

The Secret of Success 1 Chronicles 11:1-9

To the question of, “What is the secret of your success?” The answers can vary from person to person. How many times have you heard somebody claim they know ‘the secret of success’ only to find out somebody else has another secret completely different from the last secret you heard? Which secret is right? Who knows THE REAL secret? Is there in fact ‘a real’ secret at all? If so, just how many secrets are out there? But most importantly, whose secret advice do we follow to ensure our personal success? This is something we have to decide for ourselves. Here is a list I have found of quotes that will supposedly lead to your success. Listen and have a think about who might be right!

- #12** *“The secret of your success is determined by your daily agenda.” ~ John C. Maxwell*
- #11** *“Before everything else, getting ready is the secret of success” ~ Henry Ford*
- #10** *“The secret of success is consistency of purpose.” ~ Benjamin Disraeli*
- #9** *“The secret of your success is hidden in your daily habits.” ~ Mike Murdock*
- #8** *“The secret of success is making your vocation your vacation.” ~ Mark Twain*
- #7** *“The secret to success is to start from scratch and keep on scratching.” ~ Dennis Green*
- #6** *“The secret of success is sincerity. Once you can fake that you’ve got it made.” ~ Jean Giraudoux*
- #5** *“The secret of success in life is for a man to be ready for his opportunity when he comes.” ~ Benjamin Disraeli*
- #4** *“A great secret of success is to go through life as a man who never gets used up.” ~ Albert Schweitzer*
- #3** *“To follow, without halt, one aim: There’s the secret of success.” ~ Anna Pavlova*
- #2** *“The secret of success is learning how to use pain and pleasure instead of having pain and pleasure use you. If you do that, you’re in control of your life. If you don’t, life controls you.” ~ Tony Robbins*
- #1** *“People become really quite remarkable when they start thinking that they can do things. When they believe in themselves they have the first secret of success.” ~ Norman Vincent Peale*

In noting Norman Vincent Peale’s rationale from his once popular book ‘The Power of Positive Thinking’ and taking it to it’s fullest

possible natural and logical conclusion we come up with none other than “The Donald”. Do you know whom I am talking about? Yes it is Donald Trump, whom I believe has been this book’s most avid disciple ever, far exceeding even the author’s greatest expectations, who incidentally was the Trump family’s minister at the Church they attended and were members in New York.

Donald, a Scottish name from the Gaelic *Domhnal*, meaning *Dark Stranger*, but more prominently, *Great Chief* and *World Mighty* which together make for the meaning, ‘*Ruler of the World*’.

It was a name given to both early Celtic Kings and dark strangers. Whereas, from our bible reading today we have in stark contrast ‘the David’ whose name means “beloved”, a man after God’s own heart. He was Israel’s shepherd King, warrior-poet, musician, singer and dancer. One totally unashamed in public of his loud proclamation of praise and worship to the Lord- that’s David!

If ‘the Donald’ and ‘the David’ were squaring off in a presentation on what is the secret to success how would each answer?

Well, Donald Trump might say, “The secret to my success is that I believe in myself and therefore I can do and achieve anything that I set out to do. I can do all things or anything because I believe that I am a winner, and therefore, I will succeed! And anyone who doesn’t believe that or agree with me is a loser and ‘you are fired’, or fired at, by my word of unmoving and unshakable belief in myself. That is the secret to my success.” That was Donald Trump.

Now, if we were to ask King David, “What is the secret to your success”, what might he say? I believe it would go like this, “The secret to my success is the LORD Almighty who is with me! God is the source of my greatness and strength. With and through the Lord God Almighty I can do all things!”

The Donald and the David are definitely not alike.

From our scripture reading today we learn that David’s heroic personality illustrates the success that God bestows on those who trust in him, whether in the author’s, that is the Chronicler’s time, or any other, including ours today. In 1 Chronicles, the writer documented David’s greatness as God’s faithful vice-regent. In 2 Chronicles, he proceeds to evaluate all David’s successors, those following Kings in his Davidic line, in terms of his successes.

In the chapters that unfold, the writer wove his hope for Israel's future together with God's love, as demonstrated in the Almighty's past faithfulness, to encourage faith and obedience in his readers – a recipe for success!

David's eventual coronation was inevitable because God had chosen him as king long before Saul died making his succession to the throne guaranteed. The Chronicler began his history of David with his coronation over all 12 tribes of Israel. This fact probably reflects the writer's concern for the unity of God's chosen people, which is represented by the sheer numbers that gathered. It was a huge group of people from all of the tribes coming to David. Hundreds of thousands would have been in Hebron, including David's mighty warriors, soldiers and so forth.

