

The Life of David: Finding God When Alone and Struggling I Samuel 19 & Psalm 59

Last time we saw that David had a simple focus in the midst of a very complex life.

As we open to Psalm 19, look with me at the last verse. Here is the cry of David's heart, right in front of us, and on paper. David simply said, "I want my life to please YOU. Every part, seen or unseen, I want my life to please you."

14 Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer.

There is it, short and sweet, David unabashedly and as a young man laid open his life before the Lord who was watching.

We know from the record in God's Word that David failed: as a husband, as a father, as a worship leader, as King, and as a friend. But God does not demand nor expect perfection from his chosen ones. He just asks for us to love Him with all of our heart, soul, mind, and body. David loved the Lord, and his life should draw us to want to follow and seek the Lord like he did.

As we hold open our Bibles to Psalm 19 we are looking at the first period of David's life:

PERIOD 1: DAVID FROM THE LONELY DAYS OF HIS YOUTH WRITES THREE INCREDIBLE PSALMS (8, 19, 23).

From his hours out in the wilderness watching sheep and the long nights guarding them under the stars as a young shepherd boy, David was inspired (after the Spirit came upon him in I Samuel 16:13), to write the Spirit prompted lessons of his life we have now in the book of Psalms.

Psalm 19: Pleasing God, not pleasing myself. David broke with the crowd, stopped getting and seeking approval from his peers and went straight to the top. He wanted God and God alone to be his goal. And that was still his desire.

Psalm 23: Following the Good Shepherd for all my Life. David had watched many sheep for much of his life (I Samuel 16:11,19; 17:15,20) walked through life with

confidence because it was settled for him, the Lord was David's shepherd and as one of the Lord's sheep, David followed God.

Psalm 8: Living for the Glory of His Name not mine. Note the preface to Psalm 8 talks about the city of Gath, the first verse and last verses both frame the entire Psalm as focusing on Name of the Lord. As recorded in I Samuel 17:45, David was concerned about defending, honoring, and standing for the Name of the Lord.

Now, as we turn to I Samuel 19, we come to the second great era of David's life.

1. We already saw David anointed by Samuel as King in I Samuel 16.
2. Then Goliath is met and killed by a fearless young David in chapter 17.
3. In I Samuel 18, King Saul asks David to start working for him full time (v.2), and David becomes best friends with Saul's son Jonathan. But Saul becomes more erratic, depressed, jealous, resentful, and finally seek to murder David (v.2,9,11). David stays in touch and walking with the Lord (v. 14), and eventually David becomes the King's son-in-law as he marries Michal, Saul's daughter. The chapter ends with a striking contrast:

I Samuel 18:28-30 Thus Saul saw and knew that the LORD was with David, and that Michal, Saul's daughter, loved him; 29 and Saul was still more afraid of David. So Saul became David's enemy continually. 30 Then the princes of the Philistines went out to war. And so it was, whenever they went out, that David behaved more wisely than all the servants of Saul, so that his name became highly esteemed.

On that note we enter:

PERIOD 2: FROM HIS LONELY, STRUGGLING, YEARS AS A FUGITIVE DAVID WRITES TWENTY-THREE DIFFERENT PSALMS (4, 7, 11, 13, 16-17, 31, 34-36, 39-40, 52-54, 56-57, 59, 63-64, 70, AND 141-142).

The context of these dark and lonely days puts a beautiful frame around each of these Psalms. The prayers, the cries for help, and the affirmations of God's faithfulness are clearer, dearer, and more memorable from those dark and lonely hours in David's life. David repeats in as many ways as possible that: "All the time God is good"; and "God is good, all the time". Before we read the story, practice with me the message. I'll say: "God is good" and you say: "All the time". And then I'll say: "All the time" and you say: "God is good". Ready?

**All the Time (God is good)
God is good (All the time).**

Now, as we read these 24 verses, see if that is really what we would say, if we didn't know David's God!

Listen to God speaking about a tragic event over three thousand years ago!

