

O God, you are my God

In the last few Newsletters we have been following the histories of many faithful people of the Bible. These histories include the lives of Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and Moses.

Abel was faithful in obedience to God's commands in the type of sacrifice that God required. For his obedience he was killed by his brother.

Noah in faithful obedience built an ark and saved himself and his family from the all-encompassing flood.

Abraham was called by God to leave his home and family to go to a new land. He put his faith in God and through that faith and obedience God gave him eternal promises of blessings, enumerable descendants, and an eternal inheritance of the Promised Land.

Abraham's son, Isaac, and grandson, Jacob (Israel), received the same promises through their faith.

Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers but through faith survived and became a powerful ruler in Egypt and

saved his family from famine.

Moses was born to a slave family but became the leader of his people to freedom from Egypt and through faith during much tribulation led them to the Promised Land.

In each of these testimonies of faithful obedience to God we see lives changed, families saved, and eternal promises of hope received. But even more than this we see in each of these lives the growth of a close and intimate relationship with the awesome creator and God of the universe. They trusted in him and in that trust God worked in their lives and revealed himself to them.

The trust and faith that they had led them to a deep and abiding love for their God. In their faith they learned how much God loved them and cared for them. One of the most outstanding examples in the Bible of faith leading to a passionate love and appreciation for God is the man, David. In this newsletter we will take a little closer look at the life and writings of this man and through this see the deep love that David had for his God.

A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah. O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water. So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary, beholding your power and glory. Because your steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise you. So I will bless you as long as I live; in your name I will lift up my hands. - Psalm 63:1-4 ESV

Of David. The LORD is my light and my salvation--whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life-- of whom shall I be afraid? ... One thing I ask from the LORD, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the LORD and to seek him in his temple. ... My heart says of you, "Seek his face!" Your face, LORD, I will seek. - Psalm 27:1, 4, 8 NIV



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Lead me Lord

The history in the Old Testament follows the history of the people of Israel, the descendants that were promised to Abraham. These are the people that Moses led through the wilderness to the land promised to Abraham and his offspring. After Moses died Joshua led them into the Land and was their leader in conquering and settling it. His story is told in the book of Joshua. After Joshua came a series of leaders called the "Judges" whose stories of faith and courage are told in the book of Judges.

When Samuel, the last judge of the nation of Israel, was an old man, the people of Israel asked for a king so that they could be like the other nations. The first king, Saul, was a disappointment. He had been anointed as king by Samuel by God's direction, but he was more interested in being well-thought of by the people than in serving God. Finally, after Saul's repeated disobedience to God's commands, God rejected Saul as king and sent Samuel to anoint a new king.

Samuel said, "Send for him; we will not sit down until he arrives."

So he sent and had him brought in. He was ruddy, with a fine appearance and handsome features. Then the Lord said, "Rise and anoint him; he is the one."

So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the Lord came upon David in power... 1 Samuel 16:11-13

David was the youngest son of eight of an Israelite by the name of Jesse of the tribe of Judah. David's age at this time is not known but he must have been no more

than a youth. Obviously Jesse, David's father, didn't consider him old enough to meet Samuel. However, God knew David's heart and youth is no hindrance to him. At this time even though David was anointed as king, only Samuel and his family knew about it.

David, as a youth, was a shepherd boy. Alone with his sheep, David grew to know God through seeing the starry heavens at night as he pastured his sheep and during the day as God provided for him. We see in Psalm 23 the love that David had for his God and his reliance on him through all the difficulties of life. Notice how personal this psalm is. The LORD is my shepherd. He makes me to lie down. He leads me.

A Psalm of David. The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake. 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. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the LORD Forever. - Psalm 23:1-6 NKJV

In another Psalm David cried to the LORD to lead him and to be his refuge.

