

The Adventures of Amari & Darius

David Grew From Humble Beginnings – David Becomes King

The last time we saw Amari and Darius, they were headed for the Pink Palace after a great week at Street Reach Bible Club. We see them again this week, as week 5 of Bible Club begins in Memphis this summer. It's Sunday afternoon at Amari and Darius's house. Mama has gone to the store for the week's groceries, and Memaw is on duty. The kids are in their rooms doing their least favorite thing – cleaning up.

As they finished, Mama returned from the store. The kids helped carry the bags. Once groceries were unloaded, they went to play next door with their twin cousins, Ghalen and Jabari. Mama told them she was considering a field trip for Saturday. "How would you kids like to spend the day with Ghalen and Jabari at Mud Island?" She asked. Amari clapped her hands! "What fun! Can we picnic too?" Mama said, "I think so. But you both know the rules. Good reports every day from the church people and clean rooms all week long. Ok?" Mama looked sternly at both kids. Then she said, "I'll speak with the twins' Mama and Daddy to see if they all want to go too."

Monday morning started out sunny and hot. The kids were up and dressed early. Then they all went out front to wait for the church people. It wasn't long before they came down the road. The church leader stopped for a moment to speak with Memaw, then the kids went with them to the club site.

Soon, the story leader stood before them. "We're glad to be here this week. You'll have fun. We'll talk about a humble young man who became a king! Let's dive in and see how David grew up," she said.

With everyone listening, the leader began today's story:

Do you want to hear about some of what David did as a shepherd boy? Well, mostly, the sheep and lambs needed care. They needed to be led. If someone didn't lead them along the path, they would wander off and get into prickly bushes or fall into ditches. They needed to be fed, or they'd munch on poisonous plants, and to be protected, or they'd get eaten up or stolen, since sheep can't fight at all. David had to admit that sheep were not the smartest animals. But David took care of them because these lambs belonged to his father. David led, fed, and protected them.

In the morning, David led the sheep to the grassy valleys. In the hot afternoon, he took them to a cool stream to rest and drink. And when night came, he built a fire and found a hill where he could watch over all of them while they slept. Sometimes, a lion, bear, or wolf sneaked up on the sheep. David watched for these predators, day or night.

One night, David heard a little, tiny branch snap. Something was nearby! Then there was a grumbly, grumpy, growwwwl of a bear. What do you think David did? Did David freak out, scream, and run away? Did he leave his lambs all alone so that he could keep himself safe?

No, he jumped to attention, grabbed his staff, and looked all around! He was ready to protect his father's sheep. He looked out across the field!

There! He saw it! Down the hill!

When he saw the bear go after one of his daddy's lambs, strength rose up within David, and his anger burned hot.

"No way, Mr. Bear! That's NOT OK with me!" David shouted, then started running straight toward the danger, not stopping to think about whether the bear could hurt him.

He grabbed that mean animal and killed it, dead! He pulled the little lamb close and held it tightly. Baaa-baaaa.

Another time, David was leading the flock through a narrow path with high rock walls. He had just finished helping a little sheep get its foot unstuck when suddenly out of nowhere came a flash of golden fur and a ROAR as a lion sprang over him. It was leaping across the path from overhead, jumping right toward one of the little weak sheep.

No sooner had the lion's paws hit the ground than David was on top of that lion, pulling its jaws open. "No way, Mr. Lion! It's NOT OK with me for you to be here! Let...go...of...my...daddy's...sheep." The lion's jaw let go of the sheep and then tried to chomp on David instead, but it was too late for the lion. David killed it, dead!

Do you think David was brave? How do you think David got so brave? Do you think it could have been because of his time together with God? The time he spent thinking about, talking to, and looking up to God?

David was focused on what really mattered, so when the danger came, he had the courage and passion he needed! He wasn't puffing his chest out and "trying to be brave." He drew close to God, and his heart began to take on more of God's likeness.

David cared more about the lambs than himself. He risked his life because he would not let anything harm his father's sheep, trusting God to care for him. David learned something very special about God way back at the beginning when he was just a shepherd boy. Being a shepherd meant he watched and protected his sheep, right?

Amari smiled at the story. This was just the first day about David. They were going to learn all about him this week. It would be a fun week. church people were nice. After finishing their rotations, they had snacks and then started home with the church people. The church leader told them as they were walking, "I think you'll enjoy tomorrow's story – you may already know it." Soon they were home, and there was Memaw rocking on the front porch as usual. The church leader gave her a thumbs-up before they started down the road to the next house.

Group Discussion Questions:

What does a shepherd do all day?

