



***Theme: Many Faces of David***  
***"A Shepherd's Heart"***

Sermon preached by Jeff Huber, August 20-21, 2022, at Summit Church, Durango

**Weekly Memory Verse:**

***<sup>1</sup> The Lord is my shepherd;  
I have all that I need. – Psalm 23:1***

**VIDEO      Sermon Starter**

Today we blessed the backpacks of our kids before they go back to school, and I was reminded of a backpack I got when I was in middle school. I must admit that our backpacks were not as cool as the ones that we have today, and mine was made of simple cloth with some straps. However, it was made by my mother or grandmother, I can't really remember which one. It was meant to be a reminder to me that I didn't go to school alone which was important because almost every year I was at a new school because we moved so much when I was a kid. I remember being worried about what I wore to school, because cool kids had Levi 501 jeans and Adidas tobacco brown suede shoes and hang 10 shirts. I didn't have any of those to begin with and it makes you feel a bit subconscious when you don't feel good on the outside. I also

had braces and was very short and in many ways was not cool if you simply looked at me from the outside.

Have you ever felt like that? Have you ever felt unworthy on the outside or judged because of your appearance? Have you ever doubted yourself worth because maybe you didn't have the means to look good on the outside? If so, today's sermon and message is just for you because it is a message from God through one of the most amazing characters in scripture about how God doesn't look at us on the outside but instead sees our hearts. God not only sees what we are on the inside, but he sees what we can be. I remind you frequently as your pastor that God made you to love you which means God knows our potential and **God loves us just the way we are and loves us enough not to leave us there.**

Today we begin a new series of sermons on David, one of the most important figures in what we call our Old Testament, or the Hebrew Bible. As followers of Jesus, we trace his lineage to King David who both were born in Bethlehem and seen as kings. We are going to explore the significance of David who is foundational to both Judaism and Christianity. David name is mentioned in the Old Testament more than 1000 times, more than Moses or Abraham or any other character. Half of the book of Psalms are ascribed to David and much of the history of the kings of Judaism are about David. All the Hebrew kings are compared to David who was a warrior, prophet, poet, and shepherd.

David was very human, and his life reflects our life and our life often reflects his experience. At his best, we see in David what we might hope to be, someone who is after God's own heart. David's name literally means "beloved." He was beloved by God and many others, which is something we all long for in our lives. But, we also look at his story and we recognize that David was sometimes a mess. There were times when he abused his power which led to adultery and very poor decisions, including murder. We look at those parts of his life and

recognize that we don't want to be like that, and yet we are that in some ways. What we see in David is someone who fell short and made mistakes and still found his way back to God, confessing his broken places and asking for forgiveness.

David's story actually begins two generations before him with his grandmother Ruth. She became Jewish by choice, choosing to believe in the one true God. She said to her daughter-in-law that her people, the Jewish people, would now be her family, and the Jewish God would be her God because it had saved her through Naomi who was faithful and stayed with Ruth even after her husband, Ruth's son, died. Ruth was a model of what it meant to be faithful and we are meant to make that connection when her great grandson David becomes the greatest king of Israel.

When we have traveled to Bethlehem as Christian pilgrims, there is a central place we end up which is the Church of the nativity And Manger square. We have seen this place where it is said that Jesus was born in a cave, which would have been called a stable because it is where the animals would be kept. It was in essence a 1st century parking garage.

**GRAPHIC            Church of the Nativity Exterior**

**GRAPHIC            Church of the Nativity Interior**

**GRAPHIC            Church of the Nativity Grotto**

**GRAPHIC            Church of the Nativity Grotto Up Close**

**GRAPHIC            Shepherd's Field Church**

**GRAPHIC            Shepherd's Field**

**GRAPHIC            Fields of Ruth and Boaz**

The place of Bethlehem and this history is important to understanding the story that we're going to look at today from the life of David which really tells us about the beginning of his journey

towards being a king. Remember that the first king of Israel was Saul who had many issues and eventually lost favor in the eyes of God. The Israelites were going to be needing a new king soon and here is what we read in 1 Samuel 16.

## **BIBLE**

**1 Now the Lord said to Samuel, “You have mourned long enough for Saul. I have rejected him as king of Israel, so fill your flask with olive oil and go to Bethlehem. Find a man named Jesse who lives there, for I have selected one of his sons to be my king.”**

**<sup>2</sup> But Samuel asked, “How can I do that? If Saul hears about it, he will kill me.”**

**“Take a heifer with you,” the Lord replied, “and say that you have come to make a sacrifice to the Lord. <sup>3</sup> Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you which of his sons to anoint for me.”**

**<sup>4</sup> So Samuel did as the Lord instructed. When he arrived at Bethlehem, the elders of the town came trembling to meet him. “What’s wrong?” they asked. “Do you come in peace?”**

**<sup>5</sup> “Yes,” Samuel replied. “I have come to sacrifice to the Lord. Purify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice.” Then Samuel performed the purification rite for Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice, too.**

