

A Heart After God's Heart

There are godly persons of whom we can take an example of how to walk with God, and there are indeed some who are really special for whom God Himself bears witness.

One of them is David of whom is also said to have a heart after the heart of God.

“But now your kingdom shall not continue. The LORD has sought for Himself a man after His own heart, and the LORD has commanded him *to be* commander over His people, because you have not kept what the LORD commanded you.” (1 Samuel 13:14)

“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.’” (Acts 13:22)

These passages from the Scripture indicate that David was called a man after God's heart. And this wasn't stated by any man but by God Himself. I mean, what a privilege and a testimony this is!

There were times when I was praised by certain persons saying that I was doing well in the faith and that I had a good testimony, but how many times have those persons not actually known me for real and how mistaken they might have been in that very moment by saying that I am doing well in my spiritual life. I am not saying that I am constantly failing, but there are times when a person knows that not everything in him is fine in front of God, and what people see is not what truly happens. How strong and true it is to receive a witness by God Himself that you glorify Him and please Him. This is whom we need to be praised by – by God. After that, people will also bear witness to the fact that we are on the right path, **but what comes first is the witness and praise coming from God.** This is what we should aim at. We will obviously not be praised by all the people for that, and we will encounter hostility, but what is really important is that He is pleased with us. Those who truly have accepted the Lord know when they please God and when not.

Obviously, the life of faith is not a life in which we always manage to please God. Often, He will come to deal with a specific problem and situation in us, and He will show us our faults because this is the purpose of His word – to encourage us and guide us in the truth, but above all, to correct and admonish us. But why is David called a man after God's own heart? Because he was righteous and was always obeying what God was telling him to do? Yes, indeed, that was his intention, and he managed to do that with God's help, but the truth is that no man is really perfect and observes all to the point. So was David, too. When

reading his story in the Bible, we can conclude he wasn't always obeying and following God, even if that was his main intention. He sinned various times, which is described in detail in the scripture. Surely it was his desire to perform righteousness, but it wasn't only for this that he was a man after God's heart. Trusting in God, praising Him, and obeying Him is a part of that, **but what is also important and what David was doing and for what he was also called a man after God's own heart, was that he knew how to repent and how to humble in front of God.**

We all know the situation he had with Bathsheba, with whom he committed adultery, and the other sins he committed related to that (**2 Samuel 11**). Surely, after that, when he repented, he didn't do it with the attitude of considering sin as something common and forgiveness as something granted, thinking that God would show him mercy anyway. No. What he did instead was to implore God and humble himself in front of Him, saying: **"Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me."** (**Psalm 51:11**). He knew what he was deserving, and he really meant it! He didn't just say: "God, I know that you anyway will forgive me...." He really thought of losing what God had given him and knew what he deserved.

God is not pleased with sin. Sin grieves His Spirit. David knew that and was imploring the Lord not to depart from him. I see the fear of the Lord in this prayer. It is not a question of condemning ourselves and doubting God's forgiveness, but going to God and asking Him with faith to forgive us. We need to understand that

we don't deserve Him. This is what David understood. He knew how to repent, which surely was a part of the reason to be called a man after God's heart. Of course, that in order for that to happen, we need to be sensitive to God's Spirit because only He can make us feel this way. Only He can convince us of our condition so that we can see ourselves and our sins and repent. I think that David was sensitive to that and had a genuine love for God.



David knew what he deserved when he sinned. He knew God's righteous judgment; maybe because of that, God spared him and was merciful toward him when he sinned. We can say that there is a kind of judgment and consequences that come to us when we sin. We mustn't get confused at this point. Obviously, God is merciful and forgives when we acknowledge our faults and repent. He doesn't treat us according to our sin ([Psalm 103:10](#)).

Those who repent, though, know what they deserve for their sin. They don't take mercy for something granted and easy to achieve. On the other side, we need to have faith and be convinced that God will forgive us when we go before His throne, but we need to have a godly fear. Those who repent are truly grateful when they receive the undeserved grace in their life. They never think that forgiveness is something easy to achieve. Maybe this is the secret, and maybe that's why God is always faithful to those people and forgives them. We know that God's faithfulness and forgiveness are entirely His gifts, but as we discuss here about a person having a heart after His heart, I am giving an example of how a heart that He created and that pleases Him is. The people with that heart know His righteousness and judgment and fear Him. This helps them to stay on His path.

