



12

God Chooses David

Key Passages

- 1 Samuel 16:1–23; 1 Corinthians 1:26–31

What You Will Learn

- God’s criteria for choosing David.
- Some of David’s characteristics.



Lesson Overview

God sent Samuel to Bethlehem to anoint the next king of Israel. Jesse’s least likely and youngest son, David, was the one God had chosen, and Samuel anointed him king. David had a heart after God’s own heart. David loved and trusted God and had a heart to obey Him.

Memory Verse

1 Samuel 16:7

But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”



Prepare to Learn

SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

Recall in the last lesson that the first king chosen by God to rule Israel, King Saul, demonstrated through his disobedience to God that he thought himself wiser than God. Saul's heart was not right with the Lord. Because of his rebellion, God would take his kingdom away. But who would take his place? God sought a man "after His own heart . . . to be commander over His people" (1 Samuel 13:14). God found such a man in David.

God sent Samuel to anoint the man God had determined to take Saul's place. This new king would come from the household of Jesse, a man from the tribe of Judah (1 Samuel 16:1). God promised to reveal to Samuel which of Jesse's eight sons was the one whom God had selected (1 Samuel 16:3).

As Jesse presented his sons to Samuel, we see that they must have been impressive young men! Samuel immediately thought that surely God must have chosen Eliab, Jesse's oldest son, as Israel's new king (1 Samuel 16:6). But the Lord revealed that what impressed Samuel was not important to God. Eliab's good looks and height were the focus of Samuel's admiration, but the Lord sees things differently; "for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart" (1 Samuel 16:7).

Rejecting the seven older sons, God was about to reveal

Jesse's youngest son, David, as the one who was fit to replace Saul as king. Jesse apparently didn't even think enough of David to bring him in from the fields where he was shepherding to attend this sacrifice and meeting with Samuel. And yet because of David's heart, he was the one God had chosen. God knew that David would seek after His will.

David was skillful in playing music, a mighty man of valor, a man of war, and prudent in speech; the Lord was with him (1 Samuel 16:18). Ruddy, bright-eyed, and good looking, David was the one intended by God to be the next king (1 Samuel 16:12). At David's anointing, the Spirit of the Lord came upon him in a special way "from that day forward" (1 Samuel 16:13). The Spirit would give David the power he needed to accomplish God's will.

While the Spirit of God entered David, God's Spirit left Saul, and a distressing spirit overcame him, causing him much anguish (1 Samuel 16:14). In God's sovereign plan, David was called into Saul's court to comfort and soothe Saul with his harp playing. David obediently came and Saul loved him and made him his armor bearer (1 Samuel 16:21).

Looking ahead in Israel's history, we find that David did fall into sin at times during his reign. Even people with the most casual

knowledge of the Bible are familiar with David's adultery with Bathsheba and murder of her husband (2 Samuel 11). David's heart was not perfect—no man's heart is. But David loved and trusted the true God rather than his own ways and judgments, as shown in his repentance over his sin (Psalm 51). This cannot be said of Saul, who rebelled against God and made excuses rather than seeking forgiveness through humble repentance.

A striking passage that shows a picture of David's heart is found in 1 Chronicles 29. In that passage, David exhorted Israel to give gifts to support the building of the Temple. The people responded generously, and David gave thanks in 1 Chronicles 29:10–19. David asked the Lord, "who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly as this? For all things come from You, and of Your own we have given You" (1 Chronicles 29:14). David knew that all things come from God, including the gifts they were giving for the Temple. Though he was king, David knew that God was the true Ruler of all: "Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, the power and the glory, the victory and the majesty; for all that is in heaven and in earth is Yours; Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and You are exalted as head over all" (1 Chronicles 29:11).

This heart of faith and adoration is what led David to be brave in battle with Goliath: "The Lord, who delivered me from the paw of

the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine" (1 Samuel 17:37). It is this heart that led David to act honorably toward King Saul and spare his life when Saul was seeking to kill him (1 Samuel 24:12). The characteristic pattern of David's heart was to trust that the Lord was in control over all things. David did all to serve, honor, and love the true God. Such is a heart that is fashioned after God's own.

HISTORICAL/APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

In Genesis 49, as Jacob was approaching death, he called his sons together and prophetically blessed them. These blessings were not for the individual sons, but for their families, which would become the tribes of Israel. Jacob's blessing on Judah is recorded in Genesis 49:8–12. In verse 8, Jacob said, "your father's children shall bow down before you," and in verse 10 he said, "The scepter shall not depart from Judah."

Israel's first king, Saul, was from the tribe of Benjamin—not the tribe of Judah. We see the fulfillment of Jacob's blessing as the "scepter," or kingdom, was taken from Saul and passed to David, who was of the tribe of Judah. The Lord's intent was that a descendant from the tribe of Judah would reign permanently. And ultimately, that descendant from the tribe of Judah and the Son of David is Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior forever.



Studying God's Word

Why is Bethlehem so important?

Take notes as you study the following passages.

1 Samuel 16:1–13

1 Corinthians 1:26–31

1 Samuel 16:14–23



The Bethlehem Thread

The city of Bethlehem is an important part of the history of the redemption of mankind. Use the references below to begin making a chain reference. Write each successive reference next to the prior with a symbol that will help you remember the connection among the passages—the redemption of mankind and the city of Bethlehem.

- Ruth 2:4
- Ruth 4:11
- Ruth 4:21–22
- 1 Samuel 16:1, 13
- 1 Samuel 16:18–19
- 1 Samuel 17:12
- Micah 5:2
- Luke 2:4–7
- Luke 2:11–15
- Matthew 2:1–6
- John 7:40–44

1. What synonym for Bethlehem was present in the text, such as Luke 2:4?

2. Why does this synonym make sense in light of the passages from this list (Hint: John 7:42)?

3. Would it be appropriate to include Judges 12:8 or Judges 17:7 in this thread on the connection between redemption and Bethlehem? Explain.

