

1. The Holy Qur'an on Dawood alayhi's-salam.

All quotes are from The Holy Qur'an. Translation and Commentary by Abdullah Yusuf 'Ali.

Names: Dawood – David; Talut –Saul; Jaloot – Goliath; Zaboora – the Psalms

Surah 21: Al-Anbiya

78. And remember David
And Solomon, when they
Gave judgment in the matter
Of the field into which
The sheep or certain people
Had strayed by night:
We did witness their judgment.
79. To Solomon We inspired
The (right) understanding
Of the matter: to each
(Of them) We gave Judgment
And Knowledge; it was
Our power that made
The hills and the birds
Celebrate Our praises,
With David: it was We
Who did (all these things).
80. It was We Who taught him
The making of coats of mail
For your benefit, to guard
You from each other's violence:
Will ye then be grateful? [2735]

Surah 34: Saba

10. We bestowed Grace aforetime

On David from Ourselves: [3799]
"O ye Mountains! Sing ye
Back the Praises of Allah
With him! And ye birds
(Also)! And We made
The iron soft for him –
11. (Commanding), "Make thou
Coats of mail, balancing well
The ring of chain armour,
And work ye righteousness;
For be sure I see
(Clearly) all that ye do."

Surah 38: SAD

17. Have patience at what they
Say, and remember Our Servant
David, the man of strength: [4167]
For he ever turned (to Allah).
18. It was We that made
The hills declare, [4168]
In unison with him,
Our Praise, at eventide
And at break of day,
19. And the birds gathered
(In assemblies): all with him

Did turn (to Allah.)

20. We strengthened his kingdom,
And gave him wisdom
And sound judgment
In speech and decision.

...

26. O David! We did indeed
Make thee a vicegerent [4177]
On earth: so judge thou
Between men in truth (and justice):

Nor follow thou the lusts
(Of thy heart) for they will
Mislead thee from the Path
Of Allah: for those who
Wander astray from the Path
Of Allah, is a Penalty Grievous,
For that they forget
The Day of Account.

2735. David's good work then was: (1) he was open to learn wisdom wherever it came from; (2) he sang the praises of Allah, in unison with all nature; (3) he made defensive armour. But all these things he did, because of the faculties which Allah had given him, and we must be grateful for this and for all things to Allah.

3799. Cf. 21:79-80, and notes 2733-34. David had the gift of song and sacred music, and this is shown in his Psalms. All nature – hills and birds – sing and echo back the Praises of Allah.

4167. David was a man of exceptional strength, for even as a raw youth, he slew the Philistine giant Goliath. See 2:249-252, and notes 286-87. Before that fight, he was mocked by his enemies and chidden even by his own elder brother. But he relied upon Allah, and won through, and afterwards became king.

4168. See n. 2733 to 21:79. All nature sings in unison and celebrates the praises of Allah. David was given the gift of music and psalmody, and therefore the hills and birds are recorded as singing Allah's praises in unison with him. The special hour when the hills and groves echo the songs of birds are in the evening and at dawn, when also the birds gather together, for those are respectively their roosting hours and the hours of their concerted flight for the day.

4177. Cf. 2:30, and n.47. David's kingly power, and the gifts of wisdom, justice, psalmody, and prophethood were bestowed on him as a trust. These great gifts were not to be a matter of self-glory.

Verses on the battle with Jaloot (Goliath)

Surah 2: Al Baqarah

246. Hast thou not
Turned thy vision to the Chiefs
Of the Children of Israel
After (the time of) Moses?
They said to the Prophet [278]
(That was) among them:
"Appoint for us a King, that we
May fight in the cause of Allah".
He said: "Is it not possible, [279]
If ye were commanded

To fight, that ye
Might not fight?" They said:
"How could we refuse
To fight in the cause of Allah,
Seeing that we were turned out
Of our homes and our families?"
But when they were commanded
To fight, they turned back,
Except a small band
Among them. But Allah
Has full knowledge of those
Who do wrong.

247. Their Prophet said to them:
"Allah hath appointed
Talut [280] as king over you."
They said: "How can he
Exercise authority over us
When we are better fitted
Than he to exercise authority,
And he is not even gifted,
With wealth in abundance?"
He said; "Allah hath
Chosen him above you,
And hath gifted him
Abundantly with knowledge
And bodily prowess: Allah
Granteth His authority to whom
He pleaseth. Allah careth
For all, and He knoweth
All things."

248. And (further) their Prophet
Said to them: "A Sign
Of his authority
Is that there shall come
To you the Ark of the Covenant,
With (an assurance) therein
Of security from your Lord,
And the relics left
By the family of Moses
And the family of Aaron,
Carried by angels.
In this is a Symbol
For you, if ye indeed
Have faith."