*1 Samuel 19:1-24 Now Saul spoke to Jonathan his son and to all his servants, that they should kill David; but Jonathan, Saul's son, delighted greatly in David. 2 So Jonathan told David, saying, "My father Saul seeks to kill you. Therefore please be on your guard until morning, and stay in a secret place and hide. 3 And I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where you are, and I will speak with my father about you. Then what I observe, I will tell you." 4 Thus Jonathan spoke well of David to Saul his father, and said to him, "Let not the king sin against his servant, against David, because he has not sinned against you, and because his works have been very good toward you. 5 For he took his life in his hands and killed the Philistine, and the LORD brought about a great deliverance for all Israel. You saw it and rejoiced. Why then will you sin against innocent blood, to kill David without a cause?" 6 So Saul heeded the voice of Jonathan, and Saul swore, "As the LORD lives, he shall not be killed." 7 Then Jonathan called David, and Jonathan told him all these things. So Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he was in his presence as in times past. 8 And there was war again; and David went out and fought with the Philistines, and struck them with a mighty blow, and they fled from him. 9 Now the distressing spirit from the LORD came upon Saul as he sat in his house with his spear in his hand. And David was playing music with his hand. 10 Then Saul sought to pin David to the wall with the spear, but he slipped away from Saul's presence; and he drove the spear into the wall. So David fled and escaped that night. **11 Saul also sent messengers to David's house to watch him and to kill him in the morning [this is the setting of Palm 59!]**. And Michal, David's wife, told him, saying, "If you do not save your life tonight, tomorrow you will be killed." 12 So Michal let David down through a window. And he went and fled and escaped. 13 And Michal took an image and laid it in the bed, put a cover of goats' hair for his head, and covered it with clothes. 14 So when Saul sent messengers to take David, she said, "He is sick." 15 Then Saul sent the messengers back to see David, saying, "Bring him up to me in the bed, that I may kill him." 16 And when the messengers had come in, there was the image in the bed, with a cover of goats' hair for his head. 17 Then Saul said to Michal, "Why have you deceived me like this, and sent my enemy away, so that he has escaped?" And Michal answered Saul, "He said to me, 'Let me go! Why should I kill you?'" 18 So David fled and escaped, and went to Samuel at Ramah, and told him all that Saul had done to him. And he and Samuel went and stayed in Naioth. 19 Now it was told Saul, saying, "Take note, David is at Naioth in Ramah!" 20 Then Saul sent messengers to take David. And when they saw the group of prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as leader over them, the Spirit of God came upon the messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied. 21 And when Saul was told, he sent other messengers, and they prophesied likewise. Then Saul sent messengers again the third time, and they prophesied also. 22 Then he also went to Ramah, and came to the great well that is at Sechu. So he asked, and said, "Where are Samuel and David?" And someone said, "Indeed they are at Naioth in Ramah." 23 So he went there to Naioth in Ramah. Then the Spirit of God was upon him also, and he went on and prophesied until he came to Naioth in Ramah. 24 And he also stripped off his clothes and prophesied before Samuel in like manner, and lay down naked all that day and all that night. Therefore they say, "Is Saul also among the prophets?"*

Are you ready?

**All the Time (God is good)
God is good (All the time).**

In First Sam 18-19 **David suffers intense loneliness as he faces family conflict, big life changes, and great danger;** and from this deep valley of his life writes Psalms 59 and 11.

Think of everything happening here. David moves away from home (18:2), joins the army and becomes an officer leading troops (18:5), becomes a national celebrity (18:7), draws the jealous rage of King Saul (18:8-9), faces life threatening situations (spear thrown at him (18:11), meets and marries a nationally known girl (18:17-28)

In **I Sam 19:11** as Saul tries to murder him, David writes **Psalm 59**. These times of danger are from his boss and father-in-law King Saul. Instead of being eaten up by the intense loneliness he must have felt with job and family pressures all dumped on him at once—he expresses his needs to God. His prayerful responses to these tough times are captured in the Psalms and show a pathway through loneliness to the One who is closest of all.

In that time of feeling so alone David writes **Psalm 59**—how to overcome the feelings of loneliness when we are in danger. David finds an ***unshakeable trust in God's protection.***

Some key truths from this Psalm are:

- David **turns to God** in his fearful times v.1.
- David **trusts in God** in his fearful times v.9.
- David **triumphs through God** in his fearful times v. 16.

