



David's life was a self-inflicted roller coaster of emotional highs and lows as well as good decisions and bad judgments. David throughout his life was guilty of committing serious mistakes whilst being fully committed to God. In spite of David's actions and failings he was one of the greatest kings and leaders recorded in the Bible. This shows us that, as leaders, we may not always get it right (David certainly didn't) but David tried to mostly do right by those he led. From scriptures we read that David looked to God to show him how to lead his people. Was it no surprise that when David lost sight of God, he also lost sight of how to best lead others? We also know that when David trusted God he was victorious.

David's passionate love for God inspired him to write some amazing poetry and his Psalms in the Bible have helped influence and shape hymns, songs, prayers, liturgies and patterns of worship for centuries.

King David quick facts:

- David was born around 907BC in Bethlehem and he lived for about 70 years.
- David was the youngest son of Jesse. David had seven older brothers and Ruth was his great-grandmother (from the book of Ruth in the Old Testament).
- As a young confident shepherd boy David killed the giant Goliath with a sling shot.
- David went on to kill many of Israel's enemies on the battlefield (but only when he trusted in God).
- As well as being a great leader of armies, David was an accomplished musician and poet and he is thought to be the author of 75 of the 150 Psalms in the Bible.
- David had a very close working relationship with King Saul (the first anointed King of Israel). Even though King Saul tried to kill David on more than one occasion, David had many opportunities to kill King Saul in return, but he chose not to.
- David's best friend was Jonathan (King Saul's son).
- David became the second King of Israel and he ruled for 40 years.
- King David committed adultery with Bathsheba and tried to cover up her pregnancy. When this failed David arranged the murder of her husband Uriah.
- King David's first son with Bathsheba died as a child, but he went on to have many more children from lots of different mothers, one of those children was Solomon who became the third king of Israel.
- Against God's strict orders King David took a census of the people.
- David was an ancestor of Jesus Christ. Jesus was often called "Son of David".
- David loved God deeply his entire life and God called David a man after his own heart.

Three examples where David learned from his mistakes...

■ Great leaders own up to their mistakes...

Read 2 Samuel 11: 1-15. Adultery was frowned upon in ancient Israel as it is today, and being a leader does not give a person license to break vows or abet in someone else breaking theirs. But David's bungled attempt to cover up his adultery led the King to murder Bathsheba's husband, Uriah. Unwilling to admit committing one crime, David was led to a far greater one, and in the end, David and Bathsheba's newborn child died and his kingdom was shaken.

■ They choose humility over pride...

When David was triumphant, he managed to alienate those around him, including his own children. In meeting with his son, Absalom, the Bible tells us "the King kissed Absalom" (2 Samuel 14: 33) not as a father, but as a king. That same son later rebelled against David. But when David was willing to humble himself, as he did by admitting his faults or by not letting his men sacrifice in his honor, the people loved David for these deeply human moments.

■ They have faith...

Faith comes in many varieties, and surely not everyone who is a leader shares the same kind of faith, or even religious faith. But from early on, we see in David that he had the courage born of the belief that his destiny and Israel's mission were real. In other words, not only did David have faith in God, but he had faith in the possibilities of the people whom he led.