249. When Talut set forth
With the armies, he said:
"Allah will test you
At the stream: if any
Drinks of its water,
He goes not with my army:
Only those who taste not
Of it go with me:

A mere sip out of the hand
Is excused." But they all
Drank of it, except a few.
When they crossed the river –
He and the faithful ones with him –
They said: "This day [285]
We cannot cope
With Goliath and his forces."
But those who were convinced
That they must meet Allah,
Said: "How oft, by Allah's will,
Hath a small force
Vanquished a big one?
Allah is with those
Who steadfastly persevere."
250. When they advanced
To meet Goliath and his forces,
They prayed: "Our Lord!
Pour out constancy on us
And make our steps firm:
Help us against those
That reject faith."
251. By Allah's will
They routed them;
And David [286] slew Goliath;
And Allah gave him
Power and wisdom
And taught him
Whatever (else) He willed. [287]
And did not Allah
Check one set of people
By means of another,
The earth would indeed
Be full of mischief:
But Allah is full of bounty
To all the worlds.

278. This was Samuel. In his time Israel had suffered from much corruption within and many reverses without. The Philistines had made a great attack and defeated Israel with great slaughter. The Israelites, instead of relying on Faith and their own valour and cohesion, brought out their most sacred possession, the Ark of the Covenant, to help them in the fight. But the enemy captured it, carried it away, and retained it for seven months. The Israelites forgot that wickedness cannot screen itself behind a sacred relic. Nor can a

sacred relic help the enemies' faith. The enemy found that the Ark brought nothing but misfortune for themselves, and were glad to abandon it. It apparently remained twenty years in the village of Ya'arim: I. Samuel, vii. 2. Meanwhile the people pressed Samuel to appoint them a king. They thought that a king would cure all their ills, whereas what was wanting was a spirit of union and discipline and a readiness on their part to fight in the cause of Allah.

279. Samuel knew as a Prophet that the people were fickle and only wanted to cover their own want of union and true spirit by asking for a king. They replied with spirit in words, but when it came to action, they failed. They hid themselves in caves and rocks, or ran away, and even those who remained "followed him trembling:" I. Samuel, xiii. 6-7.

280. *Talut* is the Arabic name for Saul, who was tall and handsome, but belonged to the tribe of Benjamin, the smallest tribe in Israel. His worldly belongings were slender, and it was when he went out to search for some asses which had been lost from his father's house that he met Samuel and was appointed king by him. The people's fickleness appeared immediately after he was named. They raised all sorts of petty objections to him. The chief consideration in their minds was selfishness: each one wanted to be leader and king himself, instead of desiring sincerely the good of the people as a whole, as a leader should do.

285. Even in the small band that remained faithful, there were some who were appalled by the number of the enemy when they met them face to face, and saw the size and strength of the enemy Commander, the giant Goliath (Jaloot). But there was a very small band who were determined to face all odds, because they had perfect confidence in Allah and in the cause for which they were fighting. They were for making a firm stand and seeking Allah's help. Of that number was David.

286. Note how the whole story is compressed into a few words as regards narration, but its spiritual lessons are dwelt upon from many points of view. The Old Testament is mainly interested in the narrative, which is full of detail, but says little about the universal truths of which every true story is a parable. The Qur'an assumes the story, but tells the parable. David was a raw youth, with no arms or armour. He was not known even in the Israelite camp, and the giant Goliath mocked him. Even David's own elder brother chid him for deserting his sheep, for he was a poor shepherd lad to outward appearance, but his faith had made him more than a match for the Philistine hosts. When Saul offered his own armour and arms to David, the young hero declined, as he had not tried them, while his shepherd's sling and staff were his well-tried implements. He picked up five smooth pebbles on the spot from the stream, and used his sling to such effect that he knocked down Goliath. He then used Goliath's own sword to slay him. There was consternation in the Philistine army: they broke and fled, and were pursued and cut to pieces. Apart from the main lesson that if we would preserve our national existence and our faith it is our duty to fight with courage and firmness, there are other lessons in David's story: (1) numbers do not count, but faith, determination and the blessings of Allah; (2) size and strength are of no avail against truth, courage, and careful planning; (3) the hero tries his own weapons, and those that are available to him at the time and place, even though people may laugh at him; (4) if Allah is with us, the enemy's weapon may become an instrument of his own destruction; (5) personality conquers all dangers, and puts heart into our own wavering friends; (6) pure faith brings Allah's reward, which may take many forms: in David's case it was Power, Wisdom, and other gifts.

287. David was not only a shepherd, a warrior, a king, a wise man, and prophet, but was also endowed with the gifts of poetry and music. His Psalms (*Zaboor*) are still extant.

NOTE: When writing the story of the Prophet Dawood alayhi's-salam we referred to the Old Testament as well as the Holy Qur'an because many details of this story came to us from the Bani Israel. For centuries, Muslim scholars have used as a source material the revealed scriptures of the People of the Book as long as they did not contradict Islamic dogma. The following two versions of the same sahih Hadith show the permissibility of relating stories of the Bani Israel.

'Abdullah bin 'Amr bin Al-'As reported:

The Holy Prophet said, 'Convey from me even an Ayah of the Qur'an; relate traditions from Bani Israel, and there is no restriction on that; but he who deliberately forges a lie against me let him have his abode in the Hell.'