This applies to those who approach God for the first time, and I think that applies to those who already walk with Him, too. They also find themselves not deserving of God's grace and often believe they deserve something else when sinning. Still, the grace comes, and they receive it as a gift from God. This belief and feeling should always accompany us, as grace is always a gift no matter how long we are with Christ. This should help us to be more grateful as well. No one deserves God's grace, no matter how righteous he is. It is actually the reason and what makes a person genuinely righteous in front of God.

This might be different from certain messages we could hear, saying that God surely and always forgives you, but I am not saying it for condemnation. I am just saying what kind of attitude should accompany us when we approach the cross of Jesus. The message stating that God surely and always forgives should be directed to those who struggle and feel the guilt, for those who somehow felt the weight of the law on their shoulders and know for sure that they have sinned.

There is a message for each person in the situation in which he is found, but understanding God's righteousness and judgment is important. The cross was a terrible place filled with much pain where something great happened. We need to understand the pain Jesus felt there, even though we will never fully live and experience it. In this way, we will comprehend its value. There was the thief who was crucified on the side of Jesus, and He said that he deserved what he was going through while Jesus was completely innocent ([Luke 23:40, 41](#)). He knew what he deserved, and that was important. He knew what he deserved for his sin. This is fundamental when it comes to asking for forgiveness for sin. How can someone understand it? By leaving God and His word to work in him and show him his condition. To convince him of his sin. In this way, a person can really comprehend his condition and also how to approach God.

So, we conclude that David had a heart after God's heart, and one of the reasons was that he knew how to repent. There is a

situation in the Old Testament where we can see one of the aspects that had to do with that.

⁷And God was displeased with this thing; therefore He struck Israel. ⁸So David said to God, “I have sinned greatly, because I have done this thing; but now, I pray, take away the iniquity of Your servant, for I have done very foolishly.”

⁹Then the LORD spoke to Gad, David’s seer, saying, ¹⁰“Go and tell David, saying, ‘Thus says the LORD: “I offer you three *things*; choose one of them for yourself, that I may do *it* to you.’””

¹¹So Gad came to David and said to him, “Thus says the LORD: ‘Choose for yourself, ¹²either three years of famine, or three months to be defeated by your foes with the sword of your enemies overtaking *you*, or else for three days the sword of the LORD—the plague in the land, with the angel of the LORD destroying throughout all the territory of Israel.’ Now consider what answer I should take back to Him who sent me.”

¹³And David said to Gad, “I am in great distress. Please let me fall into the hand of the LORD, for His mercies *are* very great; but do not let me fall into the hand of man.” (1 Chronicles 21:7-13)

Here, we see David given a chance to choose in a way his punishment for a sin he committed. We see also that he was ready to accept it. He understood what he deserved, and he was ready to accept it. We need to see something here. As we said before, God does not treat us according to our sins, but there is a kind of judgment that occurs here on earth while we are in life. This usually happens to those who are His sons. To the believers. And why? Because He loves them, and in this way, He wants to teach them something. He works in their life. If He had to treat us according to our sins, no one then could stand before God and not even pronounce a simple prayer. In the book of Exodus, it is described that the people of Israel were standing in front of mount Sinai and were greatly scared as they were standing in front of a Holy God and were warned not even to touch the mountain. Not by chance, we see the same passage of Exodus described in the book of Hebrews.

¹⁸For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire, and to blackness and darkness and tempest, ¹⁹and the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words, so that those who heard *it* begged that the word should not be spoken to them anymore. ²⁰(For they could not endure what was commanded: “And if so much as a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned or shot with an arrow.” ²¹And so terrifying was the sight *that* Moses said, “I am exceedingly afraid and trembling.”) (**Hebrews 12:18-21**)

This is the justice of God the way it is. This passage comes right after the one about God's discipline in **Hebrews 12**. He nevertheless doesn't treat us as described in this passage. Now He is approaching us and giving us possibility through His Son Jesus Christ.

These are the verses coming after this passage.

