

Refine Women's Ministry
Lesson 1: God Calls David - 1 Samuel 16
January 17, 2018 by Kim Peelen

This semester we examine King David before he takes the throne of Israel. His life is worthy to imitate as he walked *in a manner worthy of the calling - with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace* (from our theme verses in Ephesians 4:1-3). The books 1 and 2 Samuel record David's history. But before he is introduced in chapter 16, Samuel's story as the faithful prophet and last judge of Israel unfolds with his amazing birth, his training under Eli (and his two wicked priest sons), his hearing God's instructions, and his anointing Saul as the first king of Israel. The obedient servant Samuel is the framework around which God builds his people from disparate tribes struggling spiritually under the leadership of various judges to a unified God-honoring nation under a strong, godly king.

When Samuel's two sons pervert justice and abuse their position as judges, Israel's leaders demand Samuel to change their type of government and appoint a king. He warns them that a king will require much from them including their children, their flocks, their fields, and their harvest.

*"Then you will cry out in that day because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves, but the LORD will not answer you in that day." Nevertheless, the people refused to listen to the voice of Samuel, and they said, "No, but there shall be a king over us, **that we also may be like all the nations, that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles.**" Now after Samuel had heard all the words of the people, he repeated them in the LORD's hearing. The LORD said to Samuel, "Listen to their voice and appoint them a king." So Samuel said to the men of Israel, "Go every man to his city" 1 Samuel 8:18-22.*

So, God gives Israel the very tall, handsome, mighty man named Saul as their king. Samuel tells the sons of Israel on the day he anoints the king:

"Thus says the LORD, The God of Israel, 'I brought Israel up from Egypt, and I delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the power of all the kingdoms that were oppressing you.' But you have today rejected your God, who delivers you from all your calamities and your distresses; yet you have said, 'No, but set a king over us!' 1 Samuel 10:18.19.

Do you see the people's error? They connect a human king as one who will judge, go out before, and fight battles on their behalf, when The Almighty God has done, and will continue to do, those very things with perfection, power, and in perpetuity! In order to **be like all the nations**, they reject God to *follow other gods to serve them and bow down to them; they did not abandon their practices or their stubborn ways Judges 2:19*. After a strong, faithful start to his rule by protecting the town of Jabesh-gilead, Saul disobeys the LORD's command twice and Samuel delivers God's judgment: *"I will not return with you; for you have rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD rejected you from being king over Israel." "The LORD has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today and has given it to your neighbor, who is better than you" 1 Samuel 15:26-28. Saul does not repent nor confess his sin to God.*

Samuel's First Difficult Assignment: 1 Samuel 15:32-35

Then Samuel said, "Bring me Agag, the king of the Amalekites." And Agag came to him cheerfully. And Agag said, "Surely the bitterness of death is past." But Samuel said, "As your sword has made women childless, so shall your mother be childless among women." So Samuel hewed Agag to pieces before the LORD at Gilgal. Then Samuel went to Ramah, but Saul went up to his house at Gibeah of Saul. 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.

After Saul disobeys His commander's assignment to utterly destroy all that Amalek has, Samuel has to complete the task by hacking to death Agag, the king whom Saul spared. Recall that Samuel is an old man now (1 Samuel 8:1; 12:2), yet he can still wield a deadly sword! Israel's first king is squandering his call from The LORD which troubles Samuel.

Samuel's Second Difficult Assignment: 1 Samuel 16: 1-13

*Now the LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul, since I have rejected him from being king over Israel? 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.**" But Samuel said, "How can I go? When Saul hears of it, he will kill me." And the LORD said, "Take a heifer with you and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.' "You shall invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; and **you shall anoint for Me the one whom I designate to you.**" So Samuel did what the LORD said, and came to Bethlehem. And the elders of the city came trembling to meet him and said, "Do you come in peace?" He said, "In peace; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD. Consecrate yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." He also consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.*

At first look, this does not seem like a difficult assignment; but Samuel understands he is about to commit treason to the reigning king. Recall he *told the people the ordinances of the kingdom and wrote them in the book and placed it before the LORD (1 Samuel 10:25)*, so he knows the law and its consequences. How faithful and obedient he is to face the real threat for his life and yet obey the LORD's call and follow His plan. Again, God clearly states it is HE who selects/calls the king (as He did with Saul). Note: the elders trembled before the man of God, wondering if he would wield his deadly sword on them! Samuel limits those at the sacrifice so God can reveal His choice among Jesse's sons in private.

In your groups continue chapter 16: Anoint means set apart or ordain for a purpose

God Reveals Samuel's Partiality

When they entered, he looked at Eliab [first-born] and thought, "Surely the LORD's anointed is before Him." 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."

1. Based on the LORD'S words, what qualities is Samuel assuming would make a good king?
2. Why are Samuel's assumptions surprising? [Recall Saul's remarkable qualities that Scripture points out in 1 Samuel 9:2]
3. What is the quality the LORD requires for His king?

God Reveals Jesse's Partiality

Then Jesse called Abinadab [second-born] and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, "The LORD has not chosen this one either." Next Jesse made Shammah [third-born] pass by. And he said, "The LORD has not chosen this one either." Thus Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. But Samuel said to Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen these."

4. Discuss what characteristics you think father Jesse assumes Samuel is searching for?
5. If you were Samuel, what would you have concluded after seeing Jesse's seven sons and none were God's choice? How tempting to leave and avoid committing treason!

