

Will you be a David or an Eliab?

David and Eliab were brothers, raised in the town of Bethlehem, sons of Jesse. Eliab was the oldest and David was the youngest. All of Jesse's kids would have been taught the first five books of the Bible as were all Israelites growing up at the time.

As David grew older, he was given the job of watching over the family's sheep, while 3 of his brothers would join the army and serve under king Saul.

"Jesse became the father of Eliab his firstborn, Abinadab the second, Shimea the third, Nethanel the fourth, Raddai the fifth, Ozem the sixth, and David the seventh. Their sisters were Zeruiah and Abigail. The sons of Zeruiah: Abishai, Joab, and Asahel, three."

1 Chronicles 2:13-16 AMP

We do know a lot about David. However, there is not much information about any of David's brothers and sisters. By examining the situation of how both David and Eliab each reacted to the giant Goliath, we can acquire an understanding of each person. We learn how each reacted to the giant gaining life lessons for us to apply to our individual life.

Let's begin contrasting the two brothers:

David had a heart for the Lord.

"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 NIV

- ***Having a heart for God simply means David was concerned for God's morals, values, and principles. He was passionate for God and made sure God's morals, values, and principles were the standard throughout the country. This should be our goal.***

Eliab had a heart for the world.

"So it happened, when they had come, he looked at Eliab [the eldest son] and thought, "Surely the LORD'S anointed is before Him." But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because ***I have rejected him.*** For the LORD sees not as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

1 Samuel 16:6-7 AMP

When the giant approached, Eliab followed the crowd. He reacted in fear, just like the rest of the army.

"When Saul and the Israelites heard this, they were terrified and deeply shaken.

As soon as the Israelite army saw him, they began to run away in fright.”
1 Samuel 17:11, 24 NLT

- Those whose hearts follow the world will get in line with what the world is doing. When the army fled from fear, Eliab just did what everyone else was doing. The thinking ‘if others are doing it, then I must do it too.’ This line of thinking is worldly.

David was a shepherd and Eliab was part of the army

“So, he asked Jesse, “Are these all the sons you have?” “There is still the youngest,” Jesse answered. “He is tending the sheep.” Samuel said, “Send for him; we will not sit down until he arrives.””1 Samuel 16:11 NIV

“Jesse’s three oldest sons had followed Saul to the war: The firstborn was Eliab; the second, Abinadab; and the third, Shammah but David went back and forth from Saul to tending his father’s sheep at Bethlehem.” 1 Samuel 17:13, 15 NIV

- ***Both took their duties very seriously.***

Eliab didn’t respect David’s job.

David’s father asked David to take food to his brothers. When David arrives, Goliath the giant came out and defied the Israelites as well as mocking God.

“Now Eliab his oldest brother heard him when he spoke to the men; and Eliab’s anger burned against David and he said, “***Why is it that you have come down? And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness?*** I myself know your insolence and the wickedness of your heart; for you have come down in order to see the battle.””

1 Samuel 17:28 NASB2020

Eliab was essentially saying that this was not a place for you to be here. Leave the fighting to the big boys. You should go back home and watch over those “few” sheep you have. Eliab was insulting David as well as David’s occupation. He showed no respect for David’s job and also didn’t believe David could handle army life.

- Every job is important in the Kingdom of God. We must always show respect for every position in the body of Christ.

“If the foot says, “I am not a part of the body because I am not a hand,” that does not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear says, “I am not part of the body because I am not an eye,” would that make it any less a part of the body? If the whole body were an eye, how would you hear? Or if your whole body were an ear, how would you smell anything?”

1 Corinthians 12:15-17 NLT

Having a heart for God prompted praise and worship for the Lord.

