

1st Samuel Ch 16

Chapter 16 opens with Samuel in *mourning*, and finds Saul slipping into *madness*. Samuel is going *through* sadness and Saul is slipping *into* madness. You recall that in the previous ch God gave Saul another opportunity, in fact several opportunities to obey His *direction*, to receive God's *correction*, but because Saul refused to respond, refused, to repent, he was rejected by God from being king over Israel.

And God will always give us opportunity after opportunity to respond to His direction and His correction for our lives, He desires that we would walk in His ways. And follow His leading that He might bless us and provide for us, use us, and be glorified through us, but if we refuse, there's ramifications, again (And we mentioned this last week). Prov 29:1 "*He who is often rebuked, and hardens his neck, Will suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.*" You see the warnings come, but it's up to us to respond, and if we refuse to respond, and want to just do what we want to do, then we will have to reap those consequences. Understand that God will never leave you nor forsake you, but you're free to leave Him, and to forsake Him. And that's exactly what happened in the case of Saul, God was simply responding to the direction that Saul chose to take, God didn't reject Saul until it was clear that Saul had rejected God, and had no intention, desire, aspiration, or plan to repent. Saul tried to hang onto his life, didn't want to let go, and so he lost it, the kingdom would be torn from him, and so though he's been *rejected*, he's not yet been *removed*.

There are still a number of years yet before the man whom God has selected will be ready to take the thrown, and for all intents and purposes, the people of Israel don't know there's been a rejection of their king. Now God could've just removed Saul right then and there, but I believe that God wanted the people to see the fruits of their choice, God didn't need to let Saul remain on the throne to see what kind of fruit would ultimately come of his rule. He already knew the way things would go, but it was important that Saul see it, it was important that Samuel see it (having loved Saul) and the people needed to see it because they chose him to be their king. They rejected God and accepted Saul as their king and so God would allow them to see the fruits of their choice, and reap that harvest accordingly.

But as for now, this whole event concerning Saul was just regrettable, the Lord "regretted" (vs 35 of ch 15) that He had made Saul, or allowed Saul to become king over Israel. The whole situation was just a regrettable situation, the fact that Saul was king, that the people wanted a king, now it's not that God hadn't planned to give them a king. God had always planned that they would eventually have a king to rule over them in the tangible, that is the touchable realm. God was in reality their King, but he would give them a physical king, Duet ch 17 makes clear that God knew that time was coming and had set up some guide lines accordingly. But the problem was that the people jumped out ahead of God, they got out in front of God's plan and His purposes, because the man that God had intended them to have will be introduced to us tonight, his name was David (you know him well).

But the time wasn't right when the people were all, "We want a king right now, we want a king today." and God said, "Ok, have it your way, take your pick, and they chose Saul, he won the people's choice award and the whole thing was a regrettable ordeal." They should've waited, but they refused, and maybe God would minister that to someone's heart tonight, it's always to regret when we get out ahead of God, the word of the Lord is to wait.

Ps 37:4 says, "*Delight yourself also in the LORD, And He shall give you the desires of your heart.*" Why, because He placed them there, and He's got a plan that He wants to bring into fruition in your life, but you need to wait for it. God was preparing the people for a king, and they got ahead of Him. And the whole thing was a regretful situation. How often God begins to stir our hearts, we have this desire that's from the Lord, and we say, "This is the desire of my heart, and I want it right now." and When we do that we wind up with a Saul when had we waited we could've had a David, we get in front of God only to *regret*, instead of waiting upon the Lord and *rejoicing* when God moves us in that direction, or grants us that desire. God's plan for our lives demands patience, and when we grow impatient we wind up with a Saul, or like Ab we wind up with an Ishmael when God wanted us to have Isaac, it's a lesson that we see over and over in the scriptures, God has a plan for you, for me, lets wait on Him to bring it about. Israel didn't, and now they're in a mess, and for years to come they'll be reaping the rewards of impatience and compromise.

Vs1

Now there are a few things in this vs that are worthy of underlining #1 "How long will you mourn for Saul." #2 "Fill your horn with oil, and go" and #3 "I have provided Myself a king."

God says to Samuel, "How long will you mourn?" Now we don't know exactly how long Samuel's been mourning, a day, a week, or a month, but we do know that Samuel loved Saul, and now that Saul has been rejected it's a painful thing for Samuel. Samuel had felt *rejected* of the people, his sons weren't *accepted*, and now the king that the people had *selected* has been a dismal failure. Samuel had done his best to try and govern and guide Saul, but Saul refused to heed the word of God and so this whole thing has just really got Samuel down. Eccl 3:1 tells us that, "*To everything there is a season, A time for every purpose under heaven.*" and Vs 4 of that ch tells us that there is a time to mourn, but there comes a time when we need to move on. Why, because God's still moving and working, and it's important that we not get bogged down so much in the past that we miss the move of God in the present. And so there comes a time to get going, fill your horn with oil and go, start serving, there's work to be done.

