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David Faces the Nation

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Series: God's Living Legends II

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It's true! The crudely built steel tower does seem a bit out of place as it reflects the sun's rays from where it stands so majestically just outside the city gates, still thousands of years from such luxuries as electricity, running water, or paved roads, Jerusalem was hardly a candidate for its own television station. Yet it was a station that simply HAD to be built. Otherwise, we would have had to use a different theme as a backdrop for this lesson! So build it we did, at least in our imaginations.

Its call letters are WORD. It broadcasts on channel 7 (naturally), and we will imagine its signal is a faint black and white one, lest we be accused of carrying this whole charade too far.

It is nearly 3 p.m. on Sunday afternoon, and Israel's favorite program is about to come on the air. All over the walled city, Jewish families are plugging their sets into make-believe wall sockets, adjusting imaginary antennas, and settling down to see just who Aaron and Ruth Shimei will interview today. Aaron and Ruth are a husband-wife duo of journalists who team up every Sunday for a lively question and answer session with a celebrity of their choice. They have come up with a unique title for their show called "Face the Nation", a title that would no doubt be stolen by other, less creative networks in the years to come.

Last week, General Joab, the King Kong of the Israeli army, had been their guest; the man who always won in battle, and he came out definitely second best in front of the cameras. Having kept a file of the Jerusalem Gazette handy for quotes, Aaron and Ruth barbecued the warrior in his own juices by asking him revealing questions about his apparent vacillation on key issues through the years. But last week was nothing compared to this one. This week's mystery guest, billed as

“the journalistic event of the century”, was sure to boost their ratings out of sight.

Aaron and Ruth were an interesting couple, to say the least. Aaron was your typical hardened, cynical reporter. A brilliant journalist, he was also an imposing figure on the camera. He had jet-black curly hair, an olive complexion, and penetrating eyes that seemed always to say, “I don’t believe what you’re saying, but I’ll write it down.” His wife, Ruth, meanwhile, was billed as the “Barbara Walters” of the Mid-East. Brilliant, blunt, and even brutal at times, she nonetheless had a hidden stroke of kindness buried within her spirit that never allowed her to exceed the boundaries of professionalism for a story (a trait her husband did not seem to possess).

There’s one more thing you should know about this tenacious television team. They were on different sides of the political fence. Aaron Shimei, for instance, had reported Absalom’s revolution as though the nation were being liberated. Ruth had reported it as a national disaster. That difference in perspective would have a profound impact on how they approached today’s mystery guest.

Well, the mystery is about over. It is 2:59 p.m., and just after that stirring commercial for Kline’s chariots that shows a determined warrior riding into battle in the most advanced two wheeler ever made, and an extravagant attempt at a station break, the show will begin. Let’s tune in.

With a colorful photo of Jerusalem in the background (no mean trick since cameras have not yet been invented), in the foreground there appear the letters WORD; and a crisp, yet enthusiastic voice proclaims, “This is station WORD, the eyes and ears of Israel. The time is three o’clock.” That, too, was something of a miracle, since clocks were thousands of years from becoming a reality. But no one dared question the accuracy of their prehistoric Seikos.

The music swells in the background, a brisk band of marching music, and on camera comes Ruth Shimei. “Welcome to another edition of Face the Nation, the program that asks the questions of those who have the answers. Today Face the Nation is making television history (she grins a little). In fact,

everything we do makes television history, since television has not been invented yet (professional face returns), for today... for the very first time on television, (and only on channel seven), you and I have an opportunity to ask the questions of the most famous guest ever to be interviewed. Today, facing the nation is none other than...our very own King David.”

With that, the camera swings away from Ruth and zooms towards the king, a feat accomplished by little Isaac Shimei, who is holding the world’s only video camera, simultaneously utilizing the world’s first pair of roller skates. (If he ever loses his ability to stop, the word “zoom” is going to take on a whole new meaning.)

