

Moments *for* You

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Theme: David



THE GOOD SHEPHERD

David was a shepherd and had a shepherd's heart. One day, as he faithfully kept his father's sheep, a lion came and took a lamb out of the flock. This stirred David's heart, and he tells us: "I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him" (1 Samuel 17:35). Thus David risked his own life to save one little lamb of his father's flock. It was helpless against a mighty lion, but David, in the power of God, was mightier and delivered the lamb.

The Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ (of whom David is a picture), also keeps His Father's sheep. He said, "My Father ... gave them [to] Me" (John 10:29). We (the sheep) also have a mighty foe, the roaring lion (Satan)—and need deliverance. The Good Shepherd was prepared to accomplish this, but doing so cost Him His life. Jesus said, "I am the Good Shepherd: the Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep" (John 10:11). Nothing short of death could meet our need; in order to save us He must go all the way into death. This He did on that center cross on the hill called Calvary. In those three terrible hours of darkness He suffered for the sins of the guilty sheep, and then went down into death in order that He might overcome that mighty foe who had the power of death, and deliver the sheep "who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Hebrews 2:15).

And now, as the blessed result, He gives His followers "eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither

shall any man pluck them out of My hand" (John 10:28). What glorious fruit of the work of the Good Shepherd. Eternal life! Never perish! He who gave Himself for the sheep has also pledged Himself for their safety. He holds them securely in His hand, where none can ever seize them. Even more than that, "My Father, which gave them Me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and My Father are one" (John 10:29,30). The Owner and the Shepherd of the sheep are one. What security! —Paul Wilson

GOD'S CHOICE

The story of David opens with a dramatic contrast between the fresh hope of David's young life and the rejection of King Saul, who proved that he was not fit to act as God's representative. In God's Word, we read of four phrases about His choice of David as king.

**"THE LORD HATH SOUGHT HIM A MAN"
(1 SAMUEL 13:14).**

No one can know the day or hour when God passes by, seeking precious vessels and beautiful pearls. When we least expect it, we are being scrutinized, watched, and tested in the events of daily life to see whether we will be faithful with more significant responsibilities. Let us always be on the alert, our armor in place, our lamps burning, our nets mended, and our hearts cleansed.

**"I HAVE FOUND DAVID MY SERVANT"
(PSALM 89:20).**

There is ecstasy in that voice, like that of the shepherd who found the lost sheep in Luke 15. David was found long before Samuel sent for him. When was the moment of the

blessed discovery? Was it one dawn, when in the first flicker of daylight the young shepherd led his flock from fold to pasture? Or when in an outburst of heroic faith he rescued a trembling lamb from a lion or bear? Or was it one afternoon, when the first conception of the shepherd psalm stirred in his heart as he sat and watched his charge? Or was it one night, when David heard the silent speech of the heavens declaring the glory of God?

**"HE CHOSE DAVID ALSO HIS SERVANT"
(PSALM 78:70).**

The people chose Saul, but God chose David. This made David strong. He was conscious that the purpose of God lay behind and beneath him. In the years that followed, when Saul drove David into hiding, the knowledge that he was divinely commissioned was David's strength (2 Samuel 7:21). We, too, will find strength for every trial when we walk in the will of God and hear Him say, "He is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name" (Acts 9:15).

**"I HAVE PROVIDED ME A KING"
(1 SAMUEL 16:1).**

This answers everything. The divine provision meets every need and silences every anxiety. Let us not give in to anxieties about God's plan for the future. He has provided against all contingencies. In some unlikely place—perhaps a shepherd's hut—God has prepared and appointed His instrument. For now, the arrow is hidden in His quiver, but at the precise moment when it will accomplish its greatest effect, it will be revealed and launched into action.

—Adapted from *The Life of David* by F.B. Meyer

DIVINE TEACHING

In 1 Samuel 16 we find David in perfect obscurity, keeping sheep. But

he was already chosen by the Lord. In the wilderness, he was under God's teaching. He was being prepared for public service in the secret school of Him who looks not on the outward appearance, but on the heart.

It must also be the same way with us. God will always work first in *secret* with the soul which He intends to use as an instrument in His *public* service. The excellent wisdom of our God in this pattern may be seen in the history of many of His most eminent servants. They are found calm, wise, and enduring when all around are perplexed and in fear. All they say and do tells us that they have been prepared for the work and the moment.

