

God's Superhero – David

An Anointed Life

1 Samuel 16

Introduction

Samuel was the last one to rule over Israel during the time of the Judges. Israel had failed to drive out the Canaanite people who had inhabited the Promised Land and in time became more and more influenced by their pagan practices. After seeing that the other nations had kings to govern over them, Israel wanted to have her own king.

In 1 Samuel 8:19 it says the people refused to listen to Samuel and said, "We want a king over us. Then we will be like all the other nations, with a king to lead us and to go out before us and fight our battles." Samuel was concerned by this but God told him, "Listen to all that the people are saying to you; it is not you they have rejected, but they have rejected me as their king."

In early Jewish history the high priests and later the kings were anointed with oil for God's service. They would be referred to as "the Lord's anointed" even though God always saw Himself as Israel's King and High Priest. Even when the people rejected God, he did not abandon them.

The first King of Israel was chosen from the tribe of Benjamin. Saul was a very promising and impressive young man. He stood head and shoulders above his peers. Saul starts out as a very humble man. When Samuel anoints him king he says, "But am I not a Benjamite, from the smallest tribe of Israel and is not my clan the least of all the clans of the tribe of Benjamin? Why do you say such a thing to me?" But power and position would change all of that. King Saul would become an unbearable dictator. His paranoia would make him moody and irritable and devilish. Eventually, his consuming arrogance and pride would be his undoing and would ultimately result in his being rejected by God as King of his people.

By the time we come to 1 Samuel 16 Saul has completely abandoning the ways of God, Samuel is lamenting the spiritual condition of the nation and God is preparing to change leaders. This time God will choose a young man that is already living an anointed life of service before God. Let's read from 1 Samuel 16: (Read)

Bethlehem, a familiar biblical name, would come to be called David's city. It would be the birth place of God's Messiah King where our Lord Jesus Christ, the anointed One would also be born. Bethlehem was to become indeed the birthplace of the Kings.

David tended sheep on the hills around Bethlehem. He led them to good pasture and water, and when they were too far to return home before night, he led them to a place of shelter for the night. His tools were a staff and sling which he used to protect the sheep from wild animals in the countryside.

David's father was named Jesse. He was the grandson of Boaz and Ruth. Jesse had eight sons. David was the youngest. When Samuel arrives, Jesse is home with his other sons while David is out tending the sheep.

So picture in your mind an old prophet coming up over one of the hills of Bethlehem, bringing a heifer for a sacrifice and feast to the Lord. Samuel has been sent by the Lord to anoint another king in place of Saul. So he calls Jesse and his sons to the sacrifice and begins his interview with each one. One by one, David's brothers come in, tall, handsome men, and Samuel looked for some sign from the Lord to show him which one should be king, but not one of them was chosen. Are these all of your sons? Jesse replies, "Well no, I do have one younger son who is still in the field with the sheep."

Sometimes we completely overlook those that God has chosen for ministry. It's also easy to feel as though you've been forgotten and stuck out in the field tending sheep. However, remember God knows exactly where you are!

Samuel says, "Send for him." They go to get David and the Lord says to Samuel, "Arise, anoint him for he is the one." So Samuel pours oil on David's head and anoints him king. And the Spirit of the Lord came upon David.

I. A life of spiritual power

David was young, good-looking and had a twinkle in his eyes. Not bad for a shepherd boy, but he was no King Saul, who they said was more handsome than any among the children of Israel. From his shoulders upward he was taller than any of the people. (1 Samuel 9:2) David was cute, but you didn't look at him and say, "Now there's a born leader. He could be a king." That's what people said when they looked at Saul. When they looked at David, they said "He sure is a nice looking boy." We don't know how old David was at this time but most scholars think he was somewhere between 10 and 15 years old.

