

1<sup>st</sup> Samuel 16:1-13  
The Anointing of David, a Better King

Introduction

1. In the last three weeks we've seen how Israel's rejection of God and demand for an earthly king "just like all the other nations" resulted in exactly that kind of king
2. Saul was arrogant, proud, foolish, rash, self-serving and outright disobedience to God's commands
3. As a result, while God would allow Saul to live out his reign as king, he would replace him with a new and better king—a man after God's own heart
4. Today, we learn this man's identity as God sends Saul to anoint him king

A. The Lord selects a better king (1-5)

1. Our passage begins with Samuel grieving over the downfall of Saul (15:35): "**Samuel did not see Saul again until the day of his death; for Samuel grieved over Saul. And the LORD regretted that He had made Saul king over Israel.**"
2. The Lord gently rebukes Samuel (16:1): "**Now the LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul, since I have rejected him from being king over Israel?"**"
  - a. Samuel was a priest, judge and prophet of the LORD which means that his interests needed to align with God's
  - b. God had rejected Saul because of his sin and rebellion
  - c. The Lord had already told Samuel that He was seeking a new king "**after His own heart**" (1 Samuel 13:13-14)
  - d. In fact, the Lord had already made His selection (1 Samuel 15:28): "**The LORD has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today and has given it to your neighbor, who is better than you.**"
  - e. This new king would be a "**better**" king because He would be a man after God's own heart—we will look at this concept of being a man after God's own heart a little later
3. The Lord sends Samuel on a mission to anoint this new king (2-5): "**Fill your horn with oil and go; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have selected a king for Myself among his sons.**"
  - a. At first, Samuel is reluctant to go because he fears Saul will kill him when he learns of the purpose for his trip (the route from Ramah to Bethlehem goes right through Gibeah, Saul's home)
  - b. But, Samuel obeys and travels to Bethlehem to anoint the one God will designate to him (4-5)

NOTE: It's unclear why the elders of the city were afraid when Samuel arrived, but it may be related to Samuel's killing of King Agag a short time ago (chapter 15) and his pronouncement against Saul

B. The Lord's criteria for a new king (6-11)

1. When Jesse and his sons arrive at the sacrifice, Jesse's eldest son, Eliab, catches Samuel's eye and he is immediately impressed and convinced that this must be the new king God has selected (6): **"When they entered, he looked at Eliab and thought, 'Surely the LORD'S anointed is before Him.'"**
2. But, the Lord gently admonishes Samuel again: **"But the LORD said to Samuel, 'Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.'"**
  - a. Samuel was not to be impressed with Eliab's **"appearance or the height of his stature"** because the Lord had not chosen him (**"rejected him"**)
  - b. God's choice in a new and better king was based on a different criteria: **"God sees not as man sees"** (7)
    - 1) **"People look on the outward appearance..."**
      - a) I've often wondered why God chose Saul as the first king knowing what kind of king he would be
      - b) It might have been to drive home this point
      - c) According to 1 Samuel 9:2 Saul was **"a choice and handsome man, and there was not a more handsome person that he among the sons of Israel; from his shoulders and up he was taller than any of the people."**
      - d) He was also a fierce warrior
      - e) But he was a horrible king: arrogant, proud, boastful, vengeful, self-serving, disobedient, even murderous (attempting to kill both his own son Jonathan and David)
    - 2) But, the Lord looks at something different: **"the LORD looks at the heart."** – more on this later
      - a) When Israel demanded a king "like all the other nations" God gave them exactly what they asked for—a tall, handsome, impressive warrior
      - b) But Saul lacked the kind of heart necessary to serve as Israel's king
      - c) In contrast, David would be a better king because his heart would be aligned with God's
  - c. Jesse presents six more of his sons to Jesse (likely in order of their ages, oldest to youngest) but the Lord reveals that His appointed king is not among them (8-10)