For the director of music. With stringed instruments. Of David. Hear my cry, O God;

listen to my prayer. From the ends of the earth I call to you, I call as my heart grows faint; lead me to the rock that is higher than I. For you have been my refuge, a strong tower against the foe. I long to dwell in your tent forever and take refuge in the shelter of your wings. - Psalm 61:1-4 NIV

In his youth David learned to trust the LORD. The lessons he learned gave him courage to stand up to the giant Goliath and to endure many years as a fugitive because of the jealousy of King Saul who was intent on killing him. During those years in the desert exiled from his family and homeland, he learned to be completely dependent on God. He learned the lessons of trust and patience. It was not until the death of Saul that he was able to return to his home. There are several Psalms that David wrote during this period of exile including Psalm 142 which record his distress:

A maskil of David. When he was in the cave. A prayer. I cry aloud to the LORD; I lift up my voice to the LORD for mercy. I pour out before him my complaint; before him I tell my trouble. When my spirit grows faint within me, it is you who watch over my way. In the path where I walk people have hidden a snare for me. Look and see, there is no one at my right hand; no one is concerned for me. I have no refuge; no one cares for my life. I cry to you, LORD; I say, "You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living." Listen to my cry, for I am in desperate need; rescue me from those who pursue me, for they are
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too strong for me. Set me free from my prison, that I may praise your name. Then the righteous will gather about me because of your goodness to me.

Even in this terrible time of trouble that extended for years with no end in sight, David still turned to God for deliverance and praised Him for his love.

This poor man called, and the LORD heard him; he saved

him out of all his troubles. The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them. Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in him. Psalm 34:6-8

God's Eternal Promises to King David

The last chapter of 1st Samuel records the death of Saul and his son Jonathan in battle. David was able to return home but he did not immediately become king. Eventually David did inquire of the LORD if he should go to Judah and God told to go to Hebron, a city in Judah. In Hebron the men of Judah anointed him king. For seven years there was war between the house of Saul and the house of David. Gradually David's power and influence increased. Finally, the other tribes of Israel came to David and made a pact with him. They anointed him king over all of Israel. This was approximately 1,000 years before the birth of Jesus.

One of the first things David did as king over all Israel was to conquer the city of Jerusalem and the fortress of Zion from the Jebusites. He took up residence in the fortress of Zion and called it the City of David which it is called to this day. With Jerusalem and Zion, the City of David, as the capital of the kingdom, David wanted to bring the Ark of the Covenant from its resting place in Kiriath Jearim to Jerusalem. This was the Ark that had been in the Most Holy Place in the Tabernacle from the time of the wilderness wanderings. When the Ark arrived, there was rejoicing with music, dancing and singing. It was placed in the tent that David had prepared. There was still, after almost 500

years of being in the Promised Land, no permanent place, no building for the Ark of the LORD. David wanted to build a temple as the permanent place of worship for the Ark to reside. Nathan the prophet thought this was an excellent idea but God directed him to speak to David and tell him that he was not the one to build this temple:

"Now therefore, thus shall you say to My servant David, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts: "I took you from the sheepfold, from following the sheep, to be ruler over My people, over Israel. "And I have been with you wherever you have gone, and have cut off all your enemies from before you, and have made you a great name, like the name of the great men who are on the earth. "Moreover I will appoint a place for My people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own and move no more; nor shall the sons of wickedness oppress them anymore, as previously, "since the time that I commanded judges to be over My people Israel, and have caused you to rest from all your enemies.

Also the LORD tells you that He will make you a house. "When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed

after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. "He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. "I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men. "But My mercy shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I removed from before you. "And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever."'

" According to all these words and according to all this vision, so Nathan spoke to David. - 2 Samuel 7:8-17 NKJV

David was not to build the temple for God. Instead God gave eternal promises to David concerning a son who would build the house for God. And God promised to build a "house", that is a royal lineage, for David that would last forever. The promises of God to David included:

God will make David's name great like the greatest men on earth.

God will provide a place for Israel, they will no longer

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be oppressed.

After David died, God will raise up a son to succeed him. His throne will be established forever.

This son of David will build the house for the Name of God.

This son of David will also be the son of God and God will never take his love from him.

David's house and kingdom will endure forever before God.

These are eternal promises. Promises yet to be completely fulfilled but David believed God and he understood the impact of these promises.

Give the king Your judgments, O God, And Your righteousness to the king's Son. He will judge Your people with righteousness, And Your poor with justice.

The mountains will bring peace to the people, And the little hills, by righteousness. He will bring

justice to the poor of the people; He will save the children of the needy, And will break in pieces the oppressor. They shall fear You As long as the sun and moon endure, Throughout all generations.

He shall come down like rain upon the grass before mowing, Like showers that water the earth. In His days the righteous shall flourish, And abundance of peace, Until the moon is no more. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, And from the River to the ends of the earth.