We've all experienced tragic things in this life, painful things happen, Samuel's heart was broken, he was grieving deeply over the loss of Saul, but there came a day when God spoke to his heart and said, "It's time to move on." God was saying to Samuel, "Look, I've moved on, when are you going to? I regret the whole thing just like you do, but there's work to be done, let's keep moving."

And it's important for you, and it's important for me that we move on, no one is denying that things come into our lives that are hurtful, even regrettable, raw deals, oppressions and disappointments, but move on, why? Because God is on the move, and if I allow myself to get bogged down and stuck in the past hurt, or the past disappointment, or I'm never able to get beyond that raw deal in my own mind's eye, if I'm focused on the past, I'll miss God's move in the present. How so, because I'm not focused on today, I'm thinking *about*, and looking *at* the past. And if I'm focused on the past, caught up in what happened in the past, maybe over analyzing the things of my past, then when the Holy Spirit wants to move in the present moment, I'll never see it. And that's what God's saying to this wonderful man of God; Samuel, "I've moved on, this is a closed issue with me, why are you still dwelling over it, and stumbling around in it, it's time to get moving, move forward, I've got a plan." Which brings me to a little side note that we want to see here, just because a man might *fail*, that doesn't mean God's plan is *finished*. Saul failed, but God's plan wasn't finished, God will always fulfill His plan with or without you, or me, a work of God doesn't depend on man, now He'll use men to accomplish it often times, but He doesn't depend on man.

So even though Saul failed, God's not finished, He's still moving. "And Samuel it's time to quit mourning and get moving, fill your horn with oil and go." So this is God's remedy, what's oil represent in the scriptures? The Holy Spirit. "So Samuel, let oil fill your vessel, and get moving, get Spirit filled and go, because I'm sending you to Jesse's house." Now Jesse was the grandson of Boaz who was the husband of Ruth, and Jesse had a son named David who would be the one whom God would promise to bring the Messiah through his lineage. (So as to where "wait" may've been a word for some here tonight, perhaps for others God would say it's time to quit frolicking, and floundering around in issues and situations and regrets of the past. Because I'm wanting to move in your life presently, so allow the Holy Spirit to fill you fresh again and move on.)

So Samuel is to go to Bethlehem to anoint the king that God has provided for Himself. Now why do I make a point of this, because here's where we find that God takes credit for the selection of David, God didn't provide Saul, he was the fruits of the people, but He's provided David, so we need to see that distinction.

Vs2

Now there are those who will say that Samuel is (here) doubting God's ability to keep him. And I suppose that's absolutely true, but I know that I've doubted God many a time over, I've been fearful for my life on more than one occasion. But the fact is, Samuel has told Saul that as far as God's concerned, he's no longer the king. And so now if he catches wind that Samuel is anointing another to take his place, in his paranoid and ever maddening and demonically oppression position he will kill Samuel. He wants to hang on to the kingdom remember? and So even though to a degree Samuel is doubting God's ability to preserve him (And I noted that in my bible) God doesn't fault Samuel for his fear here at all, God understands his humanity. And Knows the reality of the situation, and so He says, just take a heifer with you for a sacrifice, and don't tell anyone your business beyond that.

Vs3-6

Mark those 2 words in vs 6, “he looked” that was the people’s downfall with Saul, he was a head taller than everyone else, better looking physically than every other man in the nation. And here Samuel is beginning to fall into that same trap once again. He looked at Eliab and said, “Man this guy has the countenance of a king, surely this is the one!” Now Samuel didn’t pray about it, listen to see if God would affirm that, he just looked at him and said, “Let the ordination begin” but God interrupted Samuel and said.

Vs7

And this has become one of those famous passages of scripture that’s worthy of underlining and committing to heart and to memory. God says, “Don’t be fooled because he’s good looking and tall, that was the credentials of Saul, but I have refused him.” Because the Lord doesn’t see as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.

People have this tendency to judge a book by it’s cover, we think we know everything about a person by the way they dress, or how much money they have, what kind of rides they drive or what job they have, we’re all concerned about the outward appearance, the credentials of the physical, what kind of hair cut you’ve got, what kind of clothes you wear. How big is your house? We think that we know about a person by evaluating these things, but God says that we err exceedingly to do business by such standards, especially when it comes to the work of *His Kingdom*, because God’s not concerned with the outward appearance, but rather the inward person of the heart. Now I don’t want to condemn anyone for seeking to evaluate things for what they see, because there’s no way we can know the heart of a man, that position is reserved for God alone.