C. David is anointed king (12-13)
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1. When Samuel asks Jesse if there are any more sons, he learns of David and calls for him (11)
2. In an interesting bit of irony since God warned Samuel not to pay attention to external appearances, David turns out to be a good looking guy: **"ruddy (red hair or complexion), with beautiful eyes and a handsome appearance"** (12a)
3. The LORD identifies David as this new and better king (12b): **"And the LORD said, 'Arise, anoint him; for this is he.'"**
4. Samuel anoints David in a private ceremony in front of his family (13a): **"Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers;"**
5. As it did with Saul, the Holy Spirit came upon David (13b): **"and the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward."**
  - a. In the OT, the work of the Holy Spirit is related primarily to empowerment or enablement, and an indication of the presence or favor of the LORD in one's life

- b. This is different than the internal indwelling of the Holy Spirit experienced by Christians
- c. There is one striking difference between David's experience with the Holy Spirit and Saul's— in David's case the text says the Spirit came upon him **"from that day forward"** where in the very next verse we learn that the Spirit departed from Saul (the only example of this occurring in the entire Bible)

Conclusion
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1. There are two themes I believe we should see in this passage today
2. The first theme is found in v. 1 and it's reflected in the word translated as **"selected"** (or **"chosen"** in the NIV):
  - a. The Hebrew word is raah which means to see, so a more literal translation would be **"for I have seen a king for Myself among his [Jesse's] sons."**
  - b. However, in this context it's usage implies **selection** or **choice**
  - c. The word is used nine times in various forms in this chapter—and repetition is generally an author's way of driving home a point
  - d. Even though God had Samuel anoint Saul as the first king, it was pretty clear in that passage that ultimately Saul was the people's choice—they wanted a king just like the other nations
  - e. However, in this passage it is absolutely clear that David was God's choice
  - f. Look back at 1 Samuel 13:14: **"But now your kingdom shall not endure. The LORD has sought out for Himself a man after His own heart, and the LORD has appointed him as ruler over His people, because you have not kept what the LORD commanded you."**
  - g. In our passage today, the author stresses the fact that David is God's choice:
    - 1) v. 1: **"I have selected..."**
    - 2) v. 2: **"The one whom I will designate..."**
    - 3) v. 7: **"I have rejected him..."** (referring to Eliab)
    - 4) vs. 8, 9: **"The LORD has not chosen this one either."** (referring to two more of Jesse's sons)
    - 5) v. 10: **"Not chosen these"** (a reference to any of the first seven sons of Jesse)
    - 6) v. 12: **"Arise, anoint him for this is He..."** (referring to David)
  - h. God's divine intent to establish a king after His own heart is reflected in Psalm 89:19-29 (READ)
3. The second theme is found in the word "heart":
  - a. Again, when God first rejected Saul for his disobedience He announced that He was seeking to establish a man after His own heart as king over Israel
  - b. That is repeated in this passage when God admonishes Samuel not to look upon the physical appearances and attributes of a man, but rather see what God sees—the heart (1 Samuel 16:7): **"But the LORD said to Samuel, 'Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.'"**
  - c. What does it mean when God told Samuel that He looks at the heart and that He was seeking a man after His own heart?
    - 1) Paul spells it out for us in Acts 13:22: **"After He had removed him, He 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.'"**

- 2) We see this reflected in Samuel's rebuke of Saul in 1 Samuel 15:22: **"Samuel said, "Has the LORD as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams."**
- 3) We see this repeated in the Scriptures:
  - a) Hosea 6:6: **"For I delight in loyalty rather than sacrifice, And in the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings."**
  - b) Isaiah 1:11: **"Isa 1:11 "What are your multiplied sacrifices to Me?" Says the LORD. "I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams And the fat of fed cattle; And I take no pleasure in the blood of bulls, lambs or goats."**
  - c) Proverbs 21:3: **"To do righteousness and justice Is desired by the LORD more than sacrifice."**
- 4) David was a man after God's own heart because he understood this and we can see it not just in his behavior, but in his own words:
  - a) Psalm 40:6: **"Sacrifice and meal offering You have not desired; My ears You have opened; Burnt offering and sin offering You have not required."**
  - b) Psalm 51:16-17: **"16 For You do not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it; You are not pleased with burnt offering. 17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise."**
4. So if there is one over-arching take away from this passage today it's that even after Israel's rebellion in asking for a king like all the other nations—and the miserable failure of King Saul—God still reached out to Israel and gave them a new...a better...king that would reflect His heart and shepherd and lead Israel as God Himself would