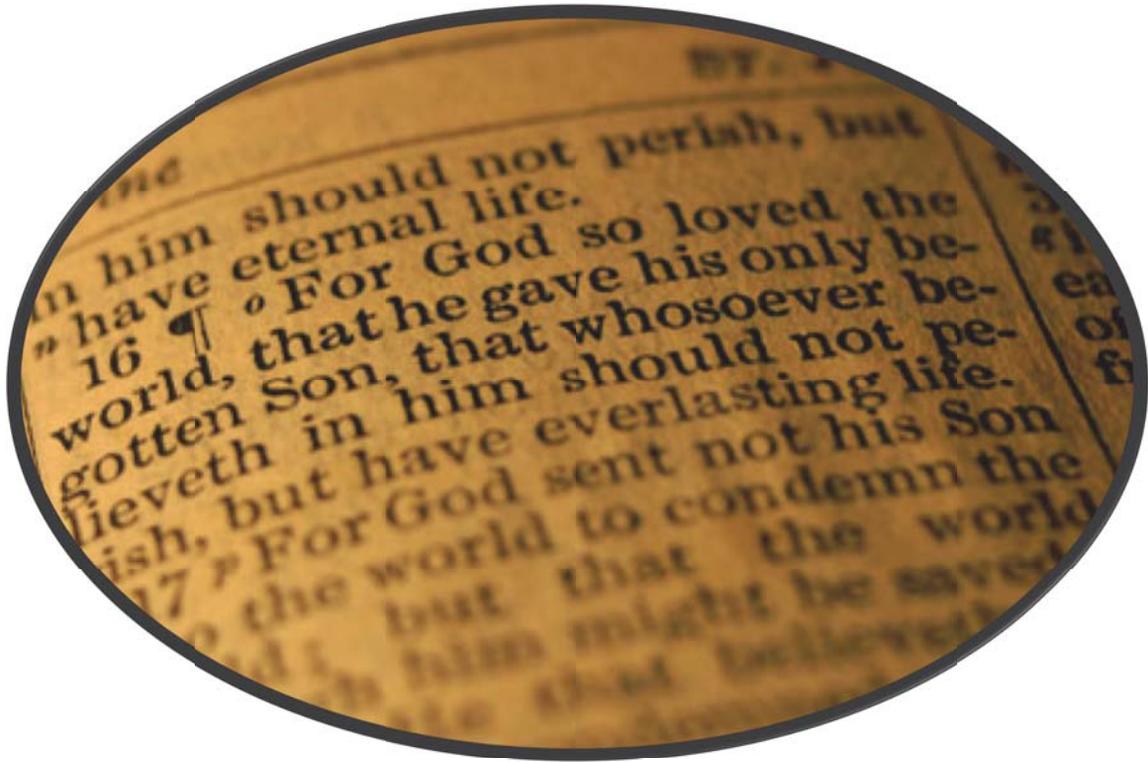


THE HEART OF GOD
DAVID AND SOLOMON



T. M. Moore

A Scriptorium Study

And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets,

He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. Luke 24.27

The Fellowship of Ailbe

The Heart of God: David and Solomon
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Introduction to *David and Solomon*

If there is a high water mark for the Old Testament kingdom of Israel, it was reached during the reigns of David and Solomon. In faithfulness to God, geographic extent, cultural achievement, and international influence, here is presented a foretaste of what God intends His Kingdom to be like on earth.

And yet, because this was a *human* and *political* kingdom, it could only foreshadow promises and blessings to come, and never achieve them fully. This is part of the lesson we are to gather from Israel's kingdom experience throughout the Old Testament: Not the swords and words of men, but Sword and Word of God are the key to righteousness, peace, and joy in the Spirit.

Still, many good things came about under the leadership of David and Solomon, and there are many excellent lessons to learn.

The Heart of God studies provide a road map through the Scriptures, unfolding key unifying threads and following the development of those matters closest to the heart of our Lord Jesus Christ, from Genesis to Revelation. Through all our study we'll see how the Scriptures lead us to Jesus, and how He, in turn, brings into the presence of our heavenly Father and His Kingdom. There, as we encounter God and His glory, the Spirit can transform us increasingly in to the very image of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We're pleased to provide *Scriptorium* studies in PDF format at no charge. We hope you will find them helpful and encouraging as you press on in your journey toward spiritual maturity with the Lord.

Please visit our website, www.ailbe.org, to discover the many other resources available to serve your needs. The Fellowship of Ailbe is a spiritual fellowship in the Celtic Christian tradition. Visit our website also to subscribe to our worldview study *ReVision*, our devotional newsletter *Crosfigell*, and our worldview newsletter *The Week*.

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1 David Ascendant

Read and meditate on 2 Samuel 1-5.

