

David, the servant, the leader



The beloved of God

*Pastor Tânia Cristina Giachetti
Ministério Seara Ágape*

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*Ministério Seara Ágape
Estudo Bíblico Evangélico*

Pastor Tânia Cristina Giachetti
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I thank my God and Lord Jesus Christ for making me someone able to fight for the establishment of His kingdom on earth and overcome the barriers that have been placed in my path. Above all, I thank Him for giving me the Holy Spirit, this faithful companion, loving God and wise Master.

I dedicate this book to all my brothers in Christ who truly decided to be warriors of the Father.

“For some time, while Saul was king over us, it was you who led out Israel and brought it in. The Lord said to you: It is you who shall be shepherd of my people Israel, you who shall be ruler over Israel” (2 Sam. 5: 2).



Introduction

Do you have courage to be David?

This book talks about some personal experiences that I had with God and it is for leaders or those who heard the call to be leaders of His people and who have within themselves a different flame, a burning and deep flame of being a man and a woman after God's heart. In Acts 13: 22b it is written: "I have found David, son of Jesse, to be a man after my heart, who will carry out all my wishes."

It's for those who feel rejected and misunderstood, who feel 'aliens' and have courage to break with the old, with the religiosity, the traditionalism and the ordinary and the small to accomplish nothing less than the purpose of God: "for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure. Do all things without murmuring and arguing, so that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, in which you shine like stars in the world. It is by your holding fast to the word of life" (Phil. 2: 13-16a). It is for those who despite all the opposition are 'ruddy' and have 'beautiful eyes and good-looking (*NIV: handsome features*).'

This book is also for those who have the courage to face the "Goliaths", the "Sauls" and the "Absaloms" of their own souls to be kings, prophets and priests.

It is for those who have the courage to face the cross and forgive, as David forgave Absalom, and for those who have the courage to see their human weakness and ask for forgiveness, as David asked when he committed adultery with Bathsheba, and in the threshing floor of Araunah (Ornan), when he built an altar to the Lord.

It is for those who have confidence in the promise and do not care if their 'throne' will be usurped, because they know who put them there. They do not allow that the competitive mentality of the world enter within them. They allow others to grow and to discover who they really are.

It is for those who want and let the Holy Spirit find room in their hearts and no longer care that God use their bodies, minds and emotions the way He wishes.

It is for those who do not care to fight for something that they maybe come not to see in life, but are capable of sowing the inheritance to their descendants: "who found favor with God and asked that he might find a dwelling place for the house of Jacob. But it was Solomon who built a house for him" (Act. 7: 46-47).

It is for those who reject the glory of men and easy help, and decide to 'pay the price' of surrender to God and the price of the promise, as David did on the threshing floor of Ornan. It is for those who can give up their own wishes and dreams so that God's dream is fulfilled and can still praise the Lord when all around say, "no", and even God seems to say, "just a little longer."

It is for those who know that God gives the seed and the strength to acquire wealth, but understand that His kingdom has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force.

Therefore, they do not let be intimidated by the size of the work they have ahead, and accept the challenge. David did not care about the quality of people who were with him in the cave, nor about their contrary suggestions; instead, he agreed to lead them and be a model for them. Later they became his valiant men.

It is for those who can overcome the barriers of anxiety about the physical time to enter the dimension of God's time. David took about fourteen years being wrought by the Lord to reign over Israel. He had, according to tradition, about sixteen years when

he was anointed king by Samuel, but only sat on the throne in Hebron when he was thirty years old (2 Sam. 5: 4).

It is for those that did not accommodate themselves with what they have already won but, even having reached their Promised Land, continue conquering for the kingdom of God, because they know that no request is so big and absurd that He cannot answer when we call Him Father and know Him as such: “As a father has compassion for his children, so the Lord has compassion for those who fear him” (Ps. 103: 13). In Isa. 63: 16, the prophet says: “For you are our father, though Abraham does not know us and Israel does not acknowledge us; you, O Lord, are our father; our Redeemer from of old is your name.” And in Isa. 64: 8 he repeats: “Yet, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand.” In Jeremiah it is also written: “And I thought you would call me, My Father, and would not turn from following me” (Jer. 3: 19b).

David is the figure of the Church, and it is this mature Church and ready to surrender that God seeks to find when Jesus returns. It is the Church who understood very well the meaning of the cross and can walk victorious and clean. Each topic that was mentioned guides a chapter. I tried to develop them as easily as possible, including some personal experiences.

This book tells us about the life of one of the most important men in the Old Testament for having been chosen to be the ancestor of the Messiah of Israel. He was one of God’s beloved, for he knew how to be a servant, so he also was a successful leader. To be leaders and instruments in His hands we must have certain characteristics, such as those that will be described from now on and only the Holy Spirit can develop them in us. The secret is surrender.

Is anyone still there?

Are you still listening to me?

Do you have the courage to be David?

Notes:

- Words or phrases enclosed in brackets [] or parenthesis (), in *italics*, were placed by me, in most cases, to explain the biblical text, although some verses already contain them [not in italics].
- The version used here is the New Revised Standard Version, NRSV – 1989 (1995)
- NIV = New International Version (it will be used in brackets in some verses to make it easier for readers to understand).
- I’ll use here the name “David” in its plural form “Davids”, created by me, with the purpose to give the idea of many men and women after God’s heart. I did it in the same way with Saul, Absalom and Goliath to represent many people like them.

Email: msearaagape@gmail.com

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*1**David is different from the others*

“But the Lord said to Samuel: ... for the Lord does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.” (1 Sam. 16: 7)



In the bible, we often see men and women of God as ‘superheroes’ without, however, to put ourselves in their place and feel a little of their emotions, feelings, thoughts, questions and anguishes that are so characteristic of humans.

I confess that I always had a special interest for David to be someone able to show so openly his weaknesses as he showed his love for God. I believe that, from heaven, the Lord bent down very carefully in order to hear an insignificant shepherd boy playing his harp and singing for a God he had never seen, but whom he deeply believed in his heart. I wonder if He was not seduced by those declarations of love, as Solomon later wrote in the book of Song of Songs. Maybe He answered: “O my dove, in the clefts of the rock, in the covert of the cliff, let me see your face, let me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely” (Songs 2: 14)... “You have ravished my heart, my sister, my bride; you have ravished my heart with a glance of your eyes, with one jewel of your necklace. How sweet is your love, my sister, my bride! How much better is your love than wine and the fragrance of your oils than any spice!” (Songs 4: 9-10)... “You are beautiful as Tirzah, my love, comely as Jerusalem, terrible as an army with banners. Turn away your eyes from me, for they overwhelm me! Your hair is like a flock of goats, moving down the slopes of Gilead” (Songs 6: 4-5).

I think that David’s sensitivity, generated within him by God Himself, must have gotten him into certain trouble with his family. For them, he should be someone strange, a dreamer or a lunatic, with ideas of grandeur, someone with propensity to musings and somewhat absent-minded. While his brothers, ‘normal people’, seemed to be so concerned with the daily problems, with appearance before men, the youngest brother only served to tend sheep in the Judean desert. An inhospitable place, full of canyons and dangers, but that David knew like the palm of his hand and where none of his brothers liked to stay for long, except in military campaigns. His solace was the praise to God. He did not care too much about himself, on how many days he would pass out from home, if he would sleep on soft bed or not; what mattered was to do the work that he had to do, with love and dedication. He was human and, certainly, it did not go unnoticed to his heart his family’s preference by the other brothers. Maybe he even preferred the loneliness of the sheep and of the desert to live with seven rude men around him. God, however, was already working His purpose in the heart of David. While he praised Him, he did not bother on nurturing the hurt, the bitterness and spicy words that surely came to break his heart. Would it be possible that he has made to God the question that many of us have done? *“Why was I born in this family? Did God really know what He was doing?”* Now I ask, *“Have we ever stop to think that He not only knew, but was already shaping us for His purpose since our childhood, to be after His own heart?”* So, the devil cared so much in hurting us and creating barriers to us to come to the heart of God. But the dream and the calling were so deeply implanted that they could not be masked or suppressed. I went through many seemingly inexplicable experiences in my childhood, but today they make it clear that the Lord was already shaping me for His purpose. I remember those films on the life of Jesus in the school where I studied and on how I wept at the crucifixion and how I wanted to shout in the amphitheater, *“He is not guilty for anything.”* Throughout my life, I experienced other situations that sometimes hurt my heart, but I could not explain why. For example: those spicy jokes about God and His servants always bothered me much, even when they were in the wrong way. It was He, showing Himself present and saying, *“You’re David, I’m shaping you.”*

When I became a convert then, it’s good not even to mention! I had already gone through so many spiritual experiences (I knew ‘the other team’ very well indeed) that no evangelizing time was needed. Just one invitation to go to church and the first call to

‘accept’ Jesus was enough to make me kneel down and surrender my life for the only and final solution to my problems.

In 1998 I was invited to bring a word to a group of women at a camp sponsored by a church where a friend of mine was congregating. God used a preacher to tell me, *“I have heard your cry; your affliction has come into my presence. Wait, because I have already answered your prayers; though you do not realize, I have shaped and prepared you to fulfill my purpose in your life.”* God was already shaping ‘David.’

Many times I cried because I felt different.

Have you ever felt all this? Have you felt different from everyone else? Did you already pay the price of mockery? David must have paid it too, but God knew his heart and He saw courage inside it. In 1 Sam.16: 7 it is written: “they look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.” That is, the man sees with the physical eyes; but in Hebrew, the word “heart” (Lebhābh or lebh – לב) can be interpreted in this text as ‘courage.’ God saw courage inside David. Courage for what? To live a simple and rude life without complaining; also to continue dreaming ‘big,’ with the impossible; courage to fight and achieve what he wanted, to protect his sheep, to be different from his brothers, to overcome rejection and the title of different or weird. The bible says that the eldest brother was Eliab, but was rejected. Eliab means ‘God is father.’ It seems clear the pomp and religiosity in his face and in his posture. He should be the famous one of the house, but God did not see the peel, saw the inside of the fruit and what He saw did not please Him. He does not want religious acts; He wants deep and sincere relationship. The religiosity often subtle and disguised holds us in the spiritual chains and prevents us from proceeding and knowing Him in truth. The ecclesiastical regulations standardized for long can become a religiosity and a tie for us.

The second was Abinadab, which means ‘generosity, nobility, my father is noble.’ He should be the ‘lavish’, the most generous person in the world. It’s the kind of people that think to gain the blessings and the heart of God through the liberality as they give tithes and offerings at the Church, but without the heart being truly involved.

The third was Shammah, which means ‘sadness, desolation.’ Being child of God frees us from the face of sadness. Not long ago, being a Christian was to have a serious and sad face of those who suffer the pains for the gospel. God does not want us with sad and pretended countenance just to say that we no longer belong to the world. He looks at the real sadness of those who suffer for justice, wishing to smile and be happy again (“Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted”).

In 1 Chr. 2: 12-17, the bible tells us about the other brothers of David:

The fourth was called Nathanael [NIV, Nethanel], which means “gift of God, God has given.”

The fifth was called Raddai, which means ‘subjugated, dominated.’

The sixth was Ozem, which means ‘strong.’

The seventh is mentioned in this biblical passage as David (1 Chr. 2: 15), but mentioned in 1 Chr. 27: 18 with the name of Elihu, which means: ‘He is God.’ Elihu was not mentioned in the first listing, according to Jewish tradition, because he had no descendants. Other theologians say that it may refer to a close relative of David or the other brother (Eliab). In 1 Sam. 17: 12 it is written that Jesse had eight sons.

The bible also speaks in 1 Chr. 2: 12-17 about the sisters of David: Zeruiah (separation, slit, blood flowing) and Abigail (my father is joy).

From the human point of view, considering the other names and their respective personalities, some of them could have the characteristics desired for a king; others would be totally unqualified for the position.

After the seven brothers had passed, David came. He should have been called hastily and contrary to the desire of the family; he probably arrived as he was, sweating and with that smell of sheep.

I wonder the hilarity of the scene in front of people so traditionalists and personable, receiving a visit from an illustrious prophet, the sudden arrival of that guy. Didn't someone make a comment like, "*What will the prophet think of a family as noble as ours?*" Have you seen this movie before? Even in the mind of Samuel it might have passed a fast thought like, "*Lord, do not let me lie. Only this one was left. What about now?*"

But the bible says (NRSV) that David was ruddy ('red hair' in other versions), with beautiful eyes (KJV: *beautiful countenance*; NIV: *a fine appearance*) and handsome (NIV: *handsome features*; KJV: *goodly to look to*). 'Ruddy' (in Hebrew, *admoni*, אדמוני) didn't mean exactly the color of his hair. In Hebrew means, 'reddish', 'healthy' (ruddy). Perhaps this can refer to his physical skill. Therefore, the best translation could be 'covered with blood' or 'warrior.' Whose blood? Blood of the animals that tried to kill or hurt his sheep. This description represents that David was fighter and courageous. He was not afraid to fight for what had been entrusted to him. How many times have you fought for a cause and that has struck you, has covered you with blood, your own blood, trying to win? Has God seen this courage in you, this ability to fight even when others have given up? Although God's way of fighting is another, what He wants to see first is not your success, but your willingness to be a fighter. Afterwards, He will correct your way of fighting. It is better to be fighting, even wrongly, than to be a quitter.

'Beautiful eyes' means to look with eyes that believe in the future, living eyes, eyes that see beauty. Despite the rejection that David should suffer by family and neighborhood, he had 'beautiful eyes', he looked to God and His promise; he looked at His love for him. By the comment that Eliab, his brother, did a little later in 1 Sam. 17: 28 and David's answer in verse 29 we have an idea of jealousy and envy that his brothers had of him: "His eldest brother Eliab heard him talking to the men; and Eliab's anger was kindled against David. He said, why have you come down? With whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your presumption and the evil of your heart; for you have come down just to see the battle." David said, 'What have I done now? It was only a question.'"

David might have taken advantage of the presence of the man of God there (Samuel) to ask him something, but he came simple, divested, without letting clearly visible in his eyes the hurt or resentment for the injustice and without whining, "Have you seen how they treat me here? I am nothing! I was not even told that a prophet would come." What I mean is that David had the sensitivity to perceive the seriousness of the situation and, even without knowing clearly what was happening, he saw that something spiritual would happen in his life and, from that day on, he would never be the same creature.

