

The Life of David: The Settings for the Key Psalms of David's Life I Samuel 16:1-13

There are almost three thousand biographical portraits in the Bible. In fact, the Bible is the single greatest source of biographical information from antiquity. There are more different individuals from a wider scope of history recorded in God's Word than any other single source in the world.

Most of the lives recorded in the Bible are only mentioned by name, but some are very clearly examined and analyzed by God. Those deeply explained lives give us great reasons to pause and listen to what God may have to say about them. After all He took the time and went to all the effort to capture these portraits for us and then delivered them to us in a forever settled in Heaven book—the Bible.

The Life Most Noticed by God

So, whose life is considered important to God? Well, who did God choose to write more about than any other single person in the whole history of the world? The answer is the young man we are going to meet this morning.

Please open to Acts 13:22

*And when He had removed him, He raised up for them David as king, to whom also **He gave testimony** and said, 'I have found David the son of Jesse, **a man after My own heart, who will do all My will.**' NKJV*

There are more chapters (141) devoted to the life of David than any other person next to God Himself—in all of His Word. That is a profound truth.

We know more about David's words, thoughts, fears, strengths and weaknesses—than anyone else who has ever lived. And we know about all that from God Himself, and from His perspective. But that's not all. We also know one very important thing for sure—it is God Himself who tells us about David. David was God's man—His heart was after God, and for God. David was serving God as a servant of the Lord for life.

David is the most described man in the Bible for a reason—God has made him our prime

Old Testament example of the life of God's servants.

David had a simple life when we see the world of three thousand years ago; and he had a small world by our modern view; but it was also a very hard and lonely world.

The Big Events of David's Life

David's life was carved into the bedrock of God's Word for a wonderful purpose. Through his godly responses in trials, the Lord was giving Divine Truth to help us learn how to overcome our own loneliness.

In fact, the Holy Spirit inspired David to write over thirty psalms that captured how the Lord was his refuge during his greatest struggles. Here's a chronological list of those events and the songs he is believed to have penned in each.

One common denominator can be traced through each era, and most events, of David's life: David often suffered from intense loneliness. Whether from being the youngest of the boys in a family with all the normal rivalries, jealousies, and troubles as we'll see in I Samuel 16, or from his long work hours far away from anyone else: David spent an immense amount of time alone in the wilderness.

Then from his army days fighting for Saul, David was often on the battlefield, again, a lonely place. Then, the years of running from Saul, hiding for his own safety from so many dangers, and the constant threat of traitors, spies, and enemies produced another long era of loneliness. Most of this period alternates between deserts, wildernesses, and caves, all are lonely places.

Then from his years as King there are many more lonely days. Leadership in itself is often a lonely position. But add to that the pressures of a multi-wife family, struggles with strong-willed children, the constant drumbeat of wars, and then the searing pain of his adultery and all that followed made for even more loneliness.

But the habits of David's youth never left him. They were simple habits. When he was afraid he trusted in God. When he was at the end of himself he turned to God. When he felt alone he confessed that he could escape the Spirit of God. David was a life-long seeker and finder of the Lord he loved.

And all of that is what we find captured in the Scriptures and vividly portrayed in the Psalms. Join me in this look at the Life of David in I Samuel 16. You may even want to jot a note on paper or in your Bible as we see the setting for each of these Psalms.

When the pages of the Scriptures open to his life, the first scene is sad at best, and bordering on abusive by modern standards.

David was **overlooked, ignored, and disliked** by his family (1 Samuel 16:1-13). But from that lonely time when he could have gotten embittered, David chose to seek the One who never ignored, overlooked, or disliked him.

David used a simple instrument, a harp as a tool to offer his praises and worship to God. Instead of wasting his hours of monotonous work, he used them to seek the Lord. He so sharpened the skills God had given him, others learned and heard of his skills in singing (I Samuel 16:14-23).

**PERIOD 1:
FROM THE LONELY DAYS OF HIS YOUTH
PSALMS 8, 19, 23, 101, 132**

From his hours out in the wilderness watching sheep and the long nights guarding them under the stars as a young shepherd boy, David was inspired (after the Spirit came upon him in I Samuel 16:13), to write the Spirit prompted lessons of his life we have now in the book of Psalms.

**Psalm 19:
Pleasing God, not pleasing myself.**

The bottom line of life is measured by the answer to the question, "Whom do you want to please?" There are only two possible choices at the deepest level. Either we please God or we in one way or another are seeking to please ourselves. David wanted God to be pleased. It started way back in his youth as we can see in Psalm 19.