Did David have any brothers or sisters?

Was David the oldest or youngest in his family?

What did David do when his sheep were in danger?

Bible Verse:

"Now then, tell my servant David, 'This is what the Lord Almighty says: I took you from the pasture, from tending the flock, and appointed you ruler over my people Israel.'" 2 Samuel 7:8

Word of the Day: Humble

Not thinking you are better than others and putting God first

The Adventures of Amari & Darius

David Grew From Humble Beginnings – David and Goliath

Amari and Darius sat on the porch with Memaw when they got home, telling her all about David at first. Amari noted that David must have had a hard time in those days. Memaw replied, "Yes, the children in Bible Times didn't have time to swing in the back yard or drive through McDonald's!" After that, they all went in to have some fruit for a snack before starting on the afternoon chores.

Tuesday arrived. It was definitely summer in Memphis – hot and humid. After breakfast, the kids went to the porch to wait for the church team. Memaw came out also. Soon, Ghalen and Jabari hopped on the porch to wait with them. Soon, the church people came down the road. After a goodbye wave to Memaw, they joined the group to head to their site.

It doesn't take long to get settled in the story circle under the big tree. Soon, the story leader stood before them to talk about today's adventure. "Today, we will see David tested in a way he's never been tested before. And the result depends entirely on how close he is to God. So, let's get right to it."

And today's story goes something like this...

Saul had been king, but he kept disobeying God, so God asked Samuel to find a new king. God said to Samuel, "Go to Bethlehem, and there is a man named Jesse with eight sons. One of them will be the next king." (WOW – now that's a lot of kids!) When Samuel first met the sons, he automatically thought that the oldest son, Eliab, would be the king that God had chosen. But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look at the way he

looks or how big he is. Eliab is not the one I have chosen; the way he looks doesn't matter to me. I look at the heart." Jesse brought more of his sons to meet Samuel, but none of them had chosen by God. Samuel asked Jesse, "Have I met all your sons?" Jesse replied, "I have one son left named David, he's the youngest, and he's out looking after the sheep. I will bring him here to meet you. "As soon as Samuel saw him, the Lord spoke to him and said, 'He is the one.'" So Samuel anointed him with oil, a special way of promising that he would be the next king. And from that day on, the power of the Lord was with David.

David continued to take care of his father's sheep in the fields. When he didn't have much to do in the field, he played the harp and wrote songs (you can find them in the book of Psalms in your Bible). Meanwhile, Saul was still king and ruled the Israelites. David and his family were Israelites too. The Israelites weren't getting along with people named the Philistines. The problem with the Philistines was that they had many giants living in their land. One of the strongest and biggest giants was named Goliath. He was over nine feet tall!!! He would've had to bend way down to get through a regular door. (Have you ever seen anyone so tall?) Goliath was covered with armor to protect him and carried a big spear. Every morning and every evening for forty days, he shouted to the Israelites in his big, deep voice, "Hey, you guys! I dare you to find one man to fight me. If he can beat me, we will become your servants, but if I win, you will all become our servants."

When King Saul and all his men heard this, they were very afraid. Three of these men were David's three oldest brothers. Now, David's father, Jesse, heard about the giant and was worried about his sons. He called David out of the fields and asked him to take some food to his brother and report back on how they were doing. So, David set off to visit his brothers. As he approached them, he heard Goliath shouting his challenge like he did every morning. "Isn't someone going to stand up to this man?" David asked the men in the army. "Then I will fight this giant Philistine."

One of the men overheard this and ran to King Saul, telling him what David said. King Saul approached David and said, "You can't fight Goliath, you're only a boy, and he has been fighting for many years." But David said to King Saul, "I have had to fight lions and bears to protect my father's sheep. God helped keep me safe then, and he will help keep me safe now."

It was too bad that King Saul wasn't trusting in God to help him; he didn't know what to do to beat Goliath. Then this young boy named David came, and he knew exactly what to do in one day and trusted that God would help him. That's why God loved David's heart and wanted him to be king. So, King Saul dressed David in heavy armor to protect him from Goliath, but David took it off. It was so heavy he could hardly walk, and he knew that God would keep him from harm. Instead, David went to a nearby stream, found five smooth stones, put them in a pouch around his waist, and, with his slingshot (have you ever tried to use a slingshot?), went to Goliath. As David approached Goliath, Goliath looked at David and thought it was a joke. Goliath thought that he could easily beat David, and it was funny that King Saul would send a small boy to fight him. But David said to him with fear, "You fight with a sword, and I come with God on my side, and today everyone will know that there is one true God in this land." Goliath didn't care what David said, and he moved closer to attack him. David ran quickly to meet him. Reaching into his pouch, he pulled out a stone, put it into his slingshot, and shot it at Goliath. The stone hit Goliath right between his eyes, and suddenly, Goliath started to lose his balance. He fell with a loud thud right on his face. David had done it; he beat the giant Philistine!! When the rest of the Philistines saw this, they fled, and David became a hero to all the people of Israel.