He knew to look to the future with faith that the Lord would honor him in relation to his family and everything else, which actually happened. In 2 Sam. 21: 15-22, we can see his nephews as his warriors fighting on his side to defeat four giants.

'Good-looking' (NIV: *handsome features*) means joy, joviality. He rejoiced in what he was and in what he had inside, without caring about the outward appearance or on what they thought of him. He was clear, transparent and simple.

God wants to see transparency, joy and joviality in us. Not something forced, something that the ego uses as a weapon of 'Gospel marketing.' Living a constant joy, self-imposed or imposed by the system without the real participation of the Holy Spirit

can be a great burden. It's impossible to feel true joy when there is sin, frustration, hurt or lack of sincerity inside us, because we cannot feel God's approval.

In 1 Sam. 16: 18 we can see other features of David: "One of the young men answered, 'I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite who is skillful in playing, a man of valor, a warrior, prudent in speech, and a man of good presence; and the Lord is with him.'" Here David's courage, his joviality and joy ("*Good-presence*", in this version – *NRSV*; or "*fine-looking*", *NIV*) are reinforced and his temperance in words ("prudent in speech").

Briefly, this means that he was courageous, believed in goodness, in the righteousness of God on his life and was sincere and clear and pure in heart.

Can you feel like David? Are you willing to abandon the old, the traditional, the small, the religiosity, the rebellion, the idolatry, the materialism, your wounds, your reasons and your rights so that Jesus sits on the throne? Are you willing to fight for the larger projects of God for your life? Are you willing to be spontaneous, even taken the risk of seeming ridiculous to the 'Pharisees' on your side? Read 2 Sam. 6: 14-16; 20-23: "David danced before the Lord with all his might; David was girded with a linen ephod. So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the Lord with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet. As the ark of the Lord came into the city of David, Michal daughter of Saul looked out of the window, and saw King David leaping and dancing before the Lord; and she despised him in her heart... David returned to bless his household. But Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, 'How the king of Israel honored himself today, uncovering himself today before the eyes of his servants' maids, as any vulgar fellow might shamelessly uncover himself!' David said to Michal, 'It was before the Lord, who chose me in place of your father and all his household, to appoint me as prince over Israel, the people of the Lord, that I have danced before the Lord. I will make myself yet more contemptible than this, and I will be abased in my own eyes; but by the maids of whom you have spoken, by them I shall be held in honor'. And Michal the daughter of Saul had no child to the day of her death."

Years had passed since David had been anointed by Samuel, but now an adult and king of Israel he still maintained his characteristics of youth: the innocence and spontaneity before God. The ephod was a short and sleeveless dress at the thighs, but it was not indecent, so Michal's comment was not relevant. She symbolizes false morality, religiosity, envy and hypocrisy. The meaning of her name in Hebrew is 'Who is like God?' David actually did not need to bring her back because she had been given to another (although David had the legal rights of husband over her), but after he brought her to the palace he realized. In 2 Sam. 3: 14-16 it is written: "Then David sent messengers to Saul's son Ishbaal, saying, 'Give me my wife Michal, to whom I became engaged at the price of one hundred foreskins of the Philistines'. Ishbaal sent and took her from her husband Paltiel the son of Laish. But her husband went with her, weeping as he walked behind her all the way to Bahurim. Then Abner said to him, 'Go back home!' So he went back." In 1 Sam. 25: 44 there is another reference to Michal: "Saul had given his daughter Michal, David's wife, to Palti son of Laish, who was from Gallim." This means that religiosity is from the devil (Saul), and when God delivers us from his 'claws', there is no more reason to worship the Lord dressed in it. It is no longer part of our life, of the kingdom that God has given us. Religiosity brings a false reverence and a false fear of the Lord. It acts in society through norms, rules, etiquette, outward appearances that destroy the spontaneity and true joy. It is worth noting that Michal, not only died keeping this bitterness and this envy, but she died sterile. She

never had children by David or anybody else. Religiosity generates sterility; it does not produce offspring.

In fact, it was not the first time that David violated religious rules. In 1 Sam. 21: 3; 6 when he fled from Saul and took refuge with the priest Ahimelech, he ate the holy bread, or bread of the Presence (“Now then, what have you at hand? Give me five loaves of bread, or whatever is here... So the priest gave him the holy bread; for there was no bread there except the bread of the Presence, which is removed from before the Lord, to be replaced by hot bread on the day it is taken away”), which were reserved for the priests, because he was hungry and the bread would supply his needs. About the bread of the presence and the priests it is written (Lev. 24: 5-9): “You shall take choice flour, and bake twelve loaves of it; two-tenths of an ephah shall be in each loaf. You shall place them in two rows, six in a row, on the table of pure gold. You shall put pure frankincense with each row, to be a token offering for the bread, as an offering by fire to the Lord. Every Sabbath day Aaron shall set them in order before the Lord regularly as a commitment of the people of Israel, as a covenant forever. They shall be for Aaron and his descendants, who shall eat them in a holy place, for they are most holy portions for him from the offerings by fire to the Lord, a perpetual due.” Jesus Himself in Matt. 12: 1-8 spoke to the Pharisees in reference to David when His disciples ate the ears of the harvest, freeing him of all charges: “At that time Jesus went through the grain fields on the Sabbath; his disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. When the Pharisees saw it, they said to him, ‘Look, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath.’ He said to them, ‘Have you not read what David did when he and his companions were hungry? He entered the house of God and ate the bread of the Presence, which it was not lawful for him or his companions to eat, but only for the priests. Or have you not read in the law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple break the Sabbath and yet are guiltless? I tell you, something greater than the temple is here. But if you had known what this means, ‘I desire mercy and not sacrifice’, you would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath.’” Bread means revelation, intimacy with God, the body of Jesus.

The Lord told me once: “Children are free because they are spontaneous and their needs are summed up in love and nourishment. They don’t need power, dominion, possessions, fame or success. Only those who accept my kingdom with the spirit of a child can take possession of it. Give up the false needs that the world demands of you and seek the values of my kingdom. You’ll discover the real treasure.”

Are you willing to be David?

If the answer is yes, you will experience what is written in 1 Sam. 16: 13: “Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the presence of his brothers; and the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.” In Hebrew the expression ‘came mightily upon him’, ‘came upon him in power’ means ‘hastened upon’, that is, the Spirit of God came in haste upon him. And the Lord said, “Rise and anoint him; for this is the one.” Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him before his brothers and returned to Ramah.

I remember a promise from God for my life when I graduated in the workers’ course at church. Today it makes more sense, but only I know the price and the path. I praise God for not leaving me and for enabling me both to will and to work (Phil. 2: 13). It says: “You will bring many to me by your word. Do not fear, I’m with you. You’ll see my Spirit moving in you. My mantle is over your life. You will know the joy of serving and loving. I have great plans for you.” The vision the Lord gave me was of a huge field of white lilies and Jesus was in the center of it.

By the way! Do you still have the courage to be David? Do you still want to be the beloved of the Lord?

“Do not be afraid to be different, because the gift that poured on you is strong and eternal and will not be revoked. Just wait on me, for your support comes from me. I sent my angel to surround you and protect you. The limiting words of others will not reach you because I protect you from the enemy and push him far away from you. I shut the mouths of the lions as I did with Daniel.”

2

David is brave

“But David said to the Philistine, you come to me with sword and spear and javelin; but I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This very day the Lord will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you down and cut off your head; and I will give the dead bodies of the Philistine army this very day to the birds of the air and to the wild animals of the earth, so that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, and that all this assembly may know that the Lord does not save by sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord’s and he will give you into our hand.” (1 Sam. 17: 45-47)



To be kings and priests, it is needed something more than being obedient to human beings and their desires. God does not want us to be fatty sheep in the church, for He knows very well the risk we take of losing ‘our crown’ because of laziness, competitiveness, selfishness or our obedience to the flesh.

It is necessary a personal search for God and an inner desire of killing everything that prevents our deep relationship with Him, all that prevents us from learning the secrets of His heart.

It’s interesting that Goliath was the first human enemy reported in the bible that David won to begin his career as a warrior of the Lord and to enter the palace of Saul. Maybe, this is the first enemy to win to really take on our leadership position, assume ourselves as children of God and fight the battles of the Lord. Some believers become accommodated to the comfortable position of saved people, but do not take a firm position of having spiritual experiences of victory with Jesus. Goliath means ‘exile, passage, transmigration and powerful warrior’. It is something to overcome within our own soul, the carnal human tendency to self-indulgence, as well as human structures that affront us as a nation of warriors, preventing the change to a new level and blocking our entry into the ‘palace of Saul’, for what belongs to us is there. It is there that we should govern. The palace of Saul (our soul, before dominated by the enemy) is not a place for him to be, but David. Saul prefigures Satan and, among other things, his nature within our flesh. Saul was the anointed of God who lost his anointing by rebellion and disobedience. Satan was the anointed cherub who lost his position as an angel that ministered to Jesus because of his pride and rebellion.

Therefore, we as Church (David) came to occupy the position of worshipers near Jesus. The fact of David defeat Goliath as a springboard to be in the palace of Saul makes us understand that we must overcome fear, disbelief, self-indulgence, religiosity, the human structures unsuccessful that face us, and all the giants of the flesh to really surrender ourselves to God and thus have authority over Satan, invade his ‘palace’ and take possession of what belongs to us. I’m not doing any parallel with the time of conversion, because the deep delivery to the Lord and His plan is independent of any spiritual moment, but of the interior willingness.

Another important detail of the victory of David over Goliath is what was reported in 1 Sam. 17: 39-40; 50: “David strapped Saul’s sword over the armor, and he tried in vain to walk, for he was not used to them. Then David said to Saul, ‘I cannot walk with these; for I am not used to them.’ So David removed them. Then he took his staff in his hand, and chose five smooth stones from the waddi, and put them in his shepherd’s bag, in the pouch; his sling was in his hand, and he drew near to the Philistine... So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone, striking down the Philistine and killing him; there was no sword in David’s hand.” David went against Goliath with the simplicity and the faith of surrender to God, not with Saul’s armor or the sword. He also went with the authority (‘staff’) and the reverence to the Lord, because he was worried about the affront of the giant to His people.

In Jewish literature, we find a commentary of Rabbi David Kimchi, who lived in Provence between 1160 and 1235 AD about the fact that David chose five stones from the brook, not one or two or four. There are two possibilities according to him: The first is that each stone was for the honor of God, the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the priestly class in the person of Aaron, which had recently been occupied by the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, killed by the Philistines (1 Sam. 4: 11: “The ark of God was captured; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, died”). The second possibility is that each stone was for the honor of God, the three patriarchs and the Torah (the Law). I confess that, when in meditation, I asked God for a revelation on the

subject, the Holy Spirit made me think of something closer to the second possibility. I suppose that the five stones of the stream are related to the five books of the Torah, for the number five is related to the fulfillment of the prophetic words and promises of God made to His people in these first five books of Scripture. For Jews the number five means the events that occurred as divine predestination. Thus, we can think that David went to the fight in the spiritual way, armed with faith in the Word that he knew and that to him was totally true. It was his strength. In 2 Sam. 21: 15-22 the bible describes four giants killed by the men of David, who were born in Gath. Would they be the same ones from the beginning of David's career, from the same time as Goliath, who he killed? Was that why he took five stones? They do not seem to me to be contemporaries of Goliath, but descendants. The interesting thing is that Goliath fell on his face (1 Sam. 17: 49); contrary to what we should expect. When the stone hit him, he should have fallen back, which proves once again God's action in the fight. The Jewish literature confirms this thesis.

In 1 Sam. 17: 4-10; 16 we can also find some interesting references about Goliath: "And there came out from the camp of the Philistines a champion named Goliath, of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span (about three meters or nine feet). He had a helmet of bronze on his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail; the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of bronze (1 shekel = 11.5 g). He had greaves of bronze on his legs and a javelin of bronze slung between his shoulders. The shaft of his spear was like a weaver's beam, and his spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron; and his shield-bearer went before him. He stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, 'Why have you come out to draw up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and are you not servants of Saul? Choose a man for yourselves, and let him come down to me. If he is able to fight with me and kill me, then we will be your servants; but if I prevail against him and kill him, then you shall be our servants and serve us.' And the Philistine said, 'Today I defy the ranks of Israel! Give me a man, that we may fight together'... For forty days the Philistine came forward and took his stand, morning and evening." Thus, the Goliath was over nine feet tall, his spear weighed seven kilograms or 15 pounds, and his armor, about 125 pounds (57 kilograms). Therefore, looking through human eyes it was impossible for a boy to win. However, Goliath contributed to his defeat because he underestimated the size of the enemy and did not realize that his weapons could be more powerful. Likewise, the devil may be larger than us and even underestimate us, but when we face him in God's strength and with the faith we have in Him, the enemy fall at our feet. Goliath defied Israel for forty days, that is, it was necessary a time for preparation and learning for the people until the Lord provided a hero. Goliath was one of the remnants of the giants ("Rephaim") that, after have been scattered by the Amorites, took refuge among the Philistines, bitter enemies of Israel: "It also is usually reckoned as a land of Rephaim. Rephaim formerly inhabited it, though the Ammonites call them Zamzummim, a strong and numerous people, as tall as the Anakim. But the Lord destroyed them from before the Ammonites so that they could dispossess them and settle in their place" (Deut. 2: 20-21). The promise for those who killed Goliath (1 Sam. 17: 25) included: wealth, God's blessing on the offspring (represented by Saul's daughter) and exemption from taxes in Israel (freedom of all hereditary curses and accusations of Satan, that is, we will no longer pay tribute to the devil nor will have to suffer charges about what we were in the past or about the legacy that brought in our flesh). This is one of the steps, in my view, more difficult to achieve within us. It not only concerns to a confession of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior of our lives to move to the kingdom of God (baptism of repentance), but something deeper, a powerful work of the Spirit in our flesh, removing the memories and habits and changing old

‘programming’ that can still be ‘anchors’ for Satan to take us to the past. This is the process of the ‘baptism of fire’ (resulting of the baptism in the Holy Spirit), where He ‘burns’ our flesh and takes possession of it bringing by faith, which Paul speaks in Gal. 2: 20: “and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”

This action really stirs our mental, bodily and spiritual structure, for it is the Lord pointing out gaps and giving us the option to close them through our surrender and the covering of His blood. The higher the mark of Satan in our flesh, the greater the work of God to remove it and give us victory: “but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more” (Rom. 5: 20b). This implies, sometimes, in several ‘surgeries’ to repair the wounds, and several moments of decision and inner tests so that we can make it very clear on whose side we are fighting.