²² But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, ²³ to the general assembly and church of the firstborn *who are* registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, ²⁴ to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than *that of* Abel. (**Hebrews 12:22-24**)

This is the reason why He works in our lives today, and He has a Father-son relationship with believers. It is because of Jesus. While He was here on this earth as a firstborn among many brethren, He lived a life of example, showing us how we should live and what we need to aim for. He also showed us the special relationship we would have with God, calling Him Father, which is something very important that He showed us along with all His teachings. He was the first to call God in this way, indicating the

relationship the believers were going to have and the way for it, which He was going to open through His sacrifice.

In the book of Hebrews, it is said that He corrects His children so they can be partakers of His holiness. **1 Peter 4:17** says that the time has come for judgment to begin from the house of God, meaning with the believers.

“For the time *has come* for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if *it begins* with us first, what will *be* the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?” (**1 Peter 4:17**)

Why does it begin with the believers and not with other people? Because other people will be judged on judgment day, and those who believe will experience judgment now in this life. This also explains why some people do whatever they want to, sin, and even prosper in their doings. It is because their judgment will come at the end, and now God doesn't want to force them into believing by punishing them. He is a gentleman who doesn't want people to believe in Him just for fear of punishment but wants them to believe because they really understand the reason for it and willingly love Him.

There is a psalm of Asaph in which he complains about the prosperity of the wicked (**Psalm 73**). Because he saw them doing evil and no consequence came into their life. We see this happening today. People do whatever they want with all kinds of evil and seem unpunished most of the time. This happens for the reason that one day, they will receive what they deserve when they are judged. Obviously, God wants these people to

repent, too, because He sent His son to die for this reason, but in general, the reason why they are not punished now is because there will be judgment one day. Most of the time, God deals only with His sons now, and if they do something wrong, they will feel the consequences.

God doesn't work directly in the lives of those who are not sons now, which is why not all of them go through massive trials. We can all feel upset when we see the wicked man prosper now and ourselves going through tough moments. We are nevertheless called to pray for those people to be saved as well. Later in the same psalm, Asaph writes that he understood their end and that they were brought to desolation in a moment ([Psalm 73:19](#)).

The Bible says there are two paths – a broad one, which is easy to walk on, but its end leads to perdition, and a narrow and hard one, but its end leads to salvation. The wicked persons walk on the broad way. We will be corrected and rebuked by the Lord while walking on the narrow one, but we will receive the crown of life at the end. The fire purifies, and it is a fire that we often need to go through. The wedding garment of Christ's bride will be made of fine, clean, and bright linen ([Revelation 19:8](#)). It will be completely white without any spot. This is a fruit of the work of the spirit of God, which purifies as a fire. This fire is His ability to sanctify, but it also signifies the trials we go through. Trials in the Bible are also compared to fire ([1 Peter 4:12](#)). We as a church are the bride of Christ, but also personally, each believer can be seen as Christ's bride.

The wicked persons walk on the broad way. The correction we, as godly people, receive is all with the purpose of teaching us something. Sometimes, it is the hard way, but sometimes, this is the way we can understand, and we need to appreciate it. That's why David received the punishment while he was alive. It was good that he knew about it and was ready to accept it. We also need to know that this is not actually a punishment but a lesson and a chastening, as it is called in [Hebrews 12:7](#).

The first verse in the same chapter of Hebrews speaks about the sin which so easily ensnares us, meaning that the chastening of which is spoken after has to do with that. In many situations in the Old Testament, we can see that when the nation of Israel was sinning, there were enemies rising against them, meaning that there was a consequence for the sin. All of this was a part of the judgment, too. This judgment could manifest in different ways in today's days, such as spiritually, which has to do with what we feel and live inside us or with situations around us.

Now the LORD raised up an adversary against Solomon, Hadad the Edomite; he was a descendant of the king in Edom. ([1 Kings 11:14](#))

This verse is an example of what we are talking about. It describes what happened to Solomon after he strayed from the Lord's ways. We can see it in what v.11 in the same chapter says.

"Therefore the LORD said to Solomon, "Because you have done this, and have not kept My covenant and My statutes, which I

have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom away from you and give it to your servant.” (1 Kings 11:11)

After this situation, an enemy came against him. There are consequences of sin, even if the Lord forgives us! I am not saying this to scare anyone or say that the Lord is not merciful. Obviously, He wants to teach us a lesson through this, but we need to think twice before we sin. There are times when we don't know at the very moment that we might be sinning, but there are other times when we know well about it. Even though sin is always a sin, there are different ways in which God will judge the sin that is consciously committed and the one we weren't so aware of. Often, it is said that we are sinners anyway and always sin, but there is a part of the scripture stating that our life with God is not meant to be seen in this way. We must strive to love the Lord and show our love by obeying Him.