Amari had to smile. Memaw was right about today's story. She would have to discuss this one with her this afternoon! The kids all finished their rotations and had snacks. Then they finally started home. When they arrived, there sat Memaw waiting for the "report". The church leader

smiled and gave her a thumbs-up. Amari and Darius were very happy about that!

Group Discussion Questions:

Do you think David was afraid to fight Goliath?

Have you ever tried to use a slingshot?

Do you think David had faith?

Bible Verse:

And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Then I said, "Here I am! Send me." Isaiah 6:8

Word of the Day: Faith

Belief and trust in and loyalty to God

The Adventures of Amari & Darius

David Grew From Humble Beginnings – David and Jonathan

Wednesday arrived; another hot and sunny day. After breakfast, Amari and Darius went out with Memaw to wait for the church people. Ghalen and Jabari were already out there. Soon, the church team came down the road, and after a wave bye, the kids all joined the group walking to the club site.

They got into their circle under the big tree. Soon, the story leader stood up. "Did everyone enjoy the story yesterday? (many clapping – well, it was a good story!) Today, we have a slightly different story about David. So let's all go see what David is up to now."

And our story goes something like this...

The David in this story is the same dude that we saw yesterday. After David beat Goliath, he went from being a humble shepherd to a national hero. He was now living in King Saul's palace. David became close friends with King Saul's son, Jonathan. This is where our story begins.

Sometimes King Saul was sad, and he liked to hear a harp played. (Do ya'll know what a harp is?) It made him feel better. King Saul knew that David could sing and play the harp. King Saul invited David to come to him and play and sing for him. David and Jonathan (King Saul's son) were such good friends that they made a promise to each other that they would always be friends, no matter what happened. Jonathan wanted to show David that he loved him as a friend. He gave David his tunic and the robe he was wearing. He also gave him other gifts like his belt, sword, and even his bow and arrows. It made Jonathan happy to give gifts to his friends.

Everyone seemed to like David. Everyone talked about how brave David was. The women even sang songs about brave David. Jonathan was glad that people liked David. When good things happened to David, Jonathan was happy for his friend.

But Jonathan's father, King Saul, was not happy for David. Sometimes, when David played his harp for King Saul, the King started thinking about all of the good things that happened to David. He thought the people might like David better than their King! King Saul became very jealous. (Do you all know what being jealous is?) The Bible says that Saul had a "jealous eye". That meant King Saul always watched David and wished for what David had. He was jealous that the people liked David. Everything the king saw about David made him jealous. When people get jealous, it sometimes makes them do bad things, which is exactly what happened here. One day, King Saul got so angry that he threw a spear at David (while he was just playing his harp for the king!!). David was able to get out of the way just in time, and he ran away.

Jonathan heard about this and went quickly to his friend. "Don't worry, David," said Jonathan. "I will talk to my father. I'm sure he will be sorry." So, Jonathan talked to his father, and while King Saul said he was sorry, he did try to kill David again with his spear.

Jonathan was very sad when he heard about this. He told David to hide while he talked to his father again. So, David hid behind some stones. Jonathan and David made an arrangement using a special signal so David would know when it was safe to come out of hiding.

Jonathan went to find his father. When Jonathan talked to King Saul about David, the king became very angry. He did not like David; in fact, he hated David. He even ordered some men to try to find David and kill him. Jonathan tried to defend his dear friend. That made King Saul really angry. He was so angry that he even threw a spear at his own son, Jonathan.

Jonathan was very sad. He was sorry that his father was so jealous and mean. He knew he had to give David a message so David could run away and be safe. Jonathan took his bow and arrows out to the field and shot an arrow far away. The helper who was with him ran to find the arrow. Jonathan yelled to him to go very far to find it. Later, when the boy had gone back to the palace, David came out of his hiding place to talk to Jonathan. They were both very sad and cried. David knew he had to leave his friend.

"Just remember, Jonathan, we will always be friends," said David.

"Yes, I will always remember you," answered Jonathan.