One of the most painful wounds is the one that has been made in relation to our spiritual calling, which tried to kill our dream and steal our anointing. As we saw, Goliath was a descendant of the giants that occupied the Promised Land but were later dispersed by the Amorites. Amorite means visionary. The biggest pain of God’s servants who have a special calling to be ‘a child of love’ as David, is, without doubt, having spent so much time fighting against enemies who prevented the divine view for their lives. However, when we stand firmly as David did, we begin to see the project of the Lord for us, and we gain from Jesus the weapons to fight for it, so that it becomes real in the physical world. It’s time to achieve the true authority and have a divine fatherhood real and vivid, to feel really protected by the God we serve.

In 1 Sam. 17: 58 Saul asks David whom he is son and he says: “I am the son of your servant Jesse the Bethlehemite.” Jesse means ‘God’s gift’ or ‘one who is’ or else ‘I can.’ This is where our self-esteem and authority are restored. What we thought we would not get to defeat has already fallen. In the next chapter (1 Sam. 18: 1-5) an important character appears to present David with a covenant: Jonathan. He is the figure of Jesus, who wants to give His Church the same that was given to David: “When David had finished speaking to Saul, the soul of Jonathan was bound to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul [NIV, Jonathan became one in spirit with David, and he loved him as himself]. Saul took him that day and would not let him return to his father’s house. Then Jonathan made a covenant with David, because he loved him as his own soul. Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that he was wearing, and gave it to David, and his armor, and even his sword and his bow and his belt. David went out and was successful [Hebrew wisely; note of NIV] wherever Saul sent him; as a result, Saul set him over the army. And all the people, even the servants of Saul, approved.”

In the first place, the bible says that Jonathan was bound to David and he loved him as his own soul. In the original, the expression ‘to bind’ can be translated as ‘he strengthened himself.’ Therefore, it is a deep connection with Jesus that strengthens us, when we really let Him take Goliath out of our way.

In the second place, the bible says that Jonathan (Jesus) stripped himself of the robe that he wore (His royalty) and gave it to David, as well as the armor and the belt, namely, defenses. Which defenses? His word and His blood, which protect us from the attacks on our mind and emotions. He also gave David the sword (His word) and his bow, that is, we’ll lead other lives to Jesus through love, truth and the pure word of God, while we will be led by Him. Compare these elements with Eph. 6: 14-17 (the armor of God).

Another enemy to be defeated is the *Saul* of soul. God uses Sauls from outside to show us the Saul from inside. Saul also means our inheritance of the flesh, Satan’s

nature in us. At a time when the priest and the prophet did not have much credit, the people of Israel asked for a king. That is, the people, as usual, despised the covenant and leadership of God to be led by a human being, symbol of their own wills. Saul was chosen. Saul means begged, pleaded, and desired. Desired of the people, but not God's, well understood.

First, read in your bible what is written in 1 Sam. 8: 7-10: "and the Lord said to Samuel, 'Listen to the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them. Just as they have done to me, from the day I brought them up out of Egypt to this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so also they are doing to you. Now then, listen to their voice; only—you shall solemnly warn them, and show them the ways of the king who shall reign over them'. So Samuel reported all the words of the Lord to the people who were asking him for a king." Shortly after, in 1 Sam. 9: 2 we can read: "He [*Kish, Saul's father*] had a son whose name was Saul, a handsome young man. There was not a man among the people of Israel more handsome than he; he stood head and shoulders above everyone else." God gave the people a king who, by human appearance was great, but of His point of view was inadequate (later we'll see why). Saul was the son of Kish, which means bow, power. He lived, as all who live in the flesh, seeking for small and passed things, which he did not give up in any way. Saul, in 1 Sam. 9, was looking for his father's donkeys. Donkeys symbolize something that is hard, permanent, constant and perpetual and stuck, 'balked.' When Samuel sought him to be introduced to the people as king, he was not found because he was hidden among the baggage: "So they inquired again of the Lord, 'Did the man come here?' and the Lord said, 'See, he has hidden himself among the baggage'" (1 Sam. 10: 22).

Do you know someone who 'is neither for nor against, quite the opposite (never takes a stand, I mean)?' Someone who 'flees from the fight at the last minute?' Do you know someone who was blessed, but refuses to accept or use the blessing because he says 'oh, no, it takes work,' do you? Do you know someone whose favorite phrase is, "I've always been so, I will never change," do you? Someone who loves to say, "Do not move; leave things the way they are. It's okay!" Do you know someone like this? Do you know someone who says, "Let me do everything; the guy is taking too long to appear!" Do you know this? Do you know someone who, when annoyed, gets angry and jealous and wants even to kill? So, I introduce you Saul:

"Reader, Saul. Saul, reader."

"Glad to meet you, reader."

"Haven't we met somewhere before?"

"Yes, I live within you."

"Oh, no way!"

Let us take a look with me at 1 Sam. 18: 9-12: "So Saul eyed David from that day on. 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 day by day. Saul had his spear in his hand; and Saul threw the spear, for he thought, 'I will pin David to the wall.' But David eluded him twice. Saul was afraid of David, because the Lord was with him but had departed from Saul." This was the first attempt to kill David. The second was placing David in front of the battle against the Philistines to be killed, for the dowry he had to pay to Saul for Michal was a hundred foreskins of the Philistines (1 Sam. 18: 17-30, with a focus on verses 17; 21; 25): "Then Saul said to David, 'Here is my elder daughter Merab; I will give her to you as a wife; only be valiant for me and fight the Lord's battles.' For Saul thought, 'I will not raise a hand against him; let the Philistines deal with him... Saul thought, 'Let me give her to him that she may be a snare for him and

that the hand of the Philistines may be against him'. Therefore Saul said to David a second time, 'You shall now be my son-in-law (he was spoken on marriage between David and Michal) ... Then Saul said, 'Thus shall you say to David', 'The king desires no marriage present except a hundred foreskins of the Philistines, that he may be avenged on the king's enemies'. Now Saul planned to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines." The third attempt of death was again with a spear (1 Sam. 19: 8-11, focusing on verse 10: "Saul sought to pin David to the wall with the spear; but he eluded Saul, so that he struck the spear into the wall. David fled and escaped that night").

If we read the first book of Samuel to the end, we will see a fierce persecution, as cat and mouse.

Do you understand now why Saul has to get out of us? He is no longer in God's plan for our lives.

One way of Saul to make his reign prevail is to insist on keeping within us the desires of the flesh, cultivated for long, but that we do not give up in any way, thinking that if we give them to God, they will never be accomplished. Saul tries to keep his reign in all forms, even knowing he has not the divine approval (anointing). He wants to participate in what he no longer has any right. David's hope is that the Lord intervenes in time, killing Saul.

Saul says, "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush." The Davids fear the Lord and know to respect His time for their lives. The Davids wait for their turn to reign.

How hard is it to understand that we will never be successful while we do not deliver our Saul in the hand of God! The thirst for power, the temperamental character, rebellion, restlessness, anxiety, thirst to gain things and even some lives for His kingdom in our flesh, without direction of the Spirit, sadden His heart deeply.

Here comes David, who knows the humility of knowing that we do not take even one step if God doesn't protect us; that we are absolutely nothing to criticize anyone or to give a guess on the calling and the ministry of the other; that we have absolutely no ability to discipline ourselves without the help of the Holy Spirit, let alone to make 'disciples!' When Jesus says to make disciples, He means the disciples are His, well understood: "But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher [NIV, Master], and you are all students [NIV, brothers]. And call no one your father on earth, for you have one Father—the one in heaven. Nor are you to be called instructors [NIV, teacher; ARA, guides], for you have one instructor [NIV, teacher; ARA, Guide], the Messiah [NIV, ARA Christ]. The greatest among you will be your servant. All who exalt themselves will be humbled, and all who humble themselves will be exalted... Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cross sea and land to make a single convert [KJV, proselyte], and you make the new convert twice as much a child of hell as yourselves" (Matt. 23: 8-12; 15). Here I want to make a parenthesis to explain what Jesus meant. Jesus was not removing the word father of our vocabulary. He was just saying not to misuse the word father in order to inflate the ego of those who seek honor through certificates or special positions. Jesus Himself used the word father in the usual sense (for example, in the parable of the lost son). The expression "son of hell" might be a Hebrew expression which meant a person particularly bad, as opposed to the sons of the kingdom. Jesus accused directly the Pharisees, proud of their righteousness, of being sinners and boastful and ostensible hypocrites. Worse than that, they spread their false teaching and their loyalist attitudes among those they recruited. They led people away from God's truth, increasingly deep to the human traditions. The ancient leaders have always given much value to religious leadership (like a godfather) and took the risk of leading this practice to the religious extremism, idolizing men and taking out the Lord

of the true center of worship and respect. He is our Guide and Master. There can be no other guides or teachers. The honor is His, the glory is His, the work is His and the burden is His. Our part is just to teach the youngest in faith to seek the Lord, His holiness and the deep relationship with Him; also help others to find their own gifts and their spiritual identity. God does not want His sheep making other sheep getting fatter into His House, but see children with the courage to take His pure and clear word to those who need light outside the Church. He needs children willing to do His work. Then read Matt. 9: 37-38: “Then he said to his disciples, ‘The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.’”

If we are sensitive enough to perceive the signs that the Holy Spirit gives us, we will know that is not yet the right moment to bring one life to the Lord and, thus, we’ll spare all of unnecessary suffering. We need to understand that the work of God with lives is of His total mastery and that we do not need to charge ourselves and be so restless and impatient to bring the word to certain people. If their heart is not open, prepared by God Himself, we’ll sow on dry land. Our part is just pray so that He touches and calls more people to Him and brings them to us when they are ready, because it’s no use in wanting to do His part. When one life comes to us, prepared by His Spirit, we feel the joy of seeing it born again, for we perceive through our spirit that the person truly received salvation. It is true that the bible speaks to preach in time and out of time, but it has to be done with wisdom, not as a mandatory move, imposing our vision to people. The enemy has put a great resistance in the hearts and only by the action of the Holy Spirit is that these walls will fall. I think that often, God Himself hardens some hearts, as did with Pharaoh, to show truly His glory and let the own person, by himself, exercise his free will to seek Him.

Another point I find interesting about the character of Saul is the tendency of his flesh (and ours) to rebellion and idolatry of persons, which somehow, are the opposite side of the coin of religiosity. Idolatry is something that haunts us as human beings. We idolize ourselves, our parents, teachers, friends, famous singers, and after we convert, our pastors and brothers ‘more endowed’ and even the church where we congregate. We feel proud of it. Inevitably the Lord gives us the experience to overturn this altar, sooner or later, because He reveals who our idols are in fact. And here comes another painful experience, for someone who looked ‘so holy’, suddenly begins to show his weaknesses of flesh and we feel hurt, cheated, bewildered, misunderstood and even betrayed.

However, as God turns the curse into a blessing, it becomes good for both sides, to the ‘idol’ and the idolater, for both are treated and learn the truth that exists in God’s word about not trusting the man, but in God. What perpetuates this idolatry, sometimes it is sin that separates us from perfect communion with God; sometimes it is the deceit of the enemy that says that we are newly convert and we are not ready yet to walk with Jesus and this one or that one is the perfect guide; and sometimes it is insecurity and fear of trusting in what the Lord puts in our heart and that is different from what others have told us, because throughout our life the devil may have put people to steal our authority and self-confidence, and now He needs to restore us of them.

That’s why many believers do not ever develop. They only exchange the most famous sorcerer of the city who plays cards ‘so well’ by the prophetess ‘Elijah’ in the church, who is ‘a blessing.’ And then they realize the mistake they made, because what she says does not match with what God has spoken by another prophet or with what the Holy Spirit has placed in their heart. I’m not in any way against the true prophets that the Lord sends, because the very word says in Prov. 29: 18: “Where there is no

prophecy, the people cast off restraint, but happy are those who keep the law.” When God uses a true prophet, the word is fulfilled and there is no confusion.

I want to clarify something about the prophetic ministry. Prophet comes from the Greek word Prophetes, spokesman; pro = before and phetes = speaker; verb phenai = ‘to speak.’ Prophet means: spokesman, messenger, who reveals the divine thoughts; who interprets the oracles; who is moved by the Holy Spirit and, thereafter, offers himself, solemnly, to declare to man what he has received from God by inspiration; the man who is used by the Spirit of God and to whom is given the authority and wisdom in the Word so that it has the weight that it should have; to discern and do the best for the cause of Christianity predicting the future (class of prophets called seers); also means poets. The prophet has the power to instruct, to comfort, to encourage, to rebuke, to convince of error, to declare guilty and encourage people. Oracle means prophecy or the word of God; divine counsel, responses or utterances; in Hebrew, dabar, דָּבָר, ‘thing’, ‘word’, Strong #1697; in Greek: λόγιον, logion, ‘divine responses or utterances’, Strong #3051.

It is a holy ministry for God. The true prophet is very sensitive to the Spirit’s voice and needs, more than anyone, to know the path to the throne through holiness. He knows he is nothing and can only release a word when it is in perfect tune with God’s will. Often, the prophet cries and suffers because he does not want to say something, but the Lord urges him to say not only the good things that everyone always want to hear as well as the true exhortations of the Father to bring His people back to His presence. Sometimes God reveals us the error and we take a stand as watchmen that we are. Here comes carnal people and condemns us for having liberated the message from God. Believe me! This is the best time to be David and run to the cave where the Lord comes to help us, to avoid the risk of responding in the same way as a Saul, throwing the spear.

