On the walls in our capitol food court hang some of Cass Gilbert's blueprints and designs for the West Virginia statehouse. You can tell from the sketches you are looking at a unique and beautiful building. However those drawings do absolutely no justice to the real beauty and grandeur of our capitol building. How many times have we admired the gold dome and the stately columns? We often stop to admire the intricate details both inside and outside the building.

Such is the life and reign of King David. As we study him, we can learn much from his trials and his triumphs, from his faith and his failures. We should keep in mind David's life is a "picture" describing and pointing us to Jesus Christ, helping us to better understand and admire our Savior!

In 2012 our study series dealt with seeing Jesus as the subject of all the Scriptures.[1] We considered how all the Bible, including the Old Testament, is the story of God redeeming sinful people through His Son. Jesus challenged the disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:25-27): **"'O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! 26"Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?' 27And beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures."**

Writers in the New Testament tell us to look for pictures of Christ and the gospel in the Old. Some of the terms that refer to these pictures are **Types** (Rom. 5:14, 1 Cor. 10:6,11); **Shadow**s (Col. 2:17; Heb. 8:5, 10:1); **Copies** (Heb. 8:5, 9:23); and **Signs** (Matt. 12:39). One of the greatest pictures of Christ we find in the Old Testament is indeed that of King David.

We are taught very specifically that David is a picture, type, or shadow that is describing Jesus Christ. Jesus Himself challenged those listening to His teaching regarding His relationship to David in Mark 12:

35 And Jesus began to say, as He taught in the temple, "How is it that the scribes say that the Christ is the son of David? 36 David himself said in the Holy Spirit, 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Until I put Your enemies beneath Your feet."'2 37 David himself calls Him 'Lord'; so in what sense is He his son?" And the large crowd enjoyed listening to Him.

We can also consider two important sermons recorded for us in the Book of Acts:

Acts 2:22-36:

29 "Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. 30 And so, because he was a prophet and knew that GOD HAD SWORN TO HIM WITH AN OATH TO SEAT one OF HIS DESCENDANTS ON HIS THRONE, 31 he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that HE WAS NEITHER ABANDONED TO HADES, NOR DID His flesh SUFFER DECAY.[3]

Acts 13:26-39

…(God) raised up David to be their king, concerning whom He also testified and said, 'I HAVE FOUND DAVID the son of Jesse, A MAN AFTER MY HEART, who will do all My will.'4 23 From the descendants of this man, according to promise, God has brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus…

We certainly do not have time to consider all the truths and implications of these passages. Let us simply see how they help direct us in our study of the life of David.

Some approach David and other Old Testament characters with what one author called a "Heroes and Villains" approach. We look to the heroes to inspire us and the villains to warn us.[5] (For example: From David and Goliath we learn how we might defeat the giants we face in our lives.) There are dangers to studying the life of David from a merely "Hero and Villain"

view. **It can be man centered**, changing the focus of the Bible from God and His glory to man and his needs. It can be **moralistic**, emphasizing what we should or shouldn't do while neglecting what God has done or is doing for us. It can **fragment the Bible**, isolating people or events from the grand, sweeping story of God's redemptive plan. Teaching from this perspective can become **Christless**, providing guidelines and principles while neglecting the message of the cross and the gospel. And this approach may **miss the original meaning**, neglecting to consider God's purpose for revealing Himself through this account to the original audience (in this case, the people of Israel).

This is not to say we do not seek out the lessons we might learn from David and the other biographical accounts we find in the Old Testament. Paul reminded us that the Old Testament accounts were written for our example. (Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:1,6,11). James pointed out Job and Elisha as positive role models to follow (James 5:10-11; 17). Hebrews 11 (the "Hall of Faith") gives us the examples of many Old Testament believers we should emulate. Jesus Himself warned us to "Remember Lot's wife" (Luke 17:32).

So as we study the life of David or any other Old Testament account or character, we should do so with both purposes in mind. First we want to learn what this reveals to us about God and His redemptive plan for sinful people. Then we do examine the inspirations, examples, and warnings from the vivid accounts of the heroes and villains found in the Bible. David Murray gives these encouraging reminders when studying the Old Testament accounts:

- Keep God, not man, in the foreground.

- Distinguish Christian morality from mere moralism by realizing that we need Jesus' grace to obey any moral requirements and His forgiveness when we fail.

- Relate every story to the overarching plan of redemption.

- Look for Jesus when studying Jesus' people.

- Consider the original purpose for the original audience.[6]

An Example: Israel's Need for Deliverer

As we begin our study of David, we might start by examining the condition of the nation of Israel at this time. The spiritual condition of the people had fallen to an extreme low, with the

Book of Judges describing how "…There was no king in Israel, and everyone did that which is right in his own eyes" (Judges 21:25). There was a great failure of the priesthood borne out by the sin of Eli's sons (1 Samuel 2:22). The nation as a whole rejected God's rule over them (1 Samuel 8:7) and asked for King. They were given King Saul, a worthless and reprobate leader who rebelled against God.

The coming of King David, a valiant deliverer, a godly leader, and a man after God's own heart was an outpouring of God's grace to a people who deserved nothing but God's judgment. What a picture of Jesus Christ and His coming to deliver us.

Romans 5:6-8

⁶ For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. ⁸But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Galatians 4:4-5

⁴ But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, ⁵so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

God's provision of King David to the people of Israel is a picture of the deliverance He provides for us through Christ. As we pursue our study David, we can certainly learn a lot from His example. More importantly let us remember David's life is a "picture" helping us to learn how we can better understand and appreciate who Christ is and what He has done for us.

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1 http://www.capitolcom.org/west-virginia/studies/2012
2 Psalm 110:1
3 Psalm 16:8-11
4 1 Samuel 13:14
5 Murray, David (2013-08-20). *Jesus on Every Page: 10 Simple Ways to Seek and Find Christ in the Old Testament* (p. 58). Thomas Nelson. Kindle Edition.
6 Ibid. (p. 58)