

Moving On

1 Samuel 16:1-23

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."

² But Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears about it, he will kill me."

The LORD said, "Take a heifer with you and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.'³ Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what to do. You are to anoint for me the one I indicate."

⁴ Samuel did what the LORD said. When he arrived at Bethlehem, the elders of the town trembled when they met him. They asked, "Do you come in peace?"

⁵ 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.

⁶ When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab and thought, "Surely the LORD'S anointed stands here before the LORD."

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 people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

⁸ Then Jesse called Abinadab and had him pass in front of Samuel. But Samuel said, "The LORD has not chosen this one either."⁹ Jesse then had Shammah pass by, but Samuel said, "Nor has the LORD chosen this one."¹⁰ Jesse had seven of his sons pass before Samuel, but Samuel said to him, "The LORD has not chosen these."¹¹ So he asked Jesse, "Are these all the sons you have?"

"There is still the youngest," Jesse answered. "He is tending the sheep."

Samuel said, "Send for him; we will not sit down until he arrives."

¹² So he sent for him and had him brought in. He was glowing with health and had a fine appearance and handsome features.

Then the LORD said, "Rise and anoint him; this is the one."

¹³ 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 powerfully upon David. Samuel then went to Ramah.

¹⁴ Now the Spirit of the LORD had departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD tormented him.

¹⁵ Saul's attendants said to him, "See, an evil spirit from God is tormenting you."¹⁶ Let our lord command his servants here to search for someone who can play the lyre. He will play when the evil spirit from God comes on you, and you will feel better."

¹⁷ So Saul said to his attendants, "Find someone who plays well and bring him to me."

¹⁸ One of the servants answered, "I have seen a son of Jesse of Bethlehem who knows how to play the lyre. He is a brave man and a warrior. He speaks well and is a fine-looking man. And the LORD is with him."

¹⁹ Then Saul sent messengers to Jesse and said, "Send me your son David, who is with the sheep."²⁰ So Jesse took a donkey loaded with bread, a skin of wine and a young goat and sent them with his son David to Saul.

²¹ David came to Saul and entered his service. Saul liked him very much, and David became one of his armor-bearers.²² Then Saul sent word to Jesse, saying, "Allow David to remain in my service, for I am pleased with him."

²³ Whenever the spirit from God came on Saul, David would take up his lyre and play. Then relief would come to Saul; he would feel better, and the evil spirit would leave him.

Grieving and Moving On

1 Samuel 15:34-16:1

³⁴ Then Samuel left for Ramah, but Saul went up to his home in Gibeah of Saul. ³⁵ Until the day Samuel died, he did not go to see Saul again, though Samuel mourned for him. And the LORD regretted that he had made Saul king over Israel.

Samuel Anoints David

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."

1. Saul's failure was difficult for Samuel. Samuel had invested much into Saul's life and he deeply cared for this once promising king. In verse 35, God grieves over the whole matter. As much as God is all knowing and unchanging, He is not apathetic. He cares and is deeply moved, because His creation matters to Him.
2. Samuel grieves over the loss. We can grieve when God-given potential is wasted or opportunities opened by God is squandered. We must allow time to grieve over our loss. There is a season to grieve and there is a time to learn to move on.
3. God tells Samuel to move on. Yes, Saul has failed but God's work must continue. Israel will be led by another; God has chosen David and rejected Saul. Moving on is a difficult thing. It is not easy to move away from someone whom you care for and have invested much into. Yet we must learn that there are times we have to accept what the Lord says and move on. We all have faced the pain of having someone who is close to us (perhaps a friend or a trusted leader) turn against God and pursue choices that are destructive. God is not asking us to walk away from everyone who turns against Him. God would move us to pray and reach out with love and compassion. Yet in such situations there are decisions to be made as to what we can do and what we must let go. Things will change and it will be challenging, yet it is something we must navigate with godly counsel, wisdom and love.

What Are We Looking For? (vv. 5-7)

⁵ 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. ⁶ When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab and thought, "Surely the LORD'S anointed stands here before the LORD." 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 people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

1. To Samuel, Eliab was the person that would make a good king. Somehow his looks and the way he carried himself inspired confidence. Samuel quickly concluded, "Surely the Lord's anointed stands here before the Lord", but God spoke to Samuel "The Lord does not look at the things people look for".
 - What do people look for?
2. We live in the world where a lot of emphasis is placed on outward appearances. In social media, we can easily shape or even manufacture an image of ourselves for the world to see. The amount of time spent on looking at what people post and how media portrays events and people can influence the way we perceive things in a subtle way.
 - What influences the way we look at people?