David left Jonathan and the palace, and he did not come back for many, many years. King Saul was jealous of David for the rest of his life. David had to keep moving from place to place because King Saul tried to hunt him down and harm him. David and Jonathan never saw each other again but remained the closest of friends.

Amari was a little sad about the story's ending. She thought David and Jonathan should have been able to be together again. But that was not to be. Again, she would have a little discussion with Memaw when they were home. They all finished their rotations and had snacks before heading home. Once they got home, the church leader gave Memaw the thumbs up before the group started down the road. The four kids all hopped onto the front porch for a banana and a glass of juice that Memaw had ready for them.

Group Discussion Questions:

Do you know what jealousy means?

Do you have a loyal friend?

Do you like to share with someone?

Bible Verse:

**"A heart at peace gives life to the body, but envy rots the bones."
Proverbs 14:30**

Word of the Day: Friend

Someone who is supportive, trustworthy, and caring, always

The Adventures of Amari & Darius

David Grew From Humble Beginnings – David the Musician

After the kids all had some snacks and juice, Amari asked Memaw if she knew the story about David and Jonathan. Now, Memaw was a wise woman and had been going to church all her life. She told Amari, "Yes, I know the story." Amari asked her, "Why did God let that mean old king keep them apart? They were such good friends!" Memaw looked at Amari and said, "Back in Bible times, things didn't always go the way they were supposed to. There were many cruel kings who didn't care about the people. It's just the way things were. We have to accept that." Amari was not happy, but she understood.

Thursday morning started hot and sunny – a normal Memphis day! The kids hurried out front to wait for the church people. Memaw joined them. Soon, they were coming down the road. Today they were all singing a song. The kids waved bye to Memaw and joined the group.

It didn't take long to get to their club site and make a group under the big tree. The story leader stood up to talk to the group. "Did you all know that David was also a musician? He played a harp. (Hold up a sample of the harp from the craft or a real one if you have it.) This was something that called the king down and made him happy. Music held a significant role in the lives of the Hebrews, particularly in their worship of God. It was prominently featured at coronations, was integral to religious ceremonies, and played a role in warfare. With that in mind, let's get right to our story."

And today's story goes something like this...

David was extraordinary as both a musician and a poet, with over half of the psalms attributed to him. As a boy, he was a shepherd, finding inspiration in the landscapes of Bethlehem. Moved by the beauty of natural melodies, he began to play his harp and sing praises to God. God's Spirit turned away from Saul after Saul turned away from God. Pretty sad, huh? On top of that, God sent a troubling spirit to be with Saul. It would make him feel confused and miserable.

Saul's servants could tell he was a mess. They said, "Let us go find someone who can play the harp for you. The music will help you feel better."

"Ok," Saul said, "find someone and bring him to me."

"I think I know just the guy for the job," one of the servants said. "One of Jesse's sons can play the harp really well. He is also a mighty man of courage and discernment. God is clearly with him."

So, Saul sent messengers to Jesse and said, "Send your son to me — the one who's out with the sheep.

Guess who? Of course, he was talking about David!

While David had been out in the field watching over his lambs and fighting off the bears and lions, he'd also been making music to God. As the sheep munched their grass, David would play his harp and sing and sing to God, thanking Him for helping him fight the lion and bear, and singing about how God was like his Shepherd. David had gotten pretty good at playing that harp.

So, David went to see King Saul. Saul liked him right away. David's music playing made Saul feel better.

From then on, David served King Saul. He took care of Saul's armor for him and helped him carry his weapons. And whenever the troubling spirit came upon Saul, and he felt miserable, David picked up his harp and played it. He played some of the songs he used to play in the field for God. At the sound of that music, the troubling spirit left Saul alone, and he

felt much better. The chaos, fear, and trouble Saul felt went away for a little while when the peace and joy of God's Spirit with David were nearby. Now remember that Samuel had already poured oil on David's head in an anointing because God had chosen David to be the next king. But here, David was serving Saul!

David didn't come in and say, "Ok, God said it's my turn to be king now!" He didn't look down on Saul and act like he was better than Saul. He didn't pout and grumble because he had to shine Saul's armor. No, no, no. David was quietly waiting until God said it was his turn. He was happily serving the man in front of him. He was not competitive or impatient, or a grabber. God had blessed David, and David was passing that on by being a blessing to others.

Amari liked all kinds of music. The thought of a harp was interesting. Maybe someday she could learn to play one. The kids finished their rotations, then had some snacks before heading home. It was a good morning. They soon arrived home, where Memaw was waiting for them. The church leader gave her a thumbs-up before they went on down the road. Amari and Darius hopped onto the front porch to tell Memaw all about the harp. "That David sure could do a lot!" Darius said.