“Then David praised the Lord in the presence of the whole assembly: “O Lord, the God of our ancestor Israel, may you be praised forever and ever! Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the victory, and the majesty. Everything in the heavens and on earth is yours, O Lord, and this is your kingdom. We adore you as the one who is over all things. Wealth and honor come from you alone, for you rule over everything. Power and might are in your hand, and at your discretion people are made great and given strength. “O our God, we thank you and praise your glorious name!” 1 Chronicles 29:10-13 NLT

- Throughout the day we can praise and worship the Lord and thank Him specifically for what he has done and is doing in our lives. David was always worshipping the Lord, yet there is nothing in Scripture to support that Eliab ever worshipped the Lord.

David fought for a cause.

“Then David spoke to the men who stood by him, saying, “What shall be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?”

And David said, “What have I done now? *Is there not a cause?*”
1 Samuel 17:26, 29 NKJV

Since we are the body of Christ, and an Ambassador for Christ here on earth our cause is to represent Christ in all areas of lives. It is our duty to stand on God’s principles, morals, and values. Our responsibility is to stand against injustice at all times.

“All of you together are Christ’s body, and each of you is a part of it.”
1 Corinthians 12:27 NLT

“So, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making His appeal through us; we [as Christ’s representatives] plead with you on behalf of Christ to be reconciled to God.”
2 Corinthians 5:20 AMP

- Do we fight for God’s cause today?

Eliab lived like the world and wanted David to get in line and do the same.

“Then David spoke to the men who stood by him, saying, “What shall be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?” And the people answered him in this manner, saying, “So shall it be done for the man who kills him.” Now Eliab his oldest brother heard when he spoke to the men; and Eliab’s anger was aroused against David, and he said, “Why did you come down here? And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your pride and the insolence of your heart, for you have come down to see the battle.” And David said, “What have I done now? Is there not a cause?” Then he turned from him toward another and said the same thing; and these people answered him as the first ones did.” I Samuel 17:26-30 NKJV

One could say that Eliab fought for the world’s view (fear).

Eliab was angry because David didn’t react like everyone else. Because David had a heart for God and a heart for God’s cause, he reacted in faith. Eliab didn’t like that. In fact, Eliab was telling David to act like everyone else (be afraid). Get in line and do what you are told, act just like everyone else. Do what the world says to do. Just fall in line with everyone else. You should be afraid just like everyone of us.

Eliab told David you don’t belong here. You should be watching the sheep, not being a part of the army.

But David would not listen to Eliab. Instead, he sought someone else, someone who would listen to him.

- How will we respond to the world’s peer pressure?
- When we choose God’s morals, values, and principles we will be criticized.

“In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,”
2 Timothy 3:12 NIV

Eliab was filled with envy and bitterness towards David

Eliab was the oldest and should have been the successor to the king but the Lord rejected him and choose David. Not only was Eliab rejected by Israel’s prophet Samuel, Eliab was also rejected by God. This was an incredible blow to Eliab, one that he allowed to irritate him from that moment on.

When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab and thought, “Surely the Lord’s anointed stands here before the Lord?” But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.” 1 Samuel 16:6-7 NLT

- We must be careful not to be driven in life by envy or bitterness. Living in bitterness can keep us from accomplishing the plans God has for us.

“Look after each other so that none of you fails to receive the grace of God. Watch out that no poisonous root of bitterness grows up to trouble you, corrupting many.” Hebrews 12:15 NLT

Eliab’s pride and jealousy led him being offended with David.

“Now Eliab his oldest brother heard when he spoke to the men; and Eliab’s anger was aroused against David, and he said, **“Why did you come down here? And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your pride and the insolence of your heart, for you have come down to see the battle.”** And David said, “What have I done now? Is there not a cause?” Then he turned from him toward another and said the same thing; and these people answered him as the first ones did.” I Samuel 17:28-30 NKJV

Eliab was basically saying ‘Who do you think you are, showing up here and telling us (the army) how to do things?’ Eliab took David’s desire to do something against the giant personally. Eliab was saying ‘not only are you showing up the army but you are embarrassing me.’ ‘I’m the army guy, you are just a lowly shepherd.’

