

1 Samuel 16:1-23 (NIV)

¹ The LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him as king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and be on your way; I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem. I have chosen one of his sons to be king." ² But Samuel said, "How can I go? Saul will hear about it and kill me." The LORD said, "Take a heifer with you and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.'" ³ Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what to do. You are to anoint for me the one I indicate." ⁴ Samuel did what the LORD said. When he arrived at Bethlehem, the elders of the town trembled when they met him. They asked, "Do you come in peace?" ⁵ Samuel replied, "Yes, in peace; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD. Consecrate yourselves and come to the sacrifice with me." Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

⁶ When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab and thought, "Surely the LORD's anointed stands here before the LORD." 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 man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart." ⁸ Then Jesse called Abinadab and had him pass in front of Samuel. But Samuel said, "The LORD has not chosen this one either." ⁹ Jesse then had Shammah pass by, but Samuel said, "Nor has the LORD chosen this one." ¹⁰ Jesse had seven of his sons pass before Samuel, but Samuel said to him, "The LORD has not chosen these."¹¹ So he asked Jesse, "Are these all the sons you have?" "There is still the youngest," Jesse answered, "but he is tending the sheep." Samuel said, "Send for him; we will not sit down until he arrives."

¹² So he sent and had him brought in. He was ruddy, with a fine appearance and handsome features. Then the LORD said, "Rise and anoint him; he is the one." ¹³ So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the LORD came upon David in power. Samuel then went to Ramah.

1. What is your response to God rejecting Saul as king but allowed him to remain as king for 15 more years? What does that say about the grace of God in our failure?
2. God allow Samuel to mourn for a while then says “ok that is enough wallowing time to get up and get moving.” What do you think about God’s approach to our mourning in the same manner? What do you think happens when we refuse to get up and get going?
3. What huge life change has God led you to where you questioned the change in direction for your life?
4. New direction can be challenging and can give us pause, respond to the truth; God give protection for his direction.” How does this truth give us peace in hard charging in the direction God has chosen?
5. What question of love does God use to choose our relationships, business partners and friends?
6. Respond to the following statement: if a relationship is built upon a foundation of loving God, then it can withstand any storm.
7. When picking people to be in the inner circle of our life, the sermon says to us “Be who you are trying to attract.” Explain what this meaning and do you agree?
8. Why is the adage of “opposites attract” not biblical?
9. Many find it difficult to serve others without getting something out of the deal. Why is this not the disposition of the Christian? What have we already gotten that allows us to serve freely?
10. Share your main takeaway from the sermon and the lesson?

The Story of David's Secret Anointing As King and His Service in Saul's Court: God Judges the Heart, Not the Appearance, of a Person, 16:1-23

(16:1-23) Introduction— Anointing, Secret, of a King— King, Secret Anointing of: picture a king sitting upon his throne, ruling over a nation and people he had governed for years. But unknown to him, some distance away, a young boy is about to be secretly anointed to replace him, a young boy who was to become the future king of the nation. And not only is a secret anointing taking place, but this young boy would soon be serving in the royal court at the very feet of the king he would someday replace. And the king would be totally unaware that the young boy was the future anointed king.

What a picture of high drama! A suspenseful picture of the shift of power, the highest power of a nation being secretly transferred from a ruling king over to a young boy who was destined to become king.

This is the dramatic story unfolded in this present chapter of God's Holy Word. Because of disobedience, King Saul was destined to be removed as king of Israel by the hand of God's judgment. But the work of God among the Israelites and upon this earth was to go on. And to carry on the work of God, God had chosen a young boy who had a heart "after God's own heart" (13:14). This young boy was to become the future king of God's people. From the day of David's secret anointing to the end of Saul's life, David would be a threat to Saul's claim to the throne. And Saul would seek to kill David time and again. This drama is played out in the remaining chapters of this great book, *1 Samuel*. This is: *The Story of David's Secret Anointing As King and His Service in Saul's Court: God Judges the Heart, Not the Appearance, of a Person, 16:1-23*.

1. The mission of Samuel to arise and anoint a new king: conquering grief and sorrow (v.1-5).
2. The secret anointing of David: being empowered by God's Spirit (v.6-13).
3. The beginning of David's preparation to be king: a picture of God's sovereignty (v.14-23).