But that’s the way that God deals with people, and establishes people, based upon the position of their heart. I liked what J. Vernon McGee said about this vs, he said concerning God, “He is an interior decorator. He always checks the interior.” and So as to wear I might say, “Man that car is a beauty, not a ding in it, not a scratch on it, and not an ounce of wear on the tread, this thing is a great piece of machinery.” God will say, “I don’t care how many dings are in it, I need to check under the hood to see if it’s got what I need to get me where I’ve got to go.” God’s searching our hearts, and only He knows our hearts, not even we know our own hearts, we so easily deceive ourselves. That’s why the proverbs tell us, “*He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, But whoever walks wisely will be delivered.*” Prov 28:26 How do we walk wisely? By walking according to the Word of God, only God knows the heart. In 1 Kings 8 when Solomon was praying, he said concerning the Lord, “*(For You alone know the hearts of all the sons of men)*” 1 Kings 8:39 1 Chron 28:9, “*The LORD searches all hearts and understands all the intent of the thoughts.*”

So God's ways aren't our ways, nor are His thoughts our thoughts, our ways are to look to the exterior, and think about what we see, God looks to the interior and considers the intents of the thoughts

Vs8-11

In other words, we're not having dinner until you bring that boy here! But Jesse was just as guilty as Samuel when it came to considering who would be anointed. He considered David so incredibly insignificant to what was going on, and the task at hand that he didn't even invite him from the flock to the feast!

But I love this because where does God find the one whom He would have shepherd the nation of Israel? Out tending the sheep, and keeping watch over the flock, he chose a man with a shepherd's heart, the least of the low, shepherding was a servant's job, so Jesse wasn't a man of great means or he'd have a servant doing what his son was doing. But the son who would do this would be the least in the house, and since David was the youngest, then he got the job, he was insignificant in his family's eyes concerning Samuel's visit. But what does the bible say? *"Not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence."* 1 Cor 1:26-29

God was preparing David from his childhood that he might have a heart fashioned after God's own, that God might use him in an awesome way.

And just as we touched on the other morning a couple of Sundays ago, God called him when he was busy, he was on the job, taking care of his dad's sheep. When people look for ways to avoid responsibility, God won't call them, but men who are willing to be busy about God's will and their responsibilities God will use. And again, Moses, Nehemiah, Gideon, Elisha, Peter, James, John, and Matthew are but a few examples of men whom God called while they were busy about their responsibilities in life, just taking care of day to day tasks. The bible teaches us not to despise the days of small things, to be faithful over a few things, and God will entrust us with greater things, but when we won't even take care of our basic responsibilities why would God entrust us with the greater things. Jesus said that if we're unfaithful with little, we'll be unfaithful with much, but if we're faithful with small things, with day to day things, then we'll be faithful and trustworthy of much.

David was being faithful in the days of small things, wasn't griping about what his brothers got to do while he had to sit out there and tend the sheep. What else does this show me?

God knows where you're at, and He's able to raise you up from right where you are, the world's ideals says, you have to move. You need to get somewhere where you can be noticed, where there's opportunities to advance, you're landlocked ministerially speaking, you'll never be noticed there, people can't see the potential in you. But what did we just learn, it doesn't matter what people see, as a matter of fact what we usually see is wrong. But David was just being faithful right where he was, and God sought him out and raised him up.

Vs12-13

So in comes David, fair skinned, red headed, and a good-looking kid, didn't look like a king, but he was a good-looking kid. And the Lord says, this is the one, it's time for the outward affirmation of the inward transformation that's taken place in his heart, anoint him. Now we don't have time to discuss this in depth, but there's something to be said here regarding this anointing because this is the 1st of 3 times that David would be anointed and there's profound lesson in that for you and me.