God Reveals David As His Choice

*And Samuel said to Jesse, "Are these all the children?" and he said, "There remains yet the youngest, and behold, he is tending the sheep." Then Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here." So he sent and brought him in. Now he was **ruddy, with beautiful eyes and a handsome appearance**. And the LORD said, "Arise, anoint him; for this is he." Then **Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers**; and the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward. And Samuel arose and went to Ramah.*

6. Who does Jesse exclude from the sacrifice? Is there a reason for this?
7. How does Samuel officially designate God's choice for king? Who witnesses this ceremony? Does the audience know that the anointing designates a new king? Why or why not?
8. How does the LORD confirm His choice for the new king?

Summary: Samuel reluctantly obeys the LORD's command to go to Bethlehem to anoint Saul's replacement as king of Israel; a task he knows will incite Saul to kill him. The LORD uses the selection process to teach both Samuel and Jesse (as well as his sons) truths about themselves as the LORD eliminates each of the seven sons presented to Samuel. Ironically, Samuel assumes the tall, handsome, first-born Eliab is the man –the same qualities Saul possesses - but God passes on him because his heart is opposed to Him. After the seventh one is eliminated, Samuel is confused as the LORD clearly states His next king is one of Jesse's sons. Samuel could have selected one of the seven anyway 'in order to obey' or left town without anointing anyone, but instead he inquires about other sons.

Apparently, father Jesse did not inform his youngest son David of the invitation to attend the sacrifice with the prominent judge Samuel. Is his job with the sheep too important or does father think he is not worthy to attend [scripture does not explain]? This reminds me of the Cinderella fairy tale where a parent decides which children are worthy to be included in a special event and which one remains behind to take care of the household. A biased father does not thwart the LORD's plan and He calls Jesse's youngest son David as ruler over His people, *a man after His own heart, tearing the kingdom of Israel from Saul and giving it to his neighbor who is better than he*. After the anointing, Samuel does not linger in Bethlehem; he quickly returns home to Ramah. [It is unclear if Samuel tells the group the specific reason for David's ordination, but God calls him for a special purpose.]

David's First Assignment: 1 Samuel 16:14-18

As the Spirit of the LORD indwells the new king-elect David, it departs the current king Saul with God replacing it with an evil spirit. Apparently Saul's servants know God is the source of the terrorizing spirit and, to help relieve its ill effects, a servant highly recommends Jesse's son David to play his harp in order to soothe Saul's troubled soul. Saul agrees.

*Then one of the young men said, "Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite who is a **skillful musician, a mighty man of valor, a warrior, one prudent in speech, and a handsome man; and the LORD is with him.** So Saul sent messengers to Jesse and said, "Send me your son David who is **with the flock.**"*

After Samuel's anoints him king, David returns to his occupation as shepherd. But God's new king has a different assignment that uses his musical skill, wise words, and godly character to minister to the current king in his mental instability. David witnesses the emotional and physical unraveling of Saul, his nation's king, in his new career.

David's Next Assignment: 1 Samuel 16: 19-23

*Jesse took a donkey loaded with bread and a jug of wine and a young goat, and sent them to Saul by David his son. Then David came to Saul and attended him; and Saul loved him greatly, and he **became his armor bearer.** Saul sent to Jesse, saying, "**Let David now stand before me, for he has found favor in my sight.**" So it came about whenever the evil spirit from God came to Saul, David would take the harp and play it with his hand; and Saul would be refreshed and be well, and the evil spirit would depart from him.*

David's heart that pleases God also pleases Saul and he becomes his armor bearer as well.

Saul and David

When Saul was first anointed, Samuel proclaimed that *“The Spirit of the LORD will come upon you mightily, and you shall prophesy with them and be changed into another man.”* And it came about, when all who knew him previously saw that he prophesied now with the prophets, that the people said to one another, *“What has happened to the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?”* 1 Samuel 10:6,11. Before Saul’s first battle to defend Jabesh-gilead, *the Spirit of God came upon Saul mightily when he heard these words* and he led them to victory 1 Samuel 11:6. Tragically, Saul does not obey the commandment of the LORD so his kingdom is cut short, God does not answer his inquiry, the Spirit of God departs, and an evil, tormenting spirit replaces it. God tells Samuel, *“I regret that I have made Saul king, for he has turned back from following Me and has not carried out My commands”* 1 Samuel 15:11.

Similarly for David, the Spirit of The LORD comes mightily upon him from the moment Samuel anoints him. In contrast to Saul however, David possesses a heart that pleases the LORD, and the LORD is with him (1 Samuel 16:18). His handsome appearance is ruddy with beautiful eyes, but it is his character that makes him stand out among others. He is a skilled musician, a man of ability, a fearless fighter, speaks with wisdom and understanding; but most impressive is he **walks with the LORD**. This quality is what empowers David to fulfill his calling by God; and, in turn, his life of obedience inspires us to imitate his faithful walk. As Christ’s redeemed children, the same Spirit of God instructs, guides, and reproves us just as it did for David. What a calling!

David is a young man, yet his fine reputation is already widely known. Perhaps the harp therapy idea originates because the king’s servant witnesses David’s remarkable music ability to soothe hurting people. Who knows? But Scripture is clear that God specifically places Israel’s second king in the current king’s household where the two men’s vastly different personalities and character co-exist. Next week we will see how the relationship develops between the two vastly different men.

Homework for Lesson 1

1. Read 1 Samuel 15 and 16 in one setting. Ask yourself what God has commanded you – are you doing it? Are you making excuses or rationalizing your actions? How are you developing a respect, fear, and honor for God?
2. Read Psalm 23 and imagine David tending the family flocks. How does being a shepherd influence his words? What do you learn about David’s heart from this psalm?
3. Read Psalm 24. What do you learn about David from this Psalm? Re-read with your situation in mind and pray it back to the LORD.
4. For next week, read 1 Samuel 17. Record what you learn about David.