Eliab was saying ‘go back to watching the sheep. He even said the ‘few’ sheep, as if watching the sheep was not as important as his job of being in the army.

We must always be careful to guard ourselves from being prideful in life.

“Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.” Proverbs 16:18

David did not retaliate back at Eliab’s negative words. Instead, he chose self-control and ignored him.

“Now Eliab his oldest brother heard when he spoke to the men; and Eliab’s anger was aroused against David, and he said, “Why did you come down here? And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your pride and the insolence of your heart, for you have come down to see the battle.” **And David said, “What have I done now? Is there not a cause?” Then he turned from him toward another and said the same thing;** and these people answered him as the first ones did.” I Samuel 17:28-30 NKJV

- **David saw a cause (purpose). David’s cause was God’s cause. This cause was bigger and more important than trying to please others, in this case it was his brother.**
- **It is important not to let criticism move us or deter us from our purpose (cause) in life. Our reaction to obstacles in life determines the outcome of that situation.**
- **Even though David was young, he demonstrated self-control with Eliab.**

The apostle Paul was in tough situations on many occasions. On one particular moment, God even told him he was going to be persecuted and experience tribulation, yet Paul was not going to be moved by these obstacles. In other words, Paul was not going to let anything deter him from his cause. Acts 20:24 NKJV

David reacted in faith but Eliab reacted in fear

“As he was talking with them, Goliath, the Philistine champion from Gath, came out from the Philistine ranks. Then David heard him shout his usual taunt to the army of Israel. As soon as the Israelite army saw him, they began to run away in fright. “Have you seen the giant?” the men asked. “He comes out each day to defy Israel. The king has offered a huge reward to anyone who kills him. He will give that man one of his daughters for a wife, and the man’s entire family will be exempted from paying taxes!” David asked the soldiers standing nearby, “What will a man get for killing this Philistine and ending his defiance of Israel? Who is this pagan Philistine anyway, that he is allowed to defy the armies of the living God?” And these men gave David the same reply. They said, “Yes, that is the reward for killing him.” But when David’s oldest brother, Eliab, heard David talking to the men, he was angry. “What are you doing around here anyway?” he demanded. “What about those few sheep you’re supposed to be taking care of? I know about your pride and deceit. You just want to see the battle!” “What have I done now?” David replied. “I was only asking a question!” He walked over to some others and asked them the same thing and received the same answer. Then David’s question was reported to King Saul, and the king sent for him.” 1 Samuel 17:23-31 NLT

David and Eliab were both raised in the same household, so therefore both of them would have been taught Deuteronomy 31:6.

“Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.”
Deuteronomy 31:6 NIV

David believed in his heart that God was with him and therefore he could always be strong and courageous. David took God at His Word and trusted that if he stepped out in faith God would back him up.

David’s Reaction was faith:

**David never hesitated. He didn’t give fear a chance to enter his heart. David believed God’s Word and saw this giant as an insult to God and the people of Israel. He asked ‘what would be done for the one who would kill the giant?’ As we read these passages, we can hear David thinking, ‘why isn’t anyone doing something about this giant?’

Eliab’s Reaction was fear:

“When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid.” 1 Samuel 17:11 NKJV

“And all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him and were dreadfully afraid.”
1 Samuel 17:24 NKJV

**Since Eliab was part of the army, he too reacted in fear and fled like the others.

David was moved by Goliath’s insults.

“And the Philistine said, ‘I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that he may fight together.’”

“Then as he talked with them, there was the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, coming up from the armies of the Philistines; and he spoke according to the same words. So, David heard them.”

“Then David spoke to the men who stood by him, saying, ‘What shall be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?’” 1 Samuel 17:9,23,26 NKJV

David could not allow this giant to insult and disrespect God nor God’s people. When he heard Goliath speak, he was compelled to action.