David's patience finally bore fruit, as the influence of Saul waned, then ended, and the elders of the nation finally recognized David's proper place as king. God brought His people through trial and loss to a period of new beginning with Him. Great is His faithfulness!

For reflection

1. Was this period of civil war inevitable? What seem to have been the causes of this seven years of strife? Are those causes still present among the people of God in our day? Explain.
2. What evidence do you see in David to set him apart as different from Saul? How are his attitudes and outlook different from Saul's? How can you see that he is a man after God's own heart?
3. And yet, even under David's rule, wickedness is present. How can you see that? What counsel or warning does this pose for us in God's Kingdom and covenant today?
4. In 2 Samuel 5.10-12, the Lord showed His approval of David. What do you imagine it looked like as "David went on and became great, and the LORD God of hosts was with him"? How can you see that David's heart was truly focused on the Lord?
5. Briefly summarize the process, beginning in 1 Samuel, whereby David became king over Israel. How can you see the unifying threads of Scripture – God's glory, God's people, His work of redemption – weaving through and supporting this whole process? How can you see that God was sovereignly at work, according to His covenant and promises?

Summary

God does not cease to bring His covenant with His people to new stages of development and fruitfulness. Sometimes we must go through times of trial and suffering, often because of our own foolishness, in order to emerge from our confusion and separation to a season of revival and renewal. David's rise to the throne of Israel teaches us to wait patiently on the Lord and to hope always in His Word. What does this imply for your own walk with and work for the Lord?

Closing Prayer

LORD, remember David

And all his afflictions;

How he swore to the LORD,

And vowed to the Mighty One of Jacob:

"Surely I will not go into the chamber of my house,

Or go up to the comfort of my bed;

I will not give sleep to my eyes

Or slumber to my eyelids,

Until I find a place for the LORD,

A dwelling place for the Mighty One of Jacob."

Behold, we heard of it in Ephrathah;

We found it in the fields of the woods.

Let us go into His tabernacle;

Let us worship at His footstool.

Psalm 132.1-7

2 David's Reign

Read and meditate on 2 Samuel 7-12, and 1 Chronicles 17 and 18.

David is a man after God's own heart, but he is not a perfect man. God does not require us to be perfect, only faithful. In these chapters we get a look at the heart of David – in sin, in service, and in seeking the Lord. And by looking at David's heart, we may perhaps catch a glimpse of our own.

For reflection

1. Meditate on God's promise to David in 2 Samuel 7. How do you see that God is pointing ahead to a fuller realization of His Kingdom than what will come with David? Would you say that, integral to the realization of God's *covenant* is the establishment of His *Kingdom*? Explain.
2. Participation in God's covenant does not exempt us from temptation and sin. What can we learn from David, in 2 Samuel 11 and 12, about recognizing and dealing with temptation? Do you think David's vulnerability to sin may have resulted from his success in 2 Samuel 8-10? Explain.
3. What do we learn about David, and *from* him, in his response to the Word of God from Nathan?
4. Meditate on 2 Samuel 8 and 1 Chronicles 17 and 18. How do you see that David immediately set about to realize as much as possible of the promises of God? What does his example teach us about laying hold on the promises of God's covenant?
5. We've seen that politics and military might are not the hope for realizing God's covenant. But does this mean they are not necessary at all? How would you compare David's conquests with those of the judges or Saul? Is there any difference? Is David working *toward* anything different from these others?

Summary

David seems always to have been conscious of his calling to serve within the larger context of God's covenant and Kingdom. He was not a perfect man by any means, but his responses to the Word and promises of God show him to have been a *teachable* man, with a true heart for God. In what ways might we see in the kingdom of Israel under David a *foreshadowing* of the coming Kingdom of God?

Closing Prayer

Arise, O LORD, to Your resting place,
You and the ark of Your strength.
Let Your priests be clothed with righteousness,
And let Your saints shout for joy.
For Your servant David's sake,
Do not turn away the face of Your Anointed.
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.
If your sons will keep My covenant
And My testimony which I shall teach them,
Their sons also shall sit upon your throne forevermore."

Psalm 132:8-12

3 A King's Legacy

Read and meditate on 2 Samuel 22-24 and 1 Chronicles 21-27.

At the end of his glorious reign, David is still David – still a sinner. But he is also still faithful in seeking to secure the promises of God for his generation and the generations to come. David's legacy to Israel was one of *vision* and *provision*, all with a view to knowing the presence of the Lord and His promises.

