



THE LIFE OF DAVID

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# AFTER GOD'S HEART

“The Measure of a Life”

Acts 13:20-22





**saving** private ryan







David Brooks

Recently I've been thinking about the difference between the résumé virtues and the eulogy virtues. The résumé virtues are the ones you list on your résumé, the skills that you bring to the job market and that contribute to external success. The eulogy virtues are deeper. They're the virtues that get talked about at your funeral, the ones that exist at



David Brooks

the core of your being—whether you are kind, brave, honest or faithful; what kind of relationships you formed. Most of us would say that the eulogy virtues are more important than the résumé virtues, but I confess that for long stretches of my life I've spent more time thinking about the latter than the former.





How should  
we measure  
David's life?





# Robert Alter

The gritty historical realism of the story ... surely argues against the notion that it is simply legendary. Were David an invention of much later national tradition, he would be the most peculiar of legendary founding kings: a figure who early on is shown as a collaborator with the archenemies of Israel, the Philistines; who compounds adultery with murder;



# Robert Alter

who more than once exposes himself to humiliation, is repeatedly seen in his weakness, and oscillates from nobility of sentiment and act to harsh vindictiveness on his very deathbed. ... David turns out to be one of the most unfathomable figures of ancient literature.





# David Wolpe

What is it about David that makes him the one to whom God bestows an eternal promise? He is such a contradictory personality that even the ancient rabbis confessed, "We are unable to make sense of David's character" ... David is everything. Conventional religion has a regrettable tendency to do surgery on the human soul,





# David Wolpe

leaving only the exalted parts. But readers of the Bible find that the original source is more realistic. The Bible is filled with flawed human beings and fraught situations against the backdrop of charged sanctity. The entire book is indeed, in Leonard Cohen's words, "a broken hallelujah."





# Jonathan Kirsch

Exactly what are we meant to learn from King David as he is depicted in the Bible? Once we have read his biblical life story with open eyes –and once we have witnessed the shocking excesses of which he was capable–some of us may be left with the idea that he does not really belong in a book that holds itself out as a source of moral instruction for humankind!





# Jonathan Kirsch

... “The one indisputable point about King David is that he is one hard case,” writes Donald Harman Akenson. ... And if we overlook these “hard” facts, as preachers and teachers have tended to do, we miss the whole point of the biblical life story of David. ... The Talmudic rabbis were so troubled by the plain facts of David’s life—the cunning, cynicism, and carnality





# Jonathan Kirsch

that he displays unapologetically in the pages of the Bible—that they simply dreamed up a new and improved David. ... The kinder and gentler David of rabbinic fantasy, however, is plausible only to someone who has never opened the Bible or who ignores what the Bible actually says of David. ... If we are courageous enough to read it with open eyes and with an open mind, we discover that the Bible is provocative and challenging, unsettling





# Jonathan Kirsch

and off-putting, sometimes even shocking and scandalous. And nowhere in the Bible are we confronted more forcefully with what it means to be a human being than in the biblical life story of David. The deepest of all the mysteries that confront us in the Hebrew Bible is the mystery of how a man as flawed as David can be a man after God's own heart.





**What Would David Do?**





**“a man after God’s own heart”**





## 1 Samuel 8:4-7

So all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah. They said to him, "You are old, and your sons do not follow your ways; now appoint a king to lead us, such as all the other nations have."

But when they said, "Give us a king to





# 1 Samuel 8:4-7

lead us," this displeased Samuel; so he prayed to the LORD.

And the LORD told him: "Listen to all that the people are saying to you; it is not you they have rejected, but they have rejected me as their king.



## 1 Samuel 15:10-11

Then the word of the LORD came to Samuel: "I regret that I have made Saul king, because he has turned away from me and has not carried out my instructions."





# 1 Samuel 16:7

But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

David was never guilty of idolatry. Not once is it recorded that David worshipped idols or false gods.