3. “People look at outwards appearances, but the Lord looks to the heart.” It is hard to look at a person’s heart. The “heart” in the Old Testament refers to the will and character of a person. This is the second reference to the heart when it comes to selection. The first was the *“The Lord has sought out a man after his own heart and appointed him ruler of his people, because you have not kept the LORD'S command.”* (1 Samuel 13:14)
4. When it comes to our heart, what we have learned so far:
 - Only God can reveal what is in the heart
 - Our attitude towards God’s commandments reveal the state of our heart
 - Our heart is shaped by God as we learn to surrender our will to Him
 - What matters to God is our heart, not our success or our offerings

Study the scriptures and prayerfully seek God as to how He is renewing your heart. Make this a point of study, prayer, and meditation in this season.

God’s Good Spirit and Evil Spirit (vv. 13-16)

¹³ *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 powerfully upon David. Samuel then went to Ramah.*

¹⁴ *Now the Spirit of the LORD had departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD tormented him.*

¹⁵ *Saul's attendants said to him, “See, an evil spirit from God is tormenting you. ¹⁶ Let our lord command his servants here to search for someone who can play the lyre. He will play when the evil spirit from God comes on you, and you will feel better.”*

1. How are we to understand the idea of God sending an evil spirit? Let’s look back at the book of Samuel and see how it helps us understand what is happening here.
 - a. The Lord first anointed Saul with His Spirit

1 Samuel 10:1

Then Samuel took a flask of olive oil and poured it on Saul's head and kissed him, saying, “Has not the LORD anointed you ruler over his inheritance?”

1 Samuel 10:6

The Spirit of the LORD will come powerfully upon you, and you will prophesy with them; and you will be changed into a different person.

- b. Saul has turned away from God
 - Disregarded God’s instructions on worship (13:11-14)
 - Only sought the Lord for his own benefit
 - Disobeyed God’s word again and again
 - Wanted to kill his own son, Jonathan (14:44)
 - Was more concerned about losing face than losing God
 - God sent Samuel to warn Saul, but he did not repent or turn to God
 - Saul’s pride would lead him to do worse things
2. It is clear that it is was Saul who had turned away from God. Saul’s heart was consumed with pride which led to bad choices that would leave Israel in tatters. He also almost killed his son (he would try to kill Jonathan again when he discovers his son’s loyalty to David). This shows us that his pride and rage led him to madness. Saul must bear the responsibility for what is happening.

3. In the Old Testament narratives, God's sovereignty in all matters is emphasized. He is responsible for everything (good or bad). The narrative does not focus on secondary causes (Saul's own disobedience). The reason for this is to avoid dualism (two forces of equal power in battle: the forces of good vs evil). However, it is clear that Saul is held responsible for his disobedience and pride that led to the departure of God's Spirit.

Reflect on the verse below (David's prayer of repentance when he committed adultery and killed Uriah):

Psalms 51:10-12

¹⁰ Create in me a pure heart, O God,
and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

¹¹ Do not cast me from your presence
or take your Holy Spirit from me.

¹² Restore to me the joy of your salvation
and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.

God's Conditional Promises

Jeremiah 18:5-10

⁵ Then the word of the LORD came to me. ⁶ He said, "Can I not do with you, Israel, as this potter does?" declares the LORD. "Like clay in the hand of the potter, so are you in my hand, Israel. ⁷ If at any time I announce that a nation or kingdom is to be uprooted, torn down and destroyed, ⁸ and if that nation I warned repents of its evil, then I will relent and not inflict on it the disaster I had planned. ⁹ And if at another time I announce that a nation or kingdom is to be built up and planted, ¹⁰ and if it does evil in my sight and does not obey me, then I will reconsider the good I had intended to do for it.

In the above text, we learn that God will relent from judging a nation that repents from evil. He will reconsider His good intentions if a nation turns to evil. The point is that the Lord does not change His attitude towards evil. He will put an end to evil. Saul has made himself an agent of evil, therefore God has to put an end to the damage this evil is causing to preserve His people. The irony in this story is now Saul seeks David for comfort every time the evil spirit came upon him. Saul still had a way back, but he refused to take it.

- What should we do when we have sinned against God? What is His promise to us?

1 John 1:8-2:2

⁸ If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. ⁹ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰ If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us. ¹ My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. ² He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

Prayer

Moving On

- Be mindful of God's presence and leading when we are disappointed and discouraged
- Understand the grieving process and learn to move on
- Trust God that He is able to renew all things
- Grow in our understanding of the anointing of the Holy Spirit:
It is the power of the Holy Spirit that transforms us to be like Jesus

Life Church

- Unity in Jesus Christ
- Online services: God will bless and nurture the church
- Prayer meeting: The Lord will bestow upon us Spirit of intercession
- The church will be an effective witness
- The Lord will lead us to care for the poor.
- Church Ministries: Life Explorer, Redeeming Roses, Destiny Kids & Teens, Sunday School, Lifeline, Worship, Life Seed, Cell

Healing

- Bro Harold (Connie & Mel's dad)
- Si Yun: chemotherapy;
Jayden: physiotherapy

Covid-19 Pandemic

- Healing & deliverance
- Protection
- Front-liners & resources
- Economy
- Sabah

Malaysia

- Leaders
- Churches
- Unity