Men and women who have been reading and praying and meditating and fasting and serving in secret before the living God can move onward unhindered through the confusion and strife of this world. They have learned how to stand in the battle and meet Goliath face to face!

—Adapted from *Christian Truth*

THE SAVIOR

"So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him" (1 Samuel 17:50).

In Jonathan we have the very opposite of his father, Saul. Saul only knew David as his amuser or his helper. But Jonathan knew him as the victorious savior. He had been in the valley of Elah and had found himself utterly helpless to meet the power of the adversary, Goliath. What about you? Have you ever felt powerless against your adversary, Satan? Like the Philistines in battle array, your sins are before you. You cannot deny them. You are guilty and can find no relief. Fighting your own battle will not do.

WATCHING THE SAVIOR

Jonathan saw David go forth against the Philistine. With what intense interest he watched him! Yes, he saw David go forth alone to meet the adversary. He saw him take up those five smooth stones from the brook. He saw him take his sling. He heard those words of faith. He saw David's arm lifted up—the stone is gone, the giant falls.

Jonathan saw David descend into the valley of Elah and do this great work of victory. Have you, by faith, seen the Son of God descend from the glory He had with the Father to this valley of sin and death? Have you seen Him go to the cross, and there alone win eternal victory for us? It was there, alone before God, that He bore the wrath due to us. We did not—and could not—help Him. Listen to the words He spoke as He conquered: “It is finished” (John 19:30). The work is done, and all the benefit of Christ's work is yours the moment you believe God. Yes, yours for eternity.

LOVING THE SAVIOR

What was the effect on Jonathan when he beheld the savior, David, before his eyes? “The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul” (1 Samuel 18:1). And what will be the effect on you, if your eyes are opened to behold the Savior, Jesus? Your heart will be knit with the heart of Christ. You will say that Jesus “loved me, and gave Himself for me” (Galatians 2:20). You will sing, “Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen” (Revelation 1:5,6). Yes, “unto Him be glory,” will be your every desire, and will mark your every action.

TRUSTING THE SAVIOR

When Jonathan beheld David, the all-victorious savior, did he ask David to become his helper? No: “Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow” (1 Samuel 18:4). Only let your eyes be open to behold the risen, glorified Savior, who has finished the work of eternal redemption, and you will strip yourself of all self-righteousness. You will take your good works and religion, your music and ritual, and lay them all at Jesus' feet and put your trust in Him alone.

There is no greater contrast between light and darkness, than the one between a living faith in the Person and finished work of Christ, and the unbelief of praying to Christ to help you do the work yourself. Jonathan did not treat David this way; he simply saw and believed. We do not see, but we believe on God, who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification. Believing God, we are justified: we are saved. It is done, it is finished. Our Jesus is not on the cross now; He is not in the grave now. He is in the brightness of the glory of God! He has neither to fight the battle again, nor to help us fight it. Peace with God is the everlasting portion of those who, like Jonathan, rest in what the Savior has done.

—Adapted from “Whose Son is This Youth” by C.S.

Tradition holds that David took Goliath's head to Jerusalem, that it was buried in a place known as Gal Goliah, and that the site became known in Jesus' day as Golgotha, “the place of the skull.”

A MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART

"I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after Mine own heart, which shall fulfil all My will" (Acts 13:22).

In Jesus, we have no difficulty recognizing the moral excellencies that would entitle Him to be pointed out as "a man after God's own heart." But are we not somewhat at a loss to understand how such a marvelous and touching title could be bestowed upon David, the son of Jesse? How could David, a sinner, be described as "a man after God's own heart"?

Such an inquiry will not only give us a true understanding of what David was to God, but will also enable us to understand God's feelings toward us. For those who believe in God and love Him, no praise is higher than to be found "after God's own heart." The more we enter into God's love, the more we will seek to respond to and reflect that love. This is easy to see as we think of Christ: everything in Him answered completely to the heart of the Father who loved Him. But how could this be true of David? How can it be true of ourselves?

David was a sinner along with those who surrounded him. Like us, he stood before God upon a platform where "There is none righteous, no, not one" (Romans 3:10). What was it then that set David apart from those that stood with him? What did the Lord see in his youthful heart that He did not find in Saul, or in any other of the sons of Jesse? And how can we ever hope to obtain the same divine approval?