What we see on camera is the face of the world’s most famous man, a man much maligned, yet still heralded as the greatest warrior, the godliest leader, and the most influential politician in the history of the Jewish nation. Only two days ago, he had handed over the reins of his rule to his son, Solomon, amidst a stirring speech that had captivated the country, as literally thousands gave their choicest possessions for the building of the temple. Ruth Shimei had reported the speech as “the most moving message in Israeli history.” Her husband had billed it “the biggest religious fund raising effort ever held.”

Now here was the king, seated in what Aaron liked to call the “Hebrew Hotseat”. On each side of him were his two Israeli interrogators. The camera captured the lines on David’s face with startling realism. They were lines that had formed a cascade of kindness, the evidence of an unusually soft and gentle spirit for one who had marched in so many conflicts, slain so many giants, ruthlessly destroyed so many enemy armies, and confidently conquered so many of those who had opposed him.

He was obviously frail and weak, but his eyes glistened with a lustre so brilliant you’d never dream he had suffered such hardship, such grief, such an array of disappointments. You might have expected an arrogant, self-centered old man who would dominate the conversation with overrated, antiquated war stories of days gone by. If so, you were to be surprised indeed.

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“Welcome to Face the Nation,” Aaron Shimei said with computer-like coldness. “We are pleased to have you on our program. As you may know, King David, our program consists of a series of questions called in by our listeners on our exclusive Mid-Eastern Mama Bell Telephone System, plus of course, a few well-chosen questions that Ruth and I have prepared in advance.”

King David had faced enemies before. Terrified he was not. Relaxed he was. “I am privileged to be on your program, Mr. Shimei; you may ask me anything you like,” the kindly king responded. With that, the scene was set for today’s program. Incidentally, while the setting is a bit absurd, and the questions have been framed in modern English, the answers the king gives will be accurate quotations from his own words, taken directly from those chapters of the Psalms penned by his hand. This is, in other words, a direct interview with the David of the Scriptures.

Aaron speaks first. “You fancy yourself a brave man, King David; at least, such is your reputation. To what do you credit your extreme bravery? Why is it you are never afraid?”

David’s eyes rolled heavenward as he answered:

The LORD is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear?
The LORD is the strength of my life; Of whom shall I be afraid?

When the wicked came against me to eat up my flesh, My enemies and foes stumbled and fell.

Though an army may encamp against me, My heart shall not fear;
Though war should rise against me, In this will I be confident. (Psalm 27:1-3 NKJV)

I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people Who have set themselves against me all around.

(Psalm 27:3:6 NKJV)

Ruth: “But surely on occasions you have been filled with fear. What did you do then?”

King David:

I sought the LORD, and He heard me, And delivered me from all my fears. (Psalm 34:4)

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Aaron: “Oh, come now, King, we all know that you have been in all kinds of dangerous straits. Haven’t you ever wanted to just run away and hide?”

King David:

“Because of the voice of the enemy, Because of the oppression of the wicked; For they bring down trouble upon me, And in wrath they hated me.

My heart is severely pained within me, And the terrors of death have fallen upon me.

Fearfulness and trembling were come upon me, And horror has overwhelmed me.

So I said, Oh, that I had wings like a dove! I would fly away and be at rest.

Indeed, I would wander far off, And remain in the wilderness. Selah

I would hasten my escape From the windy storm and tempest.” (Psalm 55:3-8 NKJV)

Ruth: “How did you pray then?”

King David:

“I cry out to the LORD with my voice; With my voice to the LORD I make supplication.

I pour out my complaint before Him; I declare before Him my trouble.” (Psalm 142:1-2 NKJV)

Ruth was obviously already enamored at the king’s confidence in God. Aaron was obviously already irritated at the “other-worldliness” of the man. But before he could say another word, Ruth went on: “What happened then, King David, what happened when you poured out your complaint to the Lord?”