Those who dwell in the wilderness will bow before Him, And His enemies will lick the dust. The kings of Tarshish and of the isles Will bring presents; The kings of Sheba and Seba Will offer gifts. Yes, all kings shall fall down before Him;

All nations shall serve Him. For He will deliver the needy when he cries, The poor also, and him who has no helper. He will spare the poor and needy, And will save the souls of the

needy. He will redeem their life from oppression and violence; And precious shall be their blood in His sight.

And He shall live; And the gold of Sheba will be given to Him; Prayer also will be made for Him continually, And daily He shall be praised. There will be an abundance of grain in the earth, On the top of the mountains; Its fruit shall wave like Lebanon; And those of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth.

His name shall endure forever; His name shall continue as long as the sun. And men shall be blessed in Him; All nations shall call Him blessed. Blessed be the LORD God, the God of Israel, Who only does wondrous things! And blessed be His glorious name forever! And let the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen and Amen. The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended.

- Psalm 72:1-20 NKJV

David the Great, Great, Great, Great...Grandfather of Jesus the Messiah

David was a great king, a man who loved God. God called him "a man after mine own heart". His faithfulness to God is outstanding and exemplary during his entire life from the time he was a young shepherd boy, then when he was a warrior and a fugitive from Saul as a young man, and finally as king for 40 years. In his weakness and sin he experienced God's forgiveness and mercy. He was inspired to write psalms full of instruction, prophecy, and beauty that speak to millions of people even thousands of years after his death. He was such an amazing person yet the story of David is not finished. The New Testament tells us more. The eternal promises that God

gave to David have their fulfillment in one of David's descendants: Jesus Christ, the Messiah:

This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the son of David, the son of Abraham...Matthew 1:1

Matthew 1 introduces the genealogy of Jesus Christ by listing David and Abraham. These are the two people that received special, eternal promises from God. The fulfillment of these promises come through Jesus Christ. Mary was told before Jesus was born that her child would be the son promised to David one thousand years before Jesus' birth. This is the one who is the son of David

but also the Son of God. This is the one who will rule over David's throne in Jerusalem forever:

But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

"How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am

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a virgin?"

The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. Luke 1:30-35 NIV

Many people thought that Solomon was the son promised to David. Many blessings were given to Solomon including wealth, wisdom, power, and a kingdom that extended far beyond David's kingdom. Solomon did build a magnificent temple for the LORD but Solomon was not the promised son. The angel told Mary that it was her son, the descendant of David, who is the Son of God and the promised King of Israel that will rule and reign over David's kingdom forever.

On the Day of Pentecost, after Jesus had been raised from the dead and had ascended to his Father, the apostles preached the gospel to the assembled people.

Peter told them this about Jesus and about David:

"Brethren, I may say to you confidently of the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants upon his throne, he foresaw and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this which you see and hear. For David did not ascend into the heavens; but he himself says, 'The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand, till I make thy enemies a stool for thy feet.' Let all the house of Israel therefore

know assuredly that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified." - Acts 2:29-36 RSV
Peter tells us that David understood the gospel message through the promises that God had given him. David knew that one of his descendants will rule from his throne, over his kingdom forever. He knew that this promised king, this promised anointed one, the Messiah, would have to be raised from the dead and live forever in order to reign forever. Peter quoted from David in Psalm 110 to show us that David understood this. The Messiah will reign over the throne of David in Jerusalem forever:

The LORD says to my lord: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet. The LORD will extend your mighty scepter from Zion, saying, "Rule in the midst of your enemies!" (Vs. 1-2)

The Lord looks at the Heart

Paul the Apostle spoke these words concerning David:

But God removed Saul and replaced him with David, a man about whom God said, 'I have found David son of Jesse, a man after my own heart. He will do everything I want him to do.' "And it is one of King David's descendants, Jesus, who is God's promised Savior of Israel! - Acts 13:22-23 NLT

From an early age as a young shepherd boy David learned to place his faith and trust in God. From that faith came an abiding love for God that is seen in all of David's psalms and in his life.

A song. A psalm of David. My heart, O God, is steadfast; I will sing and make music with all my soul. Awake, harp and lyre! I will awaken the dawn. I will praise you, LORD, among the nations; I will sing of you among the peoples. For great is your love, higher than the heavens; your faithfulness reaches to the skies. Be exalted, O God, above the heavens; let your glory be over all the earth. - Psalm 108:1-5 NIV

God knew David's heart and chose him to be the one to be the forefather of the Messiah to come, God's own son. How amazing is that! Small steps of

faith led David to love his God, to know God, and to earnestly desire to serve Him with all his heart. Because of that he received blessings beyond measure.