The 1st time it was around his family, his family was able to see the anointing before anyone else had a clue. And many times when God wants to do a work in your life, it becomes apparent to those in your immediate family 1st. Now you think that since you're anointed the whole world should see it and it's time to get going. But as David's life demonstrates it often times takes years from the time God anoints you, to the time He establishes you in the office of His calling upon your life. And at 1st just a few brothers could see it, you realize in your soul you're anointed, and maybe a few brothers see it, your family sees it, and you think, "Well, why don't others see it!" Because it's not time, some time needed to pass, and some victories needed to be won before others recognized it. And after Saul had died, David's tribe, the tribe of Judah in 2nd Sam Ch 2 vs 4 realized and recognized that he was the one whom God had raised up and they anointed him a 2nd time to be king over Judah. And then a 3rd time, yrs later, after more warfare, and a specific act of kindness and benevolence finally all the elders of Israel in 2nd Sam ch 5 Vs 3 realized that David was God's anointed, and they anointed him a 3rd time to be king over the entire nation. And so there is an unfolding for God's plan concerning men and women in ministry that can't be rushed, you can't say, "There's an anointing on my life, why can't Jeff see it, or why aren't the leaders acknowledging it, are they spiritually dense, can't they see the kabod of God, the glory of God about me?" "The glow on my face? My mom sees it, my wife senses it." David became the anointed king the moment that Samuel poured the oil out upon him, but there was still work to be done in his life; there was still work to be done in the people he would be over. So though the anointing may happen immediately, it's received by others over time. It comes through fighting battles on the behalf of others, through winning victories little by little in helping out and being there for people, then your tribe starts to gather around, and ultimately through winning battles, showing kindness and mercy the whole nation realizes what God is doing in your life. But it can take years and years before people see it, God had done it, but it took time for the people to see it and receive it.

Vs14-15

No doubt a demonic spirit that was harassing Saul as the Spirit of God departed from Saul. Now, I don't have time to really get into this, but suffice it to say I'm not going to defend what the bible says as though God needs me to defend Him. Quite the contrary, I need Him to defend me. But whether you want to see this as God sending a spirit to trouble Saul in the active sense as in God commanding a spirit to trouble him as an aspect of his retribution, or you want to say that God sent a spirit to trouble him passively in simply removing His hand and hedge from Saul so that the demonic forces were able to freely harass him at that point that's up to you, but either way God was in control of the situation.

And ultimately even the demonic forces and Satan himself serve God's purposes in giving man the capacity to activate his free will. W/out a choice, it's pointless to create us with the capacity of choice, because have no choice. But because of the existence of Satan (God could've easily annihilated him) but that would annihilate the point of your freedom to choose to love God or not at the same time. And because God desires love from a pure heart, and a willful act of love rather than a robotic act, then there needs to be another choice. And through Satan and the demonic forces that follow him, God gives us the capacity to accept or reject Him. So ultimately even the devil himself is serving the purposes of God

Vs16-18

In reality what they are advising Saul is that he would call for himself a worship leader, and again time fails us to really explore this, but there is power in praise. And warfare can be won through worship, because God inhabits the praises of His people. And verse 18 unveils the credentials to look for in a worship leader, #1 skillful in playing, #2 a mighty man of valor, #3 a man of war, #4 prudent in speech, #5 a handsome person; and # 6 the LORD is with him.

#1 Someone who's skillful in playing, you need the anointing yes, but that's coupled with ability. And we're to do what we do skillfully before the Lord, it doesn't matter how good your heart is, if you can't carry a tune in a bucket, you're not called to be the worship leader. If you can't play an instrument with some form of skill than this isn't what God has for you presently. #2 A mighty man of valor, David was a man of faith; trusted the Lord. # 3 A man of war, now we don't wrestle flesh and blood, but powers and principalities, and the bible says, "*If you faint in the day of adversity, Your strength is small.*" Prov 24:10 But in a worship leader you're looking for someone who has shown themselves approved unto God, who is able to fight the good fight. # 4 Prudent in speech, knows what to say and when to say it, doesn't just open his mouth to try and sound spiritual only to quench the spirit, but speaks a good word in due season so as to promote worship and healing. #5 A handsome person, in other words not a total slob, dresses appropriately, doesn't draw attention to themselves by wear outlandish things but rather seeks to make themselves invisible and points people to Christ. And finally the most important quality, the one that gives credence to all the previous mentioned, #6 the Lord is with him. (What an incredible résumé David had.)

Vs19-21

Remember David is still very young, and here's Saul taller than everyone in Israel, better looking to, David just fell in love with this guy, respected him deeply, and even when Saul was after him, David never stopped loving him, and valued him greatly, a man after God's own heart. God never stops loving us, or valuing us.

Vs22-24

Again worship prevailing in warfare, light and darkness can't co-exist, and so as the light of God's glory fills the place in which worship is happening, the darkness just flees, the next time you're distressed, or oppressed, just stop what you're doing, and begin to get the focus off of yourself and onto God through worship. Just praise Him and worship Him and allow His presence to give you peace, and victory in the midst of the situation or circumstance that's bringing you down.