

SAMUEL ANOINTS DAVID

1 Samuel 16:1-23

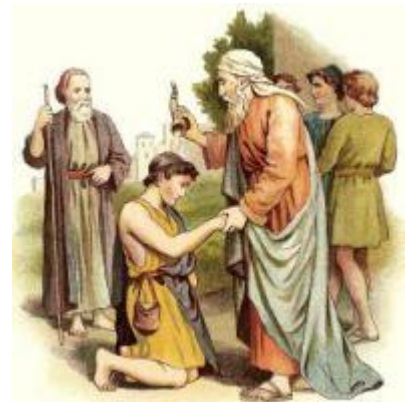
Key Verse: 16:7

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."

In this passage, God directs Samuel to anoint David, a shepherd boy and the youngest son of Jesse, to be the next king of Israel. God chose David by looking at his heart. God sent his Spirit to empower David upon his anointing. But David had to grow as a leader, waiting on God's time, to serve his people as their leader. He became a music servant for Saul.

I. SAMUEL DID WHAT THE LORD SAID (1-5)

King Saul's failure to obey the word of God grieved the Lord and Samuel mourned for Saul (15:35). Samuel was Saul's shepherd and advisor. It was hard for him to watch Saul as the king became proud before God. Samuel had cried out to God for him all night. Now he was mourning for Saul. The king had been a bad sheep to Samuel; he rarely listened to him and followed his spiritual advice. Yet, Samuel cared about Saul. His heart was broken. Samuel was a true shepherd. But God did not want Samuel to waste his time mourning for the fallen leader. Look at verse 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."* God's purpose cannot be stopped by one man's disobedience. When a chosen man rejects God's purpose for him, God turns to another who will obey his word faithfully. God told Samuel that he was sending him to Bethlehem to anoint a new king to replace Saul.



Samuel saw the danger of anointing another king while Saul remained as the king of Israel. So he replied, "How can I go? Saul will hear about it and kill me" (2). Samuel knew Saul well. Later, Saul would be obsessed with killing David after learning he was anointed to be king to replace himself. God heard Samuel's concern, but he still said to Samuel: *"Take a heifer with you and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.' Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what to do. You are to anoint for me the one I indicate"* (2-3).

How did Samuel obey? Verse 4 says that Samuel did what the Lord said. He did not object to God. He didn't second-guess the Lord's command. He did not insist on his own ideas. He did what the Lord said. He was a man of obedience. He traveled from Ramah (15:34) to Bethlehem to anoint the Lord's chosen. How did the elders of Bethlehem react to Samuel's sudden visit? *When he arrived at Bethlehem, the elders of the town trembled when they met him. They asked, "Do you come in peace?"* (4)

Bethlehem was a very small town at that time. The elders trembled at the sudden visit of a national spiritual leader. It was like President visiting Shippensburg today. Why did they tremble? Perhaps they heard about how Samuel had killed Agag, the king of the Amalekites. They acknowledged his authority. 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* (5). He helped them to prepare to offer sacrifice to the Lord. He obeyed what God said to him, without divulging the purpose of their consecration.

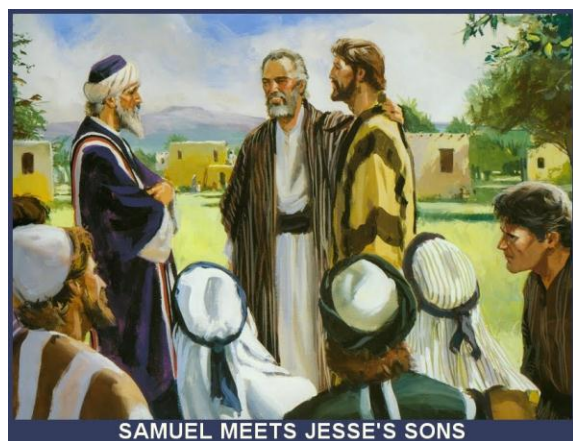
II. THE LORD LOOKS AT THE HEART (6-13)

God told Samuel that he had chosen one of Jesse’s sons to be king, but didn’t say which one. Jesse had eight sons. So after the consecration ceremony, Jesse presented his sons before Samuel in the order of their ages. First up was Son #1, Eliab. As soon as Samuel saw him, he thought, “Surely the Lord’s anointed stands here before the Lord.” Why? It was because Samuel was impressed by his appearance and his height. Eliab was handsome and tall, just like King Saul, and Samuel thought God had chosen him as Saul’s successor.