For reflection

1. Meditate on 2 Samuel 22. In what ways can you see that this psalm (cf. Psalm 18) reflects a testimony of David's experience with the Lord? Why is this song set forth first among David's preparations for the next king?
2. In these chapters, how do you see that David understood well the need for leaders to be in place in all aspects of life among the people of Israel? How does having good leaders relate to realizing the promises of God's covenant?
3. What was the nature of David's sin in 2 Samuel 24 and 1 Chronicles 21? How can we see in his response to the Lord that he remains a man after God's own heart, even in spite of the trouble he brought on God's people?
4. How does it appear that David led the entire nation of Israel into preparing for the temple and the next stage of God's covenant? What advice is there in this for leaders in God's covenant communities today?
5. What echoes of previous periods of God's covenant can you discern in David's charge to Solomon in 1 Chronicles 22? What does he specifically charge Solomon to do in preparing to take up his role as leader of God's covenant people?

Summary

Unlike the judges and King Saul before him, David finished well. Not without sin, but well. He made preparation for the next generation of God's covenant people and charged his son, Solomon, to seek the Lord and wait on Him for wisdom and a heart to rule well. What can we learn from David about preparing a legacy for the generations of God's covenant people who will succeed us?

Closing Prayer

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

Psalm 132.13-18

4 Solomon Ascendant

Read and meditate on 1 Kings 3-6 and 2 Chronicles 7 and 8.

David prepared well for his son Solomon to ascend the throne of Israel. Solomon carried on his father's focus, looking to the Lord for wisdom to carry out the duties of rule, and getting started right away on building the temple in Jerusalem.

For reflection

1. How would you describe Solomon's heart for God, as you see it in these chapters? How is it apparent that Solomon was leading the people into the promises of God's covenant?
2. How many different ways did the wisdom of God come to light in Solomon's rule? What is wisdom?
3. Why was the temple so important in Israel's covenant relationship with God? How did the temple actually draw together and reinforce the unifying threads of divine revelation – God's glory, God's people, God's work of redemption?
4. In 1 Chronicles 7.17, 18, God reiterated His promise to David. How can you see that, once again, this promise points forward beyond the time of Solomon to some future fulfillment?
5. Do you see any hint in these chapters that Solomon's heart may not have been fully devoted to the Lord?

Summary

Solomon devoted his initial energies to building the temple of the Lord. Here God would come to live among His people. He would meet with them, receive their offerings, renew them in His covenant, and keep them together, focused on Him as His people. In what ways did this temple serve as a foreshadowing of our Lord Jesus Christ? Can you think of a time in His ministry when Jesus used the temple to refer to Himself?

Closing Prayer

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.

Psalm 72.1-8

5 Covenant Blessings

Read and meditate on 1 Kings 8-10, 2 Chronicles 9, and Ecclesiastes 1, 2.

The greater part of Solomon's reign saw the blessings of God abounding to His people. As Solomon led the people to seek the Lord, the Lord responded by increasing their borders and bringing them into a lengthy season of peace and prosperity.

For reflection

1. Meditate on Deuteronomy 4.5-8. How can you see this promise to Moses being fulfilled in part during the reign of King Solomon? What does this suggest about the continuity of God's covenant?
2. Solomon gained wisdom from the Lord, but apparently, not without effort. Meditate on Ecclesiastes 1. How does Solomon's striving for wisdom fit in with God's promise to grant him wisdom? What do we learn from this about laying hold on the promises of God's covenant?
3. Review 1 Kings 8, then compare this with Ecclesiastes 2. What happened to Solomon?
4. From Ecclesiastes 1 and 2, it seems clear that Solomon's success and prosperity caused him to lose sight of the real purpose and substance of God's covenant. Rather than maintaining an "under the heavens" approach to life, Solomon, at some point, began living more "under the sun." What's the difference? How did Solomon feel about where he had arrived?
5. What do we learn from Solomon about the blessings God intends us to seek in our covenant relationship with Him? Which are the *true* and *lasting* blessings of the Lord?

Summary

As often happens, the *temporal* and *material* blessings we enjoy in life can distract us from the *true* and *lasting* blessings God intends for us – the blessing of being His people and having Him as our God. Suppose you had been a counselor to King Solomon, like Nathan or Gad was to David. How might you have advised him to keep his focus "under the heavens" rather than "under the sun"?

Closing Prayer

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.

Psalm 72.9-15

6 Solomon's Decline – and Recovery

Read and meditate on 1 Kings 11.1-13 and Ecclesiastes 9-12.

It was too good to last, but only because Solomon failed to keep watch over his heart (cf. Prov. 4.20-27). But Solomon's folly and fall wasn't the end of the story.