The answer is found in Hebrews: "Without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that

diligently seek Him" (Hebrews 11:6). It is only through faith that anyone can obtain a good report. It is the pivotal point upon which all blessing from God turns. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36). God's approval—and with it His righteousness—falls upon the believing soul. He is "just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Romans 3:26). "To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" and "the just shall live by faith" (Romans 4:5; 1:17).

David was characterized by faith—simple trust and confidence in God. What God did not find in the heart of Saul, He found in the heart of the youthful shepherd. And never, in his whole history, does David more beautifully display his heart, than when he expresses before Saul his simple confidence in going against Goliath: "The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, He will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine" (1 Samuel 17:37).

God delighted in David because he trusted in Him—not because of his goodness, for he had none. "O Lord my God, in Thee do I put my trust" (Psalm 7:1) is David's motto. "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is" (Jeremiah 17:7). A poor, weak, believing sinner is God's delight. Such was David, and such are all that are like him. A man after God's own heart, then, is one who trusts God as He has revealed Himself in His grace. Thus every believer in Jesus is a "man after God's own heart."

—Sound Words

SITTING BEFORE THE LORD

At the beginning of 1 Chronicles 17 we read that David was sitting in his house, considering certain plans which he intended to carry out. David made known his thoughts to Nathan the prophet, who encouraged David to proceed with his plans.

No doubt we have many times sat in our own dwellings and considered what we would like to do, and in some cases have made our intentions known to others. Perhaps, like David, we have forgotten to ask the Lord about what we hoped to do, and forgotten to seek His will. We need to ask the Lord what He would have us to do. Saul of Tarsus once thought to do many things, but the mind of the Lord was otherwise (Acts 26:9). Saul was stopped in his course, and we read that he fell to the earth and said, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:6).

Similarly, we find in David's case that the Lord intervened and that same night He spoke to Nathan and told him to go to David and tell him that he would not be allowed to carry out his intentions. On the other hand, David was told what God had done for him and what God would yet do for him, his descendants, and for the children of Israel.

After David had listened to God's word, he left his own house and went and sat before the Lord (v. 16). He was no longer occupied with his own thoughts and plans. Now, he owned his nothingness and acknowledged what great things God had done for him. He realized that God had done him great honor in making known all His thoughts and purposes. David believed what God had told him and he desired that the name of the Lord be magnified

(v. 24). Further, David asked that God would bless his house, for he knew that if God is pleased to bless, it will be forever (v. 27). We can learn much from this incident in the life of David. To sit before the Lord is the privilege of every believer, and indeed it should be the place of our choice.

There are other examples in the Word of God which further illustrate this point. When the Lord was on earth, he healed a poor man who was possessed with demons. This man knew no rest, for he was wild and untameable and dwelt in the tombs and in the desert. But after the blessed Savior had cast out the demons, the people who knew the man came to see him. They found him now in his right mind, clothed, and sitting at the feet of Jesus. No longer wild and restless, he was now at peace and rest as he sat before the Lord (Luke 8:27-35).

Then there was Mary of Bethany. The first thing we read about her is that she sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word. It was the place she chose, and the Lord called it "that good part, which shall not be taken away from her" (Luke 10:42). When Mary's brother Lazarus died, she knew that if Jesus was coming, she could quietly wait for Him. In fact, as soon as Mary heard that Jesus had called for her, she rose up and went to Him, and fell down at His feet. There in her sorrow she would know His sympathy, and soon she would witness His power in raising her brother from the dead.

Beloved, have we made the place of our choice to sit "at the feet of Jesus"? There we find peace and rest, there we can listen to His words, and there we shall find comfort in time of sorrow.

—From *Christian Truth*

THE PSALMIST

“David ... the sweet psalmist of Israel” (2 Samuel 23:1).

Among all the saints whose lives are recorded in the Word, David’s experience stands as one of the most striking, varied, and instructive. He knew the trials of all ranks and conditions of men. Kings have their troubles, and David wore a crown. The laborer has his cares, and David handled a shepherd’s crook. The wanderer has many hardships, and David abode in the caves of Engedi. The captain has his difficulties, and David found the sons of Zeruiah too hard for him.

The psalmist also had trials brought on by his friends and family. His counsellor, Ahithophel, forsook him, and his own son, Absalom, rose up against him. Poverty and wealth, honor and reproach, and health and weakness all tried their power upon him. He had temptations from without to disturb his peace, and from within to rob his joy. David no sooner escaped from one trial than he fell into another; no sooner emerged from one season of despondency and alarm, than he was again brought into the lowest depths, and all God’s waves and billows rolled over him.

