the Lord as his closest friend, or these and other things only God could see.

The second thing that comes to mind when we think of David is the greatness of God's forgiveness. We see David's murders, adultery, and other misdeeds and realize that if God can forgive those sins, then he can forgive anything! No matter what we may have done, we can always come back to him.

Lastly, we can look at David and see that he had many flaws, yet God created him to accomplish great things. We can be assured that even if we don't think we have any special talents, God doesn't see us that way. He looks at what is inside us and sees so much more than we ever could. Any of us, no matter how unimportant we think we are, can live life for the glory of the Lord. If we point our hearts in his direction, heaven's the limit!



How Can I Help You?

- Think of different abilities that various people have. How could they be utilized for God's glory?



Our Armenian Way

King David has a feast day in the Armenian Church. As an example of someone who loved the Lord with all his heart and who was the recipient of God's forgiveness, David is one of the saints celebrated in December, along with Stephen, Peter, Paul, and others. His feast occurs following the fourth Sunday of Advent. We celebrate his life in the season leading to the Nativity, because this Old Testament king of Israel reminds us of how special God's people are to him.