King David:

“This poor man cried out, and the LORD heard him, And saved him out of all his troubles.” (Psalm 34:6 NKJV)

Ruth: “How does God do that?”

King David:

“The angel of the LORD encamps all around them those who fear Him, And delivers them.” (Psalm 34:7 NKJV)

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With that, the king looked Aaron straight in the eye, and with a look of kindness, but with all the fervor of an evangelist, he added:

“Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him!

Oh, fear the LORD, you His saints! There is no want to those who fear Him.

The young lions lack and suffer hunger; But those who seek the LORD shall not lack any good thing.”

(Psalm 34:8-10 NKJV)

Fortunately, the broadcast was not in color. No one but those in the studio could see that Aaron had turned beet red. It was either anger or conviction, or both. In any case, he called immediately for a commercial break, and the screen was suddenly filled with an outdoor scene so realistic you could all but smell the grapes and touch the water of the stream that ran through the center of the screen. Quiet music played in the background. A gentle, friendly voice whispered: “Softer than a summer breeze, cooler than a mountain stream, that’s the fragrance and texture of Sarah’s Soap...a soap that leaves you feeling clean, refreshed, and smelling like the great outdoors. Try Sarah’s Soap tomorrow and find out what the word ‘clean’ really means in Hebrew.” With that, the screen abruptly goes blank; then, once again, King David and his two interviewers were on center stage. After all, fading in and out had not yet been invented either.

Aaron Shimei was still visibly flustered. It had never been his intent to get into a discussion of the merits of Jehovah, but rather to watch King David squirm over the relative inconsistencies in his kingdom experiences. But somehow this incredibly wise man kept turning the conversation into a testimony meeting. His only hope was to turn David over to the telephone vultures, those incoming callers that always seemed to pounce on the guest as though he were fair game. This telephone (whenever it would be invented) no doubt would bring out the beast, rather than the best in people.

“We will now give our telephone audience a chance to ask you some questions, Mr. King,” Aaron gleefully exclaimed,

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regaining his composure at the prospect of seeing this religious ruler at the mercy of his treacherous constituency.

The switchboard, a wall of imaginary colored lights and computerized switching banks, lit up like a Christmas tree. "Let's talk to our first caller," Aaron excitedly exclaimed. "And what scathingly insightful question do you have for our retired ruler," he chuckled, just daring the caller to dive into David feet first. "Here's our first caller. And your question? That's a good one...Let's see how our spiritual superman handles that," he mumbled, not realizing he could be heard. Out of the corner of his eye he could see Ruth's eyes meet his. They were poison-tipped daggers that all but said, "Just wait till I get you home, you pint-sized Dan Rather." He looked away quickly. "Your question is: If your God is so just, and He requires such integrity, then why do the wicked prosper? How do you explain the suffering believer's experience, while those who defy your God are living in the lap of luxury? Good question," an exuberant Aaron responded, "Would you field that for us, oh, King?"

King David:

"Do not fret because of evildoers, Nor be envious of the workers of iniquity.

For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, And wither as the green herb. (Psalm 37:1,2 NKJV)

Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; Do not fret—it only causes harm.

For evildoers shall be cut off; But those who wait on the LORD, They shall inherit the earth.

For yet a little while and the wicked shall be no more; Indeed, you will look carefully for his place, But it shall be no more.

But the meek shall inherit the earth, And shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

The wicked plots against the just, And gnashes at him with his teeth.

The LORD laughs at him, For He sees that his day is coming.

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The wicked have drawn out the sword, And have bent their bow, To cast down the poor and needy, To slay those who are of upright conduct.

Their sword shall enter into their own heart, And their bows shall be broken.

For the arms of the wicked shall be broken: But the LORD upholds the righteous. (Psalm 37:8-16 NKJV)

I have seen the wicked in great power, And spreading himself like a native green tree.

Yet he passed away, and behold, he was no more; Indeed, I sought him, but he could not be found.