A prayer of David. Hear me, LORD, and answer me, for I am poor and needy. Guard my life, for I am faithful to you; save your servant who trusts in you. Teach me your way, LORD, that I may rely on your faithfulness; give me an undivided heart, that I may fear your name. I will praise you, Lord my God, with all my heart; I will glorify your name forever. From Psalm 86.



Daily Bible Readings for January, February and March

Read the Entire Bible in One Year

Day	JANUARY		FEBRUARY		MARCH	
	Old Test	New Test/Psa	Old Test	New Test/Psa	Old Test	New Test/Psa
1	Gen 1,2	Matt 1	Exo 11,12	Matt 28	Lev 23, 24	Acts 24
2	Gen 3,4	Matt 2	Exo 13,14	Psalm 9, 10	Lev 25, 26	Acts 25
3	Gen 5,6	Matt 3	Exo 15,16	Psalm 11,12	Lev 27, Provb 7	Acts 26
4	Gen 7,8	Matt 4	Exo 17,18	Acts 1	Provb 8-10	Acts 27
5	Gen 9,10	Matt 5	Exo 19,20	Acts 2	Num 1,2	Acts 28
6	Gen 11,12	Matt 6	Exo 21,22	Acts 3	Num 3,4	Psalm 19,20
7	Gen 13,14	Matt 7	Exo 23,24	Acts 4	Num 5,6	Romans 1
8	Gen 15, 16	Psalm 1,2	Exo 25,26	Acts 5	Num 7,8	Romans 2
9	Gen 17,18	Matt 8	Exo 27,28	Acts 6	Num 9,10	Romans 3
10	Gen 19,20	Matt 9	Exo 29,30	Acts 7	Num 11,12	Romans 4
11	Gen 21, 22	Matt 10	Exo 31,32	Psalm 13, 14	Num 13,14	Romans 5
12	Gen 23,24	Matt 11	Exo 33,34	Acts 8	Num 15,16	Romans 6
13	Gen 25,26	Matt 12	Exo 35,36	Acts 9	Num 17,18	Romans 7
14	Gen 27,28	Matt 13	Exo 37,38	Acts 10	Num 19,20	Romans 8
15	Gen 29,30	Psalm 3,4	Exo 39,40	Acts 11,12	Num 21,22	Romans 9
16	Gen 31,32	Matt 14	Provb 3,4	Acts 13	Num 23,24	Romans 10
17	Gen 33,34	Matt 15	Provb 5,6	Psalm 15,16	Num 25,26	Romans 11
18	Gen 35,36	Matt 16	Lev 1,2	Acts 14	Num 27,28	Romans 12
19	Gen 37,38	Matt 17	Lev 3,4	Acts 15	Num 29,30	Romans 13
20	Gen 39,40	Matt 18	Lev 5,6	Acts 16	Num 31,32	Romans 14
21	Gen 41, 42	Matt 19	Lev 7,8	Acts 17	Num 33,34	Romans 15,16
22	Gen 43, 44	Psalm 5,6	Lev 9,10	Acts 18	Num 35,36	Psalm 21,22
23	Gen 45, 46	Matt 20	Lev 11,12	Psalm 17,18	Provb 11,12	Psalm 23-25
24	Gen 47, 48	Matt 21	Lev 13,14	Acts 19	Provb 13,14	Psalm 26-28
25	Gen 49, 50	Matt 22	Lev 15,16	Acts 20	Provb 15,16	Psalm 29,30
26	Provb 1,2	Matt 23	Lev 17,18	Acts 21	Deut 1,2	Mark 1
27	Exo 1,2	Matt 24	Lev 19,20	Acts 22	Deut 3,4	Mark 2
28	Exo 3,4	Matt 25	Lev 21,22	Acts 23	Deut 5,6	Mark 3
29	Exo 5,6	Psalm 7, 8			Deut 7,8	Mark 4
30	Exo 7, 8	Matt 26			Deut 9,10	Psalm 31,32
31	Exo 9,10	Matt 27			Deut 11,12	Mark 5

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