# David Wolpe

[David's] relationship with God is steady and assured throughout the story. A staunch believer and a worshiper, David prays, offers thanks, and most important, hopes to build the Temple. His being credited with the Psalms solidifies the traditional depiction of David as the most devotional figure in the Bible. "I have set the Lord before me always" (Ps. 16:8).





# David Wolpe

God is not always pleased with his servant's actions, to say the least. Still, throughout his journey, David, though sinful and rebuked, is never faithless. His failures do not make him doubt—or reject—God; rather, they intensify his devotion. Ben Sira writes that David loved his Creator and God took away his sin.









# Jeremiah 23:1-6

“Woe to the shepherds who are destroying and scattering the sheep of my pasture!” declares the LORD. Therefore this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says to the shepherds who tend my people: “Because you have scattered my flock and driven them away and have not bestowed care on them, I will bestow punishment on you for the evil you have done,” declares the LORD.





## Jeremiah 23:1-6

"I myself will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries where I have driven them and will bring them back to their pasture, where they will be fruitful and increase in number. I will place shepherds over them who will tend them, and they will no longer be afraid or terrified, nor will any be missing," declares the LORD.



# Jeremiah 23:1-6

“The days are coming,” declares the LORD,  
“when I will **raise up for David** a righteous  
Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do  
what is just and right in the land.

In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will  
live in safety. This is the name by which he  
will be called: The LORD Our Righteous  
Savior.





## Ezekiel 34:23-24

I will place over them one shepherd,  
**my servant David**, and he will tend  
them; he will tend them and be their  
shepherd. I the LORD will be their God,  
and my servant David will be prince  
among them. I the LORD have spoken.



## Hosea 3:4-5

For the Israelites will live many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred stones, without ephod or household gods. Afterward the Israelites will return and seek the LORD their God and **David their king**. They will come trembling to the LORD and to his blessings in the last days.





## Amos 9:11-12

“In that day “I will restore **David’s fallen shelter**— I will repair its broken walls and restore its ruins— and will rebuild it as it used to be, so that they may possess the remnant of Edom and all the nations that bear my name, ” declares the LORD, who will do these things.



## Micah 5:2-4

“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.”

Therefore Israel will be abandoned until the time when she who is in labor bears a





## Micah 5:2-4

son, and the rest of his brothers return to join the Israelites.

He will stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they will live securely, for then his greatness will reach to the ends of the earth.



# Zechariah 9:9-10

Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

I will take away the chariots from Ephraim and the warhorses from Jerusalem, and the battle bow will be broken. He will proclaim peace to the nations. His rule will extend from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth.





## Zechariah 14:9

The LORD will be king over the whole earth. On that day there will be one LORD, and his name the only name.



Luke 2:9-12

And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in **the city of David** a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger."









Acts 13:20-22

"After this, God gave them judges until the time of Samuel the prophet. Then the people asked for a king, and he gave them Saul son of Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin, who ruled forty years. After removing Saul, he made David their king. God testified concerning him:






Acts 13:20-22

'I have found David son of Jesse, a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do.' "From this man's descendants God has brought to Israel the Savior Jesus, as he promised.










# Tim Keller

What is an idol? It is anything more important to you than God, anything that absorbs your heart and imagination more than God, anything you seek to give you what only God can give. ... the human heart is an "idol factory" ... In Ezekiel 14:3, God says about elders of Israel, "These men have set up their idols in their hearts." Like us, the elders must have responded to this





# Tim Keller

charge, "Idols? What idols? I don't see any idols." God was saying that the human heart takes good things like a successful career, love, material possessions, even family, and turns them into ultimate things. Our hearts deify them as the center of our lives, because, we think, they can give us significance and security, safety and fulfillment, if we attain them.



John 10:10-11



The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.



What is the  
measure of a life?







## Jeremiah 9:23-24

Thus says the LORD: "Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the LORD."









# Summary

In what sense was David a man after God's own heart? David shows us that our lives are measured not by what we can accomplish but by our relationship with God.