

Moments *for* You

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Theme: David



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 HAS SOUGHT OUT 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 joy 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 did the Lord discover David? 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 concepts 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 HIS SERVANT" (PSALM 78:70)

The people chose Saul, but God

chose David. This made David strong. He was aware that the purpose of God lay behind and before 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 instrument of Mine to carry My name" (Acts 9:15).

"I HAVE PROVIDED FOR MYSELF 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 already taken care of every possibility. 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*

5 THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT DAVID

David, king of Israel, is well-known for many things, from his astounding faith before Goliath, to his terrible sins against Bathsheba and her husband, to his heartfelt psalms of praise and repentance. Here are five things about David you should also know.

1. DAVID DESCENDED FROM A GENTILE

David was the son of Jesse from the tribe of Judah, but his line wasn't pristine. Like Jesus, he had significant sinners and even a gentile in his family history (Genesis 38; Ruth 4:17). The gentile was his great-grandmother Ruth, that remarkable Moabitess who declared to her Jewish mother-in-law, "Your people shall be my people, and your God my God" (Ruth 1:16). This reminds us that greatness in God's house is not limited to those with "pure" pedigrees, just as it is not guaranteed to those with them.

2. DAVID WAS AN UNEXPECTED KING

The first king of Israel stood out because of his physical appearance—Saul was very tall (1 Samuel 9:2)—but David did not stand out in the same way. He was the youngest

of eight sons, and when Samuel first comes to Jesse's house to anoint a new king in Saul's place, he is certain it will be David's eldest brother, Eliab (1 Samuel 16:6). But God tells him not to look at height or outward appearance, because He doesn't select kings based on stature. He looks on the heart, and David stands out from among the rest because he is "a man after [God's] own heart" (1 Samuel 13:14). Nevertheless, Jesse makes all seven of David's brothers pass before Samuel—and get rejected—before calling David in from watching the sheep (1 Samuel 16:10-13).

3. DAVID WAS A SHEPHERD AT HEART

David's occupation before becoming a soldier in Saul's army was to keep his father's sheep. Remarkably, he killed lions and bears in defense of his flock, not only from a distance with a sling but sometimes up close (1 Samuel 17:35). He seemed genuinely to know their needs and to care for his sheep, which remained true even when he moved to tending people (Psalm 78:70-72). David's shepherding heart and experience provided a picture for him of God's perfect care for His sheep, which David captures movingly in Psalm 23. We also see that when Nathan confronts David about his sin with Bathsheba, he brings it home to his heart by telling a story about a poor man and his little ewe lamb (2 Samuel 12).

4. DAVID TRIED TO BUILD SOLOMON'S TEMPLE

Once David was finally settled as king in Jerusalem, he realized he was living in a house of cedar but the ark of God only in a tent. So he set out to build a house for God, but God stopped him. Instead, God tells David that He will build him a house—not another physical structure, of course, but a dynasty that will culmi-

nate with One who will reign forever and ever (2 Samuel 7:1-17). Thus, the building of the temple fell to David's son Solomon. We learn later that God kept David from building the temple in part because he was a man of war and had shed much blood (1 Chronicles 28:2-3). Nevertheless, David prepared nearly everything for Solomon to execute the work (1 Chronicles 22:5).

5. DAVID AWAITED A GREATER SON

David received God's promise to him of an everlasting house with great joy and gratitude (2 Samuel 7:18-29). David came to understand that one of his offspring will also be his Lord, which he expresses in Psalm 110: "The Lord says to my Lord: 'Sit at My right hand, until I make Your enemies Your footstool.'" Jesus quotes this psalm as evidence of David's understanding that one of his future sons according to the flesh would also be his "Lord" (in addition to the Lord his God) and therefore greater than any merely natural offspring (Mark 12:35-37).

—Tyler Kenney

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 after him and struck him and delivered it out of his mouth. And if he arose against me, I caught him by his beard and struck him and killed him" (1 Samuel 17:35). 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 ... has given 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 lays down His life for the sheep" (John 10:11). Nothing short of death could meet our need; in order to save us He must lay down His life. 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 died so that He might overcome that mighty foe who had the power of death, and deliver the sheep "who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery" (Hebrews 2:15).

And now, as the blessed result, He gives His followers "eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of My hand" (John 10:28). How wonderful is the result 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 take them away. Even more than that, "My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are one" (John 10:29-30). The Owner and the Shepherd of the sheep are one. What security!

—Paul Wilson

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 in David the son of Jesse a man after My heart, who will do 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 "None is 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 whoever would draw near to God must believe that He ex-

ists and that He rewards those who 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. "Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains 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 the one who has faith in Jesus" (Romans 3:26). "To the one who does not work but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness" and "the righteous 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 who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear will deliver me from 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 You do I take refuge" (Psalm 7:1) is David's motto. "Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose trust is the LORD" (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 do You want me to do?" (Acts 9:6 NKJV).

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 "the good portion, which will 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 will 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 Bible, 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 Zeruah 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 presented David with opportunities to stumble. He had temptations from the outside to disturb his peace, and turmoil 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 joy or sadness, 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 become mature 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 restores 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: “each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings 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 remorse. Then Nathan was sent by the Lord to speak a parable to David which revealed his guilt. “You are the man” drives home to his conscience, and David acknowledges, “I have sinned against the LORD” (2 Samuel 12:7,13).

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. “The LORD reproves him whom He loves, as a father the son in whom he delights” (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 “Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry” (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 the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep” (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 will? 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 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 into the joy of your master” (Matthew 25:23).

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