Saul was so far from God after Samuel died, that in his despair, he sought a medium (1 Sam. 28: 1-15) and this did not please the Lord. Hence, He wants to take of us this tendency to keep digging up past situations or words that have been said to us and that prevent us from following our path to the throne; He also wants to remove from our soul the habit of insisting on seeking help in other carnal beings like us.

David’s training wasn’t easy; it required years of cave and desert, training of meekness and experiences of humiliation.

And what about us? How long we spent in cave, where we seem hidden, rejected, where nobody sees us, does not even recognize our potential, where we have to give ourselves totally to the Lord and expect Him to open the doors and lift us up in honor, because we cannot expect anything else from men! How many tests do we have to pass before those who accuse us of sin or provoke us to take certain positions because it’s convenient, when in our very heart we know that is not God’s way for us because we are not ready yet! We’ll talk later about the Cave of Adullam and what it meant to David. Often we must spend some time in the ‘cave’ that does not necessarily have to be hurtful or punitive, because our cave is not locked, as was not David’s. It is not a den of lions, only a ‘sanctuary’ where we stay in a more intimate contact with God to truly hear His direction, to be healed, restored and strengthened, where we have the real learning. At such moments, the most reckless, those who know nothing of His work for us, force us to ‘leave the cave and fight’; in fact, all we need is to get a little lonely to put our head in order. We cannot put upon ourselves the heavy armor of Saul. We cannot fight ‘in the flesh.’

The major weapon of victory used on the cross for Jesus was not the violence, but the surrender to the Father. We must seek refuge in the lap of the Father and learn to fight like Him. The true Davids move away of this carnal behavior, because they know the real refuge is on the silence of God’s throne. By the way, I have an interesting

experience to relate about the silence from the throne, when I led a family group in my home. That night, I spoke to the sisters, “Tonight the Lord has not given me a word; I feel in my heart that He wants only praise, but we’ll not sing; we’ll read some psalms and let the Spirit work.” We started to read some psalms, one at a time, until something started happening in the room. Firstly, our mind became ‘clean’ of any thought and then we could hear the silence that was done. One sister, who had spiritual vision, saw that God bent down with love to see what we were doing and the angels around us looked curious to us, as if waiting to see our next step.

Another time I was praying alone. I felt dry and worried about my work and suddenly, the Spirit led me to the throne of God and the Lord told me, “When my children come to me, voices fall silent, everything stops and I hear them. Be filled with my waters, daughter, and quench your thirst. The gifts that I’ve put in you have given fruit. Go on and sow. Don’t worry about the seeds; my Spirit is still watering them. Do not fear; I’m with you.”

How good it is to hear this silence! If only we could hear it inside the church! How we need this contact to get stronger! David understands; Saul does not.

Before talking about Absalom I want to talk about a detail in the character of David that God also wanted to deal with: fear. As mentioned earlier, after three attempts of Saul to kill David he flees to enemy territory, Gath, in the land of the Philistines and subject himself to their king, Achish, hoping that Saul did not find him there. But he fears: “David took these words to heart and was very much afraid of King Achish of Gath. So he changed his behavior before them; he pretended to be mad when in their presence. He scratched marks on the doors of the gate, and let his spittle run down his beard” (1 Sam. 21: 12-13), thus he simulates an attack of madness not to be killed. How often we fail to take on the spiritual position that God places us because we fear the enemy’s persecution! The Holy Spirit has, then, to resurrect our courage, as He had to resurrect it in David, so that we can begin to fight in God’s way and not in the way of Saul.

To start to war in the spirit, not in the flesh, this is the question! Then I see the cave of Adullam (1 Sam. 22: 1: “David left there and escaped to the cave of Adullam; when his brothers and all his father’s house heard of it, they went down there to him”) as I said above, as a strategic retreat and as a place for God’s work. I wonder if David did not have some nightmares. He should dream of Saul chasing him or trying to kill him. Gradually, throughout the entire book (1 Samuel) God goes on transforming fear into fighting capacity.

What about Absalom? He was not a candidate for the throne, but he thought he could lend a hand to fate. David was already king, had already achieved victories, had lived God within himself, but now was faced with a ‘usurper of thrones.’ Absalom had not been chosen by the Lord as successor to the throne of Israel, so he had no anointing, neither had the knowledge of God as his father, therefore, he had not the inheritance of David, however, he insisted on reigning. Let’s see if you guess? Where is Absalom? Right there where Saul was: in your flesh.

“Another one here?”

“Yeah! He himself in person.”

“Help me, Jesus!”

Absalom (‘father of peace, father of prosperity’) symbolizes the part of the church that rebelled, and wants to possess what is not hers. Did you understand now what Absalom does within us?

He tries to occupy the throne that belongs to Jesus. He is Saul’s sonny. If we let him act freely, he will want to take the place of the pastor, the teacher, the missionary, he

will rebel against God's will for his own live and even more, he will meddle in other lives. Besides not knowing his anointing, he wants to steal others', using an identity that does not belong to him. He imitates everyone, thinks it's cool to be clone of the leader and wants to clone others from himself. Worse than that, he rebels against the word of God and still causes distortion in other brothers who are 'unaware of the game.' He brings a completely mess where he goes, creates competition and lowers the authority of those above him.

David knew how to deal with Absalom (we will see further) because he was freed from his internal Absalom: "He said to his men, 'The Lord forbid that I should do this thing to my lord, the Lord's anointed, to raise my hand against him; for he is the Lord's anointed'" (1 Sam. 24: 6 – in relation to Saul, because at that time he did not behave as an Absalom).

Did you understand the gravity of the matter now?

Did you understand the value of the surrender and that blood shed on the cross?

Did you understand that who forms a leader is God and not men?

Did you understand that it takes time?

David was king, prophet (Act. 2: 30; Ps. 110; Ps. 22 and Ps. 69 that are messianic psalms) and, somehow, he acted as 'priest', for the priest's function is to connect people with God and God with the people, ministering at the altar and make atonement for their sins, as was commanded to the Levites in the Old Testament, hence he ministered praise to the Lord and taught the people to do the same. That is what God expects of us. We will only get to do this when we live His love, the true love, Agape.

David was considered a great warrior of the Lord, but he did not kill for the simple pleasure of killing. By knowing a little of the character of David, we can imagine that he didn't fight screaming, nor ridiculed the enemy, however, he did his 'work' with concentration and efficiency, as a duty that should be complied by superior orders: those of God. I say this because, before killing Goliath and starting his career as a warrior, above all he was a true worshiper. He would never stop being a worshiper. And a true worshiper does not have an evil or destructive character, but of obedience to whom he worships. The worshiper does what is necessary for love of the Lord. Today, our ministry of war is not physical as it was David's, but spiritual, against rulers and authorities in heavenly places. However, sometimes we feel like him: wanting to worship rather than fight. It is the Holy Spirit that fills us with His love and teaches us another kind of war.

Did you understand now the responsibility of being David?

Do you still have the courage to be David after all you read?

"Keep my words forever in your heart until the end of your life, for they will firm your steps and keep your spirit ever young and thirsty to grow and learn from me. It's I who hold you with my strong and powerful hands and put in your heart the desire to serve me and accomplish my will here on earth. You came till here, because I was with you. Did the tests seem hard? But that's how I form my kings and my warriors. Now nothing will be impossible for you. Nobody will be able to resist you all the days of your life."

3

David knows what forgiveness is

“We must all die; we are like water spilled on the ground, which cannot be gathered up. But God will not take away a life; he will devise plans so as not to keep an outcast banished forever from his presence.” (2 Sam. 14: 14)

“David said to Nathan, ‘I have sinned against the Lord.’ Nathan said to David, ‘Now the Lord has put away your sin; you shall not die.’” (2 Sam. 12: 13)

“Then Joab went to the king and told him; and he summoned Absalom. So he came to the king and prostrated himself with his face to the ground before the king; and the king kissed Absalom.” (2 Sam. 14: 33)



We came to the third chapter, which is also part of the training of David: forgiveness. First he had to face his weaknesses and experience God's forgiveness on his affair with Bathsheba and then be able to forgive Absalom for the death of Amnon because of the incest with Tamar.

It is interesting that the bible occupies a much larger space reporting the whole process of the return of Absalom to the kingdom than the suffering of King David for the victim of the situation, Tamar (2 Sam. 13: 21: "When King David heard of all these things, he became very angry."), that is, David was angry with the situation but did nothing to maintain justice within his own family or prevent the unfolding of the tragedy. We can imagine that he decided to hand the case over to God and God took advantage of this situation to shape His anointed.

All these circumstances have to do with the cross because going to the cross is to leave there our inner desires and surrender to God's forgiveness. It's also let forgiveness to be present in our lives for those who insist on hurting us, consciously or unconsciously, enemies or friends.

Living forgiveness as a lifestyle is not easy because trials will come to shape us. Living forgiveness deeply is to 'tear the veil' to a new spiritual level, leaving justice and revenge in God's hands.

Harmful emotional situations can generate consequences quite bad for us by the lack of forgiveness. The process can be long and painful till healing is completed, because many emotional and spiritual chains are connected to that situation, especially the curses of sentence that have created barriers to the flow of the Holy Spirit. God, then, has to work deeply, touching the same wound several times. Forgiveness is the beginning, however, the marks of the soul requires perseverance and commitment to Jesus to be truly erased and healed, in addition to a firm determination not to live or bear the burdens of the past and the prisons of the enemy anymore.

When David committed adultery with Bathsheba, he lost not only his contact with the Lord, but lost the child. The child represents the dream and more than that, the ability to dream. Let us see in 2 Sam. 12: 13-15a: "David said to Nathan, 'I have sinned against the Lord.' Nathan said to David, 'Now the Lord has put away your sin; you shall not die. Nevertheless, because by this deed you have utterly scorned the Lord, the child that is born to you shall die.' Then Nathan went to his house."

Many times I told my dream to people who were not prepared to share it with me. I experienced the pain of having the 'Holy of Holies' invaded and robbed, for the Lord showed me that, besides I have erred in dividing what was precious with someone who did not give sufficient value to it and had not Him as true God, I could lose the ability to dream that He had given me. In fact, I spent much time with the feeling of having actually been plundered in my communion with Him. I could not feel His creative power or knowing what was in His heart. I felt dead, barren and lifeless. I could no longer have a revelation or understanding of the Word, because I had shared my dream with anyone who was not worthy of it. I felt there was something wrong, not hurt or resentment, because forgiveness had been released, but a void. When I confessed Him my mistake, He came and gave me His rescue and His recovery. As on the cross, I could experience the resurrection of my spiritual gift, my authority, my strength and my communion with Him. The cross teaches us truly what the forgiveness and the victory of Jesus in our lives are. He gave me back the understanding and the ability to dream, to create and to know His heart. Like David, when Bathsheba conceived again (Solomon), I could see that I had achieved more maturity with this and more security of the Lord's will on my life. Solomon means peaceful, prosperity. Nathan gave him the name

Jedidiah, which means the beloved of the Lord. I was also receiving from God something peaceful, prosperous, clean and loved by Him.

In Ps. 135: 14 it is written: “For the Lord will vindicate his people, and have compassion on his servants.”

During his journey, David had several tests of forgiveness. As I said earlier, welcoming back Absalom to the kingdom was one of them; another one was when he raised the census and had to experience the forgiveness of God on his life once more.

We can only live the true meaning of forgiveness when we recognize our humanity, namely, our tendency to make mistakes, at the same time that we are sure to have a God that helps us to correct them. For this subject, I suggest you read a few psalms, because we can really see there the emotions of David in all situations he lived. We can clearly see his humanity in contrast to the power of God, but in total link of dependence and victory through faith. David never denied his humanity, nor hid from the Lord what he felt: fear, anger, anxiety, anguish, sadness, joy, love, regret for having sinned, revolt against injustice etc. He said: “I know, my God, that you search the heart, and take pleasure in uprightness” (1 Chr. 29: 17a). We can see that at the end of all the psalms, after having placed his heart before the throne, he finishes magnifying the power and the mercy of God.

Often, we feel certain things and we do not know how to explain; we think to be the devil touching us, but they are only distorted feelings of our soul; human feelings poorly worked within us and that need to be enlightened by God as to their origin so that we can take the more convenient attitude, such as: to apologize, to ask the Lord for help to transform behaviors, and even to learn new things. Everyone has a natural tendency, as happened in Eden, to transfer to others the responsibility for his actions, so the easiest target is Satan. Then, we began to expel the spirit of this or that when, in reality, it's about emotions poorly controlled or works of the flesh, for example: sexual immorality, envy, slander, gluttony etc. David understood this, so he talked to his soul and kept it still (Ps. 62: 5-6; Ps. 131: 2-3; Ps. 116: 7, the latter is not confirmed as being written by David). He certainly didn't ignore the existence of the devil, but his biggest concern was to be in the center of God's will and clean before Him. Everything in us is fully under the control of the Holy Spirit and if we think everything is evil spirit, darkness start to have a dimension much bigger than they really have. If we exaggerate in our prayers and our concern for the spiritual protection, we will put on so many armors that we will forget to praise and thank the Lord for His love poured into our lives every day. We put on armor that is too heavy for a servant of God, when the only armor should be love. All of this, fruit of religiosity (even of fear) brings a very big burden to the soul, generating problems that would have no need. I do not deny the existence of the devil or his evil snares. I believe, however, that when God called me to Him, He took full responsibility for my life. It is His Spirit that gives us discernment if something is generated by evil spirit or if it is our soul that is scared with something. In fact, the works of the flesh have a significant portion over our being and over what surrounds us. Recognizing our weaknesses, our lack of knowledge about anything, our lack of God and our total dependence on His mercy is what makes us true winners. We cease to be ‘supermen or wonder-women’, falsely filled with the ‘power of God’, which, actually, is the power of the soul, to be truly filled with the Holy Spirit, living in His time and dimension to us, without rushing our growth, just because those who are on our side have already walked and we did not. We come to understand ourselves better, how we react, and we begin to find a personal way to communicate with God, seeing more clearly how He speaks to us, instead of wanting Him to speak the same way that He speaks to another brother. We leave aside the religious vices and we start to pray really

under the anointing of the Spirit, giving Him our mouth and letting Him pray for us. When we know our spiritual position and as far as our soul has managed to win, we can throw down the barriers with certainty and advance to the blessing. This is consciously exercising the free will that God has given us. The bible says in Isa. 32: 8: “But those who are noble plan noble things, and by noble things they stand.” It also says in Rev. 21: 5: “See, I am making all things new.”