We cannot blame Samuel. Many people today also tend to judge a book by its cover. Many business managers hire their workers based on the outward appearance. Many young people fall in love with others based on looks. I heard that in Korea even some men go for cosmetic surgery. The term “lookism” is defined as “prejudice or discrimination on the grounds of appearance.” One author calls it "Survival of the Prettiest" Research shows that good-looking people tend to earn 5-10% higher salary than those who are below-average looking. Man looks at the outward appearance.

But what did the Lord say to Samuel? Let us read verse 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."* The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart. The Lord looks at the heart. What does this mean to us? We tend to spend much time to make our appearance look nice. Some people wear high-heeled shoes or have certain hairstyle to make them look taller. But in God’s eyes, whether we look a little taller than others or we look better looking than others are not the most



important thing for a person. What is important is what is in our hearts. So we should think more about what is in our hearts than how we look.

The Lord looks at the heart. He looks at our hearts. So what kind of hearts does he want to see in us? We can find a clue in David. God looked at David's heart and he chose him to be king over Israel. So what kind of heart did David have? **First, David had a shepherd's heart.** As a young boy, he tended his father's sheep. He could have done this job casually just as many teenagers would when they are given a family duty. But David took this job seriously. When a lion or a bear came to take his the sheep, he would fight with the wild animal until he rescued his sheep from them (17:34-35). He risked his own life for the sheep. Later, he became a shepherd king for the people of Israel. **Second, David had a humble heart.** He listened to Nathan when the prophet came to rebuke him for his sins (2Sa 12:13). He was different from Saul who would not listen to Samuel. David didn't make lame excuses.

Third, David had a repentant heart. David committed serious sins including adultery and murder. Unlike Saul, however, his repentance was real. Saul's repentance was before people for a show. David's repentance was before God. He wrote a repentant testimony as a psalm. He said, "Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love.... Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me" (Ps 51:1,10-12). **Fourth, David had the heart of faith.** When the Philistine giant Goliath terrorized them everyday, the Israelite soldiers ran from him in great fear.



But the boy David volunteered to fight the giant with a sling shot and a few shiny pebbles. He told Goliath, "all those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves; for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give all of you into our hands" (1Sa 17:47). David is included in the Hall of Faith in Hebrews 11. **Fifth, David had a compassionate heart.** Years later, after King David firmly established the united kingdom of Israel through conquering many enemies, he searched out for the son of his friend Jonathan. Saul and his son Jonathan had died and there were no descendants left, except for one crippled man named Mephibosheth. David brought him to Jerusalem and let him eat together at his table everyday (2Sa 9:7). He could have sent some money for this man for the sake of his friend Jonathan, but David showed his compassionate heart for this man. Mephibosheth was deeply touched and said, "What is your servant, that you should notice a dead dog like me?" (2Sa 9:8). Of course, the perfect example of a compassionate heart is found in our Lord Jesus. Last week, we read in our daily bread how Jesus helped a widow whose only son was dead. Luke 7:13 says that when the Lord saw her, his heart went out to her and he said, "Don't cry." Jesus' heart went out to this sorrowful widow and he helped her by raising her son from the dead. In fact, many of the gospel stories are about the compassionate heart of Jesus shown to helpless people. May God help us to learn the compassionate heart of Jesus!