For reflection

1. In what ways did Solomon begin to compromise in his relationship with the Lord? Why did he do this? How does his failure here serve to warn us?
2. What did Solomon learn about the human heart (Eccl. 9)? How does this underscore his counsel to his son in Proverbs 4.20-27? David was described as having a heart for God. How would you describe Solomon's heart?
3. In Ecclesiastes 10, how do you see that Solomon is reflecting on his own folly? What warning does Solomon offer us in Ecclesiastes 11.9, 10? Where *should* our hearts be focused?
4. We saw in a previous lesson that God *remembers* His covenant – He attends to it faithfully and in all its details, at all times. How should we understand Solomon's counsel in Ecclesiastes 12.1?
5. The word *Ecclesiastes* derives from a Hebrew root which means “to assemble.” It should perhaps be translated something like “leader of the assembly.” Read quickly through 2 Chronicles 6, noting all the appearances of the word *assembly*, and Solomon's role in this chapter. Then meditate on Ecclesiastes 12.9-14. How did Solomon want to be remembered? With what period of his life did he long to be associated? What, in his view, is the whole duty of a human being?

Summary

Solomon stumbled and fell, but he worked to rescue his legacy, and that of the people, by rehearsing his failures and calling the people – especially his son, Rehoboam – *not* to emulate his folly, but to remember his service to the Lord, and to live their lives “under the heavens” rather than “under the sun.” How might we be able to tell when we are beginning to lose this perspective in our own walk with the Lord?

Closing Prayer

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.

Psalm 72.16-19

7 Legacy Lost

Read and meditate on 1 Kings 12 and 13, and 2 Chronicles 11 and 12.

What David and Solomon had worked so hard to establish, Rehoboam and Jeroboam would now squander, and set the people of God on a course of distance from God, division among themselves, and dissipation of God's promises and blessings.

For reflection

1. How did Rehoboam demonstrate that he was not concerned to carry on the legacy he had inherited from his father? Are we wise to discard the wisdom of the past, and of the generations that have preceded us in God's covenant? Explain.
2. Both Rehoboam and Jeroboam turned from the Lord and did evil. What was the evil done by each one? How was their evil directly contrary to God's revealed will and His covenant? What was in the hearts of these men to cause this to happen?
3. Meditate on 2 Chronicles 12.1-8. How would you describe the way God often uses historical situations to turn the hearts of His people back to Him? Does He do this still?
4. Jeroboam tried to make the faith of Israel more *convenient* and *democratic*. How can you see that in 1 Kings 12.25-33 and 2 Chronicles 11.13-17?
5. Rehoboam tried to make living in God's covenant *harsher* than what God required, while Jeroboam tried to make it *easier* and *more convenient* than God allowed. What's the lesson for us from these two extremes of disobedience?

Summary

It's pretty clear that when the hearts of God's leaders go bad, the people will be led into compromise, disobedience, sin, and outright rebellion against the Lord. What temptations face the leaders of God's covenant community today that might cause them to go the way of Rehoboam or Jeroboam?

Closing Prayer

How long, LORD?
Will You be angry forever?
Will Your jealousy burn like fire?
Pour out Your wrath on the nations that do not know You,
And on the kingdoms that do not call on Your name.
For they have devoured Jacob,
And laid waste his dwelling place.
Oh, do not remember former iniquities against us!
Let Your tender mercies come speedily to meet us,
For we have been brought very low.
Help us, O God of our salvation,
For the glory of Your name;
And deliver us, and provide atonement for our sins,
For Your name's sake!
Why should the nations say,
"Where *is* their God?"
Let there be known among the nations in our sight

The Heart of God: David and Solomon

The avenging of the blood of Your servants *which has been* shed.
Let the groaning of the prisoner come before You;
According to the greatness of Your power
Preserve those who are appointed to die;
And return to our neighbors sevenfold into their bosom
Their reproach with which they have reproached You, O Lord.
So we, Your people and sheep of Your pasture,
Will give You thanks forever;
We will show forth Your praise to all generations.

Psalm 79.5-13

For reflection or discussion

1. What is wisdom? How is it acquired? How does wisdom lead to realizing the promises of God's covenant?
2. Clearly, the heart is the heart of the matter when it comes to keeping covenant with the Lord. How can we guard our hearts against whatever threatens to draw us away from the Lord and His promises?
3. What can we learn from Solomon about material blessings and how to regard them?
4. Rehoboam and Jeroboam represent two extremes of turning God's people away from His covenant. Explain.
5. What are the most important lessons to emerge from this period of the Old Testament?

Glory to Glory

We are transformed into the image of Jesus Christ *from* the glory we encounter in God's Word *to* the way we live for His glory in the world (2 Cor. 3.12-18; 1 Cor. 10.31).

What have you encountered *of* God's glory in our reading and meditations in this week's studies? That is, how has He shown Himself *to* you more clearly?

How do you expect this *experience* of God's glory to help you *live more consistently for* His glory in the daily details of your life?

What have you learned about yourself from this week's study to help you in knowing more of the presence, promise, and power of the Kingdom? To equip you for serving Christ in your [Personal Mission Field](#)?

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Thank you.