

## Prayer

Almighty God, my Lord and heavenly Father  
Deliver me this day from the work of the enemy;  
I offer myself in total repentance to Jesus my Lord,  
to deal with the trouble which has penetrated my life,  
I do not know it or understand it, but I certainly know this,  
He is my Deliverer; He can save me, He has saved me before!  
AMEN

## Other Prayer Suggestions

### Weekly Theme: The Bible

*Praise God for the amazing influence of the Bible on the world over the last two thousand years. Pray that the Lord will re-ignite the hearts of His people to read more of His Word!*

### On-going prayers

- *Praise the Lord for people all over the world who are being saved by faith*
- *Pray for the nations of Central America and their leaders*
- *Pray for your local police*

## Meditation

Jesus, my Saviour, my Creator, my Lord;  
Your glory is far greater than all You've made.

Much greater than the light years separating the stars;  
And intricate in guiding each move of a hand.

More powerful than all the energy used by our planet;  
And mindful of the needs of each created soul.

More colourful and varied than a rainbow's perfection;  
And painting such inspiration as fills us with joy.

More sumptuous and lavish than the most generous of gifts  
And continuously supplying inexhaustible love

Jesus, my Saviour, my Creator, my Lord;  
Your glory has touched me, and I feel the divine.

## Bible Study - 1 Samuel 18:10-16

<sup>10</sup> *The next day an evil spirit from God rushed upon Saul, and he raved within his house, while David was playing the lyre, as he did each day. Saul had his spear in his hand; <sup>11</sup> and he threw the spear, for he thought, 'I will pin David to the wall.' But David eluded him twice. <sup>12</sup> Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with him but had departed from Saul. <sup>13</sup> So Saul removed him from his presence, and made him a commander of a thousand; and David marched out and came in, leading the army.*

<sup>14</sup> *David had success in all his undertakings; for the LORD was with him. <sup>15</sup> But when Saul saw that he had great success, he was afraid of him, <sup>16</sup> for all Israel*

and Judah loved David because it was he who marched out and came in leading them.

## Review

What an extraordinary story! The very day following David's victory for all Israel over Goliath and his presentation at court (18:10), and the day after He had acknowledged Saul as the Lord's true and anointed King over all Israel and despite his right as victor to claim the throne for himself, David was attacked by King Saul! An evil spirit took hold of the King who turned on David and attempted to kill him with a spear! Evil knows no depths to which it will not sink.

This was doubtless an awful and very threatening incident and David had to use all his agility and skill to avoid the angry King twice (18:11). He had taken up his position as before, as a musician with nothing but the service of the King in mind (see also 16:23), and his faithful obedience nearly cost him his life. In truth, it was probably Saul who was afraid of David. We saw earlier how David (in the story of Goliath) how David could have taken advantage of victory, but He did not choose the way of the world but followed God's will. Now his reward was to be attacked and hounded by the very King whose life he had just honoured and spared! This is a sad story indeed.

After the incident when Saul had recovered from his fit of evil, he made David a commander of a thousand (18:13), and it seems likely that he wanted him out of the way. There was always the possibility that someone leading a unit such as this would be killed themselves; the work of a military leader was exposed and dangerous because there was a responsibility to lead 'from the front'. There is also a certain ambiguity in the description of what level of command was given to David. Whilst appointed a leader of a 'thousand' (18:13), the same verse says that he lead 'the army'; a Hebrew expression normally meaning far more than a thousand men.

The story emphasises the success of David and the growing envy of the old King (18:15). Right at the end of our passage, it says that 'all Israel and Judah loved David', because he led the army, and was therefore responsible for the security of the people of Israel (18:16). This work of the army was to secure the borders of the nation so that people could live in peace, and as far as the ordinary people were concerned, they saw David doing this, not Saul. When scripture says that the people 'loved' David, this is a shorthand way of saying they wanted him as their King.

It is quite clear why David was so successful. Scripture says 'The Lord was with him' (18:14). It is hard to be precise about what this means, but it was a quality which meant more than military success or his rapid rise to fame and fortune. More than such things, it described the attitude of service which he displayed in his loyalty to the old King Saul and his faithful service of God's people, delivering them peace from the Philistines. Even more that this, 'the Lord was with him' because he had been anointed by Samuel (1 Sam 16), an act which was both symbolic of God's favour and a means of his empowerment by the Holy Spirit. In addition, David was fulfilling what God had created him to be, (see Psalm 139; 'it was You who formed my inwards parts ...' Ps. 139:13), and everyone who met David seemed to recognise that the Lord was with him.

It is not always easy to see Godly qualities in people, but most of us have seen something in others that reminds us of God. It is hard to define, but it may come in a glimpse of something done or said or as a general observation about a person's life, work and witness, whereby we say 'there is a man or woman of God'. We do not mean by this that such a person is perfect, and we will certainly find that David was no 'saint', but it is the signs of godliness we see which are significant. David grew in the things of God, and he received the Lord's blessing for those things he did well and also His wrath for his failure and sin, but he faced them as one who knew that the Lord was with him, and this was a scarce commodity in Old Testament times.

Few are called to be the 'David's' of this world, as leaders of people acknowledge by all; but we can still learn from the Godly characteristics we see in David, of courage, service, ingenuity, love, compassion, repentance and other qualities, and these can be imitated. Such qualities are similar to the fruit of the Spirit in the New Testament ( Gal 5:22), yet are shown in a different way through the story of the life David, and it does us good to be able to read about such things from different places within scripture.

As the story of David unfolds, a great deal happens to him, and some of it is quite difficult for us to understand, yet we will frequently find it said of David; 'the Lord is with him'. It would be good if other people said this of us, particularly as we have the benefit of the work of Jesus and the Holy Spirit to help us, something which David could only see from a great distance.

## Questions (for use in groups)

1. Why do you think that scripture describes the evil spirit as 'from God' (v10)? What is this saying about God, and about evil?
2. Imagine yourselves to be Israelites in David's day, and make a list of 'pros' and 'cons' for the leadership of Saul, and of David.
3. What are the godly characteristics of David? Discuss why it was said of him 'the Lord was with him'.

## Discipleship

### Personal comment:

*There is extraordinary humanity in the story of David, and we would be foolish to ignore it. As I have commented before about various stories in the Old Testament, the story line is as good as many a Hollywood movie, and the story of David touches on a wide variety of spiritual and moral truths. My prayer is that God's people can learn all that the Lord has for them to learn from the life of David.*

### Ideas for discipleship programme

- Give time writing down a list of the qualities you see in David which make him a man of God. How many of these are qualities to which you should aspire?
- Read in the newspapers about the stories of great leaders today; what is the difference between them and David, and why?

## Final Prayer

Bless me, Lord Jesus. Bless my work, my relaxation, my family, my home and all that I hold dear. Bless me also by making me stop to redirect my life according to Your will; and give me the courage to respond to all you need of me. Bless me, and make my day complete, Lord Jesus; AMEN