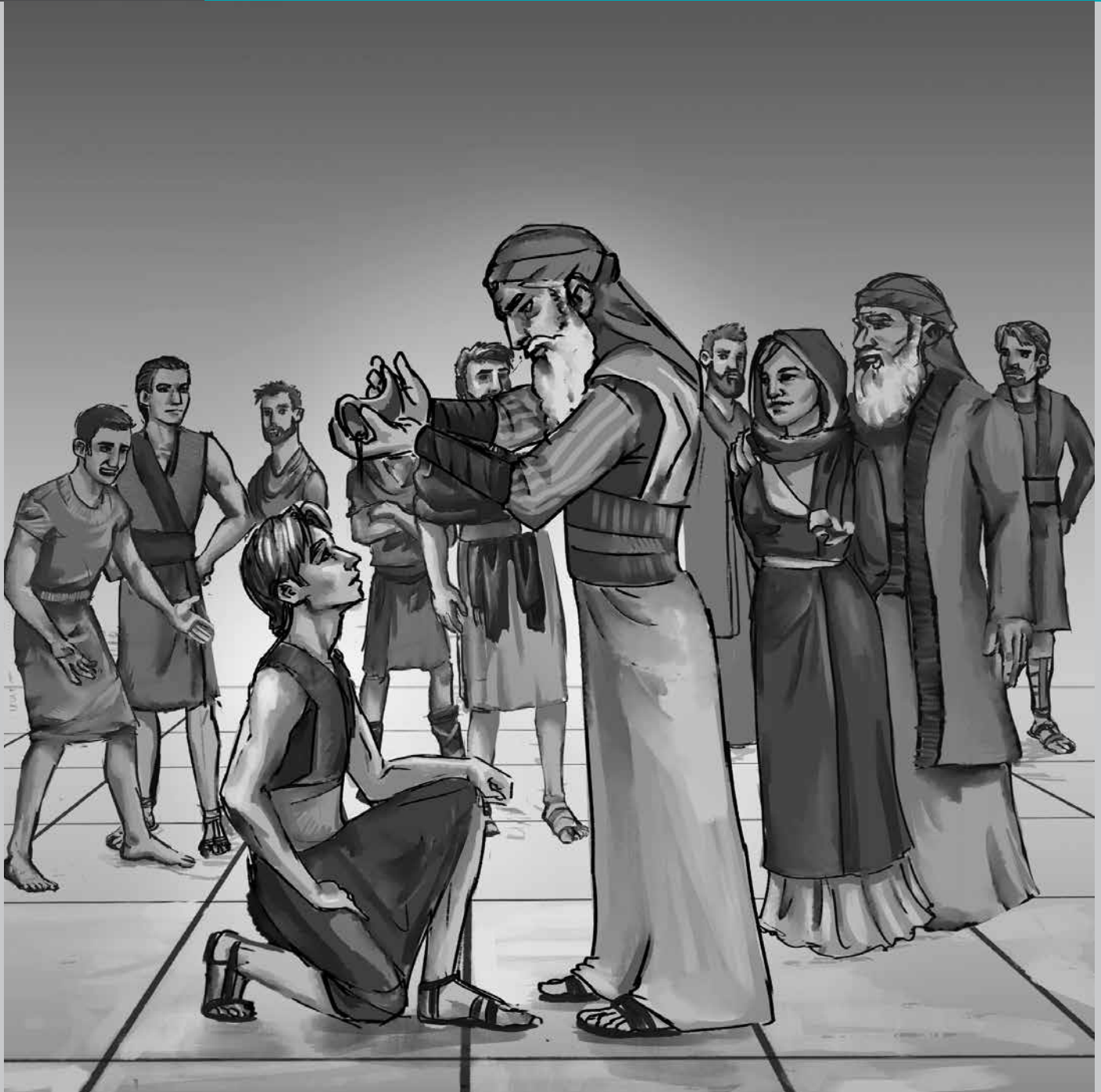




LEVEL 6
6·2
LESSON 2

Imperial Academy Bible Lessons



A Man After God's Own Heart

A Man After God's Own Heart

King David is one of the most well-known individuals in history. His story is amazing. But his life was not like a fairy tale or a movie where he walks in, kills a giant, wins the girl and gets crowned king.

David spent years spending a lot of time alone taking care of his father's sheep. God instructed His servant to anoint David to be king, but even then David had to wait 17 years before he took the throne. At first he simply went back to shepherding, but later he would spend years running for his life.