*Psalm 19
To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.*

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

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

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

*4 Their line[a] has gone out through all the earth,
And their words to the end of the world.*

*In them He has set a tabernacle for the sun,
5 Which is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber,
And rejoices like a strong man to run its race.*

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

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

- 8 *The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart;
The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes;*
- 9 *The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever;
The judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.*
- 10 *More to be desired are they than gold,
Yea, than much fine gold;
Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.*
- 11 *Moreover by them Your servant is warned,
And in keeping them there is great reward.*
- 12 *Who can understand his errors?
Cleanse me from secret faults.*
- 13 *Keep back Your servant also from presumptuous sins;
Let them not have dominion over me.
Then I shall be blameless,
And I shall be innocent of great transgression.*
- 14 ***Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
Be acceptable in Your sight,
O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer.***

David broke with the crowd, stopped getting and seeking approval from his peers and went straight to the top. He wanted God and God alone to be his goal. And that was still his desire.

**Psalm 23:
Following the Good Shepherd for all my Life.**

David had watched many sheep for much of his life (I Samuel 16:11,19; 17:15,20) walked through life with confidence because it was settled for him, the Lord was David's shepherd and as one of the Lord's sheep, David followed God.

*Psalm 23
A Psalm of David.*

- 1 *The LORD is my shepherd;
I shall not want.*
- 2 *He makes me to lie down in green pastures;
He leads me beside the still waters.*
- 3 *He restores my soul;
He leads me in the paths of righteousness
For His name's sake.*
- 4 *Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil;
For You are with me;
Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.*

*5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
You anoint my head with oil;
My cup runs over.*

*6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
All the days of my life;
And I will dwell in the house of the LORD
Forever.*

In I Samuel 17, after the singing for Saul in chapter 16, and most likely composing the songs we call Psalms 19 and 23, David faces the greatest confrontation of his life: Goliath. The story we all know so well is captured in the 58 verses of I Samuel 17, but the motivation of this young man is captured in his song about that event recorded after he slew Goliath, when he wrote Psalm 8. Look at what was motivating David in I Samuel 17:45. He came to face Goliath in the Name of the Lord that Goliath was defying.

I Samuel 17:45 Then David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.

Psalm 8: Living for the Glory of His Name not mine.

Note the preface to Psalm 8 talks about the city of Gath, the first verse and last verses both frame the entire Psalm as focusing on Name of the Lord. As we saw in I Samuel 17:45, David was concerned about defending, honoring, and standing for the Name of the Lord.

*Psalm 8
To the Chief Musician. On the instrument of Gath. A Psalm of David.*

*1 O LORD, our Lord,
How excellent is Your name in all the earth,
Who have set Your glory above the heavens!*

*2 Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants
You have ordained strength,
Because of Your enemies,
That You may silence the enemy and the avenger.*

*3 When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers,
The moon and the stars, which You have ordained,*

*4 What is man that You are mindful of him,
And the son of man that You visit him?*

*5 For You have made him a little lower than the angels,
And You have crowned him with glory and honor.*

6 *You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands;
You have put all things under his feet,*
7 *All sheep and oxen—
Even the beasts of the field,*
8 *The birds of the air,
And the fish of the sea
That pass through the paths of the seas.*

9 *O LORD, our Lord,
How excellent is Your name in all the earth!*

**Psalm 132:
Pursuing Holy habits of a Godly Walk.**

David looks back in later life at the simple habits that had fed his walk with the Lord.

Psalm 132
A Song of Ascents.

1 LORD, remember David
And all his afflictions;
2 How he swore to the LORD,
And vowed to the Mighty One of Jacob:
3 "Surely I will not go into the chamber of my house,
Or go up to the comfort of my bed;
4 I will not give sleep to my eyes
Or slumber to my eyelids,
5 Until I find a place for the LORD,
A dwelling place for the Mighty One of Jacob."

6 Behold, we heard of it in Ephrathah;
We found it in the fields of the woods.
7 Let us go into His tabernacle;
Let us worship at His footstool.
8 Arise, O LORD, to Your resting place,
You and the ark of Your strength.
9 Let Your priests be clothed with righteousness,
And let Your saints shout for joy.

10 For Your servant David's sake,
Do not turn away the face of Your Anointed.

11 The LORD has sworn in truth to David;
He will not turn from it:
"I will set upon your throne the fruit of your body."
12 If your sons will keep My covenant
And My testimony which I shall teach them,

Their sons also shall sit upon your throne forevermore.”

13 For the LORD has chosen Zion;
He has desired it for His dwelling place:
14 “This is My resting place forever;
Here I will dwell, for I have desired it.
15 I will abundantly bless her provision;
I will satisfy her poor with bread.
16 I will also clothe her priests with salvation,
And her saints shall shout aloud for joy.
17 There I will make the horn of David grow;
I will prepare a lamp for My Anointed.
18 His enemies I will clothe with shame,
But upon Himself His crown shall flourish.”