1 Samuel 20: **David learns to live with fear as he is a newlywed and faces the unpredictable outbursts of deadly rage from Saul.**

1 Samuel 20:1-42 Then David fled from Naioth in Ramah, and went and said to Jonathan, "What have I done? What is my iniquity, and what is my sin before your father, that he seeks my life?" 2 So Jonathan said to him, "By no means! You shall not die! Indeed, my father will do nothing either great or small without first telling me. And why should my father hide this thing from me? It is not so!" 3 Then David took an oath again, and said, "Your father certainly knows that I have found favor in your eyes, and he has said, 'Do not let Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved.' But truly, as the LORD lives and as your soul lives, there is but a step between me and death." 4 So Jonathan said to David, "Whatever you yourself desire, I will do it for you." 5 And David said to Jonathan, "Indeed tomorrow is the New Moon, and I should not fail to sit with the king to eat. But let me go, that I may hide in the field until the third day at evening. 6 If your father misses me at all, then say, 'David earnestly asked permission of me that he might run over to Bethlehem, his city, for there is a yearly sacrifice there for all the family.' 7 If he says thus: 'It is well,'

your servant will be safe. But if he is very angry, be sure that evil is determined by him. 8 Therefore you shall deal kindly with your servant, for you have brought your servant into a covenant of the LORD with you. Nevertheless, if there is iniquity in me, kill me yourself, for why should you bring me to your father?" 9 But Jonathan said, "Far be it from you! For if I knew certainly that evil was determined by my father to come upon you, then would I not tell you?" 10 Then David said to Jonathan, "Who will tell me, or what if your father answers you roughly?" 11 And Jonathan said to David, "Come, let us go out into the field." So both of them went out into the field. 12 Then Jonathan said to David: "The LORD God of Israel is witness! When I have sounded out my father sometime tomorrow, or the third day, and indeed there is good toward David, and I do not send to you and tell you, 13 may the LORD do so and much more to Jonathan. But if it pleases my father to do you evil, then I will report it to you and send you away, that you may go in safety. And the LORD be with you as He has been with my father. 14 And you shall not only show me the kindness of the LORD while I still live, that I may not die; 15 but you shall not cut off your kindness from my house forever, no, not when the LORD has cut off every one of the enemies of David from the face of the earth." 16 So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, "Let the LORD require it at the hand of David's enemies." 17 Now Jonathan again caused David to vow, because he loved him; for he loved him as he loved his own soul. 18 Then Jonathan said to David, "Tomorrow is the New Moon; and you will be missed, because your seat will be empty. 19 And when you have stayed three days, go down quickly and come to the place where you hid on the day of the deed; and remain by the stone Ezel. 20 Then I will shoot three arrows to the side, as though I shot at a target; 21 and there I will send a lad, saying, 'Go, find the arrows.' If I expressly say to the lad, 'Look, the arrows are on this side of you; get them and come'—then, as the LORD lives, there is safety for you and no harm. 22 But if I say thus to the young man, 'Look, the arrows are beyond you'—go your way, for the LORD has sent you away. 23 And as for the matter which you and I have spoken of, indeed the LORD be between you and me forever." 24 Then David hid in the field. And when the New Moon had come, the king sat down to eat the feast. 25 Now the king sat on his seat, as at other times, on a seat by the wall. And Jonathan arose, and Abner sat by Saul's side, but David's place was empty. 26 Nevertheless Saul did not say anything that day, for he thought, "Something has happened to him; he is unclean, surely he is unclean." 27 And it happened the next day, the second day of the month, that David's place was empty. And Saul said to Jonathan his son, "Why has the son of Jesse not come to eat, either yesterday or today?" 28 So Jonathan answered Saul, "David earnestly asked permission of me to go to Bethlehem. 29 And he said, 'Please let me go, for our family has a sacrifice in the city, and my brother has commanded me to be there. And now, if I have found favor in your eyes, please let me get away and see my brothers.' Therefore he has not come to the king's table." 30 Then Saul's anger was aroused against Jonathan, and he said to him, "You son of a perverse, rebellious woman! Do I not know that you have chosen the son of Jesse to your own shame and to the shame of your mother's nakedness? 31 For as long as the son of Jesse lives on the earth, you shall not be established, nor your kingdom. Now therefore, send and bring him to me, for he shall surely die." 32 And Jonathan answered Saul his father, and said to him, "Why should he be killed?"