[Al- Bukhari]

Sunnah.com reference: Book 13, Hadith 5

Arabic/English book reference: Book 13, Hadith 1380

Source: Sunnah.com

Narrated by 'Abdullah bin 'Amr:

The Holy Prophet said, 'Convey (my teachings) to the people even if it were a single sentence, and tell others the stories of Bani Israel (which have been taught to you), for it is not sinful to do so. And whoever tells a lie on me intentionally, will surely take his place in the (Hell) Fire.'

[Al Bukhari]

Reference: Sahih al-Bukhari 3461

In-book reference: Book 60, Hadith 128

USC-MSA web (English) reference: Vol. 4, Book 55, Hadith 667

Source: Sunnah.com

Among those who put this Hadith into practice when relating stories from the Bani Israel were 'Abdullah ibn Abbas, the cousin of the Holy Prophet (saws) and the first commentator on the Holy Qur'an, and also Ibn Kathir, the leading Qur'anic commentator. Allah knows best.

2. The Old Testament on Dawood alayhi's-salam.

All quotes are from The Holy Bible, New International Version. Published by Hodder and Stoughton 1991.

1 Samuel

17.4 A champion named Goliath, who was from Gath, came out of the Philistine camp. He was over nine feet tall. He had a bronze helmet on his head and wore a coat of scale armour of bronze weighing five thousand shekels; on his legs he wore bronze greaves, and a bronze javelin was slung on his back. His spear shaft was like a weaver's rod, and its iron point weighed six hundred shekels. His shield-bearer went ahead of him.

17.10 "This day I defy the ranks of Israel! Give me a man and let us fight each other."

17.11 On hearing the Philistine's words, Saul and all his Israelites were dismayed and terrified.

17.12 Now David was the son of an Ephrathite named Jesse, who was from Bethlehem in Judah. Jesse had eight sons, and in Saul's time he was old and well advanced in years. Jesse's three oldest sons had followed Saul to the war.... 17.14 David was the youngest. The three oldest followed Saul, 17.15 but David went back and forth from Saul to tend his father's sheep at Bethlehem.

17.16 For forty days the Philistine came forward every morning and evening and took his stand.

17.17 Now Jesse said to his son David, "Take this ephah of roasted grain and these ten loaves of bread for your brothers and hurry to their camp. 17.18 Take along these ten cheeses to the commander of their unit. See how your brothers are and bring back some assurance from them. 17.19 They are with Saul and all the men of Israel in the Valley of Elah, fighting against the Philistines."

17.20 Early in the morning David left the flock with a shepherd, loaded up and set out, as Jesse had directed. He reached the camp as the army was going out to its battle positions, shouting the war cry. 17.21 Israel and the Philistines were drawing up their lines facing each other. 17.22 David left his things with the keeper of supplies, ran to the battle lines and greeted his brothers. 17.23 As he was talking with them, Goliath, the Philistine champion from Gath, stepped out from his lines and shouted his usual defiance, and David heard it. 17.24 When the Israelites saw the man, they all ran from him in great fear.

17.32 David said to Saul, "Let no-one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go and fight him."

17.33 Saul replied, "You are not able to go out against this Philistine and fight him; you are only a boy, and he has been a fighting man from his youth."

17.34 But David said to Saul, "Your servant has been keeping his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock, 17.35 I went after it, struck it and rescued the sheep from its mouth. When it turned on me, I seized it by its hair, struck it and killed it. 17.36 Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this uncircumcised

Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defied the armies of the living God. 17.37 The Lord who delivered me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine. Saul said to David, "Go and the Lord be with you."

17.38 Then Saul dressed David in his own tunic. He put a coat of armour on him and a bronze helmet on his head. 17.39 David fastened on his sword over the tunic and tried walking around, because he was not used to them. "I cannot go in these," he said to Saul, "because I am not used to them." So he took them off. 17.40 Then he took his staff in his hand, chose five smooth stones from the stream, put them in the pouch of his shepherd's bag and, with his sling in his hand, approached the Philistine.

17.41 Meanwhile, the Philistine, with his shield-bearer in front of him, kept coming closer to David. 17.42 He looked David over and saw that he was only a boy, ruddy and handsome, and he despised him. 17.43 He said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come at me with sticks?? And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. 17.44 "Come here," he said, "and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field!"

17.45 David said to the Philistine, "You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. 17.46 This day the Lord will hand you over to me, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head. Today I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth, and the whole world will know that there is God in Israel. 17.47 All those gathered there will know that it is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves; for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give all of you into our hands."

17.48 As the Philistine moved closer to attack him, David ran quickly towards the battle line to meet him. 17.49 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.

17.50 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.

17.51 David ran and stood over him. He took hold of the Philistine's sword and drew it from the scabbard. After he killed him, he cut off his head with the sword. When the Philistines saw that their hero was dead, they turned and ran. 17.52 Then the men of Israel and Judah surged forward with a shout and pursued the Philistines to the entrance of Gath and to the gates of Ekron.

18.2 From that day on Saul kept David with him and did not let him return to his father's house.

18.5 Whatever Saul sent him to do, David did it so successfully that Saul gave him a high rank in the army. This pleased all the people, and Saul's officers as well.