



# BIBLE REFLECTIONS

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## Issue 2

## This Newsletter

The purpose of this Newsletter is to provide you with answers to certain biblical facts which have been misconstrued or misunderstood.

### Q: Who are our readers?

A: Anyone interested in matters of faith.

### Q: What will our readers want to know?

A: Timely, helpful, problem-solving information regarding the Bible.

The world of social media has alerted us to the insidious phenomenon popularly known as 'fake news' and the constant need for fact checking or verifying contents. In October-November 2024, Thailand had some unseasonal heavy rainfall. Flash floods hit several provinces giving rise to an interesting phenomenon, 'floods' of flood videos on TikTok. One such video caught my attention because it purported to show rather severe flooding in my district, just a few kilometres from my house. I could recognise the buildings since I drive by this area frequently. I decided to check things out for myself and drove to the supposed flooded area. I did not find a drop of water on the road or any sign that there had been some sort of flooding. This is the world we live in. Imagine believing something is biblical when it is not even 'kosher' as the following example indicates.

**Fake News:** 'Only a boy named David, only a little sling. Only a boy named David, but he could pray and sing. Only a boy named David, only a rippling brook. Only a boy named David, but five little stones he took.' This song has immortalised the image of little boy David the giant slayer in the minds of generations of kids who grew up in church. However, is this version of the story in the Bible (refer to 1 Sam 17)?

**Fact Check:** When David was anointed to be king (1 Sam 16), he would have been a teenager, approximately 16 or 17 years old. Not long after this, he entered national service. In 1 Sam 16.18 David is described to Saul as 'someone who could play the lyre, who is *gibbor khayil* and *ish milkhamah*, an articulate speaker, a man of form and Yahweh is with him'. The two Hebrew descriptors, *gibbor khayil* and *ish milkhamah*, are well-known Hebrew Bible terms to describe a warrior of great skill and exploit, not a small boy. A sling in Bible times was a potent weapon, about 1 metre long and able to hurl a tennis ball size stone up to 250-400 metres, giving slings a longer range than the bow (for further evidence about slings and slingers see Jdgs 20.16; 1 Chron 12.1-2; 2 Kgs 3.25). Sling stones had to be rounded and smooth to fly properly so David picked up 'smooth stones' (not 'little stones'). David, man of God, was also man of war and understood the 'art of war' needed to defeat Goliath. His faith in God was 'sweet' icing on the cake!

I am drawn to the following assertion of Paul, 'What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with my understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with my understanding.' (1 Cor 14.15 HCSB). I suggest this maxim should be our *modus operandi* when we contemplate theological and biblical truths. In a world filled with 'fake news', the Church should be the bearer of real good news not more 'fake news'.