These years of waiting and of hardship were not evidence that God was ignoring this teenager. God was there every day of David's life, even when he was sitting alone on a hillside monitoring a flock of sheep. God—with David—was using this time to develop the character necessary to be a good king.

The way David spent his time as a teenager set him apart from the other youth in Israel. This is what caught God's attention and why He sent Samuel to anoint David to be king. Over the years David spent in the fields of Judea, faithfully watching his father's sheep, he grew physically strong and morally courageous. He protected his father's flock, even wrestling and killing a lion and a bear (1 Samuel 17:34-36).

This young boy did not waste his youth.

He was active, productive and diligent. He learned how to labor outdoors, how to keep his mind active, how to compose poetry and music, how to follow God's law, how to love people, and how to become a man after God's own heart. God could use David because of how he had spent his *time*.

In this lesson, you will learn how God prepared David to be king of Israel. Be sure to get your Bible and a pencil. You will need to write out the most important scriptures of this famous individual's amazing story. This will help you bring God into your life so that He can use you like He used David!

MEETING KING SAUL

David was maturing and growing close to God at the same time that Israel's first king was turning away from Him. King Saul had begun his reign with a humble and obedient attitude, but as the years passed, he went after God less and less. The more he disobeyed, the more his attitude changed. He became deeply discouraged, and his attitude swung from suicidal depression to violent rage. Saul lost God's Holy Spirit and suffered from the influence of demons (1 Samuel 16:14). His advisers became concerned about his well-being.

Fill in the blanks using verses 15-16 to see what happened to King Saul: “And Saul’s servants said unto him, Behold now, an _____ from God troubles you. Let our lord now command your servants, which are before you, to seek out a man, who is a cunning _____ on an _____: and it shall come to pass, when the _____ from God is upon you, that he shall _____ with his _____, and you shall be _____.”

David may not have been famous at this time, but one of King Saul’s servants knew him and was aware of his abilities. This servant recognized David as a talented musician and a skilled communicator. Saul arranged for David to come play the harp for him. Whenever David played, the evil spirit departed and the king was at peace.

Over time, King Saul developed a close relationship with young David. He appointed David to be his armorbearer in battle, an important duty and high honor. David knew that God had anointed him to one day take Saul’s place, but he never displayed even a hint of competition toward Saul nor made a subtle attempt to take the timing of God’s promise into his own hands. In fact, David became one of Saul’s most trustworthy advisers. As long as Saul remained king of Israel, David humbly submitted to him.

DAVID AND GOLIATH

One of the greatest examples of having faith in God to fight the battle is the confrontation between David and Goliath.

During the time period when David was playing his harp for King Saul, Israel was invaded by its archenemies, the Philistines.

King Saul mustered an army and marched on the Philistines to drive them back. Three of David’s older brothers responded to the call to arms and joined Saul’s army. David remained home to watch after his father’s flocks.

Saul’s army found the Philistines encamped on a hill above a narrow valley. The Israelites took a position on a hill immediately across from the enemy. The next morning, Israelite scouts saw someone laughing and jeering at them. It was a Philistine—one who was twice as tall as a normal man.

Read 1Samuel 17:8-10 to see how this giant challenged the Israelites: “And he stood and cried unto the armies of Israel, and said unto them, Why are you come out to set your _____ in array? am not I a _____, and you servants to _____? choose you a _____ for you, and let him _____ to me. If he be able to _____ with me, and to _____ me, then will we be your _____: but if I _____ against him, and _____ him, then shall you be our _____, and serve us. And the Philistine said, I _____ the _____ of _____ this day; give me a man, that we may _____ together.”

This was Goliath of Gath, a human battle tank. His armor, his shield, his spear and his strength were unassailable.

No one answered Goliath’s challenge. So he returned every morning for 40 days to taunt the men in Israel’s army for cowardice.

One day, David arrived to deliver food to his older brothers. When he heard Goliath insulting God, he grew angry and demanded, “Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?”



ILLUSTRATIONS: JULIA GODDARD/FAEL

David knew God would help him defeat Goliath.

He saw the Israelites not as a militia of cowering men who were unequal to the Philistine troops, even Goliath, but as the armies of God, because his focus was on the great God of Israel!

Saul's men told him that David was willing to fight Goliath, but Saul discouraged him. He said David was not old enough, strong enough, nor skilled enough to defeat a giant who had been a warrior longer than David had been alive. But David was undeterred!