1. (16:1-5) Grief, Conquering, Example of— Sorrow, Conquering, Example of— Discouragement, Example— Rebuke, of God, Example— Samuel, Charges to: there was the mission of Samuel to arise and anoint a new king. Remember that the LORD had rejected Saul and promised to raise up another king, "a man after [God's] own heart" (13:14), and a man who was "better than" Saul (15:28). This was a specific reference to David, and it was now time to anoint the young boy to become the future king of Israel. As mentioned in the introduction above, this is high drama at its best, for Saul was still king and would continue ruling for many more years. But here the LORD commissions Samuel to secretly anoint a young boy who was to be the future king of the nation. From this point on, the story focuses upon the jealousy of Saul toward David and his many attempts to kill the future king of Israel. The present scene launches the suspenseful adventure of this high drama:

1. The LORD rebuked Samuel, for he had grieved over His rejection of Saul far too long. Because of Saul's disobedience, the LORD had rejected him as king and the kingdom was to be torn from him. It had been the sad duty of Samuel to inform Saul of his rejection by the LORD (15:22-23, 26, 28). Delivering the message of Saul's rejection had been a difficult mission for Samuel. From the beginning Samuel had held great hope for Saul, for Saul appeared to have all the attributes needed to be a very successful ruler. He was tall, handsome, and had a charismatic personality. More importantly, when he first began to rule, he had both a humble, respectful spirit and a bold, courageous spirit (9:1-27; 10:1-27; 11:1-15). Moreover, Saul had been chosen to be king by the LORD Himself, and the LORD had transformed him, giving him a new and changed heart (9:15-17; 10:9-15). Saul had been just the kind of man people desired in a leader, and he had the additional qualification of having been chosen and equipped by the LORD Himself. Outwardly—from all appearances—no man had more to offer than Saul.

But Saul had failed and been condemned by God, rejected as king. Someday out in the future, Saul would be removed from the throne and another dynasty of kings would rule Israel. The dynasty of Saul's kingdom would never be established. This was a terrible tragedy for Saul and his household. And the tragedy of Saul's failure gripped the soul of Samuel: he became discouraged, depressed, downhearted, and began to grieve over the situation. As Scripture says, for some long period of time he mourned. A sorrowful, grief-stricken spirit gripped

his emotions. He mourned for Saul personally, because Saul had been so disobedient and so disappointing both to the LORD and to him personally. In addition, Saul was to lose his kingdom and dynasty.

But the day came when God was ready to begin preparation for the new king. It was time for Samuel to snap out of his grief and mourning over Saul, time for Samuel to arise and secretly anoint a new king. Thus, God confronted Samuel and strongly rebuked him. He had been mourning far too long. He must now arise and fill his horn with oil and go to Bethlehem to the household of Jesse, for God had chosen one of his sons to be the new king.

2. Note the response of Samuel: he protested because he feared that Saul would hear about the secret anointing and kill him (1 Samuel 16:2). This was a dangerous mission for Samuel, for Saul would interpret the anointing as a serious threat to his own claim to the throne.

3. The LORD's solution to this problem was for Samuel to go for the purpose of offering a sacrifice (1 Samuel 16:2). Traveling to Bethlehem to offer sacrifice would prevent the arousal of suspicion. As a levitical judge, it was the common practice of Samuel to travel from place to place for the purpose of holding court to deal with legal matters and to offer sacrifice to atone for unsolved murder cases (Deuteronomy 21:1-9).

In the present situation, the LORD instructed Samuel to invite Jesse and his sons to the sacrifice (1 Samuel 16:3). At some point during the sacrifice, the LORD would indicate which son was to be anointed as the secret king.

4. Samuel obeyed, did exactly what the LORD commanded (1 Samuel 16:4).

5. But note the fear of Bethlehem's officials (1 Samuel 16:4-5). When Samuel arrived in Bethlehem, the officials feared that he had come to hold court and to execute some judgment. And they were apparently unaware of any criminal action that required his presence (7:15-16; Deuteronomy 21:1-9). But Samuel assured them that he had come only to offer sacrifice to the LORD (1 Samuel 16:5). He charged them to *sanctify* themselves and to come to the sacrifice with him. The word "sanctify" means to set one apart spiritually and ceremonially or ritually. A person sanctified or consecrated himself by taking a bath, putting on clean clothes, abstaining from sex, and avoiding contact with any dead body (Exodus 19:10, 14; Leviticus 7:19-21; 15:2-33; Numbers 19:1-22; Deuteronomy 23:10-11). But more important than the outward rituals of cleansing oneself, a person was to seek the LORD for spiritual cleansing, confessing and repenting of his sins. The *outward* acts of sanctification or cleansing were merely symbols of *inner* cleansing. At some point Samuel visited Jesse in order to become acquainted with him and his family. And he invited Jesse and his sons to the sacrifice.

Thought 1. Samuel was wallowing around in grief, being gripped by a spirit of dejection, discouragement, and depression. Looking at him, a person saw a man with a very sorrowful, grief-stricken countenance. A victorious, conquering spirit was absent.