One of the emotions that touch our soul is fear. I once heard a comment about fear, in a preaching. If we think that is an acronym, we’ll have: F= false; E= expectation; A= appearance; R= reality. Therefore, fear is a false expectation with the appearance of reality. Thus, coming from the soul or the devil, anyway it is a lie. The love of God casts out all fear. Living in His love keeps us and protects from fear.

How about we ask the Lord’s forgiveness for our weaknesses and omissions?

Do you still have the courage to be David?

“You do not need to worry about the fear of sinning or making mistakes. You remember my words, ‘We know that those who are born of God do not sin, but the one who was born of God protects them, and the evil one does not touch them. The Lord is faithful; he will strengthen you and guard you from the evil one.’ You have free access to my sanctuary and my love is your source of strength. Rest on me. I care for you and strengthen you.”

4

David knows who made him king

“A messenger came to David, saying, ‘The hearts of the Israelites have gone after Absalom’. Then David said to all his officials who were with him at Jerusalem, ‘Get up! Let us flee, or there will be no escape for us from Absalom. Hurry, or he will soon overtake us, and bring disaster down upon us, and attack the city with the edge of the sword.’” (2 Sam. 15: 13-14)

“Then the king said to Zadok, ‘Carry the ark of God back into the city. If I find favor in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me back and let me see both it and the place where it stays. But if he says, ‘I take no pleasure in you’, here I am, let him do to me what seems good to him.’” (2 Sam. 15: 25-26)



David was already king, had already lived tremendous experiences with the Lord and now he was faced with another test: the threat to the throne. He knew the God he had and trusted in the promise that his descendants would remain on the throne of Israel, so he did not care if his place would be usurped or not. He gave up fighting for it so that God's will could be done. The text of 2 Sam. 15: 25-26 that you have read in the previous page shows his surrender to God and his confidence in His judgment. David didn't let the competitive mindset of the world entered inside him. God has already plucked the Saul out of his heart and also the Absalom. He exercised what James wrote in his letter: "Adulterers! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. Or do you suppose that it is for nothing that the scripture says, 'God yearns jealously for the spirit that he has made to dwell in us?'" (Jam. 4: 4-5). David actually did not meet James, but surely he remembered the directions given by YHWH through Moses and Joshua. To human eyes, his attitude seemed somewhat cowardly: he fled.

"What does this have to do with the leadership from God's point of view?"

"It has everything to do with that."

The leader who is David does not lose his emotional balance with the threats of his place be occupied by someone who is smaller than him, because he knows who put him there. Those who are Davids aren't a threat and God Himself prevents those who are Absaloms from carrying out their evil intentions. David recognized this truth, so he waited for the Lord to work. The leader cannot deal with the sheep in such a way as to become dependent on him for everything, nor can prevent the growth of those below him, for this creates other problems: jealousy, competition, frustration, rebellion and death of valuable potentials to the Lord. The Holy Spirit gives His children the freedom to release the inner potential of each one to contribute to the Body of Christ, whether working inside or outside the Church. God does not seek fat and immature sheep, but mature and conscientious workers to His field. There are few Davids willing to put their hands to the plow. There are few who dare to rebel against spiritual 'cloning' and encourage the search of God's purpose for their members. There are few who surpassed the human barrier between secular work and the ministry. Why can't someone live God twenty-four hours a day and minister the Word in his secular life too? Wherever we go, we will be instruments in His hands. Nor we need to fear that our throne is taken by those who try to copy our anointing. The people of Israel never had two leaders at the same time. Abraham went out, came Isaac; Isaac went out, came Jacob; Jacob went out, came Joseph and so on with Moses, Joshua, Judges, Saul, David, Solomon ... Even after the split into two kingdoms, there were always separate kings, one for Judah, another for Israel. Each one of them had his 'promised land', his spiritual throne to occupy, his own gift. So it is with us. Woe to him who tries to take the place of another! He was not prepared to it.

It is a sign of lack of love (Agape) to envy the growth of a brother and his relationship with God. He simply obeyed what is written in the Word: "From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force" (Matt. 11: 12). What kind of effort or violence the Lord is speaking about? About the religiosity to go four times a week to church? Not to eat chocolate for one year? To climb the stairs of the house of God on the knees? About keeping vigil once a week? If it is not for love, faith or direction of the Holy Spirit, it's no use. The effort or violence that He speaks here, I believe, is the total surrender to His will, it is the stripping away of the 'self', dreams and possessions so that they not to become an idolatry.

God shows no partiality with persons (Act. 10: 34). What He promised to one, He also promised to another. What makes the difference is the response of each one to His call: "Many are called but few are chosen." They are chosen because they answered yes to God, even knowing that they will have to say no to men and preformed structures to obey His voice in their hearts.

If we spoke less, if we judged the brothers less, if we prayed more carefully and heard more the voice of God we would be more blessed.

You may be wondering, even finding strange, while reading this chapter, that I'm not giving much emphasis to Absalom; he is the figure of the Church who rebelled. I'm not defending the right of the leadership or speaking, theoretically, what the majority would like to hear about to exterminate the rebellion in the House of God. But I focused on the attitude of David in relation to the rebellion of his son. This is because, due to enemy action in the midst of the Church, it was created a reverse situation where religiosity is that generates a 'rebellion' against certain rules and standards that are a real burden to members. How often we see people with so many difficulties to flourish because their gifts are blocked and even 'stolen.' We know that gift is irrevocable, but it's what one feels when the gifts are no longer allowed to flow; the person feels they were stolen and gives up fighting against what oppresses him. Therefore, we should watch so that religiosity does not begin to reign in our midst and we are not accused by God of generating Absaloms, which are actually Davids who are fleeing oppression. We need, really, to pray that God takes the true Absaloms out of the Church, but also pray that His leaders are prepared as Davids to take on their post, without being afraid that it might be stolen, and thus transmit confidence to their sheep.

I remember one experience I had with God at a time of so great spiritual struggle when I was trying to conquer my space and my emotional balance, that I saw myself totally impotent and incapable. It was an effort to conquer anything at that moment. I knelt down and cried. I no longer had what to pray or the strength to fight. Everything I wanted and needed was the lap of Jesus. Suddenly, the Spirit made me feel on the throne of God, I put my head on His lap and cried. I noticed His right hand open as a sign of authority. Behind me, an immense curtain of fire rose, sweeping away my enemies, like those movie scenes we see when an atomic bomb explodes. Then He made me get up, put His armor on me and gave me the assurance that I was ready to fight again. What I want to illustrate with this testimony is that we must do what David did: fled from the enemy and sought help at the right place, at the throne of God. There, we can find the answers; we can sit there, for it is our throne. Those who try to hinder our journey are under the Lord's control and He Himself removes them so that they do not steal our place. Only we can sit on that throne. You can see the illustration in this chapter: a lion sitting on the throne. The Lion of the Tribe of Judah, Jesus, is the only one who should sit on the throne of our heart and is the only one who can ensure our reign.

He placed gifts within us and wants us to use them with love to bring lives to His kingdom, to bring forth fruit and to bless. I think God's heart is glad to see that we can awaken these gifts in the brothers or encourage them to seek these talents within themselves. David used his gift as a poet and a worshiper to bless others, even in the greatest difficulties, because he took advantage of them to praise the Lord and encourage us. See Ps. 40, 51, 52, 54, 56, 57, 63 and 142, for example.

Talking a little about to take advantage of the circumstances, I want to relate an experience that happened to me on my eyesight. In January 2000 an important event was happening at the church where I attended. Sermons were made by a foreign pastor and I decided to attend all. I left home in the morning and passed by the home of a sister

in Christ who lived near me for us to go together, but something had happened to the vision in my right eye. I saw a spot, like those we see when the reflection of the sun hits a glass or metal. I told her; however, she showed little interest. I went to the church, God spoke tremendously through the pastor, but the stain in my retina continued to bother me even though I have rebuked all the arrows of the enemy. Over the days it grew and I decided to seek an ophthalmologist, who could not make a diagnosis. As my doctor was on vacation, the other one who saw me asked me to come back the next day so that the college professors could take a look as well. I went back and was examined for about five or six doctors, professors of ophthalmology, who also were unable to diagnose. A doctor suggested a name (I, as a doctor, had never heard it before) of a rare syndrome and asked the colleagues to dilate more my pupil for her to take some photos. I was placed in a machine that was attached to a camera and they took about thirty-six photos of the fundus of my eye. Since they didn't know what it was, they gave me some eye drops to put on it until the stain disappeared. When my ophthalmology came back, I scheduled an appointment and he also did not know what it was about. He sent me to a specialist and he asked me a retinal mapping. As I was unemployed at the time and the examination was expensive, I decided to cancel it and handed the case over to God. Every time I prayed, the Lord confirmed cure in the bible, and then I began to anoint my eye every day and declare defeat of the enemy. One day in prayer I saw Jesus in front of me, walking over the sea and He got close to me, put His hand over my eyes and removed (in spirit) a kind of scale. He told me the word that is in Matt. 13: 16: "But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear." I was sure that the healing would come. I asked the Holy Spirit to help me give a strategy for victory. After a few days, I was walking down the street when the song of praise came to my mind, with lyrics and music. Although no longer seeing almost anything with the right eye, I picked up a pen and wrote right there (this is the literal English version of the song, inspired by Matt. 13: 16):

Chorus:

*Blessed are my eyes because they see the Lord
Blessed are my ears because they hear His voice*

*He is the one who guides me along the roads of life
And by His faith He makes me walk
He is my God that guards and protects me
And does not ever let me hesitate*

(Chorus)

*He brings light to my eyes now
And He makes my eyes, good eyes
My whole body gets bright
This God of mine is wonderful!*

(Chorus)

*Every envious eye will turn away
For it is His blood that comes to guard me
(Repeat twice)*

(Chorus)

*It is His love and His righteousness
That comes to cover my life
It is His faith that strengthens me
And makes me discover treasures*

(Chorus)

It was a prophetic praise. I went out on the street singing and declaring my healing. I knew it was retaliation from the enemy, for days before getting the problem I had anointed the house of that sister in Christ and the Lord made me declare the anointing of Josiah in that place (For those who don't know, it is anointing to break the idolatry and restore 'the temple', anointing of revival and healing of the soul).

After nine months, my vision was fully restored. As at this time I had gone back to work, I sought for the ophthalmologist and scheduled the retinal mapping and nothing was found on examination.

At the time I had the family group at my house and this case with my eye 'yielded' a lot of interesting preaching about eyes. Glory to God!

Well? Are you still excited to be David?

“What you conquered with difficulty until here is yours. No one shall take from you, because it is grounded in the truth of my word. My kingdom has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force. I have a barn full of precious blessings waiting to be conquered by you. Strive. I'll be with you and will open your ways so that you can move forward. What you conquered, you will not lose anymore. Nobody shall steal your crown and your throne; I myself will chase away the curious and envious, so that they do not covet your treasure. They may even covet and desire, but the throne has your name, and the robe and the crown only fit you, because I made them the right size.”

5

David sows for his offspring

“who [David] found favor with God and asked that he might find a dwelling place for the house of Jacob. But it was Solomon who built a house for him.” (Act. 7: 46-47)

“With great pains I have provided for the house of the Lord one hundred thousand talents of gold, one million talents of silver, and bronze and iron beyond weighing, for there is so much of it; timber and stone too I have provided. To these you must add more. You have an abundance of workers: stonecutters, masons, carpenters, and all kinds of artisans without number, skilled in working gold, silver, bronze, and iron. Now begin the work, and the Lord be with you!... Now set your mind and heart to seek the Lord your God. Go and build the sanctuary of the Lord God so that the ark of the covenant of the Lord and the holy vessels of God may be brought into a house built for the name of the Lord.” (1 Chr. 22: 14-16; 19)



Another interesting feature of David was the loyalty and selflessness because he did not care to fight the wars of the Lord, even knowing that he would not get to see some seeds grow, the temple, for example.

In the previous text (1 Chr. 22: 14-19) that we read in the previous page, he makes it clear that it was with painful work that he got resources to build the temple.

Have you ever had experience of fighting for the life of someone in prayer, to battle, to break down the spiritual barriers, waiting for the time to bring this person to Jesus, and suddenly he/she escapes because he/she decided to exercise his/her free will and leave the decision to follow Jesus for later? Have you ever had the experience of fighting for years for a dream or a goal and see it regularly cut off by jealousy or snares of Satan, seeing others enjoying the benefits at the expense of your work? Have you ever received an invitation to participate in any project, give of yourself, dedicate yourself to it, enter the gap, help others to lay the foundations and then have to get out, leaving your plantation there without even being able to see the flowers?

Once the Lord told me while I prayed: "I'll teach you to sow; do not worry about the harvest, it will come in time."

Let's take a look there in 1 Cor. 3: 4-9: "For when one says, 'I belong to Paul', and another, 'I belong to Apollos', are you not merely human? What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you came to believe, as the Lord assigned to each. I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. The one who plants and the one who waters have a common purpose, and each will receive wages according to the labor of each. For we are God's servants, working together; you are God's field, God's building." I think that most would like to hear: "When the Lord your God has brought you into the land that he swore to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give you—a land with fine, large cities that you did not build, houses filled with all sorts of goods that you did not fill, hewn cisterns that you did not hew, vineyards and olive groves that you did not" (Deut. 6: 10-12 cf. Deut. 8: 7-10 and Josh. 24: 13). But, back to 1 Corinthians, you are more conformed with it now? Your medal was not lost. What happened is that you forgot again: this child belongs to God; the sheep is Jesus', not men's.

So we don't need to be afraid of losing the sheep to anyone. It is easier to overcome the frustration, seeing everything from the standpoint of a farmer: we are only sowers of the Word, the land is Jesus'.

In how many people I sowed little cards with evangelical messages for seven or eight years, sending them twice a month or monthly by post (I didn't have a computer at the time)! How many people have read my texts on the Internet for so many years without interacting! I confess that I was often worried and even angry with the hardness and coldness of some hearts, but I realized: the sheep is not mine and does not come when I want, but in God's time. My part is to give support in prayer and feed them with spiritual milk when the Holy Spirit asks me, until they make a decision for themselves.

