

# The Old Paths

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## “A Man After God’s Own Heart”

Jarrod Jacobs

**T**he statement above is well-known to most people. This statement, while not the exact Bible quotation, is based on the words of Scripture found in I Samuel 13:14 and Acts 13:22. In both passages, we see reference made to David, the second king of Israel. He was the one God describes as being “after His own heart.” In fact, God makes it clear that David “*did what was right in the eyes of the LORD and did not turn aside from anything that he commanded him all the days of his life, except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite*” (I Kings 15:5). What made David a man after God’s own heart? What characteristics stand out when we think of this wonderful Bible character? Can we possess those characteristics today? Let us answer these questions.

### What Made David A Man After God’s Own Heart?

The answer to this question is not hard to find. In I Samuel 13:14, after Saul had sinned in offering the sacrifice before the battle with the Philistines (v. 9-10), God inspired Samuel to condemn the action and then pronounce this judgment: “*You have done foolishly. You have not kept the command of the LORD your God, with which he commanded you. For then the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. But now your kingdom shall not*

*continue. The LORD has sought out a man after his own heart, and the LORD has commanded him to be prince over his people, because you have not kept what the LORD commanded you*” (v. 13-14).

I Samuel 16 records God’s selection of David as the next king of Israel. By simply reading I Samuel 13, we see that David was “a man after God’s own heart” because he was obedient to the Lord! Evidently, God saw in David a characteristic not found in Saul, and that was his consistency and fortitude to continue to obey God even when it was hard to do! Those who read of the life of David have to be impressed with his consistency and faithfulness to the Lord through his life.

Another attribute that makes David “a man after God’s own heart” would be his willingness to repent of sins. At no time should we equate “a man after God’s own heart” with sinlessness. This is not the case with David because he sinned at times. Some recorded occasions of sin include the time he sinned with Bathsheba and murdered Uriah (II Sam. 11-12). Also, the time he allowed the ark to be brought back on the new cart; (resulting in the death of Uzzah) rather than looking for the Levites who could correctly transport the ark back to Jerusalem (II Sam. 6). On another occasion, David committed the sin of acting when God had been silent when he numbered

the people (II Sam. 24). This resulted in the deaths of 70,000 men. In each case, David repented and determined to do better in the future. He relied upon God and went to God for forgiveness. His attitude is probably best summed up in his words, “*Let us fall into the hand of the LORD, for his mercy is great; but let me not fall into the hand of man*” (II Sam. 24:14). With his godly attitude, it is not surprising that we read the following words of advice to Solomon: “*Be strong, and show yourself a man, and keep the charge of the LORD your God, walking in his ways and keeping his statutes, his commandments, his rules, and his testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses, that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn*” (I Kings 2:2-3).

In connection with the above, we also see David as a humble man. He humbly repented before God when he sinned. Notice also that though he was king of Israel, and the victor in many battles, he still remembered, “*The Lord is my shepherd ...*” (Ps. 23:1). He freely confessed, “*I am poor and needy*” (Ps. 86:1). He was truly a humble man.

David was a man of faith as well. Remember that when he went out to meet Goliath in battle, he said, “*You come to me with a sword and 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. This day the LORD will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you down and cut off your head. And I will give the dead bodies of the host of the Philistines this day to the birds of the air and to the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, and that all this assembly may know that the LORD saves not with sword and spear. For the battle is the*

LORD's, and he will give you into our hand" (I Sam. 17:45-47). This is but one of many examples we could cite that shows David's great faith. He believed in God, and believed God! Doesn't God expect the same of us today (Heb. 11:6)?

We can also say David was a patient man. Though chosen to be king over Israel (I Sam. 16), he did not lead some kind of coup, or rebellion against Saul. In fact, he would not lift a hand to harm "the Lord's anointed" in any way, nor did he encourage others to do harm to him (I Sam. 24:4-7)! He was patient and waited until the time was right to serve as king of Israel. Only after Saul's death, and the time of mourning was passed did he ask God if he ought to go to the cities of Judah (II Sam. 2:1). Even at that time, he did not just "assume the throne"! In addition to this, David's patience is seen when he wanted to build the Temple, but God would not let him do it (II Sam. 7). He was satisfied to gather the materials and wait for his son to build the Temple (I Chron. 22:2-4, 14-16, 29:2-7). He did not overrule God's decision and start building the Temple, but was patient and did as God wanted. What wonderful examples of patience by David.

### Could It Be Said That You Are One After God's Own Heart?

Notice David is not called "the" man after God's own heart, but he is "a" man who fit this description. Evidently, God acknowledges that there are others who could also be described in this way.

Friend, be honest and examine yourself (II Cor. 13:5). Could God

describe us as a man/woman "after His own heart"? If not, why not? What part of our lives have we decided do not belong to the God of Heaven? Have we decided that we can't be a "person after God's own heart" because we're not "good enough"? I hope that through this study, it is made clear that it is not a matter of someone being "sinless", for this is impossible (Rom. 3:23). It is a matter of self-sacrifice for the Lord and the willingness to be corrected and repent to God when we see that we are in error. We need to learn to be that "living sacrifice" for the Lord (Rom. 12:1-2) and give Him our all. Let us stand as David and be someone "after God's own heart."

When we determine we will show humility, faith, patience, and obedience to God in our spiritual lives, we will be someone "after God's heart" won't we? Let us learn a lesson from the life of David, and let us apply the attributes of his life to our own (Rom. 15:4; I Cor. 10:11). When we do this, we will grow closer to God and do much to prepare ourselves for an eternity in Heaven.

*"Not to know is ignorance, but to refuse to learn is pride."*  
-- L.E. Sloan

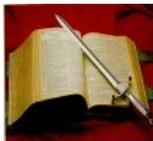
## "Give Me The Truth"

Bill Crews

If you are my friend, if you are concerned about my soul, give me the truth. Do not flatter me. Do not praise my virtues while remaining silent about my vices. Do not fear the truth will offend me. Do not treasure our friendship, our friendly relations, above my salvation. Do not think that by ignoring my sins, you can help me. Do not think that being blind to my sins will prove you charitable. However I may react to it, whatever may be my attitude toward you after you have done it, GIVE ME THE TRUTH!

For the truth, and only the truth, can make me free from the shackles of sin, strengthen me in the pathway of righteousness and lead me to the joys of heaven. If I am wavering, weak, lukewarm, indifferent, neglectful; if I have been overtaken in a trespass; if I have been drawn into the pleasures of the world; if I have left my first love; if I have been led astray by error, or, if I have done none of the these things, but simply need to grow in knowledge and then be edified, GIVE ME THE TRUTH!

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