This Psalm may have been prompted when David studied what God expected from a King. As David studied what Deuteronomy 17:14-20 explained were God’s expectations of the King, he made them his holy habits. These youthful habits strengthened him for enduring all the adversities and adversaries he faced for his entire life.

Deuteronomy 17:14-20 “When you come to the land which the LORD your God is giving you, and possess it and dwell in it, and say, ‘I will set a king over me like all the nations that are around me,’ 15 you shall surely set a king over you whom the LORD your God chooses; one from among your brethren you shall set as king over you; you may not set a foreigner over you, who is not your brother. 16 But he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, for the LORD has said to you, ‘You shall not return that way again.’ 17 Neither shall he multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away; nor shall he greatly multiply silver and gold for himself. 18 “Also it shall be, **when he sits on the throne** of his kingdom, that **he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book**, from the one before the priests, the Levites. 19 And **it shall be with him**, and **he shall read it all the days of his life**, that he **may learn to fear** the LORD his God and **be careful to observe all the words of this law** and these statutes, 20 that his heart may not be lifted above his brethren, that he may not turn aside from the commandment to the right hand or to the left, and that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children in the midst of Israel.

Psalm 101: Keeping the Sacred Pledges of Purity.

David revealed a list of resolves for his growing years—his pathway to a godly life.

Psalm 101
A Psalm of David.

1 I will sing of mercy and justice;

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To You, O LORD, I will sing praises.

*2 I will behave wisely in a perfect way.
Oh, when will You come to me?
I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.*

*3 I will set nothing wicked before my eyes;
I hate the work of those who fall away;
It shall not cling to me.*

*4 A perverse heart shall depart from me;
I will not know wickedness.*

*5 Whoever secretly slanders his neighbor,
Him I will destroy;
The one who has a haughty look and a proud heart,
Him I will not endure.*

*6 My eyes shall be on the faithful of the land,
That they may dwell with me;
He who walks in a perfect way,
He shall serve me.*

*7 He who works deceit shall not dwell within my house;
He who tells lies shall not continue in my presence.*

*8 Early I will destroy all the wicked of the land,
That I may cut off all the evildoers from the city of the LORD.*

David Made Time for God

The sum of David's life is that: despite loneliness, affliction, hardships, and disappointments—David made it a regular choice to set aside time for God.

Love demands intimacy. When you love someone or something you devote hours to them. David loved God so he: fled sin, sought the Lord, sorrowed over his failures, and rejoiced in God's gracious mercy.

One way to remember the Life of David is with a song. David didn't write it, but he lived this concept. It is Hymn # 441

Take Time to be Holy

1. Take time to be holy, speak oft with thy Lord;
Abide in Him always, and feed on His Word.
Make friends of God's children, help those who are weak,
Forgetting in nothing His blessing to seek.
2. Take time to be holy, the world rushes on;
Spend much time in secret, with Jesus alone.

- By looking to Jesus, like Him thou shalt be;
Thy friends in thy conduct His likeness shall see.
3. Take time to be holy, let Him be thy Guide;
And run not before Him, whatever betide.
In joy or in sorrow, still follow the Lord,
And, looking to Jesus, still trust in His Word.
 4. Take time to be holy, be calm in thy soul,
Each thought and each motive beneath His control.
Thus led by His Spirit to fountains of love,
Thou soon shalt be fitted for service above.

~William D. Longstaff, 1882

"Take Time to Be Holy," Sankey says, was written by William Dunn Longstaff (1822-1894) after hearing a sermon from a missionary to China speaking on I Peter 1:16 in the year 1882. Eight years later the composer of the tune, George C. Stebbins, received the poem from a friend in 1890, who had clipped it from a periodical. Later, while Stebbins was spending a winter in India assisting in evangelistic and conference work, he recalled that he had the slip of paper with him. He promptly set music to the words and sent it off to Ira D. Sankey (1840-1908) who was the well-known gospel singer and hymn writer who accompanied Dwight L. Moody in the late 1800's as the two of them traveled all over the world holding camp meetings and revivals. Sankey published this hymn the same year (1890).

Longstaff was born on January 28, 1822, in Sunderland, England, the son of a wealthy ship owner. He was a faithful steward of his riches and was known to be a most philanthropic and generous individual. He was a friend of Moody and Sankey, and also of William Booth, the founder of the Salvation Army. He died on April 2, 1894, in his hometown of Sunderland.