We need to learn more about what is written in 1 Jn. 2: 27: "As for you, the anointing that you received from him abides in you, and so you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, abide in him." He is the master, he who teaches, he who makes disciples and molds the character. He just needs sowers, children who love with His love, without wanting to turn the other into their own image and likeness. Moreover, that they respect God's time for each one. Deep healing takes time, sensibility and wisdom. The only things we cannot be complicit with are laziness and unwillingness to grow.

David sowed, Solomon reaped.

Everyone wants to be Solomon, because in his reign there was no war, just peace, prosperity and alliances. But before we are ‘Solomon’ we have to be ‘David.’ It was David who, through war, conquered the peace and a unified a nation. Solomon just continued. David had a great weapon of war, love. Hence, sowing without expecting an immediate harvest is to know how to love according to God’s heart.

In Chapter 1, I transcribed a message that the Lord told me when I graduated in the workers course at church. Sometime later, He told me: “Do you remember the field with lilies? Fear not, be strong and courageous. The field is ready for harvest; I put my words in your mouth. Nobody can resist you all the days of your life. Just as I was with Moses, I will be with you. For I will give you words and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict.”

Excuse me! I talked so much that I forgot you, reader.

Are you still standing, David?

Do you have strength to be a sower and a warrior?

“Sit on the grass and keep your spirit in my rest and you’ll see the miracle of the multiplication before your eyes. Give me what is insufficient for you and keep your faith strong and I will restore to you multiplied what you have sown. Just keep in your heart the willingness to be a giver and a sower. All those who retain with them the blessings that I give, take the risk of seeing the seeds rotting in their fingers. Even if the world holds you to greed, resist and learn to invest in my kingdom.”

6

David pays the price

“Then David said to Gad, ‘I am in great distress; let me fall into the hand of the Lord, for his mercy is very great but let me not fall into human hands.’” (1 Chr. 21: 13)

“David said to Ornan, ‘Give me the site of the threshing floor that I may build on it an altar to the Lord – give it to me at its full price – so that the plague may be averted from the people’. Then Ornan said to David, ‘Take it; and let my lord the king do what seems good to him; see, I present the oxen for burnt offerings, and the threshing sledges for the wood, and the wheat for a grain offering. I give it all’. But King David said to Ornan, ‘No; I will buy them for the full price. I will not take for the Lord what is yours, nor offer burnt offerings that cost me nothing.’” (1 Chr. 21: 22-24)



Araunah is derived from the Hittite 'arawanis' and means: freed, noble. The bible also calls him Ornan (a Hebrew name which means, 'large pine tree').

He was a Jebusite, the last Jebusite in that place. Jebusite means 'he who struggles', 'he who resists', 'he who remains until the end.' Jebusites symbolize the enemies that Satan puts in our way and that fight against God's purpose for us, that try to prevent the rebuilding of our soul, the place that was already established as the temple of the Lord. Jebus means 'trodden place, threshing floor.' It symbolizes our soul that was once wounded by the enemy, the stage of our spiritual struggles. The interesting thing is that Araunah (or Ornan) was the last Jebusite in the place where there was Mount Moriah ('chosen by God, seen by God'); there, Abraham had given Isaac to the sacrifice. And there was the place chosen by the Lord to build the temple: "Solomon began to build the house of the Lord in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the Lord had appeared to his father David, at the place that David had designated, on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite" (2 Chr. 3: 1).

David wanted to erect there an altar to the Lord. He wanted that God was the absolute owner of that place. Why? Because he needed to be reconciled with Him, because he had done something unpleasant: he raised the census to measure the size of his army, in short, of his power and his reign. He relied on himself and felt safe in his own strength. However, this attitude has brought serious consequences to other lives. He had once more to humble himself before God and ask forgiveness so that the Lord withdrew the plague. In the bible we see this situation described in two books: 2 Sam. 24: 1-25 and 1 Chr. 21: 1-30. The two texts have different information that seem antagonistic, but by direction of the Holy Spirit I will take the first interpretation, 2 Samuel, that says: "Again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he incited David against them, saying, 'Go, count the people of Israel and Judah'" (2 Sam. 24: 1). In 1 Chr. 21: 1 the bible says that Satan was God's agent. Whatever the reason the people deserved to be punished, David was an instrument in the hand of God.

Apparently there was nothing wrong in raising a census. God Himself had instructed Moses on how to raise a census in a way to avoid a plague: each man should pay a census fee for the support of the services of the tabernacle: "The Lord spoke to Moses: When you take a census of the Israelites to register them, at registration all of them shall give a ransom for their lives to the Lord, so that no plague may come upon them for being registered. This is what each one who is registered shall give: half a shekel according to the shekel of the sanctuary (the shekel is twenty gerahs), half a shekel as an offering to the Lord"... "Then the officers who were over the thousands of the army, the commanders of thousands and the commanders of hundreds, approached Moses, and said to Moses, 'Your servants have counted the warriors who are under our command, and not one of us is missing. And we have brought the Lord's offering, what each of us found, articles of gold, armlets and bracelets, signet rings, earrings, and pendants, to make atonement for ourselves before the Lord'" (Ex. 30: 11-13; Num. 31: 48-50). Thus, it was forbidden to count the people by head, but through an object, for example, a coin that each one handed, and was counted. Even so, only one count with a defined objective was allowed. God has provided a census before forming an army to conquer the Promised Land: "Take a census of the whole congregation of Israelites, in their clans, by ancestral houses, according to the number of names, every male individually" (Num. 1: 2). So there was a right way and a wrong way, a right reason and a wrong reason to raise a census.

David's sin was not having raised the census, but what motivated him. After a great military victories, he seemed more leaned to rely on a powerful army than on an Almighty God. In other words, God used David's weakness as a means of punishing the

people against whom He was angry; He used David as an instrument of justice. But also used the situation to correct His anointed, because in recognizing his wickedness and sin, he could once again be healed by the Lord and draw closer to Him and know His character. The Lord gave David a choice as to the method of punishment (famine in the land for three years, to perish at the hands of the enemy for three months or a pestilence for three days) and he once more chose to fall into the hands of God, not in the hands of men. In other words, God has deliverance for us from the consequences of the wrong things we did.

When we take a different direction from His, we produce serious consequences. Then He expects us to say, "Lord, lay your hand on me again, for I have sinned." If we admit the consequences of our mistakes, He will free us from them all. He is our Father and does not punish us, but frees us. In His presence we are freed. The way to receive His blessing is to say amen to Him, to His government and His purposes for us. The fact that David had said he would rather fall into the hands of the Lord and not men's, for great is His mercy, it means to us: when we are in a process of liberation and we do not understand anymore in what chain the enemy trapped us in, it is better to leave aside the logical reasoning and the human explanations and surrender ourselves to God's justice, because He knows the circumstances that made us give in to temptation and commit sin. His righteousness is clean and impartial.

David came to Ornan and offered payment for the place. As king, he was entitled to take that place and do whatever he wanted, but he made it clear to the Jebusite that he would not take what was his for the Lord, nor offer burnt offerings that did not cost anything. And he paid the price. The bible says that David bought the threshing floor and oxen for fifty shekels of silver (2 Sam. 24: 25). In 1 Chr. 21: 15 it is written that David gave for that place the sum of six hundred shekels of gold. The shekel was only recognized in the form of money (coin) in the reign of Darius I (521-486 BC; David reigned from 1010 to 970 BC). Until then, it was a measure of weight. Silver was used for the purchase of properties, for it was more common in Palestine. In Hebrew, the word for silver is Keseph, which means money. Gold was used in large quantities in the payment of taxes. A shekel is equivalent to an average of 11.5 grams of our measure of weight. David paid fifty shekels of silver for each tribe of Israel, so the sum of six hundred shekels of gold (about seven kilograms) that he gave to Araunah. He paid for each tribe, fifty shekels (50x12). The bible refers to the amount in gold to emphasize that was a tribute for that place. He really paid the price for his error and for the altar to the true God, to take the enemy out of that place once and for all.

Mount Moriah tells of burnt offering, sacrifice, surrender, and threshing floor of Ornan, idem. What does all this have to do to us? Is it not the parallel with the cross? Jesus already paid the price for our souls, by our 'Jebus' to turn it into Jerusalem ('the city of peace'). Therefore, being like David implies paying the price of being on the altar of the Lord, of making our soul a holy place, a place of peace, where there are no gaps or accusations from the enemy, but the lordship of the Lord. If we notice well in 1 Chr. 21: 23-24, Ornan offered everything to David, because he was the king and had legal rights over that land. He did not want to accept aid of the enemy; he did not accept bribes, because that place was not just any place. It was the site of the promise, the place of the temple (1 Chr. 22: 1; 2 Chr. 3: 1).

How many times the enemy bribes us, seduces us, does everything to take part in the promise of God! Be sure! He will charge you later. He always wants to participate in the blessing of God upon our lives without having any rights. How much money tries to come easy in our hands! If we don't have the discernment of the Spirit, we will end up entangled. How many proposals of glory and human honor present to us, as long as we

do what everybody else does! The world hates the innovators and idealists, but hates even more those who do not sell themselves for anything, those who do not give up the truth.

The Davids do not sell themselves, they pay the price.

I had experience enough on the threshing floor of Ornan in this ministry, especially with the books. Whenever I faced any serious fight, especially in the case of this book, or felt something disturbing my peace, God was saying, “There are gaps, pay the price” or else, “Use of authority, throw away the arrows.” With these experiences I learned a lot about temple, houses and lands. The more I sought support in the people, the more the enemy used them to affront me or frustrate me. Then I discovered that my relationships needed to be reformulated before God. The saint could not be mixed with the profane. Every person that God put before me had a specific place in my ‘Promised Land’, in my ‘inner temple.’ God created me to love, not to hate. All people who were around me would receive His love through my life, but few would have the right to participate in my victories and my dreams, others not, for having not within them the Spirit of God. ‘Ornan’ offered everything, he tried to participate in the Lord’s altar, forcing me to acquire the same behavior of the ‘old self’, simply to please certain people and not to take the risk of feeling again the pain of rejection for being different, for having other projects. The spiritual and emotional threats were absurd. The price paid for the victory of the Lord was being too high in every way: financial, physical, emotional and spiritual. But the blood of Jesus had already paid the price for me. What I needed to do was to acknowledge my difficulties, to ask for forgiveness and help to the Lord and use His authority, putting the enemy out of all this. It meant to persevere and work, despite the scarcity of financial supply and emotional support for it. It was still to persist until conquer the dream entirely, not giving up for anything. Thus, Jesus paid the price for our salvation and justified us from our sins, but we, through our daily achievements, ‘pay the price’ for the ‘maintenance’ of our holiness and our intimacy with God, not accepting any explanation that is given us, any revelation, any behavior or any threat to abandon the divine plan. We pay the price for the fulfillment of our dreams.

So, the great opportunity to grow with these experiences concerns to my relationships. Who I was allowing to enter my temple? “The Lord said to me: Mortal, mark well, look closely, and listen attentively to all that I shall tell you concerning all the ordinances of the temple of the Lord and all its laws; and mark well those who may be admitted to the temple and all those who are to be excluded from the sanctuary” (Ezek. 44: 5). When I let someone come into my Holy Place and in my Holy of Holies besides the Lord or someone worthy of His confidence, I defile myself, and this is not what He wants for my life or for yours. I say this because Satan uses our relationships to undermine our dreams or take our communion with God, if these relationships are not under His protection and His choice. It is important to know the place that each person has in our affective life.

Figuratively, the Holy of Holies corresponds to our spirit, where only God can minister. The Holy Place corresponds to our soul, where only those who have a commitment to God and an affinity with our purpose can stay, because to them we open our hearts and make them know our ‘self’, our dreams, disappointments, thoughts, emotions etc. In the Outer Court are those with whom we live, but in a more superficial way, more physical and material (in our everyday life), where we relate to them, but do not tell them our intimate things because they still do not have understanding to share the secrets of our soul. Outside our walls, stay the world and the things of darkness, which have no affinity with our life.

Who prays for you? Who prophesies in your life? Who exchanges confidences with you? Who knows your dreams? Meditate on that.

Did I make you tired?

Have you not given up being a David yet? Good!

“The way to the throne seems lonely and the struggles seem to be greater than for those who are content to be governed. I called you for a special purpose, because I took you from the sheepfold, as I did with David, to reign over my people. Do not fear the responsibility that I give you because I don't give anything to my children that they cannot bear. I have for you a light yoke and the wings of freedom. Chains and shackles will no longer arrest you nor will stop you.”

7

David works and waits

“...and we did not eat anyone’s bread without paying for it; but with toil and labor we worked night and day, so that we might not burden any of you... For even when we were with you, we gave you this command: Anyone unwilling to work should not eat...” (2 The. 3: 8; 10)

“David left there and escaped to the cave of Adullam; when his brothers and all his father’s house heard of it, they went down there to him. Everyone who was in distress, and everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was discontented gathered to him; and he became captain over them. Those who were with him numbered about four hundred” (1 Sam. 22: 1-2)

“David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years.” (2 Sam. 5: 4)



Have you ever had the opportunity to visit a cave? It is cold, dark, the ground is hard and dusty, the walls rough and rocky, small insects walk on the ground, in some places the ceiling is low, forcing visitors to walk a little bent and some 'lovely' beings with wings fly suddenly around someone who makes a great discovery, "Aahh, bats!"

I met a small cave on a tourist trip I made to Aruba (an island in the Caribbean Sea) in 1995 and I was very interested in indigenous inscriptions on the rocks, however, a foreign tourist in the group had a screaming fit when she saw the bats and we were all forced to return to the bus.

