

- *If we are to be used by God we will have to face differing opinions of us*
- *After slaying Goliath*

1. Fame

- *Before, the question was whether he would be able to handle obscurity*

- *Now he must cope with exaltation and success*

- *Will he once again learn to live on God alone?*

- *The psalms that David wrote give us the answer – yes!*

2. Friendship

- *Jonathan*

- *The friendship had a spiritual base*

- *Covenant-friendship*

- *Generous friendship*

- *Friendship free from jealousy*

If we are to be used by God we will have to face differing opinions of us, close relationship with others, and enmity: fame, friends and foes.

David has been anointed by the Spirit, has received some initial training in Saul's service, and now becomes a national hero.

Several things happen to him as a result of the slaying of Goliath.

1. **Fame.** Suddenly David becomes well-known. It happens as soon as he starts walking out to meet Goliath. Saul, who had shown no interest in David's family background before and did not recognize his former armour-bearer, now wants to know all about him¹. The people were expecting he would offer the conqueror the privilege of marrying into the royal family². Not surprisingly, Saul wants to know about David's place among the families of Israel³. David is rising into prominence. Before, the question was whether he would be able to handle obscurity. He was anointed the king by Samuel and by the Spirit. But he had to live in obscurity, with scarcely anyone knowing that he had received such a high privilege. But now he has the opposite situation to handle. As a result of the Goliath incident he will be abruptly pushed into national prominence and will be living with the king himself. David has to be like Paul who said he knew how to be abased and how to abound, and could face any and every circumstance⁴. David has had to cope with humiliating circumstances. Now he must cope with exaltation and success. David had been discounted by his father and despised by his brothers. But he had lived for God! The question now is: as he moves from obscurity to fame, will he still be able to cope? Will he once again learn to live on God alone? Will he learn neither to be depressed by obscurity or elated by fame? The psalms that David wrote give us the answer. He learned to look to God alone.

2. **Friendship.** God was with David, and gave him what he needed at this time, a close friend. He and Jonathan became close in the Lord and David had someone who knew about the life of the palace and could be an advisor and counsellor to him.

How did this friendship begin? It had a spiritual base. Saul took David back to the royal house and started talking with him. David no doubt told Saul more about the spiritual experiences that were the background to his killing Goliath. Saul probably was not impressed, but Jonathan was¹. The fact that David and Jonathan were in the same house enabled the friendship to grow². It was **covenant-friendship**; they swore oaths of loyalty to each other promising that nothing would separate them³. It was **generous friendship**. Jonathan could see that David would need some garments appropriate to his new situation as military-commander staying in Saul's house. He immediately gave David what he had himself⁴. It was **friendship free from jealousy**. It was surprising that these two young men became such good friends, because one would expect them to have been fiercely hostile and jealous of each other. Jonathan was expecting to be the next king. Yet David knew and Saul was soon to start guessing⁵ that David would be the king, not Jonathan. Still, no jealousy ever came between David and Jonathan.

¹ 17:55-58

² 17:25

³ 17:56

⁴ Philippians 4:11-12

¹ 18:1

² 18:2

³ 18:3

⁴ 18:4

⁵ 18:8

• It is similar to the friendship of Jesus

It is similar to the friendship of Jesus. Jesus' friendship is covenant-friendship; he swears never to leave us or forsake us. Jesus covers us with his protective royal clothing – his righteousness and his status as the King's son. He gives us the 'belt of truth' that holds us firm in the midst of conflict. Jesus gives us a short-distance weapon (the 'sword' - the Word of God) and a long-distance weapon (the 'arrow' of prayer that can be fired over long distances!).

3. Foe

• He had to face intense jealousy and animosity

3. **Foe.** David had not only a close friend but a close enemy. He had to face intense jealousy and animosity. Within a short time he was a military commander of high rank and popular with everyone¹. When the men went out to war with David leading them, crowds of women met them as they returned from battle, singing songs in praise of David².

1 18:5

2 18:6-7

• Saul tried to remove him from the palace and put him in danger

If he was tempted to pride he had something to keep him dependent on God. Saul was jealous¹. David had taken up his previous task of soothing Saul's moodiness² but now it roused him to intense violence³. Saul tried to remove him from the palace and put him in danger⁴. Then he offered him status in the royal family but on the understanding that he walked into increasing danger to his life⁵. David's humility and Saul's instability combine and the idea is abandoned⁶.

1 18:8-9

2 18:10

3 18:10b-11

4 18:12-16

5 18:18

6 18:19-20

• Another opportunity for Saul to put David in danger

Then the opportunity comes again for Saul when Michal falls in love with the young national hero. Saul is delighted and without putting the idea to David face-to-face sees that he gets to hear he must walk into even greater danger¹. Great exploits have to be performed within a time-limit². Saul feels sure that somewhere along the line David will be killed.

1 18:21-27

2 18:21, 26

• God gives the protection - we have to learn to live on God alone

How does one live with such enmity? God gives the protection¹. David had to learn how to stay cool under the ever-present schemes of a cunning enemy. It has often been that way with the people of God, and it was the experience of Jesus. But it is all part of our training. We have to learn to live on God alone. David grew in favour with God and in favour with Saul's own daughter². Even greater fame came to him³. His training was continuing. God was taking him steadily towards the kingship and using him along the way.

1 18:28

2 18:29

3 18:30

• His training was continuing

God has a calling for all of his people. He will train us for it, in ways no humanly devised programme could ever do. When he is ready he will bring us into our finest hour. Meanwhile we serve him along the way and one step trains us for the next step.

• When God is ready he will bring us into our finest hour – meanwhile training continues

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