

Did God Micromanage David?

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BIG SANDY, Texas—Bible students like to discuss God's involvement in the selection and behavior of civil leaders. In three separate articles (last week, this week and next week), we are discussing three Old Testament leaders who were chosen by God.

The three examples demonstrate that, even when God does choose a person to lead nations, He generally does not micromanage the actions of that leader.

Regretted choosing Saul

Last week, we discussed how God had informed Samuel of the selection of Saul to be king (1 Samuel 9:15-16).

We read about God regretting the selection of Saul (1 Samuel 5:11). We also read about Samuel's evaluation about Saul and the reason for Saul's failing (verse 17).

1 Samuel 15:17—"So Samuel said, 'When you were little in your own eyes, were you not head of the tribes of Israel? And did not the LORD anoint you king over Israel?' "

God chose David

Bible students remember the story about Samuel interviewing the sons of Jesse to find the next king.

Samuel looked at seven of Jesse's sons before the youngest son was invited to come inside from the field (1 Samuel 16 10-12).

Did not force obedience

When Bible students look at the behavior of David, they can recognize that God did not micromanage David's behavior to be obedient.

The biblical record shows some examples of God being displeased with some of David's choices.

Adultery and murder

The sins of David that are probably his most recognizable sins to Bible students are his adultery and the follow-up murder.

The act of adultery was bad enough.

2 Samuel 11:2-4—“Then it happened one evening that David arose from his bed and walked on the roof of the king’s house. And from the roof he saw a woman bathing, and the woman was very beautiful to behold. So David sent and inquired about the woman. And someone said, ‘Is this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?’ Then David sent messengers, and took her; and she came to him, and he lay with her, for she was cleansed from her impurity; and she returned to her house.”

But David’s action to cover up the initial sin made the situation worse.

2 Samuel 11:12-13—“Then David said to Uriah, ‘Wait here today also, and tomorrow I will let you depart.’ So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day and the next. Now when David called him, he ate and drank before him; and he made him drunk. And at evening he went out to lie on his bed with the servants of his lord, but he did not go down to his house.”

2 Samuel 11:14-15—“In the morning it happened that David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it by the hand of Uriah. And he wrote in the letter, saying, ‘Set Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retreat from him, that he may be struck down and die.’ ”

Forgiveness and consequence

It is interesting to note in the Bible that, when God forgives, He often removes both the spiritual consequence and the physical consequences of a person’s sins.

In this particular situation, God forgave a repentant David (2 Samuel 12:13), but He still allowed David to face a major physical and emotional consequence (verse 14).