I do not know if the cave of Adullam had bats, but I can imagine the inhospitable conditions in which were David, his family and the four hundred men who were with him. Good or not, there was his school from that time on. He just left his parents in a safe place with the kings of Moab, and returned to his refuge in the rock. When he moved to the forest of Hereth, the Moabite king killed his parents, so the bible does not say that he returned to meet with them. This information is contained in the Hebrew apocryphal books. We can already see some growth in David. Who was afraid of the king of Achish and pretended to be crazy so as not to be killed (1 Sam. 21: 12-13: "David took these words to heart and was very much afraid of King Achish of Gath. So he changed his behavior before them; he pretended to be mad when in their presence. He scratched marks on the doors of the gate, and let his spittle run down his beard"), now became a chief over the four hundred men who were there (1 Sam. 22: 2: "Everyone who was in distress, and everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was discontented gathered to him; and he became captain over them. Those who were with him numbered about four hundred"). He didn't stay there for long but went to seek refuge in the forest of Hereth, then in Keilah, in the desert of Ziph, at Horesh, going to En Gedi, then to the desert of Paran (Maom), until he took refuge in the land of the Philistines, Gath (Here he already had six hundred men with him: 1 Sam. 23: 13; 1 Sam. 27: 2). En Gedi ('en-gedhī, 'fountain of the goat' or 'spring of the kid') is a fountain of fresh water at west of the Dead Sea, in the desert of Judah. The fertility of this area in the midst of a so barren region made it appropriate for the outlaws, to find food (Song 1: 14) and as a hiding place; that's why David went there (1 Sam. 23: 29; 1 Sam. 24: 1).

Adullam means retreat (a place for privacy), refuge, shelter, enclosure, place of Antiquity (Gen. 38: 1). Several times the bible uses the word stronghold: **1)** Keilah (fortress, castle) – 1 Sam. 23: 7: "Now it was told Saul that David had come to Keilah. And Saul said, 'God has given him into my hand; for he has shut himself in by entering a town that has gates and bars'" (stronghold); **2)** Safe places of En Gedi – 1 Sam. 23: 19; 29: "Then some Ziphites went up to Saul at Gibeah and said, 'David is hiding among us in the strongholds of Horesh, on the hill of Hachilah, which is south of Jeshimon?'... David then went up from there, and lived in the strongholds of En Gedi"; **3)** 1 Sam. 24: 22: "So David swore this to Saul. Then Saul went home; but David and his men went up to the stronghold."

So, after some battle or confrontation with the enemy, David returned to the 'stronghold' till be fully prepared for the Lord. Some people criticize David of cowardice for staying so long in the 'strongholds', rather than face the enemy once for all, but this was necessary to put him in intimacy with God, in His heart, to be completely treated and be prepared to truly assume his post. Instead of a demonstration of cowardice, this attitude can be seen as recognition of his momentary weakness and his submission to the divine work, because if he yielded to the external pressures and provocations, he might have not come at the end of his walk alive. Elsewhere in the bible, the word stronghold is also called fortress or rampart, which means defense, protection, shelter, fortification, fortress, that is, a place of intimacy with God (Hab. 2:

1: “I will stand at my watchpost, and station myself on the rampart; I will keep watch to see what he will say to me, and what he will answer concerning my complaint”; Zech. 9: 12: “Return to your stronghold [NIV, fortress], O prisoners of hope; today I declare that I will restore to you double”). In my view, the cave here was not a symbol of cowardice, fear, escape or isolation, but of seeking for protection and care of God, for it was where David strengthened himself for a new achievement and a new learning.

Throughout this journey, God worked with David, strengthening his self-confidence, capacity of leadership, authority, submission to Him, self-control, wisdom and prudence, skill in battle, military strategies and all other traits of character, in order to transform him into a leader of a people. He did not worry about the amount of work that he had ahead, neither with the apparent lack of character of those who were by his side. He influenced, but was not influenced by anyone in his decisions. He accepted to be worked by God and be a channel of healing and transformation in the lives of those who were with him. He did not worry with the comments or the carnal and reckless suggestions of his subordinates (1 Sam. 24: 4: “The men of David said to him, ‘Here is the day of which the Lord said to you,’ ‘I will give your enemy into your hand, and you shall do to him as it seems good to you.’ Then David went and stealthily cut off a corner of Saul’s cloak”); on the contrary, his behavior suppressed the outbursts and increased the respect of all for his leadership: “He said to his men, ‘The Lord forbid that I should do this thing to my lord, the Lord’s anointed, to raise my hand against him; for he is the Lord’s anointed.’ So David scolded his men severely and did not permit them to attack Saul. Then Saul got up and left the cave, and went on his way” (1 Sam. 24: 6-7). The expression Lord’s anointed is used in the books of Samuel as a synonym for king. Anyone who wants to be after God’s heart cannot hear or accept any suggestion, cannot be led by the will of others, but learn to lead, to command; cannot be afraid of work nor the size of it. For a small dream, a small work. For a big dream, a great work.

Is your blessing delaying?

Did you not understand why?

It’s because the present is big, so the work of God is great in your life. He’s ‘trimming the edges.’ He is testing your ability to wait and your creativity, your ability to overcome the discouraging and provocative voices that incite you to overthrow the former leader to take his place. He is testing your strategies of war and your obedience. He is finishing of plucking the weeds from your land (your flesh) and transforming your weakness into strength.

We are human, like David was, and we complain; sometimes we cry and get anxious because of the delay. Only our spirit filled with faith enables us to proceed.

Only those who are in the flesh have small goals.

When we submit ourselves to God’s plan we must be prepared for the surprises and for the work that leads us to the level He wants. Those who are our valiant men, God will keep them on our side. They may not understand anything but continue walking together.

I think the crucial point of the journey is when we have to overcome the barriers of anxiety in relation to the physical time to enter the dimension of God’s time, withstanding the pressures and the demands of others. It is to look up to the throne. It means not to look back, lest to take the risk of getting discouraged or having a nervous breakdown by the waiting time. It does not mean to stop working or to stop of producing for the dream, but to enter God’s rest, living one day at a time, in the certainty that, in the blink of an eye, God can say, “It’s enough; Saul is dead; sit on the throne and reign, David.”

When I decided to answer God's call and leave behind what I did professionally, I took on the same responsibility as David, because I had to rebuild my life, besides having a great work of breaking the shackles of the 'old life', trying to stop me to proceed and live my new identity. The suggestions, charges, disbelief and questions from those around me looked like what David heard of his subordinates. It was a great effort having to manage my own anxiety, uncertainty and insecurity and have to do the same with those of others. They did not help; on the contrary, they disturbed too much, and I had to stay firm in God and trust in His protection and guidance. Many times I asked Him why I had to go through all that, to suffer the pains of a pioneer in the work, when those who were by my side only watched, had not the courage to move forward, mocked and even learned with my sorrow. But it is often by the suffering of someone that others learn and acquire the courage to break their 'shells' and be born for the new. Without knowing, our decision and daring stir with many people on our side, and whether they want or not, they are also driven forward to get out of inertia and grow. Those who wish to learn will become our warriors; those who wish to remain where they are, only will watch 'our coronation' from afar. It is interesting that, when we decide to change the direction of our lives, we have to learn things we never learned, but that will be extremely useful for our new activity; we have the opportunity to break with prejudices and to open room for the new; we start to like the word 'experience', because it brings the taste of learning and surmounting of limits. God begins to put in our hands the tools to exercise our training. Every seeming defeat that I suffered with the typing of my books or with the website on Internet, God showed me the victory through the improvement of my work, my self-worth and the liberation from fear of the opinions of others. In all things we begin, we must keep in mind that some investments will return quickly; others will come in the medium and long term.

I have already written the words that the Lord told me about the seeds, do you remember? "I'll teach you to sow; do not worry about the harvest, it will come in time". So, send the anxiety away.

One night the Lord gave me an interesting dream. I dreamed I was getting a new watch, white, beautiful. But I said, "I do not want, I do not want." I saw two other watches by my side: a purple, or violet, with broken glass and the other was black. After much insistence, I decided to accept a watch to avoid contradicting who was giving me it and I said, "The black goes with everything; so, okay, I'll take this." But when looking at its glass it was also damaged. I ended up putting the white on my wrist. The Holy Spirit gave me the discernment: the watch of religiosity and the old authority (purple) was no longer useful for me. The black, of sin and oppression of the old life also no longer served; but the white would bring the blessing and a new time of God for me.

Now David, what are you going to do?

Do you insist on being David?

Very good! God trusts you. It's your turn.

“Take your shovel and work the land I have set before you so that beauty may be born in it. The shovel I gave you is my Spirit and my word. Exercise it, prophesy it with faith and make your blessings come true. Do not learn the strategies of the world, but mine. Do not be careless servant, but approved worker, correctly handling the word of truth. Give your mouth to me and I’ll show you what miracle is.”

8

David is a servant

“But David said to Saul, ‘Your servant used to keep sheep for his father; and whenever a lion or a bear came, and took a lamb from the flock, I went after it and struck it down.... Your servant has killed both lions and bears; and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be like one of them, since he has defied the armies of the living God.’ David said, ‘The Lord, who saved me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, will save me from the hand of this Philistine.’ So Saul said to David, ‘Go, and may the Lord be with you!’” (1 Sam. 17: 34-37).



One feature that has always remained intact in the heart of David was the desire to serve God and others. In the text described previously, he does not only place himself as a servant of Saul, for he was his subject (... ‘Your servant used to keep sheep for his father’...), as well as a servant of God’s people. He was troubled by the affronts of Goliath on the army of Israel and volunteered to fight for his brothers. He also served his own sheep, defending them from the attacks from the wild animals.

In the Old Testament, the word shepherd was used to indicate a leadership position as the king, priest or prophet (Zech. 11: 8).

The office of a shepherd is difficult because he takes away the sheep from the fold at 4:00 lead them by soils often difficult to walk until reach the pastures, and while they graze they are always moving, never stop. When, around 10:00 with the sun already hot, the sheep begin to feel hot and get tired and thirsty, the shepherd knows they can not drink water with a stomach full of undigested grass. So he takes them to a cool and quiet place of those green pastures, and makes them lie down there. At rest, without grazing, the sheep begin to ruminate. After digestion of food, then he leads them to the streams of water to drink. The sheep are afraid of the strong streams because they know that wool does not allow them to swim; on the contrary, it absorbs all the water and the weight would make them sink. The pastor does not mock the fears of the sheep or tries to force them to do what they do not want; he guides them through mountains and valleys in search of calm waters to satiate their thirst. Besides not knowing how to swim, the sheep do not have good vision. They see a maximum of eight to ten meters ahead. So, the shepherd guides them. Sometimes the trails are narrow and end up at the edge of a cliff, where the unsuspecting sheep might fall and die. Sometimes the trail leads to dead ends and other times, to green pastures and still waters. The shepherd goes ahead and does not push the sheep (Jn. 10: 4: “When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice”). Later we will see a little better this comparison with the position of a leader. In Palestine, between Jerusalem and the Dead Sea there is a narrow and dangerous trail that cuts through the mountains and therefore is called the ‘Valley of the shadow of death.’ Thus, the shepherd carries a hard and heavy rod about two feet to one meter in length, whose function is to protect the flock from attacks by ravenous animals. He also carries a staff of nearly three meters, whose tip is bent to form a hook. Its function is to fit it in the chest of the sheep that falls into any bank to hoist it up, back on the right track.

When sheep graze, sometimes they cut their snout against an acute stone hidden in the grass or they hurt themselves with thorns. So at the end of the day, when they come back to the sheepfold, the shepherd stands at the entrance and examine each sheep, and if there is any injury, he applies balsamic oil that helps to heal it and prevents infection. In addition, he carries a clay jar that keeps the water always fresh, and at night, after inspecting the sheep, he gives them to drink.

“What does all this have to do with us, man and woman after God’s heart?”

“It has everything to do with the unconditional love that we must exercise daily to those the Lord puts in our path. Often, we feel exhausted by so many thirsty lives that come to us. It seems that we have nothing else to offer at the end of a long workday. So we earnestly desire the company of someone who loves us unconditionally to tell us something good and, thus, we can recover our strength, but we don’t find anyone willing to listen to us but Jesus. Many of us experience physical loneliness, living alone, or spiritual loneliness, living in a house full of godless people with little and selfish heart that have nothing to give. At such moments is that we must know the unconditional love that flows from God, for only He understands and restores us.”

I had some painful experiences in my ministry regarding emotional disappointments. I learned a lot with all this, mostly to free myself from the emotional dependency of people with regard to supporting my dreams and projects. Sometimes during my walk, God spoke to me in 2 Chr. 25: 8: “Rather, go by yourself and act; be strong in battle, or God will fling you down before the enemy; for God has power to help or to overthrow.” Then I understood that even the people beside me did not give the value I gave to God’s dream for me or despised the door He had open to me, my strength would always come from Him alone. I lived many years of spiritual struggle, doubts, confusions, frustrations and disappointments. This made me grow emotionally and increased my faith, because I knew more of His power, freeing me of the bonds and snares of the enemy and do not allowing gaps in my soul. But the learning was further because the Lord began to speak to me, bringing more revelation in His word about the behavior of leaders. So, I put some details about the behavior of a shepherd at the beginning of the chapter. Just as David kept intact within him the will to serve, we must keep intact within us the awareness that the more we grow spiritually, the more we should serve those who are below us. In fact they will only obey us when they see Jesus in our lives. In Heb. 7: 7 it is written: “It is beyond dispute that the inferior is blessed by the superior.” This means: to serve the smallest with unconditional love. It means to let the anointing flow, to be willing to give.

In Jn. 13: 13-16 Jesus says: “You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them.” He says that, as He came to serve us and give His life for us, we must serve each other and doing our best for those in need. When He says that the servant is not greater than his Master, He is saying we cannot have a different attitude from His, as Lord. If He who is Lord served, we must also serve. In Jn. 10: 11-15 He refers to Himself as the good shepherd: “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away – and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep.” Jesus does for us what the shepherd does for his flock the entire day. He sets us the example of what we should do with those who come to us for help. But we should not worry. God does not require of us a greater effort than our capacity; any service that is beyond our energies and skills. What He asks of us is just the desire to serve. The Davids are willing to do that. The Sauls expect to be served. In 2 Tim. 4: 17-18 the Lord has a promise for those who are willing to take His word, even under struggles: “But the Lord stood by me and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. So I was rescued from the lion’s mouth. The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and save me for his heavenly kingdom. To him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.”