What has he done?" 33 Then Saul cast a spear at him to kill him, by which Jonathan knew that it was determined by his father to kill David. 34 So Jonathan arose from the table in fierce anger, and ate no food the second day of the month, for he was grieved for David, because his father had treated him shamefully. And so it was, in the morning, that Jonathan went out into the field at the time appointed with David, and a little lad was with him. 36 Then he said to his lad, "Now run, find the arrows which I shoot." As the lad ran, he shot an arrow beyond him. 37 When the lad had come to the place where the arrow was which Jonathan had shot, Jonathan cried out after the lad and said, "Is not the arrow beyond you?" 38 And Jonathan cried out after the lad, "Make haste, hurry, do not delay!" So Jonathan's lad gathered up the arrows and came back to his master. 39 But the lad did not know anything. Only Jonathan and David knew of the matter. 40 Then Jonathan gave his *weapons to his lad, and said to him, "Go, carry them to the city."* 41 As soon as the lad had gone, David arose from a place toward the south, fell on his face to the ground, and bowed down three times. And they kissed one another; **and they wept together, but David more so.** 42 Then Jonathan said to David, "Go in peace, since we have both sworn in the name of the LORD, saying, 'May the LORD be between you and me, and between your descendants and my descendants, forever.'" So he arose and departed, and Jonathan went into the city.

It is most likely after this event when Jonathan warned David to flee Saul's wrath, David felt even more alone, endangered, and friendless and wrote **Psalms 11** and **64**—how to overcome feelings of loneliness when suffering family problems and danger.

- **Psalm 11** is a meditation on why David should not just run away from dangers—he needed to run to the Lord first.

Psalm 11

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

1 In the LORD I put my trust;

How can you say to my soul,
"Flee as a bird to your mountain"?

2 For look! The wicked bend their bow,
They make ready their arrow on the string,
That they may shoot secretly at the upright in heart.

3 If the foundations are destroyed,
What can the righteous do?

4 The LORD is in His holy temple,
The LORD's throne is in heaven;
His eyes behold,
His eyelids test the sons of men.

5 The LORD tests the righteous,
But the wicked and the one who loves violence His soul hates.

6 Upon the wicked He will rain coals;
Fire and brimstone and a burning wind
Shall be the portion of their cup.

7 For the LORD is righteous,
He loves righteousness;
His countenance beholds the upright.

Psalm 64 is the Psalm about the poison of jealous, hateful, and hurtful tongues. After David's meteoric rise to giant slayer, King's helper, royal son-in-law and commander—there were many who hated and envied him. God shows him how to deal with poisonous language directed at him. This could also reflect not only this hard time dealing with the hatred and threats on his life from King Saul, it may also blend in some of the hard times during Absalom's rebellion, which included the evil accusations of Ahithophel and Shimei (2nd Samuel 15-19).

Psalm 64

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

- 1 Hear my voice, O God, in my meditation;
Preserve my life from fear of the enemy.
- 2 Hide me from the secret plots of the wicked,
From the rebellion of the workers of iniquity,
- 3 Who sharpen their tongue like a sword,
And bend their bows to shoot their arrows—bitter words,
- 4 That they may shoot in secret at the blameless;
Suddenly they shoot at him and do not fear.

- 5 They encourage themselves in an evil matter;
They talk of laying snares secretly;
They say, "Who will see them?"
- 6 They devise iniquities:
"We have perfected a shrewd scheme."
Both the inward thought and the heart of man are deep.

- 7 But God shall shoot at them with an arrow;
Suddenly they shall be wounded.
- 8 So He will make them stumble over their own tongue;
All who see them shall flee away.
- 9 All men shall fear,
And shall declare the work of God;
For they shall wisely consider His doing.

- 10 **The righteous shall be glad in the LORD, and trust in Him.
And all the upright in heart shall glory.**

What happens next?

First Samuel 21:1-9: David suffers intense loneliness as he loses his job, and is separated from his family.

David writes **Psalm 52**—how to overcome the feelings of loneliness when we are away from our work, home, and family.

As we close, most of you may remember my favorite hymn is Living for Jesus, right?

Thomas Chisholm wrote that hymn as a poem when he was unemployed and in a weak, broken health era of his life. Several years later he wrote the sequel to Living for Jesus. I would like to challenge you to sing about our all the time God who is good!

First look at hymn # ____ LFJ. Note the author and date.

Now turn to the sequel hymn # ____ GITF. Note the date and author.

The lesson is: Live for Jesus a life that is true (like David) and as we look back at hard times, all that we can see and talk about is how Great is our God's Amazing Faithfulness!