

David Chosen as King

1 Samuel 16 v 1-13

Context:

From the very beginning of his relationship with Israel, Yahweh God made it clear that *he* was their rightful and only king. Before they entered the Promised Land, on their journey from Egypt through the wilderness, God warned them that, should they ever desire a *human* king to replace God, that human king would be a disaster. Nevertheless, not long after settling in the Land, they did indeed demand that the prophet Samuel give them a human king so they could be like the surrounding nations with a strong king to lead them out into battle to fight against and defeat their enemies. God gave them what they wanted and Saul was anointed as the first King of Israel, but just as God had warned, Saul was a disaster due to his deep personal insecurities. So, in his mercy God decided to replace Saul with a king after his own heart and in today's study with pick up the story as Samuel risks his life by travelling to the little town of Bethlehem to secretly anoint God's new king.

Observation:

1. What question does God ask Samuel at the beginning of v 1?
2. What instruction does God then give him in the second half of v 1?
3. What is Samuel's initial response at the beginning of v 2?
4. How does God respond in v 2-3?
5. What initial reception does Samuel receive on his arrival in Bethlehem (v 4)?
6. What does Samuel say and do in response (v 5)?
7. Who did Samuel see first and what did he think on seeing him (v 6)?
8. What is God's surprising response and why in v 7?
9. What follows in v 8-10?
10. What question does Samuel ask Jesse at the beginning of v 11?
11. What is Jesse's reply and what does Samuel then say in v 11?
12. How is David described in v 12 and what does God tell Samuel to do?
13. What does Samuel do and what is the result according to v 13?

Meaning:

1. It seems that Saul suffered from personal insecurity and lacked confidence in God. Although outwardly he fulfilled the people's criteria for a king (see 1 Samuel 8 v 19-20 & 1 Samuel 9 v 1-2) he hid on the day of his coronation and had to be dragged to the throne (see 1 Samuel 10 v 20-24), and in a critical moment on the battlefield he disobeyed God out of a desire to please his troops (see 1 Samuel 15 v 24-26).

Why is personal insecurity dangerous in a leader and how might it manifest itself?

2. Why do you think Samuel was so afraid to obey God and travel to Bethlehem (v 2)? What was at stake for Samuel and how do you think he found the courage to obey?
3. Why do you think the locals reacted with such fear on Samuel's arrival in Bethlehem (v 4)?
4. Why do you think Samuel thought Eliab was God's choice as the new king (v 6)?
5. What do you think God means by his words in v 7 and how might this principle apply today in our life, our church and our world?
6. Why do you think David had been left out of the consecration ritual for the feast (v 5) and had been left off the invitation list to the party (v 11)?
7. How might we be guilty of writing off or excluding people based on worldly criteria?
8. At first sight v 12 seems to contradict v 7. If God isn't interested in the outward appearance (v 7), why does the writer give us a physical description of David (v 12)?
9. Why is the coming of the Spirit upon David at his anointing with oil so important and how did the Spirit's anointing manifest in David's life and reign?

Application:

1. How might personal insecurity hinder your life and service for Jesus, and what can you do about it (see Zechariah 4 v 6, 2 Timothy 1 v 7)
2. Samuel had to overcome his fears and take a risk to obey God and travel to Bethlehem. How might we overcome our fears and take risks for God?
3. In the Bible, God often seems to choose unlikely people like David to serve him. Can you think of any other examples in the Bible of this principle and why do you think God does this kind of thing?

Pray:

- Pray for God to heal any personal insecurities you have and give you greater confidence in who God has made you to be.
- Pray for God's help to overcome fear and take risks for him.
- Thank God that he chooses unlikely people to serve him, even you!