

“A New King Apparent”

1 Samuel 16:1-13

INTRO:

The last time we were in **1 Samuel** we witnessed God’s ultimate rejection of Saul as king in Israel. Although God had decided to remove the kingdom from Saul, God was not going to completely remove Saul immediately. Still, to understand the scene in **1 Samuel 16**, we must remember that the situation in Israel is pretty grim. Samuel has just told Saul at the LORD’s direction that his days as king were numbered. But who would follow Saul? There was no king apparent on the horizon. Some of Samuel’s grief over Saul’s failure is over the fact that there seems to be no hope in sight.

So, the LORD speaks to Samuel and will lead him to the king *“the LORD has seen”* among the Sons of Jesse. We learn here that although the situation looked desperate, God was still in control and He would provide Himself a man to rise to the occasion.

I. The Preparations for the Anointing (v. 1-5)

II. The Importance of the Heart (v. 6-10)

III. The unusual place to find a king (v. 11-13)

I. The Preparations for the Anointing (v. 1-5)

A. *“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.” (Samuel 16:1-5)*

The LORD spoke to Samuel in the midst of his concern over King Saul’s spiritual self-destruction. The LORD calls Samuel to action. Like before the new king would be anointed at a feast, but unlike before, Samuel was not given the full picture.

B. Before, Saul came to Samuel. This time he would travel to the one to be the next king. We tend to read this text knowing already what will happen. King David is an enormous

historical figure in the Old Testament. He is the one through whom Messiah would come. Yet, when Samuel traveled to Bethlehem, few knew who Jesse was and even fewer knew about his youngest son who was stuck with the dirty job of shepherding his father's sheep.

C. When the old prophet Samuel arrives at Bethlehem, the leaders of the village are afraid. They knew things were not good between King Saul and Samuel. They may even have been afraid that Samuel had come to judge them for some affront before God. But Samuel puts them at ease when he calls them to prepare for a sacrifice.

II. The Importance of the Heart (v. 6-10)

A. No sooner did Samuel meet some of Jesse's sons than he thought he knew who would be God's choice. **(1 Samuel 16:6-10)**

"When [Jesse and his sons] entered, Samuel looked at Eliab 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.' Then Jesse called Abinadab and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, 'The LORD has not chosen this one either.' Next Jesse made Shammah 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.'"

B. The LORD included these details to help us recognize our God does not value the outward accoutrements of success as much as He does our hearts.

1. While it is important to obey God and to serve Him, to obey and serve Him in an acceptable way means a service that begins in our hearts. The outward appearance means nothing without an inward reality. Still, an inward love for Christ will bubble to the surface in us through an outward submission to Christ.

2. Sometimes we believe if we are to be used of God we must be beautiful or talented or exceptional. Eliab was all of this. Do you remember the picture of King Saul? Tall, handsome, and good breeding. On the surface Saul was the picture of success, but he had a severe heart problem. Who does God bless and use? Does the LORD use only those who are beautiful or talented? Sometimes. Yet, most of the time, God uses the folks we expect Him to use the least. Robert Murray M'Cheyne wrote: *"It is not so much great talents that God blesses, as great likeness to Christ."*

C. We can readily see in David's later life evidence of his heart for God. David had a believing heart. This same David wrote *"The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want."* He believed God. David also had a heart that was committed to glorifying God.

Psalm 34:1-3 says,

"I will bless the LORD at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul will make its boast in the LORD; the humble will hear it and rejoice. O magnify the LORD with me, And let us exalt His name together."

David had a courageous heart. The LORD was so real to David that a lion, a bear and even a giant could not shake his confidence in God's protection. Finally, David had a heart that was willing to wait upon God. Twice he could have killed Saul and claimed the kingdom that was promised him, but he would not.

III. The unusual place to find a king (v.11-13)

A. Our familiarity with this account has robbed us of the sense of tension the writer wanted us to feel in this story. We forget that Samuel was not Jesse's old family friend. Samuel did not know how many sons Jesse had. He came to the end of the number of sons present and the LORD had not given him the okay to anoint any one of them. Where was this one that God had seen as the next king in Israel? No more sons. Still, no king.

B. There must be at least one more son. **(1 Samuel 16:11-13)**

"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."

David, the giant figure in Israel's history and the greatest king Israel ever had, was the least of his family, and the most unexpected choice as the king after God's own heart.

God wants to use those whose heart is aimed at Him. We may be a nobody, but if we allow Him, God will use us for His glory!