Mark the blameless man, and observe the upright; For the future of that man is peace.

But the transgressors shall be destroyed together; The future of the wicked shall be cut off.

But the salvation of the righteous is of the LORD; He is their strength in time of trouble.

And the LORD shall help them and deliver them; He shall deliver them from the wicked, And save them, Because they trust in Him." (Psalm 37:35-40 NKJV)

Aaron's complexion was changing fast. His face had turned from olive to red to ashen gray. He said to the caller, "Have you any rebuttal for the king?" The caller had none. He simply said, "Thank you, I'd never thought of it that way," and hung up. "I think we'd best take another call," Aaron quickly responded, "Yes, ma'am, it's King David facing the nation, what would you like to ask him?"

Suddenly Aaron broke into a smile so broad his ears almost split. "Good question," he replied, "This caller, oh King, wants to know if you believe in the total depravity of man. Good question. (For our viewers, that's an evangelical expression that implies that all men are sinners, without exception.) Have you an answer, oh, King?"

King David:

The LORD looks down from heaven upon the children of men, To see if there are any who understand, who seek God.

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They are all turned aside, They have together become corrupt; There is none who does good, No not one.

(Psalm 14:2,3 NKJV)

They are corrupt, and have done abominable iniquity; There is none who does good.”

(Psalm 53:1b)

Ruth Shimei interrupted at this point. She was visibly intrigued, not only by the king, but by the sudden introduction into the conversation of man’s inability to satisfy a Holy God. She had studied this matter at the Hebrew University and had never come to an acceptable answer. This is the first time she had ever heard an outright statement that God viewed all men as sinners. She asked the next most obvious question.

Ruth: “Then if all men are sinners, is it possible for man to know God...personally? Or has Jehovah rejected us? Has He no mercy? What has happened to our sins?”

David was unable to restrain himself at this point. For a brief moment, he simply broke into a hymn of praise. To say the least it was a memorable moment. He literally began to sing.

King David:

“Bless the LORD, O my soul; And all that is within me, bless His holy name!

Bless the LORD, O my soul, And forget not all His benefits:

Who forgives all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases,

Who redeems your life from destruction, Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies,

Who satisfies your mouth with good things, So that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s.”

(Psalm 103:1-5 NKJV)

Then he turned to Ruth and answered her question.

“The LORD is merciful and gracious, Slow to anger, and abounding in mercy.

He will not always strive with us, Nor will He keep His anger forever.

He has not dealt with us after our sins, Nor punished us according to our iniquities.

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For as the heavens are high above the earth, So great is His mercy toward those who fear Him;

As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us.

As a father pities his children, So the LORD pities those who fear Him.

For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust.

As for man, his days are like grass; As a flower of the field, so he flourishes.

For the wind passes over it, And it is gone, And its place remembers it no more.

But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting On those who fear Him, And His righteousness to children's children,

To such as keep His covenant, And to those who remember His commandments to do them.

The Lord has established His throne in the heaven, And His kingdom rules over all." (Psalm 103:8-19 NKJV)

Then the king broke forth into an anthem of praise that he had written years before. It was as though, at the very thought of God, he could not help but praise. He began to sing:

"Bless the LORD, you His angels, Who excel in strength, who do His word, Heeding the voice of His word.

Bless the LORD, all you His hosts, You ministers of His, who do His pleasure.

Bless the LORD, all His works, In all places of His dominion, Bless the LORD, O my soul!" (Psalm 103:20-22 NKJV)

There was absolute silence in the studio. The glint of a tear could be seen in the corner of Ruth's eyes. Aaron, meanwhile, was a combination of anger, frustration, and confusion.

Aaron: "Let's take another call. Yes, our king did speak of angels and heaven. Good question. King David, this caller wants to know if you believe God is REALLY in heaven," (he cleared his throat to keep from chuckling) "and if you believe there is really a hell. For the benefit of our viewers..." Aaron began, but he was interrupted by his wife.