"I have slain both a lion and a bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he has defied the armies of the living God," David told King Saul. "The Eternal who delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, He will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine." David's focus was locked in on God.

When King Saul saw that David had more faith in God than any of his men did, including himself, he told David he could get ready for battle. David took his rod and the sling he used to defend his father's sheep and ran to the nearest brook to gather five smooth stones. Then he strode down into the valley to fight Goliath.

When the giant Philistine saw young David approaching, he treated him like a joke. "Am I a dog, that you come at me with a staff?" Goliath jeered. "Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the fowls of the air."

Fill in the blanks using 1Samuel 17:45-47 to see David's response: "Then said David to the _____, You come to me with a _____, and with a _____, and with a _____: but I come to you in the _____ of the _____ of _____, the _____ of the armies of Israel, whom you have

_____ . This day will the _____ deliver you into _____; and I will smite you, and take your _____ from you; and I will give the _____ of the host of the _____ this day unto the _____ of the air, and to the _____ of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a _____ in _____. And all this assembly shall know that the LORD _____ not with _____ and _____: for the battle is the _____, and _____ will give you into _____."

David knew that Goliath was a bigger, better, stronger fighter, but he also knew God was a bigger, better, stronger fighter than Goliath, and he had faith that God would give him the strength to defend the honor of Israel.

David stepped forward in faith to fight for God.

Goliath rushed David. David quickly loaded a stone into his sling and whirled it rapidly. He suddenly snapped his arm forward, reaching his whole body forward into the throw. The stone rocketed out of the sling and struck Goliath beneath his helmet in the forehead. The immense man crashed to the ground, unconscious. David sprinted toward the warrior, yanked Goliath's sword out of its sheath and cut off Goliath's head.

When the Israelite soldiers saw Goliath was dead, their courage returned and they charged the stunned Philistines. Saul's army drove the Philistines out of the country. When Israel heard the news, they all celebrated and the women sang, "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands."

MEMORY TEST

Why was God able to make David a king?

Why did David have the courage to fight Goliath? _____

THE KING REACTS

God had put David in King Saul's royal court, where he could learn how the government functioned. David had become a close friend and trusted adviser to Saul. He won a great victory for his nation and his king by having faith in God and putting his life on the line to defeat Goliath.

Fill in the blanks using 1Samuel 18:8 to see how Saul reacted to the victory song: "And _____ was very wroth [angry], and the saying _____ him; and he said, They have ascribed unto David _____, and to me they have ascribed but _____: and what can he have more but the _____?"

Saul reacted to David with a carnal, selfish and even hateful attitude. The Prophet Samuel had told Saul that he would



David plays the harp in Saul's court to soothe the king.

eventually lose his kingdom because he had cared more about what other people thought than about what God commanded (1Samuel 13:13-14). Saul still had not repented of this great sin. Instead of praying to God for more faith and courage, Saul grew bitter that David had more faith and courage than he did. He became envious of David and began to hate him.

Turn to 1Samuel 18:10-11 and fill in the blanks to see Saul's attitude change: "And it came to pass on the _____, that the _____ from God came upon _____, and he prophesied in the midst of the house: and David _____ with his hand, as at other times: and there was a _____ in Saul's hand. And Saul cast the _____; for he said, I will _____ David even to the _____ with it. And David avoided out of his _____ twice."

Saul became jealous, hateful and bitter. David's harp was no longer able to make the evil spirit leave the king alone. On two occasions, Saul wholly succumbed to this evil influence and he tried to murder David. Saul then made David captain over 1,000 men and sent him into dangerous battles against the Philistines. He hoped the enemy would be able to kill David. Yet God protected David. In fact, God was allowing this to happen to prepare David to be an even greater warrior.

When Saul saw the favor God was giving David, he grew more afraid of him. He commanded his son Jonathan and his servants to kill David. Jonathan was next in line to become king. If the throne went to David, Jonathan would lose a huge amount of honor and power. Yet Jonathan loved David. He had fought alongside him in battle, and he respected David's faith and obedience toward God.

Fill in the blanks from 1Samuel 19:2 to see Jonathan's response to his father's command: "But Jonathan Saul's son _____ much in David: and Jonathan told David, saying, _____ my _____ seeks to _____ you: now therefore, I pray you, take _____ to yourself until the morning, and abide in a _____, and _____ yourself."