But this was not the way God intended His servant to live. And it is not the way God intends us to live. Sorrowful experiences do arise in the lives of us all. But they are not to grip us. We are to conquer and overcome such experiences. No matter what confronts us, we are to be triumphant over the circumstance. God will help us conquer and overcome any tragedy or sorrowful experience. He will help us conquer and overcome...

- poverty
- financial difficulty
- the death of a loved one
- alcohol or drug addiction
- rejection and divorce
- loss of employment
- failure
- a sense of purposelessness
- helplessness
- hopelessness
- emptiness

- sin and guilt

Conquering power—the power to overcome and triumph over the trials and temptations, problems and tragedies of this life—can be ours through the LORD. The LORD will empower us to live victorious lives, conquering all the sorrowful tragedies that strike us. We are not to wallow around in grief and despair, displaying a sad countenance. We are to live victoriously, for we are more than conquerors through Christ who has loved us and given Himself for us.

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword....Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our LORD" (Romans 8:35, 37-39).*

2. (16:6-13) Anointing, Example of— Empowering, Example of— Holy Spirit, Anointing of, Example— David, Anointing of— David, Empowering— David, Spirit-Filled: there was the secret anointing of David and the coming of the Holy Spirit upon him. When the Spirit of God came upon David, it was a symbol that he was equipped and empowered by God to become the future leader of Israel. Keep in mind that this was a secret anointing:

1. Note that Samuel's choice was not God's choice (1 Samuel 16:6-7). When Jesse and his sons first arrived at the worship service, Samuel's attention was immediately drawn to the oldest son, Eliab. The young man was tall and attractive, with a charismatic personality (1 Samuel 16:7). Samuel thought that surely this was God's choice. But immediately the LORD rebuked Samuel. He was not to consider the young man's appearance nor height, for the LORD had not chosen Eliab to be king.

2. Note the basic qualification of God for service: it is not physical appearance but the heart that the LORD looks at. Man usually looks at the outward things, but the LORD looks at the heart of a person. The LORD judges a person by his heart and his heart alone.

3. Note who the father would choose to be the future king: he had each of his seven sons in descending order by age pass in front of Samuel (1 Samuel 16:8-10). After the oldest son Eliab had been rejected, Jesse presented Abinadab to Samuel. But Abinadab was rejected. Then Jesse had Shammah pass before Samuel, but he too was rejected (1 Samuel 16:9). One by one in descending order, Jesse had his sons pass before Samuel. But in each case, Samuel pronounced the fateful words, each was rejected (1 Samuel 16:10). Had it been left to Samuel and Jesse, one of these seven would have been chosen to be the future king of Israel. But God knew the *hearts*, and the *heart* that He was after was not present.

4. Note the choice of the LORD: it was the youngest son, a son who was considered by his father not even to be eligible or qualified to be the future king (1 Samuel 16:11-12). Samuel had been perplexed, puzzled by the LORD's rejection of Jesse's seven sons. He was bound to be mentally, silently questioning what was going on. Did Jesse have other sons? If so, why would he not have brought them? Finally, he asked Jesse if these seven were all the sons he had. Jesse replied that he did have a younger son who had been left behind to tend the sheep. Hearing this, Samuel immediately sent for David.

When David arrived, note the favorable impression he made upon Samuel, and keep in mind that he was just a young boy. He was "ruddy" which means that he had a healthy bronze complexion. And he was good looking with piercing, bright eyes. As soon as young David walked into Samuel's presence, the LORD immediately identified David as His choice to be king. But keep in mind why he was God's choice: not because of his striking physical features, but because of his heart. He was a young boy with a heart "after God's own heart" (13:14), and his heart was to make him a better man than Saul (15:28).

"But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another" (Psalms 75:7).

5. Note the secret anointing of David (1 Samuel 16:13). And remember that this *secret* anointing was totally unknown to King Saul. David was anointed in the presence of his brothers and apparently no one else. While he

was being anointed, the Spirit of the LORD came upon him. Note what Scripture says: the Spirit of the LORD remained on him from that day forward. God's Spirit never left David. In the words of Robert D. Bergen:

The shapeless, invasive fluid [anointing oil] used in the ceremony served fittingly as a symbol of the mystical presence of God. As the oil worked its way into the individual's hair and pores, it symbolized the divine presence entering into the one being anointed.

Thought 1. The greatest gift in all the world is the gift of God's Spirit. When we approach God through Christ, God places His own Spirit in us, in the very core of our being. We become indwelt by God's Spirit. It is God's Spirit who convicts and saves and gives us assurance of salvation. He guides, teaches, protects, and provides the necessities of life for us, meeting all our needs.