David didn't even have the respect his own family. His father doesn't even mention him when Samuel asks to see his sons. He isn't invited to the sacrificial feast and he wouldn't have been sent for had Samuel not insisted on it. It's not unusual for God to choose unlikely people to do His work. In fact, he often does, probably so that everyone knows the work is God's work, not man's. God likes people to wonder what the secret of our strength is. You may not be an intellectual or well thought of or you may be despised by others for your faith in Christ. Maybe your family hasn't shown much respect for you. But those who are rejected of men often become those who are loved of the Lord.

The LORD said, "Arise, anoint him; for this is the one!" David's seven brothers, by all outward appearance, seemed to be better material for royalty than David. But as unlikely as he was, David was the one. God looks for different qualities in leaders than we do. What made David special is recorded in 1 Samuel 13:14: *The LORD has sought for Himself a man after His own heart, and the LORD had commanded him to be*

commander over His people. What made David the right one was that he was a man after God's own heart. God gave him a great heart and the Holy Spirit gave him great power.

By the way, you don't have to quit your job and go to seminary to be a person after God's own heart. You don't have to be famous or rich. You don't even need to be respected or even liked by other people. You don't need status, influence, power, the respect or approval of men to be a person after God's own heart. You get that heart by seeing God and recognizing his work.

David acquired his heart for God by tending sheep. Keeping the sheep meant you had time to think. David would spend a lot of time looking over the sheep and looking at the glory of God's creation. Later he would write:

The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork. Day unto day utters speech and night unto night reveals knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line has gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. (Psalm 19:1-4)

Keeping the sheep meant you knew how to care for the sheep and learn how to be a good shepherd. It made David realize that he was a sheep and God was his shepherd. Those lessons would provide the basis for one of his greatest psalms:

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever. (Psalm 23)

Keeping the sheep meant you had to trust God in times of danger. David had lions and bears and wolves to contend with, and the sheep had to be protected. "The life of a shepherd was not an easy life.

David would grow to become a great man, and a great king over Israel, and yet he *never lost his shepherd's heart.* He knew the power of God was greater than any obstacle or situation that would arise before him. He did not blame God for distressing circumstances; he simply saw them as challenges and opportunities for God to demonstrate his great power. The outward display of the Spirit's power was effective because of the inner life of love and devotion David had to God. He truly was a man after God's own heart.

But the anointed life is also a life of specific mission.

II. A life of specific mission

We are in training for reigning! God has a specific purpose and mission for your life. David may not have realized it at the time, but those days out on the rolling hills learning the lessons of being a good shepherd were preparing him for being King over Israel. David would become one of the greatest men of the Bible, being mentioned more than 1,000 times in the pages of Scripture - more than Abraham, more than Moses, more than any man in the New Testament. In fact Jesus became known as the *Son of David* (Matthew 9:27).

But it all began in the daily discipline of *keeping the sheep*. That's where he developed and honed his skills as a musician and songwriter and marksman with the sling. In the Hillside College at Bethlehem is where he learned to put his complete trust and his very life in God's hands as he would go out to rescue the sheep from the wolf or the lion or the bear. No wonder the LORD would later say of David, in Psalm 78:70-72:

He also chose David His servant, and took him from the sheepfolds; from following the ewes that had young He brought him, to shepherd Jacob His people, and Israel His inheritance. So he shepherded them according to the integrity of his heart, and guided them by the skillfulness of his hands.

God's purpose for your life has not so much to do with destination as with the journey. So many people think if they can just attain a certain level of comfort or success they'll have God's favor. And then they'll do something great for God. But those who know the heart of God know that each new day and every situation is our opportunity to learn and understand the ways of God. The challenges of life for those who live the anointed life are all part of the specific mission God has for us. God is using your circumstances and situations right now to prepare you for greater ministry and more effective service. And the challenge and secret to your future success is how you handle the situation that before you right now! If you can make it through the daily challenges of life and still have a grateful heart and thankful spirit, then God can use you as an example for others to follow.