When God’s Spirit and God’s Word are inside us, we should burn with a desire to do the right thing but also make sure what’s right is being displayed in the land

- When we observe immoral values and principles being displayed in our country, will we, like David rise up in faith and challenge the system (giant) or will we shrink back and live in fear and compromise?

David’s Faith was persistent

But David persisted. “I have been taking care of my father’s sheep and goats,” he said. “When a lion or a bear comes to steal a lamb from the flock, I go after it with a club and rescue the lamb from its mouth. If the animal turns on me, I catch it by the jaw and club it to death. I have done this to both lions and bears, and I’ll do it to this pagan Philistine, too, for he has defied the armies of the living God! The Lord who rescued me from the claws of the lion and the bear will rescue me from this Philistine!” Saul finally consented. “All right, go ahead,” he said. “And may the Lord be with you!”” 1 Samuel 17:23, 26, 34-37 NLT

- The enemy never gives up, but neither should we!

David and Eliab each had their opportunity to face the giant.

Eliab heard Goliath daily but choose not to trust God and face the giant.

Eliab reacted in fear, just like everyone else.

God gave Eliab his opportunity and waited for him to rise up and face Goliath. God is patient and wants all of us to live successfully.

When sufficient time had elapsed and Eliab didn't put his faith into practice, God brought David to the battlefield to face the giant.

God is a God of second and many chances. God loves us passionately and will give all of us a chance to fulfill the purpose he created us for.

“Now when *David had served God's purpose in his own generation*, he fell asleep; he was buried with his ancestors and his body decayed.”

Acts 13:36 NIV

“...And who knows whether you have attained royalty *for such a time as this [and for this very purpose]?*”

Esther 4:14 AMP

“*For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.*”

Jeremiah 29:11 NKJV

“*Therefore, do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.*”

Ephesians 5:17 NKJV

God's thoughts and plans for us are always good and positive. God desires all of us to live a victorious life.

Every single human being that has ever lived was calculated by God when and where they would be born.

Where we live, where we work, and where we are right now, all of us we can rise up and accomplish the purpose God has given us.

God has a purpose for all of us. Do we want to know what it is and will we do it once it is revealed to us?

God is more than willing to show us what our purpose is, if are we searching for it?

When confronted with this giant, Eliab ran from the giant, while David ran towards the giant.

“As the Philistine moved closer to attack him, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet him. Reaching into his bag and taking out a stone, he slung it and struck the Philistine on the forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell face down on the ground. So, David triumphed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone; without a sword in his hand, he struck down the Philistine and killed him.”

1 Samuel 17:48-50 NIV

When we truly believe God’s Word in our hearts, we will be able to face any obstacle in life. We will face these challenges with boldness and courage. Nothing will hinder or deter us. David had this boldness and courage in his heart, which is why he was able to not only face his giant, but run towards him. He believed he would be victorious over his giant.

Eliab ran away in fear

David ran towards in faith

David was the one who was victorious. David became the giant slayer.

“*So, David triumphed over the Philistine* with a sling and a stone; without a sword in his hand, he struck down the Philistine and killed him.”

1 Samuel 17:50 NIV

David was victorious over this giant because he believed God was with him and would strengthen him. He had boldness and courage because he believed God’s Word in his heart. He was victorious because he believed this giant didn’t stand a chance. This giant openly mocked God and God’s people and that is a recipe for disaster.

“Do not be deceived, God is not mocked (He will not allow himself to be ridiculed, nor treated with contempt, nor allow His precepts to be scornfully set aside); for whatever a man sows, this and this only is what he will reap.” Galatians 6:7 AMP

Throughout this story we see a contrast between the two brothers.

- **Eliab reacted in fear, envy, and anger.**
- **David reacted in faith, strength, and resilience.**

What type of person will you be? Will you be a person filled with faith and live victoriously over our giants, or will you be a person filled with fear and run from our giants and therefore accomplish nothing? Will you be a David or will we be an Eliab?