What more could a person ask? It is the Spirit of God who empowers us to conquer all the trials and temptations of life, who enables us to live a victorious and triumphant life day by day.

"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life" (John 6:63).

"Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you" (John 14:17).

"But the Comforter, *which* is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (John 14:26).

3. (16:14-23) Sovereignty, of God— Leadership, of God— Guidance, of God— David, in Saul's Court— Saul, and David, First Meeting: there was the beginning of David's preparation to be king. What now happened is a clear picture of God's sovereignty and His guidance throughout David's life:

1. Note the removal of God's Spirit from Saul. Simply stated, the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul. But even more tragic than this, an evil spirit was sent by the LORD to torment Saul (1 Samuel 16:14). What does this mean? It certainly means that the Spirit of God was no longer present to guide, protect, or provide for Saul as he walked daily throughout the remainder of his life. It certainly also means that the Spirit of God no longer empowered Saul to serve as king. But what does it mean when it says that the LORD sent a tormenting spirit upon him, a spirit that troubled and distressed him, that filled him with depression and fear? Various commentators have interpreted this to mean:

- ⇒ demon-possession sent upon Saul as a judgment because of his disobedience.
- ⇒ some demonic attack or influence allowed by God because of Saul's disobedience.
- ⇒ some evil messenger allowed by God to oppress Saul, an evil messenger such as the one sent to deceive Ahab (1 Kings 22:20-23).
- ⇒ a deep sense of guilt, depression, and fear—all kinds of emotional and psychological problems—aroused by God within Saul because of his disobedience.

Whatever the case, Saul had disobeyed God and was now reaping what he had sown. The hand of God's judgment had fallen upon him, and an evil spirit was creating a sense of guilt, depression, and fear within him. God's Spirit had left Saul to live the sinful, wicked, and disobedient life Saul had chosen. Just as Scripture teaches, God had given Saul up to live just as Saul wanted, given him up to do his own thing (Romans 1:24). As a result, an evil spirit troubled and tormented Saul.

Noticing this radical change in Saul's behavior, some of his attendants suggested that a harpist be found who could soothe Saul when he was stricken with an episode of depression and fear (1 Samuel 16:15-16). Saul agreed and ordered for a musician to be found, one who played well.

2. Note the introduction of David's name to Saul (1 Samuel 16:18-19). One of Saul's attendants immediately spoke up, sharing that he knew about a young boy who had the needed qualifications and abilities to serve in the court of the king. He was a son of Jesse from Bethlehem, a young boy who was brave, courageous, and a potential warrior. The young man also had good judgment and was a fine looking young boy. And even more significant, the LORD was with him. Hearing this, Saul was very impressed and sent for David to be brought to him.

3. Note the beginning of David's service in Saul's court (1 Samuel 16:20-23). Obviously, Jesse was excited about his youngest son's being called upon to serve in the court of the king. Remember, Jesse already knew that his son was eventually to become the king of Israel. Perhaps he thought that the LORD had moved upon Saul's heart to begin preparing David to assume the office of king upon Saul's death. Whatever the case, Jesse sent a gift to Saul along with his son David (1 Samuel 16:20). When David began serving Saul, the king was very impressed with him, so impressed that he made David one of his armor-bearers. And he requested that David's father Jesse allow his son to become a permanent member of his court. By keeping David close to him, Saul would be assured of David's availability to play the harp when he (Saul) was attacked with a tormenting episode of guilt, depression, or fear. And note this is exactly what happened: when some spiritual or mental disturbance struck Saul, David played the harp for him. David was able to soothe, bring relief to King Saul. Saul would feel much better, and in the words of Scripture, the evil spirit would leave him.

Thought 1. In the sovereignty of God, God moved events in order to place David in the court of Saul. God worked all things out, moving the events so that the preparation of the future king could begin. By being in the court of Saul, David would learn how a king should rule a nation. He would learn exactly what a king should and should not do. He would be exposed to the nation's economic, military, and justice systems and to the morality and character of its officials. God moved events so that David could learn how to fulfill his task upon this earth.

The lesson for us is clear: God is sovereign. He rules and reigns over the earth. He and He alone is God Almighty, the LORD of hosts who stands over every creature of this universe, both in heaven and in earth. It is He and He alone who is the Creator and Sovereign LORD of the universe. And because of who He is, He has the power to move events in order to help us. When we need help, God has the power to help us. No matter what our need—no matter how small or how great—God will meet it. He is sovereign, looking after us every step of our lives, taking care of us if we will simply trust Him. God has the sovereign power to help us no matter what we may need.

"And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen" (Matthew 6:13).

"But Jesus beheld *them*, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible" (Matthew 19:26).

"For with God nothing shall be impossible" (Luke 1:37).