It is probably for this reason that David’s psalms are so universally the delight of experienced Christians. Whatever our frame of mind, whether ecstasy or depression, David has exactly described our emotions. He was an able master of the human heart, because he had been tutored in the best of all schools—the school of heart-felt, personal experience. As we are instructed in the same school, as we grow matured in grace and in years, we increasingly appreciate David’s psalms, and find them to be

“green pastures.” Let David’s experience cheer and counsel you today.

—From *Morning and Evening* by C.H. Spurgeon

GRACE TRIUMPHANT

“He restoreth my soul,” says David while recounting the wonderful ways of his Divine Shepherd (Psalm 23:3). David’s failure is a solemn example of the weakness of the human heart, but his restoration is an uplifting reminder of God’s abundant grace.

Like David, we are slow to learn that no past experience of the Lord’s goodness, no measure of communion with Him in days gone by, and no amount of favor shown us by the Lord, are any safeguard against today’s temptation. After David had been led by the hand of God through all the dangers and trials of his exile under Saul, after he had obtained undisputed possession of the throne to which God had appointed him, and after God had given him rest and prosperity on every side, David failed miserably. He experienced the full force of this truth: “Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death” (James 1:14,15).

It is not my intent to dwell on the circumstances of David’s adultery with Bathsheba, or the killing of her husband. Rather, let us notice that there is no more inherent power of recovery in a believer, than there is in an unconverted sinner. A saint, when fallen, can no more restore himself to fellowship with God, than a poor sinner can save himself. The only Savior is the only Restorer, too.

Did David immediately perceive how deeply he had fallen, and how terribly he had dishonored God? No,

his only thought seems to have been how he could shield his reputation by the concealment of his sin. In so doing, he was led into even greater transgressions. He did not show even the slightest sign of contrition. Then Nathan was sent by the Lord to speak a parable to David which revealed his guilt. “Thou art the man,” drives home to his conscience, and David acknowledges, “I have sinned against the Lord” (2 Samuel 12:13).

God, in grace, restores David, but He must make it clear that He neither sanctions David’s sin, nor winks at it. David, through all of this, has to learn what an evil and bitter thing it is to forsake God. “Whom the Lord loveth He correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth” (Proverbs 3:12). Think of what David passed through: the death of his child, the dishonor of another child, and then the rebellion of Absalom which caused David to flee for his life from Jerusalem. Little did David anticipate all of this when fulfilling the lusts of his flesh and of his mind. But such were the bitter consequences of his ways.

May we all be quick to confess our sin and benefit from the restorative work of our heavenly Shepherd.

—Adapted from *Present Testimony*

JUST LIKE DAVID

Reality tells us that no Christian is exempt from the burdens of the sinful nature. Paul told the believers at Colosse to “Mortify [put to death] therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness ... [etc.]” (Colossians 3:5). The problem is that sometimes we don’t do that. We yield to temptation, and we’re left with a mess. But we are not left helpless. We have a pattern to follow for restoration. That pattern comes from the heart and pen of King

David, whose sin demonstrated the sad consequences of succumbing to temptation. Look closely at Psalm 51 as David owned up to his sin. First, he flung himself at God’s feet, pleading for mercy, acknowledging his sin, and trusting in God’s judgment (vv. 1-6). Next, he sought cleansing from the One who forgives and wipes the slate clean (vv. 7-9). Finally, David asked for restoration with the Holy Spirit’s help (vv. 10-12). Is sin stealing your joy and blocking your fellowship with the Lord? Like David, turn it over to Him.

—Dave Branon, *Our Daily Bread*. Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved.

HE FELL ASLEEP

“*David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep*” (Acts 13:36).

David occupied a prominent place in the divine counsels. He was the first king after God’s heart; he gave Jerusalem—where God had chosen to place His Name—to Israel; he made the nation great. Even more, he typified our Lord Jesus in so many ways.

But can we not also say that God is expecting each one of His children to serve in his own generation in accordance with His counsel? God has a plan for each of us—a precise task for the period in which we live and in the circumstances under which we are placed. God desires to use us according to the measure given by Him, to accomplish His work on earth. On that day when He shall be revealed, there will be no greater honor than to hear the blessed voice of our Lord saying to His redeemed ones, “Well done, good and faithful servant ... enter thou into the joy of thy lord” (Matthew 25:23).

—From *David: The Man After God’s Own Heart* by G. Andre