Ruth: "I believe our viewers know what hell means, let's

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allow the king to answer.”

The daggers between husband and wife were now flying at an uninterrupted pace. Aaron, continuing to display a kaleidoscope of colors, turned beet red again, his second time to display that vivid hue. Pity this program is only in black and white.

King David:

“The LORD is in His holy temple, the LORD’s throne is in heaven; His eyes behold, His eyelids test the sons of men.

The LORD tests the righteous, But the wicked and the one who loves violence His soul hates.

Upon the wicked He will rain coals; Fire and brimstone and a burning wind Shall be the portion of their cup.

(Psalm 11:4-6 NKJV)

Because they do not regard the works of the LORD, Nor the operation of His hands, He shall destroy them And not build them up.”

(Psalm 28:5 NKJV)

Once again, the order of the moment was silence. No one spoke, because no one knew what to say. Aaron’s only recourse was to take another call. “Face the Nation; do you have a question for the king?” he answered rather abruptly. “Yes, that’s a good question,” he added, (although he really wasn’t sure any more what was and what wasn’t a good question). “The question for the king is...Why do you so often quote the Scriptures as though they were the final word? Aren’t they just man’s opinion of God’s thought? Just what is the Scripture? And what purpose does it serve?”

King David:

“The words of the LORD are pure words, Like silver tried in a furnace of earth, Purified seven times. (Psalm 12:6 NKJV)

The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple;

The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes;

The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.

More to be desired are they than gold, Yea, than much

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fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

Moreover by them your servant is warned, And in keeping them there is great reward. (Psalm 19:7-11 NKJV)

The law of his God is in his heart; None of his steps shall slide.” (Psalm 37:31 NKJV)

That was all Aaron could take. Suddenly he just burst out: “King, we invited you into this studio today to interview you about your reign as king, your battles with the giants in the land, and your personal tragedies that brought so much grief to the nation as well as yourself. Yet all you have done thus far is talk about Jehovah. You have told us that when you are afraid, God comforts you. You have told us that everyone is a sinner. You have told us there is a literal hell. You have told us the Scriptures are literal, infallible, words of God, and that they have the power to bring joy, vision, holiness, and justice. All you have done is exalt Jehovah and His Words.” (At this time, you could just see Aaron’s face muscles tighten, and even a novice at the game of political journalism could tell he was about to go for the throat.)

He went on. “It is uh well-known all over Israel that you have had some indiscretions in your past. There are even rumors that you had Uriah murdered so that you could have Bathsheba, his wife.” (At this point, it was Ruth’s color that changed. She was pale as a ghost, because she knew how vindictive her husband could be when he did not have the upper hand.) “How did you pray to your God then? Did you ask him to look the other way?” Aaron asked.

David looked down, his eyes began to water slightly. Racing through his mind were the memories of those sleepless nights, those agonizing days of guilt mixed with fear. How did you pray then? was the question. Humbly, quietly, he answered the way you would expect a man after God’s own heart to answer. He said this:

King David:

“When I kept silent, my bone grew old through my groaning all the day long.

For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; My

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vitality was turned into the drought of summer.”

(Psalm 32:3,4 NKJV)

“So I prayed:

‘Remember, O LORD, Your tender mercies, and Your loving kindnesses; For they are from of old.

Do not remember the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions; According to Your mercy remember me, For Your goodness’ sake, O LORD.

For Your name’s sake, O LORD, Pardon my iniquity, for it is great.”

(Psalm 25:6,7,11 NKJV)

Then the old man’s eyes turned bright again. He turned and studied the rebellious reporter who stood before him, and looking straight into his eyes, he all but shouted—

“I acknowledged my sin to You, And my iniquity I have not hidden. I said, “I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD, And You forgave the iniquity of my sin. Selah”

(Psalm 32:5 NKJV)

Then he lifted his eyes heavenward and began to sing again.

“Blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no deceit.”

(Psalm 32:2 NKJV)

Ruth: “What happened then, King David,” (she was visibly crying now, television or no television). “What happened then?”

King David:

“I waited patiently for the LORD; and He inclined unto me, and heard my cry.

He also brought me up out of a horrible pit, Out of the miry clay, And set my feet upon a rock, And established my steps.

And He has put a new song in my mouth—Praise to our God; Many will see it and fear, And will trust in the LORD.”

(Psalm 40:1-3 NKJV)

To say that this interview hadn’t gone the way Aaron expected it to would be an understatement, an understatement, indeed. Yet, tried and true journalist that he was, he pretended to be unflappable.

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Aaron: “King David, sir, it is our policy to conclude the program with a series of quick questions from the audience. It is necessary for you to be brief in your answers. Do you understand?” The kindly old man smiled to signify that in fact he DID understand, and a flustered Aaron Shimei began taking calls at a more rapid pace. The questions and answers went like this:

Aaron: “Does God have a special blessing for those who help the poor?”

King David:

“Blessed is he that considers the poor; The LORD will deliver him in time of trouble.

The LORD will preserve him and keep him alive, And he will be blessed on the earth; You will not deliver him to the will of his enemies.

The LORD will strengthen him upon the bed of illness; You will sustain him on his sickbed.” (Psalm 41:1-3 NKJV)

Ruth: “I have a question from a Mr. Malachi who lives in the walled city. He wants to know if it is really true that God has a special concern for those who have lost their husbands and fathers. He wants to know if God could really care like that?”

King David:

“A father to the fatherless, a defender of the widows, Is God in His holy habitation.” (Psalm 68:5 NKJV)

Aaron: “A Mrs. Levi is calling. She wants to know if God has a plan for those who are not privileged as we are. She asks, What about those who have never heard?”

King David:

“The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork.

Day unto day utters speech, And night unto night reveals knowledge.

There is no speech nor language, Where their voice is not heard.

Their line has gone out through all the earth, And their words to the end of the world. In them He has set a

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tabernacle for the sun,

Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber,
And rejoices like a strong man to run its race.

Its rising is from one end of the heaven, And its circuit to
the other end; And there is nothing hidden from its heat.”

(Psalm 19:1-6 NKJV)

Ruth: “A Mr. Isaiah is asking, ‘Is it possible to really hear
God speak? If so, what does He sound like?’”

King David:

“The voice of the LORD is upon the waters; The God of
glory thunders; The LORD is over many waters.

The voice of the LORD is powerful; The voice of the LORD is
full of majesty.

The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars, Yes, the LORD
splinters the cedars of Lebanon.

He makes them also skip like a calf, Lebanon and Sirion
like a young wild ox.

The voice of the LORD divideth the flames of fire.

The voice of the LORD shaketh the wilderness; the LORD
shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh.”

(Psalm 29:3-11 NKJV)

Ruth felt as though she had been transported into heaven.
Finally, she spoke.

Ruth: “Here is an unusual question for King David; this
woman wants to know how you know God really rescued you
from danger. How do you know it wasn’t just a coincidence?”

King David:

“If it had not been the LORD who was on our side,” Let
Israel now say—

If it had not been the LORD who was on our side, When
men rose up against us,

Then they would have swallowed us alive, When their
wrath was kindled against us; (Psalm 124:1-3 NKJV)

In my distress I called upon the LORD, And cried out to
my God; He heard my voice from His temple, And my cry
came before Him, even to His ears.

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Then the earth shook and trembled; The foundations of the hills also quaked and were shaken, Because He was angry.

Smoke went up from His nostrils, And devouring fire from His mouth; Coals were kindled by it.

He bowed the heavens also, and came down With darkness under His feet.

And He rode upon a cherub, and fly: yea, He flew upon the wings of the wind.