While David was hiding, Jonathan talked to his father. At first Saul agreed not to kill David, but soon the evil spirit returned to Saul, and he sought to kill David once again. Jonathan's sister Michal, David's wife, helped David escape out a window so that he could flee from Saul into the mountains. David was now a fugitive from the law!

ON THE RUN

Once David had escaped from Saul, he fled to the mountains of Judah and the cave of Adullam.

This cave was a day's journey from his father's home in Bethlehem. Word spread that David was an outlaw, and bands of men began seeking David out: They wanted to join him. David eventually gained about 600 followers.

God protected David. He knew that Saul would track David to Adullam. He sent the Prophet Gad to warn him to leave the cave and move his men to the forest of Hareth in Judah.

Saul's anger grew worse the longer it took for his men to capture David; he accused them of treason. Then a man named Doeg, an Edomite, spoke up and said that he had seen the high priest of Nob give David some food and the sword of Goliath. Saul was furious that even the priests were now helping David, so he commanded that the high priest, Ahimelech, be brought to him.

Read 1Samuel 22:13 to see Saul's conversation with the high priest and fill in the blanks below: "And Saul said unto [Ahimelech], Why have you _____ against me, you and the _____ of _____, in that you have given him _____, and a _____, and have enquired of God for him, that he should _____ against _____, to lie in wait, as at this day?"

Ahimelech responded truthfully that David was Saul's most loyal servant. He admitted that he gave David bread and a sword, but assured the king that neither he nor David was planning treason.

Saul reacted in a murderous rage. He ordered his men to slaughter the high priest

and the other priests with him. When the men of Israel refused, Saul commanded Doeg the Edomite to kill them. Doeg obeyed, slaughtering Ahimelech and 84 other priests that tragic day.

SPARING THE KING

Saul took 3,000 men and traveled into the wilderness of Engedi to hunt for David. While Saul and his men were encamped in the wilderness of Engedi, Saul went into a deep cave to relieve himself. What he did not know was that David and some of his men were hiding in the back of that same cave.

Fill in the blanks using 1Samuel 24:4 to see how David's men responded to this situation: "And the men of David said unto him, _____ the day of which the _____ said unto you, _____, I will deliver your _____ into your _____, that you may do to him as it shall seem good unto



David flees to the wilderness to escape Saul's wrath.

you. Then David arose, and _____ off the _____ of Saul's _____ privily."

David's men wanted him to kill Saul, so David would be king and so they would no longer be outlaws. But David knew that even though Saul was evil, he was still God's anointed king and God had not removed him from the throne. No one but God had the right to remove Saul from office. So David crept up behind Saul and cut off a small part of his robe to prove that he had had the chance to kill him but had restrained himself.

After returning to his men, David's conscience bothered him for even having cut off part of the king's robe. After Saul left the cave, David ran out and called out to Saul, "My lord the king!" When Saul turned, David bowed down in humility and held up the piece of Saul's robe.

Fill in the blanks of what David said to Saul from verse 10: "Behold, this day your eyes have seen how that the _____ had _____ you to day into mine _____ in the _____: and some bade me _____ you: but mine eye _____ you; and I said, I will not put forth mine _____ my _____; for he is the LORD's _____."

David wanted to prove to Saul that although the king was hunting him, David was not trying to hurt the king nor take away his throne. Upon hearing David's words, Saul wept and admitted that David was more righteous than him. Saul said he knew God was going to give the kingdom to David one day. He asked David to spare his family and not cut off the house of Saul after he became king. David promised Saul that he would not hurt any member of his family.

Saul and his men departed, but he would be back. Although Saul often expressed human sorrow, he never repented of his sins; so he never changed. That is why God took the throne of Israel away from Saul and his family.

MEMORY TEST

Why was King Saul jealous and bitter toward David? _____

Why did David spare King Saul's life at Engedi's cave? _____

DAVID, NABAL AND ABIGAIL

Now that Saul knew the location of David's men, David broke camp and moved his followers into the wilderness of Paran, near the city of Carmel. There lived a wealthy man named Nabal.

There were also thieves in this area: They were stealing Nabal's sheep and goats. David instructed his men to protect Nabal's flocks. After many weeks of protecting Nabal's herds, David sent 10 men to request food and supplies from Nabal. These men explained how they had protected Nabal's flocks from the thieves, but Nabal was a foolish, ill-tempered and selfish man.

