

DAVID, THE SHEPHERD

PREPARATION FOR LEADERSHIP

Introduction:

1. When God brought the people of Israel out of bondage in Egypt, He “guided them in the wilderness like a flock” (Psalm 78:52).
2. Thus, it is no surprise that God chose David from the sheepfold to be king of Israel (Psalm 78:70-72).
3. In his time as a shepherd, David learned many things that would help serve as a faithful and successful king.
4. Though he did not know it, God was preparing him among the flock to be a leader of the nation.

I. Lessons from Shepherding

- A. In many ways, living as a shepherd was vastly different from living as a king.
- B. A shepherd often lives in obscurity.
 1. While a king is known by all and adored by many, a shepherd exists on the outskirts of society for many days at a time.
 2. David was overlooked by his own family (1 Sam. 16:11; 17:28-29).
 3. Yet, David learned to do his work solely for the benefit of the sheep, not for the praise of men (cf. John 5:41).
- C. A shepherd often lives in solitude.
 1. A king dwells in the midst of the nation, surrounded by people nearly at all times.
 2. A shepherd may spend days and even weeks alone in the wild, with no company but his flock.
 3. In this solitude, David was able to meditate and reflect upon God and His Word (cf. Matt. 14:23; John 6:15).
- E. Yet, a shepherd lives in reality.
 1. No matter what, the sheep have to be led, fed, and protected.
 2. David learned the value of work and self-reliance (doing for himself and his flock the things that he could do).
 3. In the events of his life as a shepherd, David learned to do his part and to trust in God.
 4. This prepared him for greater victories (1 Sam. 17:34-37).
- F. Though he did not know it at the time, David was learning lessons as a shepherd that would prepare him to be a king (1 Chron. 11:2).

II. Loving the Sheep

- A. A shepherd develops a caring relationship with the flock.
 1. They are his source of livelihood.
 2. Yet, they are also defenseless and, in many ways, helpless.
- B. David cared deeply about his sheep (1 Sam. 16:11, 19; 17:15, 28).
 1. Jesus, the Good Shepherd, cares for His sheep (John 10:10-15).
 2. God, our Shepherd, dwells with His sheep (Psalm 23:4).
 3. Elders, as shepherds, develop caring relationships with the congregation (1 Pet. 5:1-2).
- C. A shepherd defends the flock (Acts 20:28-32).
- D. A shepherd leads the flock (Psalm 23; 1 Pet. 5:3-4).