**<sup>6</sup> When they arrived, Samuel took one look at Eliab and thought, “Surely this is the Lord’s anointed!”**

**<sup>7</sup> But the Lord said to Samuel, “Don’t judge by his appearance or height, for I have rejected him. The Lord doesn’t see things the way you see them. People judge by outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”**

**<sup>8</sup> Then Jesse told his son Abinadab to step forward and walk in front of Samuel. But Samuel said, “This is not the one the Lord has chosen.” <sup>9</sup> Next Jesse summoned Shimea, but**

**Samuel said, “Neither is this the one the Lord has chosen.” <sup>10</sup> In the same way all seven of Jesse’s sons were presented to Samuel. But Samuel said to Jesse, “The Lord has not chosen any of these.” <sup>11</sup> Then Samuel asked, “Are these all the sons you have?”**

**“There is still the youngest,” Jesse replied. “But he’s out in the fields watching the sheep and goats.”**

**“Send for him at once,” Samuel said. “We will not sit down to eat until he arrives.”**

**<sup>12</sup> So Jesse sent for him. He was dark and handsome, with beautiful eyes.**

**And the Lord said, “This is the one; anoint him.”**

**<sup>13</sup> So as David stood there among his brothers, Samuel took the flask of olive oil he had brought and anointed David with the oil. And the Spirit of the Lord came powerfully upon David from that day on. Then Samuel returned to Ramah.**

We learn something very important in this story about the roots of David as he begins in the fields in Bethlehem as a shepherd. We see that while others might look at him on the outside and not see anything that will amount to much, God looks at something else. It's really essential we understand that the fact that David was a shepherd is what makes the foundation for the rest of his life. I thought it would be helpful for you to get a better understanding of this if you were to meet a Bethlehem shepherd. I met one years ago when I was on a trip to the Holy Land but our video camera went out and we didn't get anything in the interview. I have a friend who was able to interview a Bethlehem shepherd and I wanted to share with you what he discovered.

Omar began shepherding when he was six years old and was left by his family in the wilderness with their sheep and goats and forced to find his way home. That was part of the training for a shepherd in the

1st century. Omar is both a university student and a shepherd outside of Bethlehem in the wilderness region surrounding that city. Since David was a shepherd, I think we can get a good idea of what is important about being a shepherd and the qualities needed.

## **VIDEO     Shepherd Interview**

It was great to hear Omar talk about what a Good Shepherd does, and I wanted us to imagine David in a region like this with a flock of animals like the ones we just saw. Seeing and hearing images like that can help us more readily understand some of David's writings like the 23rd Psalm, which is used by both Christianity and Judaism, especially at funerals and at times of struggle. We talk about the “valley of the shadow of death” and we can mean that both literally but also in times that feels like we are in a dark valley. When we are in those moments of difficulty or challenge, we are invited to turn to God as comforter and provider and savior. I think of the beginning of that Psalm which is our scripture memory verse for this week. If you're willing, let's say it together out loud.

## **BIBLE**

**<sup>1</sup> *The Lord is my shepherd; I have all that I need.*** – Psalm 23:1

A key reality of cultivating a shepherd's heart is remembering this truth, and that we don't need the approval of the outside world or to be defined by what we wear or even what kind of backpack we have or what is in the backpack, or not in the backpack. One of the reasons I like this backpack is because it has everything I need. I have cables for my backpack and snacks and even this little sheep to remind me that when the Lord is my shepherd, I have all that I need. I know the world would try and convince me I need much more, but the invitation in this story about David is to remember that God looks at the heart and with God as our guide and as our Holy Spirit filling us, we have all that we need.

I was visiting recently with someone who had been in a terrible

accident and is still recovering Physically and mentally from the trauma. They seemed to be very much at peace and when I asked them how it was, they were able to be so calm and assured, they looked at me with a smile and said, “Silly pastor—it’s God! I have prayed the 23rd Psalm every day and it has carried me.”

We are invited to cultivate a shepherd's heart on a daily basis, even in the midst of the darkest valleys. Let me tell you the story of a woman who had breast cancer and after surgery she had to go bra shopping by herself. It was one of the loneliest experiences of her life. She made the decision that every time she knew a woman who had breast cancer, she would volunteer to go with them to help them by their first bra so they wouldn't be alone. Each of us are called in life to be that kind of shepherd to our friends, our family, and even strangers at times.

I think God chose David because he had the ability to see the vulnerable or weak and care for them. We saw Omar carrying that sheep that was sick and I love that image of a shepherd. That is a picture for each of us as we are all called to have that shepherd’s heart and be willing to shepherd others. I think that's why David was called to be the leader and care for Israel.

That selection process we read about in the scripture, where Samuel is sent by God to find the next king, also tells us much about a shepherd's heart. Saul is convinced it will be one of the strapping young and handsome men because that is what people are looking for in a king. It is the scrawny shepherd boy out in the fields of Bethlehem taking care of the sheep and the goats that isn't even named by his father in the story. They bring in this young boy who seems to not have any of the qualifications for a king and I love how this is described in the story. This is another scripture worth memorizing.