The people recognised David as the suitable king because he had already displayed his ability to successfully lead Israel in past military campaigns. Furthermore, God had anointed him to function in this role as shepherd of the people and ruler over them all vv1-2. So they anointed David king over Israel v.3, the entire nation acknowledging him as sovereign, according to the word of the Lord announced through the prophet Samuel in 1 Sam 16:1-3. God was leading the nation. These verses provide solid evidence that David, not Saul who was put to death by the Lord for being unfaithful and disobedient, was God's preference as king and therefore the kingdom was turned over to him 1 Chronicles 10:13-14. Highlighting that God is the reason for David's successful accession to the throne.

In the book of 2 Samuel, we learn that the crowning of David in Hebron occurred after the death of Ishbosheth, the son of Saul (2 Sam 5) who had been put in power over all Israel except Judah. It is sad that the other 11 tribes only turned to David when their previous choice was taken away. On the same principle, it is sad when Christians only really recognise Jesus as king when other choices crumble. We should choose Jesus outright, not just when other options fail. Now, back to Chronicles. The previous reign of David for seven and a half years in Hebron and his failures are left out here. And as you read through Chronicles 1 & 2, you find that the writer does not record all the failures and sins of David. Instead, it is the blessing and grace of God toward the house of David that the writer made prominent throughout his Chronicles.

So, it is then that David is successfully acknowledged by all Israel as belonging to them, a great leader, chosen by the Lord God. Together they remind him v.2 as the shepherd to feed His people Israel and to be their ruler. All the elders from each of the 12 tribes came to Hebron and anointed David king. This unity of Israel under God brought about David's leadership resulting not only in his success but the success of the nation...

Which instantly becomes apparent when all Israel marches on Jerusalem, occupied by the Jebusites. They were the inhabitants of the city, a heathen nation who had maintained its ancient location even after the conquest of the land by Joshua 400 years previously. They were quite cocky saying to David in an overconfident boast, "You're not going to get in here." Because since the Israelite occupation of the land their city walls had not been breached as they were practically impregnable. And David said, "You just think I can't" and nevertheless, with Joab leading the way, he takes the city fortress of Zion.

David's successful capture of this ancient city that's been around for 1400 years already, was foundational to all the political and religious events that followed. By taking up residence, adding to, building up and fortifying Jerusalem, David established a secure base of operations at a politically neutral site between Israel and Judah. This city named for him 'the City of David' became his royal residence and capital for ruling the kingdom of Israel, and it is here that David became more and more powerful v.9.

Literally, the Hebrew reads, "and David walked on, a walking and growing great"— a common Hebrew metaphor of gradual and progressive increase or decrease. In David's case, he continually increased in power becoming greater and greater. And the reason for his increasing greatness, all the continual success, is that the Lord Almighty, also interpreted as the Lord of Hosts, was with him.

The Lord or God of Hosts is a title derived from God's supremacy over the host of heaven, his sovereign rule of the stars that were worshipped as deities by the nations surrounding Israel. These same nations also conceived the stars as the army of heaven in their orderly array. The Lord of Hosts, who governs and controls all the stars, was also believed to govern and control all lesser things on earth in the daily lives of humans as well. Including guiding the destinies of individual humans, elevating one to make them greater

and successful and lowering or denigrating another, according to the eternal principles of goodness and truth. Saul was brought low eventually to the point of death by the Lord of Hosts while David's greatness and success increased because the Lord Almighty was with him, and because David was with God as his chosen king.

Life Application

1. As with David, if we turn to the Lord Almighty, and become recipients of His grace, faithfully and obediently following Him, then our talents and spiritual giftedness develop, being guided by God and used in the right direction. That is a recipe for success as we glorify God, encouraging one another as we build, not city walls, but build up the church, the body of Christ, growing continually and gradually greater with exercising our talents and gifts.

If you want to succeed then the blessing of God being with you, as the Almighty was with David, is of the utmost importance.

2. David went on and became great: David knew greatness, but he was by no means an overnight success. David was long prepared for the success he later enjoyed, and he came to the place of greatness because the LORD of hosts was with him. We need to consider along with David that in Gods plan for our lives there is always a hidden price of success. Often those who become great among Gods people experience much pain and difficulty in God's training process. Are you ready for that? And lastly...

3. David increased in power continually because he placed his trust and confidence in God alone, therefore, God was with him! This same thought is uttered by Paul in Philippians 4:13, when he says ***"I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me."*** Paul acknowledges that God is the true source of our success and determines the nature of our success in Him.

Will you too trust in God and have this same confidence today?

To conclude:

As the Lord was with David, the Lord has been with all his people throughout all the ages making some great in mind and in power. While making all believers great in the sense of working in them all the good pleasure of his will, directing their paths and making each successful in their own way, as they live lives in obedience to him. I challenge you as a Christian to share your secret of success with others in the world-the truth that the Lord God Almighty is with you!