Group Discussion Questions

What instrument did David play for King Saul?

How did David's music help King Saul?

Besides playing music, what else was David good at?

What is a famous Psalm that David wrote?

Bible Verse:

"Whenever the spirit from God came on Saul, David would take up his lyre and play. Then relief would come to Saul; he would feel better, and the evil spirit would leave him." 1 Samuel 16:23

Word of the Day: Anoint

Being filled with the Holy Spirit to live for God

The Adventures of Amari & Darius

David Grew From Humble Beginnings – David Becomes King

Memaw had a big bowl of popcorn on the little table next to her rocker when the kids got home, so they shared some, and Amari launched into the story from the morning. "Memaw", she said, "that David could do anything! He was a good shepherd, a good musician, and great with a sling shot." Memaw just smiled. "Just wait until tomorrow," she said. "See what else David could do." Darius was thinking. He just wanted to get his hands on a slingshot to test one out.

Friday dawned a little cloudy, but there was no rain. The kids got dressed and went in for breakfast. Memaw was just finishing up some sausage-and-biscuit sandwiches. Darius usually eats two! They finished breakfast and then went to the front porch to wait for the church team for the last time. (of course, on Monday, there would be another church team to look forward to.)

Soon, the church team could be heard coming down the road. They waved bye and joined the group. The church people were sad to be leaving; they had enjoyed their time with this group. The kids all gathered under the big tree for today's story. Soon, the story leader stood up. She had a crown on her head!

"Can anyone guess what today's story is about?" She smiled and touched the crown. Several of the kids guessed it right away. "David gets to be King?"

The story leader said, "You're absolutely right. So, let's get right to it and find out what David was up to!"

Today's story goes something like this...

The Bible tells how David was chosen to be king of Israel. King Saul wasn't a good king. He didn't follow God. So, God decided to make someone else king in Saul's place.

Now God knew who he wanted to be king. So, He sent Samuel to find that person. God even told Samuel where to find this person. He told him it would be one of Jesse's sons, who lived near a town called Bethlehem (does that town name ring a bell with anyone? Why?) God told Samuel to find Jesse, and God would show Samuel which son would be the new king. This wasn't just any family. Jesse had many sons, but God knew which one would be the king. When Jesse introduced Samuel to the first son, Samuel thought he looked pretty good and would make a good king. But God doesn't care about what a person looks like on the outside; God cares about what a person is like in his or her heart.

So, Samuel went on to meet another of Jesse's sons. He wasn't the one God had chosen either. In fact, God didn't choose any of the seven brothers.

Since Samuel hadn't found the new king, he asked Jesse if these were all of his children. Jesse said there was still one more son – the youngest, David, who was taking care of the sheep. So, Samuel asked Jesse to fetch David.

When Samuel met David, God told Samuel that David was his choice to be the new king. David was already friends with God! David had the kinds of things in his heart that God was looking for. So, Samuel put oil on David's head in front of David's family to show that God had chosen David. (Take time here to explain the oil.) This did not mean that David would take over the kingdom right away; in God's timing, he would be the next king. (How do you think David felt when he was chosen to be the next king?)

Now we don't know exactly what David did that day after learning he had been chosen as the next king. But we can assume that he continued to live his life as he had before, faithfully serving as a shepherd until God told him to do otherwise. We do know David was not a prideful or arrogant person, but a true and humble servant of God.

David knew God had chosen him to be king, but he remained faithful to do whatever God asked him to do until it was his time to be king.

From that day on, God's Spirit was with David in a special way.

Well, ok then. Amari looked around. This David was one special dude! He went from being a shepherd to being the king. God must have really seen something special in David. And David was a faithful servant. The kids finished their rotations and had a snack. The church people told them before they left how much they enjoyed this week and how well-behaved all the kids were. That made Darius very pleased indeed.

They started home. When they arrived, Amari hugged the story leader goodbye. "I hope you come back next year!" She said. The church leader gave Memaw a thumbs-up and wished her well. The kids hopped up on the porch. Memaw told them, "I guess I'll tell Mama that Mud Island is a go!"

Amari and Darius just smiled. See everyone next week!

Group Discussion Questions:

What did God tell Samuel to do?

Where was David when Samuel arrived?

Why did Samuel put oil on David's head?

What was David's job?

Bible Verse:

"After removing Saul, he made David their king. God testified concerning him: 'I have found David son of Jesse, a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do.'" Acts 13:22

Word of the Day: Faithfulness

Being loyal and dependable and true to God and others