



# AMAZING *grace*

LENT SERMONS



ASH WEDNESDAY  
David



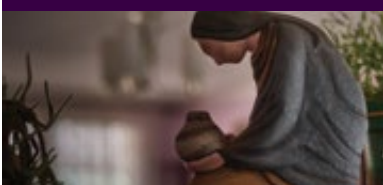
WEEK ONE  
Isaiah of Babylon



WEEK TWO  
The Prodigal Son



WEEK THREE  
The Blind Man



WEEK FOUR  
The Woman at the Well



WEEK FIVE  
Paul

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## ASH WEDNESDAY: DAVID SERMON

- The **Sermon**, “Grace for the Humble,” is delivered by the pastor **P** as narrator and another reader **R** as David, who perhaps is wearing a shepherd’s robe:

**P** As ashes are placed upon our forehead, we hear the words, “Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.” As it was for Adam, so also for us, it is a reminder of our mortality and death. But it is also a call to humility, to our connection to the very dust of the ground from which we were created. And in the shape of the cross, it is a promise that even in the midst of humble death, there is the promise that our Lord Jesus the Christ is with us.

Throughout Lent and Holy Week, we will hear the stories of several biblical figures whose lives were transformed by God’s amazing grace. We begin this Ash Wednesday with the story of a humble representative of our humanity: God’s servant, David.

**R** *I was the youngest son of my father, Jesse.*

**P** As the youngest son of Jesse, and with his family roots in the town of Bethlehem, David had

humble beginnings. All that David had, and all that he would be, was a credit to the grace of God. David, in all humility, knew this to be true. And his own early life in Bethlehem reminds us of Jesus, who was born in a manger in the town of Bethlehem. Jesus was a man of great humility throughout life. But through his humility, we all have come to experience the fullness of God's grace that raises up the weak and the lowly.

℞ *"You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows."*

ℙ When Saul, the king of Israel, had fallen out of favor with the Lord, God sent Samuel to look for a new king among Jesse's sons. Samuel examined the brothers of David first, but none were found to be those selected by the Lord. For the Lord said to Samuel, "The Lord does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart." There was only one other son of Jesse, David, who was out tending the flocks. Samuel called for David, and the Lord said to the prophet, "Rise and anoint him; for this is the one." So in the presence of all of his older brothers, David was anointed to be the next king of Israel. And the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David.

℞ *"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want."*

ℙ As David was also a shepherd, he nonetheless called the Lord his shepherd. So our Lord Jesus was the Good Shepherd, who cares for the whole flock of humanity. As David would be anointed, so would our Lord be anointed. "Christ" means "the anointed one"—and Jesus would be anointed to bring us God's grace. And as the Spirit of God settled upon David, so the Spirit of God would settle upon Jesus as the ambassador of God's grace. At Jesus' baptism, God's voice proclaimed from the heavens, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased." Jesus would then take up the mission of bringing the good news to one and all. Through him, we all receive the grace of being called God's own children in the Spirit of God's love.

℞ *"The Lord makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul."*

ℙ Saul would first learn of David as a man skilled in the playing of the lyre. He sent for him, hoping that his music would bring him relief from his deeply troubled and tormented spirit. And so David, through his music, brought comfort to Saul's spirit.

But even as Saul would bestow favor upon David, it was David who would grow in God's favor. Saul did not know that David was anointed to be his successor. Yet Saul noticed the courage of David. So when the Philistine Goliath taunted the army of Israel, leading them to cower in fear, David was up to the challenge of taking on this giant of a man with just a sling and five small stones.

℞ *“The Lord does not save by sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord’s, and he will give you into our hands.”*

ℙ Goliath would fall to the hand of David. And Saul would then bless David all the more. He would have David lead his armies against the foes of Israel, and David would become a mighty warrior, graced with much success in his campaigns. David would also become friends with Saul’s own son, Jonathan. And when they came home in victory, the people would chant, “Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands.” Yet this would only incur the jealousy and wrath of Saul. David became a fugitive as his life was threatened by Saul.

℞ *“Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.”*

ℙ The Lord’s grace was upon his humble servant, David. God protected David, and provided bread for him and his company. And David lived in that grace. As David was cared for by God, so David cared for the life of his chief adversary, King Saul, even when he had opportunity to take Saul’s life. David knew that God’s grace is greater than all animosity and hatred for one’s enemies.

℞ *“You lead me in right paths for your name’s sake.... You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.”*

ℙ But Saul would fall in battle nonetheless, at the hands of the Philistines. So also would David’s dearest friend, Jonathan. David would be deeply grieved, and he would cry out for them in deep lament.

℞ *“How the mighty have fallen!”*

ℙ But even in death, the Good Shepherd is with us. Mourning gives way to the grace of God’s everlasting presence. And as David had been so blessed in his journeys in life, so he also bestowed blessings to those who were with him in this moment of grief at the death of Saul and his sons.

℞ *“Now may the Lord show steadfast love and faithfulness to you!”*

ℙ The time of Saul’s reign was over. David’s time to rule was just beginning. By God’s grace, he would be acclaimed the king of Judah, and soon all of Israel as well. The city of Jerusalem would become the capital of this kingdom.

David would then bring the ark of the covenant into the holy city. He danced before the ark, to the sounds of music and great festivity. But he also lamented that the ark itself had no home or