Fill in the blanks from 1 Samuel 25:10-11 to see how Nabal responded: "And Nabal answered David's servants, and said, _____ is _____? and who is the _____ of _____? there be many servants now a days that break away every man from his master. Shall I then take my _____, and my _____, and my _____ that I have killed for my shearers, and give it unto men, whom I _____ whence they be?"

When David was informed of Nabal's arrogant reply, he became enraged and ordered 400 men to equip themselves to attack Nabal; he promised to kill Nabal and every man that worked for him.

Meanwhile, one of Nabal's servants told Nabal's wife, Abigail, what had happened. The servant told Abigail how well David's men had treated them, protecting their flocks and herds from thieves. The servant was concerned that Nabal's greedy, arrogant attitude had turned David into their enemy.

When Abigail realized the danger her household was in, she instructed her servants to pack loaves of bread, clusters of raisins, cakes of figs, sacks of wheat, mutton and a couple of bottles of wine. Without telling her husband where she was going, she took all this food to David as a gift.

See how Abigail greeted David in 1 Samuel 25:23-26: "And when _____ saw _____, she hasted, and lighted off the [donkey], and fell before _____ on her _____, and _____ herself to the ground, And fell at his _____, and said, Upon me, _____, upon me let this iniquity be: and let your _____, I pray you, speak in your audience, and hear



Abigail uses great wisdom to assuage David's wrath.

the words of your _____. Let not my _____, I pray you, regard this man of Belial, even _____: for as his name is, so is he; _____ is his name, and _____ is with him: but I your _____ saw not the young men of my _____, whom you did send. Now therefore, my _____, as the LORD lives, and as your soul lives, seeing the LORD has withholden you from coming to _____, and from _____ yourself with your own hand, now let your enemies, and they that seek evil to my lord, be as _____.”

David, who was on his way to kill every man on Nabal's estate, cooled down his rage and accepted Abigail's gifts.

“Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, which sent you this day to meet me,” he told her. “And blessed be your advice, and blessed be you, which have kept me this

day from coming to shed blood, and from avenging myself with mine own hand.” The raid David was about to execute would have been fatal to Nabal and his men, but it also would have stained David and his men with sin. The one who had saved both Nabal and David was Abigail.

Abigail went home and told her husband what she had done. Nabal became sick and, 10 days later, died. Because Abigail had persuaded David not to take vengeance on Nabal and his servants, God fought David's battle for him!

THE FATE OF SAUL

Several months later, Saul received another report that the Philistines were again preparing to invade. He grew fearful and appealed to God for help. But God did not answer Saul because of his many sins and his rebellious attitude. Rather than humbling himself, repenting and crying out to God with his whole heart, Saul disguised himself and went to consult with a witch.

The Prophet Samuel had died a year before: Saul wanted this witch to conjure up the ghost of Samuel.

Fill in the blanks from 1Samuel 28:8-9 to see what Saul asked this witch: “And Saul _____ himself, and put on other _____, and he went, and two men with him, and they came to the _____ by _____: and he said, I pray you, divine unto me by the _____, and bring me him up, whom I shall name unto you. And the woman said unto him, Behold, you know what _____ has done, how he has cut off those that have _____, and the _____, out of

the land: wherefore then lay you a snare for my life, to cause me to die?"

The witch was unwilling to call on the spirit world, because Saul had banned witchcraft and sorcery in Israel. She did not know, at first, that Saul was the one talking to her.

Like everyone else who has died, Samuel was not conscious and could not communicate. The witch could not really call up the ghost of Samuel. But because she yielded her mind to the evil spirit world, she could communicate with a demon, and this demon took on the appearance of Samuel. The demon told King Saul that because he had turned away from God, he would die in battle the next day and that his kingdom would be given to David (verses 10-19).

Years before, the real Samuel had told Saul that "rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft." Since that time, Saul had lived a life of rebellion against God, and now on the last night of his life, he was actually stooping so low as to involve himself in actual witchcraft.

Somehow this demon knew what God had planned for Saul. The battle against the Philistines was fierce. The Philistines overran the army of Israel and killed Jonathan and two of Saul's other sons. Saul himself was wounded and forced to retreat with his armorbearer. Knowing that his end was near, Saul commanded his armorbearer to kill him. When the armorbearer refused, Saul intentionally fell onto his own sword!

When David heard the news, he was filled with great sorrow. He had loved Jonathan and even Saul like his own family. He wrote a song of mourning to honor their memories (2Samuel 1:17-27). After this, God told David

to take his men and travel to the city of Hebron in Judah. After 17 years of waiting, it was time to crown David king.