David had the kind of heart that God was looking for in a person. Where did David get such heart? Was he born with a good heart? Good looks are God's gift to us which we don't work hard to earn

(except for plastic surgery). How about good heart? King Saul had good looks, but his heart was not right before God because he followed his own ideas rather than the word of God. As we learn from Jesus' parable of the sower, our hearts can be cultivated to produce good crops. I believe David became a man after

God's own heart through training. From his boyhood, he was trained to be a good shepherd to have the shepherd's heart of God. God also trained him in the wilderness of the Judea. The jealous King Saul pursued him everywhere with the intention to kill him. David had to move from a cave to another cave. His heart of faith, compassion and humility was strengthened as he struggled with the word of God during this training. When God trains us, let us remember that he does so to strengthen our hearts.



When Samuel came to Bethlehem, David was still a boy. His father Jesse did not even include him for the interview with Samuel. Jesse called his #2 Abinadab and then #3 Shammah, but each time, Samuel said, "It is not him." *Jesse had seven of his sons pass before Samuel, but Samuel said to him, "The Lord has not chosen these"* (10). Finally, Samuel asked, "Are these all the sons you have?" Jesse answered, "There is still the youngest, but he is tending the sheep." Samuel said, "Send for him; we will not sit down until he arrives." Samuel had a sense of mission.

Look at verses 12-13. *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." 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. Good things seem to happen to people while they are tending their sheep. On the Christmas night, the shepherds in Bethlehem were the first ones who heard the good news of the birth of the Savior. David was not the tallest or the most handsome among the sons of Jesse, though he had a fine appearance and handsome features. He wasn't regarded highly by either his father (he didn't even bother to present him to Samuel) or his brothers (Eliab thought David was conceited and his heart was wicked; he thought he came to the battlefield to watch the war game (17:28).) David probably felt he was insignificant. But he did not fall into self-pity. He was faithful in tending his father's sheep.



So David was anointed by Samuel in a private ceremony in the presence of his father and brothers (His public anointing would come much later (2Sa 2:4; 5:3).). And

from that day on the Spirit of the Lord came upon David in power. God sent his Spirit so that his servant could fulfill his purpose (Ac 1:8). God enables his servants by empowering through his Spirit to do the work he commissions.

III. THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD DEPARTS FROM SAUL (14-23)

Look at verse 14. *Now the Spirit of the Lord had departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord tormented him.* The result of Saul's disobedience and stubborn refusal to repent from his heart was that the Spirit of God departed from him. You might ask, "Wasn't Saul anointed by God's command? Did God change?" The answer is no. It was Saul who changed—from a humble man to a proud man. He became useless before God. The Spirit of the Lord left him. And a terrible thing happened to him. An evil spirit came to torment him. His attendants called it "an evil spirit from God." The NIV footnote calls it an injurious spirit. This evil spirit would leave him when he felt better (23). Perhaps, "an evil spirit from God" indicates that God withdrew his protection from him because of his disobedience. (Ro 1:24-26. Mt 12:45). When the Spirit of the Lord left him, a demon came to torment him (Lk 11:24-26). Saul became an unstable person.



His attendants suggested music therapy for his tormented soul. Saul said, "Find someone who plays well and bring him to me" (17). He was hoping a musician would make him feel better (16). One of the servants answered, *"I have seen a son of Jesse of Bethlehem who knows how to play the harp. He is a brave man and a warrior. He speaks well and is a fine-looking man. And the Lord is with him"* (18). He recommended David to Saul to play the harp for him. Of course, Saul did not know that David had been anointed by Samuel to be the next king (16:12). So Saul sent messengers to Jesse and said, *"Send me your son David, who is with the sheep."* Jesse sent his David to Saul along with gifts. So David entered his service for Saul as a harp player. God trained David under Saul to become the next king. This opportunity would give David a firsthand experience on what king can do to lead a nation. David went back and forth from Saul (17:15). But he also had to wait to become king. It was the "wait on God's time" training. David had to learn and grow, given his present circumstance. We also must learn and grow given our situation, waiting patiently on God.

In this passage, we learned that God chose the young David to be a shepherd king for Israel while he was faithfully tending his father's sheep. May God help us to be faithful shepherds! We also learned that God sees our hearts, not our outward appearance. May God help us to repent our sins and have the heart of a true shepherd!