In Matt. 20: 25-28 we see another quotation from Jesus: “But Jesus called them to him and said, ‘You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. It will not be so among you; but whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be your slave; just as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.’”

One way to serve God and our neighbor is to teach what is correct; we should teach the sheep certain basic precepts in relation to the House of God:

1) Care with the temple. Here we have to talk about the care that the janitors should have (as the Levites did), for in the Old Testament the duty of Levites were many, not only to sing, as some think. In 1 Chr. 23; 24; 25; 26 the bible tells us the functions of priests and Levites: they kept the utensils of the temple, they moved the furnishings, they baked the bread of the Presence, they kept supplies for sacrifice, they were musicians, administrators (guards of the treasures of the temple), assistants of the priests in rituals, official gatekeepers and judges (1 Chr. 23: 4). Thus, people who do cleaning in the House of God are the 'Levites' separated by the Lord for that office, and shall do everything with love and seriousness, even being meticulous, for the same way they take care of their homes they must take care of the temple of the Lord. The care with it does not concerns only to those who are employed for this service, but also regards to the sheep, watching over the hygiene and cleanliness of all areas.

2) Reverence and awe: **A)** In the temple there was separation between the Outer Court and the Holy Place, as well as between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies. So I think there should be a separation, when the space allows, between the sanctuary itself, where the Word will be preached, and the reception, where books are sold or the ads are placed. In relation to the office where the phones are ringing, it's not even needed to mention! These guidelines are important so that the person who enters the church begins to feel the separation between the worldly things and the things of God. The pulpit is not a place to make advertising, sales, raffles, comments from newspapers or personal comments about another church or making jokes about the personal life and personality of another leader before the congregation. These things seem clear, but they are not. For some, this sounds normal, but has not helped to establish the sanctity and awe in God's House. The comments that I spoke above are even worse when placed between the praise and preaching or between praise and ministration on tithes and offerings, for it decreases the anointing and steal the reverence in people's heart to receive God's word. **B)** The altar is a holy place for the Lord and should be respected by members, Levites and leaders regarding rehearsals and any other activities. **C)** Mobile phones and other media should be turned off, so that attention turns to God and not to the other gods that surround the life of the believers today. **D)** Children crying, fighting or running indiscriminately in the temple before and even during the ministration of the Word is a sign of failure of parents in children's education, starting with the discipline. Mothers with infants in arms, who may cry or ask their attention during the preaching, should sit, if possible, in the last benches to lead their children outward if they start to distract the other brothers in Christ with their cry. **E)** The expressions of joy are permitted provided that they do not go beyond the limits of convenience, such as whistles, for example, that are more convenient in other places, such a football stadium. **F)** Not to interrupt the prayer of a brother who is head down, eyes closed in deep communion with the Lord. The Spirit of God can be ministering at that moment and He needs 'privacy' to act. Afterwards you greet him. **G)** Arriving on time for the church service is also a sign of reverence to the things of the Lord. All these wrong attitudes interrupt the free flow of the Spirit and are gaps for Satan to steal the seeds that are being planted. **H)** Before the beginning of the church service, try to remain silent, praying, reading the Word and seeking communion with God. Hence, the separation of environments is important; so that those inside can be free to pray and seek His presence without the interruptions from what is outside. The people are there to worship and give praise to the Lord; therefore, they are not merely receivers of seeds, but co-workers, participants in the sacrifice. The people are not there just to receive from God, but to give something to

Him. The Lord says: “They shall not appear before the Lord empty-handed” (Ex. 34: 20b; Deut. 16: 16b-17). **I**) The moment of preaching the Word is holy, not a time to go to the bathroom or to drink water or to talk outside with friends, but moment of silence and for hearing God’s message, time to be healed, taught, changed, cleaned, fed and freed. **J**) Envelopes of tithes and offerings are sacred and should not be scratched or wrinkled.

3) Respect for the brothers: if you need to talk to the minister at the end of the church service, do not be hasty; wait for your turn. We are all equal before God.

In Matt. 21: 13 is written: “My house shall be called a house of prayer; but you are making it a den of robbers.” Jesus was referring to the disrespect and false worship in His House, unlike David, who did everything he could to make the temple of the Lord the most beautiful that anyone had ever seen. Since the texts are extensive I’ll not write them, but you can see the zeal of David with the House the Lord in 1 Chr. 22: 1-19; 1 Chr. 28: 1-21 and 1 Chr. 29: 1-22. It is truly an example for us.

“Many ways seem right to men, but in the end they lead to death. Does the choice I gave you seem difficult? I would never leave you abandoned, but I respect the free will I gave you. Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Where is your treasure? Do you love me? Feed my lambs. Do you love me? Tend my sheep. Do you love me? Feed my sheep. Don’t be afraid to exhaust your strength or your life with this work. Give your heart to me and I will heal the deformities of your way to love and the wounds that hurt you. I myself will teach you and forge you so that you learn to love with my love, without yokes, weights or manipulations. It will make you strong.”

9

David does not accommodate

“Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: ‘Thus says the Lord of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people Israel; and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies before you; and I will make for you a name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall wear them down no more, as they did formerly, from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will subdue all your enemies. Moreover I declare to you that the Lord will build you a house.’” (1 Chr. 17: 7-10)



David was now king of Judah and Israel, but did not accommodate. He continued to fight the battles of the Lord so that the kingdom became united. In 2 Sam. 6: 1-14 the bible speaks of the various victories of David. In chapter 10, it speaks of the victory against the Ammonites and the Arameans. In chapter 12 it speaks of the conquest of Rabbah; in the following chapters, David struggles to keep the kingdom united in the revolt of Absalom, and in Chapter 22, four other giants are killed by his mighty men. Finally, in the book of 1 Kings, David does not rest until he passes his kingdom to Solomon.

If you have a bible with the map of Israel at the time of Saul, David and Solomon, you shall notice that the expanse of land conquered by David was almost two and a half times greater than that existing during the reign of Saul, showing that the beloved of God really did a great work.

The important thing in the man and woman who are after God's heart is that they do not accommodate with the laurels of past victories; on the contrary, they accept bigger challenges so that His kingdom is established. At that stage, they already know to dominate the flesh, they do no longer bother with the rejection or acceptance of men; they already learned that the higher they reach, the more they need Him; they are no longer afraid of losing their 'throne' because they discovered that only they can occupy it and the space of the tent of their heart has been extended so that the love may flow freely from the FATHER to the needy. They are no longer called servants, but friends of God because they know His secrets.

Here we must talk about the two 'sickly' poles that are the activism and inertia. The two are Satan's prisons, stealing from us the free flowing in the waters of the Spirit. The unbridled activism, demanding fruit for the work of God has placed many sincere believers in trouble, because to please the leaders, they end up doing what the Holy Spirit did not separate to them and that brings frustration and exhaustion, for this activism does not respect their internal potential or their personal capacity. The competition for souls does not come from the Lord, it was never the real goal of Jesus, because He knows that all the Father gave Him will come to Him; He knows who He is and that there are no competitors equal to Him. Therefore, knowing that all souls are the Lord's and not ours and our reward will never be taken from us, we do not need to prove to anyone that we are chosen by Him or that we can bring people to Jesus more than any other brother. I'm sure that our reward will not be proportional to the quantity of our work, but the quality of our heart before God, giving Him account for the talents He has placed in us and not for what He has deposited in others. Charging does not belong to God, but to Satan. The other pole is the inertia that chains the children of the kingdom to the impossibility and to apathy because they have no one to walk along. The word of God says that each of us shall give account of himself to God. If the Lord has called us and gave us a mission we must accomplish it with support or not. He is more than capable of helping us.

The Davids have within themselves the desire to improve and perfect more their work each day to please the Lord. They do not get discouraged or seek excuses for their failures, but perform their work, recognizing their own limitations and relying on the unlimited power of God. They seek new incentives and accept the challenges to their growth. Here, it is logical that the external stimulus is important, because God has made us one body and if one member suffers, all suffer; if one is honored all rejoice together; that's what His Word says. Jesus told us to comfort the afflicted and to support the weak in faith and this means to give them strength. In Prov. 17: 22 it is written that a cheerful heart is good medicine, are like honey to the soul, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones. What else can make a heart cheerful than a compliment of a friend? So, let's

adopt the practice of encouraging the brothers to walk, praising, yes, their victories and their achievements so that they have their faith increased and the fire of the Spirit can stay burning in their hearts.

We must learn to release our potential to the work. Thus, leader must recognize the potential of each sheep which is willing for the Work and release it under the anointing and blessing of the Spirit.

Another important feature for the Davids who want to continue working in God's Work is always to want more of Him. There is nothing that He cannot give us. He owns everything and every dream is possible to Him, therefore we can ask Him what we want, knowing, however, that the blessing we are asking will be also to bless His other children. Here comes an important thing that is to ask God to take from us the fear of being great. Many of us ask things to Him, mainly in the ministerial area, but our inside is still accustomed to what is small, so the blessing takes time to come to our hands. And God, as conscious, alert and loving Father will not give us something that we can lose later. First, He prepares us for the great. When David was anointed by Samuel, he was still inexperienced; he didn't have the mentality of a king. The Lord forged him day after day, week after week, month after month, year after year, until he was ready to reign and no longer lose the throne. For David it was a great responsibility because from his offspring the Messiah would be born, even if this was hidden from him. He delivered himself in God's hands and let himself be led. He surrendered, was led and won.

Dear reader, writing this book was to me a bold work, overcoming the religiosity and the spiritual barriers in my way. But I followed God's guidance and let myself to be a channel for Him to say what was in His heart.

Years ago I discovered the gift of writing and, thus, I found a valuable and comforting form of expression, both for me and for those who started to receive my cards with messages of comfort. Writing books is something bigger, so it's not up to me the honor and the glory, but to God, because I share with Him the responsibility of what is written in these pages. I hope it is to bless you and encourage you, my brother.

In one of my moments of meditation and prayer the Lord told me: "Daughter, do not be afraid; my mantle of love surrounds you and it is a mantle of blood. My hand is on your head. Conquer for my kingdom. I strengthen you so that you may walk in faith. I open your ways. The love I pour in your heart will be constant source of abundance and peace. I empower you to do my work. Everything that I've won on the cross is your right, take in your hands and conquer it. All my blessings are yours, take possession of them, receive them. You are heir, take possession of my kingdom. Make it to prevail on earth. Do not fear. I'm with you." These words that I received from the throne I release for you too.

I want to finish by saying that God wants to make you a temple; receive then the prophetic word that is in 2 Chr. 7: 11-16 to your life:

"Thus Solomon finished the house of the Lord and the king's house; all that Solomon had planned to do in the house of the Lord and in his own house he successfully accomplished. Then the Lord appeared to Solomon in the night and said to him: 'I have heard your prayer, and have chosen this place for myself as a house of sacrifice. When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command the locust to devour the land, or send pestilence among my people, if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, pray, seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land. Now my eyes will be open and my ears attentive to the prayer that is made in this place. For now I have chosen and consecrated this house so that my name may be there forever; my eyes and my heart will be there for all time.'"

Congratulations on your courage to be David.
Now you can be Solomon.
See you soon.

“Many people only watch the waters, but don’t have the courage to dive in them in search of fish. Many people watch the wind; however, they are not willing to sow, so they will not reap. I didn’t call you to observe my kingdom from the distance, but to face it and live it. Only then, you’ll have its inheritance. Be ready to the work, pick up the plow and don’t look back. Learn from my Spirit how to fight and sow and you will find the way to my throne.”

10

Epilogue

“... I have found David, son of Jesse, to be a man after my heart, who will carry out all my wishes” (Act. 13: 22).

“... then you are to come, for, as the Lord lives, it is safe for you and there is no danger” (1 Sam. 20: 21).

“Now I know that you shall surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in your hand” (1 Sam. 24: 20).



The name David (Dhāwīdh or Dhāwīdh) has dubious roots and meanings, perhaps as Dawīdum (“chief”) of the Old Babylonian. The Hebrew root ‘dod’ or ‘dud’ means ‘love.’ The meaning well known by all (“The beloved of God”) is possibly a description of the role of David as the Lord’s chosen to be leader of His people (as His beloved, who made all His will), instead of the meaning itself of his name.

In Scripture, this name is applied exclusively to him, showing the unique position he had as ancestor of Jesus, called for all people “The son of David.” Maybe it was intentional to leave no doubt as to who was this David the bible was talking about.

As we could see, it is not so easy to see the trajectory of this hero as a nice novel or as a soft story, without problems or tests. On the contrary, David’s life was a journey of struggle, battle, surrender, submission, discipline, obedience, repentance, forgiveness, self-denial, sacrifice, attempts and errors and overcoming of many challenges, showing the great favor of God upon His chosen and His beloved, rescuing him from the difficulties and all his enemies; all this to show His people what the Lord expects of us as His chosen as well. As David took a position firm and full of faith, we must accept the divine trials as a way of knowing more the One who created us and how much He loves us, putting in our hands something of such responsibility as it is to carry on His word of life and salvation.

I think the words that follow summarize the behavior of everyone who longs to be servant, leader and beloved of the Lord as David was, as well as they summarize somehow the words of this book. God gave me this message a long time ago and I believe that the same way it lifted me and made me walk it will make your spirit face your own growth with other eyes. God bless you. It says:



“It is necessary to value the small inner achievements of your day to day, no matter what or who is around you. Often, some seem to grow quickly and reach the heights that they determined for themselves; that’s why they mock those who are slow to grow. However, they forget that the final goal is what matters: fortitude, solidity, deep roots, inner structure to achieve greater heights and ability to reign. Those who understand the quality of seed that they have inside themselves continue to grow in obedience to their own internal pace, using meekness and patience until they are ready to show the world their superiority and solidity, acquired for a price, and now are undeniable and unshakable. The sun, the rain, the strong winds do not move them or pluck them of their place. What looked like an ‘ugly duckling’ is, today, someone able to lead because was prepared with patience and experience. It is his meekness and temperance the example that keeps the others united in love, overcoming the barriers of anxiety, envy, comparison and competition. He no longer cares about the probability of someone growing more than him, because he belongs to another kind of seed. He knows that sky is the infinite which opens to everyone the possibility to reach the heights, but it is the inner limit that will determine the degree of growth of each one.”