## **BIBLE**

**<sup>7</sup> But the Lord said to Samuel, “Don’t judge by his appearance or**

**height, for I have rejected him. The Lord doesn't see things the way you see them. People judge by outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."**

This story reminds us that God chooses the unlikely and the ordinary, and even the least likely to succeed. We see that beginning with Abraham and Sarah who are an elderly couple but God will choose to start a nation and be a blessing to all the nations. Moses stuttered and couldn't speak and was also a shepherd when he was called by God. Jesus was born to peasants from the town of Nazareth, a town not even on the map in the 1st century. The disciples were not educated or expected to amount to much because they were common laborers. The Samaritan woman at the well which happens in an area not far from Bethlehem has been divorced four times and is living with someone when Jesus sends her to be the first preacher of the gospel in John 4. The apostle Peter abandoned Jesus and denied him and yet he was the one on whom Jesus would build the church. The apostle Paul was a murderer and had a thorn in the flesh which many believed was macular degeneration or poor eyesight and yet without him the Church would have stayed in Jerusalem and not been taken to Turkey and Greece and eventually Europe and the entire world.

God can take each one of us and our ordinary life experiences and do something amazing, because God sees what we can be and not what the world sees or even what we sometimes see in the mirror. Each of us has the ability to cultivate a shepherd's heart. I think I've got our Stephen ministers here in this congregation who meet one-on-one with people going through crisis or difficulty, divorce and job loss, health issues or just general anxiety and fear. We will be starting a new training this fall and it would be a great opportunity for you to cultivate a shepherd's heart if you feel called.

I thought this would be a great opportunity for you to hear from someone who has responded to a call and while I am not sure she is an unlikely shepherd, her story captured my imagination as I was thinking



about the story of David. Interview with Aubrey Walsh, the Founder of OneSeed, a nonprofit that provides long term, one-on-one, Christ-centered teacher training for schools in Ghana, West Africa. Along with training teachers, OneSeed creates Sister School Partnerships with partner schools in Ghana and schools in the U.S.A. Aubrey has worked and lived in Ghana, West Africa for six years. OneSeed is a nonprofit registered in the State of Colorado. The heart of OneSeed is discipleship and sustainable change.

- 1. Tell us a bit about One Seed and how you see the need for teachers to cultivate a shepherd's heart?***
- 2. Have you ever felt not qualified for what you felt God was calling you to do?***
- 3. How did you/do you cultivate your heart so that you can lean into your calling?***

<b>GRAPHIC</b>	<b>One Seed 1</b>
<b>GRAPHIC</b>	<b>One Seed 2</b>
<b>GRAPHIC</b>	<b>One Seed 3</b>

I want to invite you to pray the 23rd Psalm with me as we close our time together today. We are going to use the New Living Translation so we can really think about the words and what they might mean for us today. They are a bit different than the King James version or others that we might have learned when we are younger, but it's good to hear things new and fresh. I realized that some of us are in a dark valley, even the shadow of death hangs over us. Some of us are in a dark valley because our relationships are broken. Some of us feel like we are in green pastures and things are going well. Some of us are nervous because we are beginning school and have a new routine we

have to begin, meeting new people. Some of us our leading ministries 1/2 a world away and I need encouragement. Whatever place you might be in today, I invite you to pray these words with me together out loud or in your heart. Let's pray.

## **BIBLE**

<sup>1</sup> *The Lord is my shepherd;  
I have all that I need.*

<sup>2</sup> *He lets me rest in green meadows;  
he leads me beside peaceful streams.*

<sup>3</sup> *He renews my strength.  
He guides me along right paths,  
bringing honor to his name.*

<sup>4</sup> *Even when I walk  
through the darkest valley,  
I will not be afraid,  
for you are close beside me.*

*Your rod and your staff  
protect and comfort me.*

<sup>5</sup> *You prepare a feast for me  
in the presence of my enemies.  
You honor me by anointing my head with oil.  
My cup overflows with blessings.*

<sup>6</sup> *Surely your goodness and unfailing love will pursue me  
all the days of my life,  
and I will live in the house of the Lord  
forever.*

*Amen.*

## **August 20-21 Order**

1. Ely welcomes people and says, **“Have you ever not felt good enough on the outside? Today we are going to hear a message encouraging us to remember that God sees us on the inside, and sees what we can become, not what the world sees.”**
2. Two Songs
3. Jeff welcomes and invites people to greet each other however they are comfortable and be seated.
4. Announcements (Check News Section on Website)
  - a. River Baptism Service
  - b. Parenting Workshop
  - c. Women’s Retreat
  - d. Blessing of Backpacks
5. Invite congregation to prepare their hearts for the message.
6. Sermon
7. Prayer
8. Two Songs
9. Prayer and Lord’s Prayer
10. Offering SLIDE and Focus (Prayer Pencils, Backpack Tags, and key chain tags)
11. Care Ministers (If any are present)
12. Prayers and Closing Thoughts
  - i. Prayer focus August is Education
  - ii. Saturday Night announce Connect BBQ
13. Closing Prayer