Even though we might have weaknesses and sin, we are never to surrender to these things, and we need to strive to walk in obedience and desire holiness. I don't want to bear the consequences of sin in my life. Reading the Bible, we can see how certain sins and mistakes committed by persons left permanent marks. Abraham didn't have enough patience to wait on the Lord to bring him the son of the promise, and so he went to be with Hagar, his wife's maid ([Genesis 16:1-4](#)). He did that without consulting with the Lord. She conceived Ismael, and the Lord blessed him too, as he was Abraham's heir, but nevertheless, out of him came a nation that is still today an enemy of the nation of Israel. There are also other passages in the scripture where it states that because of wrong choices and because of sin, enemies were rising against the nation of Israel ([Judges 3:8](#), [Judges 6:1](#), [2 Chronicles 12:2](#)). This was the way the Lord wanted to teach them that those choices and sin weren't good.

I also say that not all the hardships and trials we are going through have to do with our sins, but the Lord definitely corrects those whom He loves. This is sometimes manifested in situations in which we will live. Sometimes, there are also situations we go through just with the purpose of strengthening our faith. Of course, the passages we mentioned above are from the Old Testament, and some people might disagree with the fact that today, there is a correction we go through after we sin. Still, even the New Testament speaks about that in the same sense in [Hebrews 12](#) and in [1 Peter 4:17](#), where it talks about the judgment which must start from the house of the Lord.

There is also the example of the thief standing on the side of Jesus while He was crucified. This is what happened:

³⁹ Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, "If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us."

⁴⁰ But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, "Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? ⁴¹ And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong." ⁴² Then he said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom."

⁴³ And Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise." ([Luke 23:39-43](#))

One of the things he acknowledged in his conversation with the Master was that he was receiving justly the due reward for his deeds. This was a really important statement as it was done from the bottom of his heart and with faith. That was a **key**. The other thief was just asking for a solution and was, in a way, testing the Lord, saying: “If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us.” Many people, including myself, sometimes ask God for a solution to their problem only, while one of the thieves acknowledged what he had done and understood what he deserved. Here is where the difference lies. May God give us a receptive heart that doesn't just ask for its own interest. Many people may be approaching God, asking Him for things, or even trying to repent and convert, but just with the purpose of finding a solution for their situation.

So, we conclude that when it comes to sin, there is a consequence and a kind of judgment that occurs. As we said before, this doesn't occur to all people but particularly to the house of God, as **1 Peter 4:17** says, because they will not partake in the final judgment that will come to all sinners. Still, they will partially experience a judgment that will occur here in life. This, we repeat, is not because God wants to punish them but rather to show them that sinning is not something good and that even if He forgives, there is also pain as a consequence. This happens because when we sin, He feels pain, too. First, because He is just, and second, because we get lost when sinning. Still, God is faithful to His promises and does everything possible to bring us back to Him. This is why He corrects us. He does it because of

love. The pain and the consequences coming into our lives are also with the purpose of correcting us. Many of the things we go through are for that reason.

Jesus paid a high price because of the sin on the cross, and He wants us to understand at least a bit of what He went through. When we used to sin in complete ignorance in the past, before we knew Jesus, we couldn't and didn't feel anything concerning sin and its consequences. We didn't have many regrets about it then. However, the situation changes when a person begins to really know in his heart about Jesus and about sin and its consequences.

The Lord rebukes us as loving Father and works in our life. The experiences we have with Him are real. God doesn't manifest Himself or work just on Sundays or just in particular moments when we are involved in some religious meeting or activity, which, of course, is important. He works in each moment and manifests Himself and His judgments around us and in the situations in which we live. A life lived by faith is something real, and the relationship with the Lord always accompanies us. With its blessings and with its corrections and chastening sometimes. We can also turn our backs and try to forget about it and leave behind the Lord's corrections, but we eventually see that this leads us to more pain and the wrong destination. It is a privilege if we participate in the Lord's chastisement for our life. We did wrong by making mistakes and sinning, but at the same time, we need to understand the purpose of His correction and feel privileged knowing that this is for our good.

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