Fill in the blanks below using 2Samuel 2:4: "And the _____ of _____ came, and there they _____ over the house of _____."

David was crowned king of Judah, but meanwhile, one of Saul's surviving generals crowned Saul's son Ishbosheth as king over the rest of the tribes of Israel. The general and Ishbosheth had no authority from God to do this, but God allowed it to happen to test David's faith once again.

In the next lesson, you will learn what happened during the rest of David's dynamic and faith-filled life!

MEMORY TEST

What important lesson did David learn from Abigail? _____

Why did King Saul visit the witch of Endor?

BIBLE MEMORY Kings of Judah

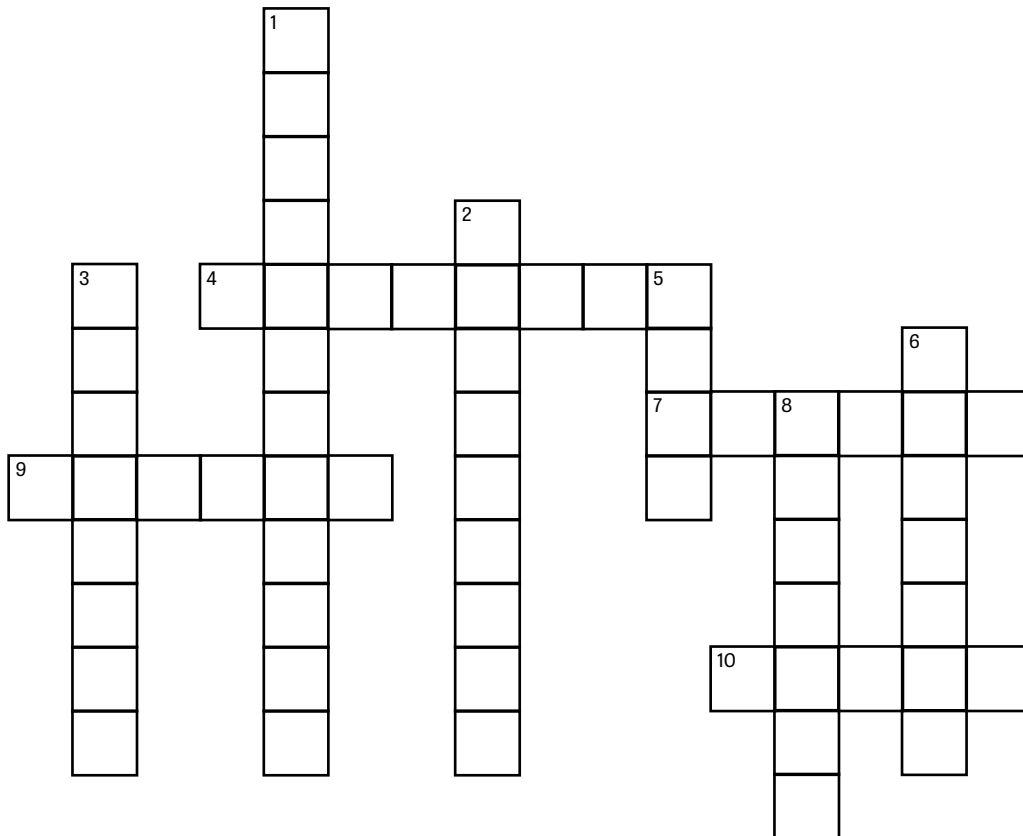
- | | | |
|----------------|--------------|----------------|
| 1. David | 9. Athaliah | 17. Amon |
| 2. Solomon | 10. Joash | 18. Josiah |
| 3. Rehoboam | 11. Amaziah | 19. Jehoahaz |
| 4. Abijah | 12. Uzziah | 20. Jehoaiakim |
| 5. Asa | 13. Jotham | 21. Jehoiachin |
| 6. Jehoshaphat | 14. Ahaz | 22. Zedekiah |
| 7. Jehoram | 15. Hezekiah | |
| 8. Athaziah | 16. Manassah | |

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David Crossword



DOWN

1. Witch Saul consulted
2. Gave David Food
3. David's Best friend
5. Killed Ahimelech
6. Cave David hid in
8. Giant David Killed

ACROSS

4. David's job as a teen
7. Wilderness David hid in
9. Anointed David
10. Wouldn't help David