He made darkness His secret place; His canopy around Him was dark waters And thick clouds of the skies.

From the brightness before Him, His thick clouds passed with hailstones and coals of fire.

The LORD also thundered from heaven, And the Most High uttered His voice, Hailstones and coals of fire.

He sent out His arrows and scattered the foe, Lightnings in abundance, and He vanquished them.

Then the channels of waters were seen, The foundations of the world were uncovered At Your rebuke, O LORD, At the blast of the breath of Your nostrils.

He sent from above, He took me; He drew me out of many waters. (Psalm 18:6-16 NKJV)

He makes my feet like the feet of deer, And sets me on my high places. (Psalm 18:33 NKJV)

The nations raged, the kingdoms were moved; He uttered His voice, the earth melted.” (Psalm 46:6 NKJV)

Suddenly, David was a little embarrassed. He had been asked to give a brief answer to each question, and he could see that he had abused the time. You could see that he was concerned that every word he spoke brought glory to his God. Softly, almost as though he were praying, you could hear him whisper,

“Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart Be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my strength, and my Redeemer.” (Psalm 19:14)

Aaron was speechless, a rare disease for a television newscaster to contract. Ruth was moved by the godliness of

this man, and the evident confidence he had in Jehovah. Here was a man whose relationship with his God was not one of memorized prayers and meaningless chants. God seemed so real, so personal to him. Something was happening in Ruth's heart that had never happened before. Quietly, she spoke.

Ruth: "If your honor, the King will but consider it, we would like to invite you to return to our program next Sunday. There are so many things we would yet like to know about you and your wonderful God. Is it true that He can be in all places at once? Is there anyone as powerful as He is? Is there anything He doesn't know?" With that, she turned to Aaron, who, if he had anything on his mind, it wasn't inviting this religious fanatic back for another round. Ruth smiled and said, "We'd love to have you back, wouldn't we Aaron?"

The world's first television commentator had lockjaw. He simply looked on in disbelief at what his wife was saying.

Aaron: "I'm sure the king has better things to do than to appear with us again," he stuttered.

"Quite the contrary," David softly replied, "Have you forgotten? Only now I am in the ranks of the unemployed." Ruth chuckled at the old man's sense of humor; a chuckle that made her husband cringe even more.

Just about that time, a storm which had been gathering overhead began to release its power with sheets of rain, followed by rolls of thunder, and brilliant bolts of lightning filled the eastern sky.

It was almost as though God were answering the question. He does speak, you know. Just then, a clap of thunder shook the very foundations of the city, and all of the imaginary power that sent the imaginary signals through the imaginary wires to those imaginary sets went out at once. The city was blanketed in darkness and silence...and at 3:30 in the afternoon, too.

Now, we'll never know if Ruth's heart has been genuinely touched by God's. We'll never know if Aaron is convinced that David's God is real. We'll never know how David's testimony affected the rest of the nation. In fact, we'll never even know if King David returns to complete his interview next Sunday.

David Faces the Nation

What a pity! We'll never know. But we do know that David's responses would not only affect the audience that viewed that make-believe TV program that day; they would be recorded in a book called the book of Psalms and touch the lives of millions upon millions of people for years to come. And we do know that as we close the book on this man after God's own heart, that though he was a man who failed God many times; a man who fell into grievous sin; he was as well, a man who, when confronted with his transgressions, seemed to understand genuine repentance. He accepted the consequences of his sin and continued to walk the walk and live the life until the last giant fell.

A hero? Perhaps. A legend? I think so. But he was more than that. With all his frailties and shortcomings, he was a man after God's own heart. And when all is said and done, what better tribute could be paid to one of God's own. A cardboard character in a make-believe world? Not on your life. A real man with real problems who came to really know His God? Yes indeed. Thank you, David, for sharing your life with us. By God's grace, may we learn from your mistakes, draw strength from your courage, and above all, come to know your God as you did.

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