Whether you are a King or a shepherd matters not to God. The mission is not identified in titles, or position. The mission of God is demonstrated in authentic and genuine relationship. God is looking for servants who are willing to get involved in their faith and take some risks to make His name great. Living the anointed life means realizing you have a specific mission to make God known to as many people as you possibly can. When you begin to live your life with that specific purpose in mind each day you will begin to realize that because of God's anointing upon you, you are living a life of special freedom.

III. A life of special freedom

David did not have to manipulate his way into the palace or into Saul's favor. He allowed the LORD to open the doors for him. David let the LORD open the doors for him. Proverbs says that a person's gift makes room for them. David had applied himself. He practiced the lyre and became accomplished enough to play before King Saul. He also loved to sing! He developed his voice, his instrument, his skill with the sling, his

courage, his appreciation of God and nature. And at the right time, it opened the door for him to learn how to conduct himself in the presence of King Saul. More training and learning!

While David had developed some skill, he still wasn't ready to be King. God needed to give him some practical training in matters of court etiquette and manners. David needed to learn how to conduct himself in the presence of the King. So when Saul's advisors were looking for some way to soothe the disposition of the King when he was distraught because of the evil spirit that came upon him, one of the servants said, "Look, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, *who is* skillful in playing, a mighty man of valor, a man of war, prudent in speech, and a handsome person; and the LORD *is* with him."

This was an important time in David's life and training for the destiny God had for him. For the first time, he was in a royal court, and began to learn the customs and manners that he would need to be a good king later in life. David would take a harp (more like our modern guitar) and play it. Then Saul would become refreshed and well. God used David to minister to Saul. David was happy to be used. But what seemed like a great arrangement would not stay great for very long.

The scriptures say that King Saul loved him greatly, and David became his armor bearer: Saul took to him immediately, and gave him the important and trusted position of armor bearer, his chief assistant in battle. A soldier's life would often depend on the courage and faithfulness of his armor bearer, and Saul knew David was worthy of this position.

David had no fear! That means he was a man of faith. There was a freedom in his heart because he had committed his destiny into God's hands and he trusted God. He did not second guess God. He could even support and serve a wayward King Saul who would try on several occasions to end his life. Most people would say David was a fool for going back again and again to serve Saul but David could do it because the Spirit's anointing upon his life gave him a freedom that comes from within!

What are you stressed and frustrated with? It's probably over some external situation or circumstance in your life! Stress can cause you lose sleep at night and worry every waking moment. Stress can affect your job, your marriage, your finances, your future, your health – there are so many things that can rob you of your peace and freedom in Christ! But those who choose to live the anointed life learn to rest in God's provision. They are secure in God's intentions and plans for them. They are not afraid of death or dying! They allow the anointing of God's Spirit to lift them up until they triumph over the bondages and afflictions that come from the Devil.

Conclusion

There is a time to mourn, but there is also a time to move on and do what God wants us to do. Samuel had become paralyzed with mourning because of Saul's tragic rebellion, but how many of you know God was not paralyzed. Satan wanted Samuel to remain

trapped in mourning over the tragedies of the past. He wanted Samuel stuck there, unable to move on with the LORD. But there are times when God tells us to simply move on. This is what God told Moses at the shores of the Red Sea: *Why do you cry to Me? Tell the children of Israel to go forward.* (Exodus 14:15) It was time for Samuel to go forward. This may be God's message for you today. Maybe it's time for you to let go of the past and begin to move in God's new anointing for your life.

The simple fact is that God *was* ruling Israel not Saul or David. They could recognize His rule, submit to it, and enjoy the benefits; or they could resist His reign over them, and suffer because of it. Attitude does matter! It affects *everything!* It can even affect your ultimate destiny.

The first king of Israel was the kind of king the people wanted. But the people's choice had failed and disqualified himself. Now, the LORD said, it's time for a king of my choosing. I will show Israel *My* king. God's King would be a servant-king! His king would be anointed to serve.

Do you want the applause and accolades of people or the anointing and affirmation of the Spirit? The anointed life is a life of special power. It is a life of specific mission. And it is a life of special freedom.