

A New King

1 Samuel 15:34-16:13

INTRODUCTION

- A. In tonight's text, the author of "Samuel," informs us how David became the great king that he was.
 - 1. READ TEXT.
 - 2. The most important part of the narrative is the activity of God.
 - a. This text makes clear that Samuel did ***not*** anoint David as king.
 - b. Granted, the prophet & judge poured the oil on David's head, but it was God who directed his actions from first to last.
 - 1) It was the LORD who regretted that he had made Saul king over Israel.
 - 2) It was the LORD who told Samuel to go to Jesse in Bethlehem.
 - 3) It was the LORD who told Samuel how to keep his mission secret from Saul.
 - 4) It was the LORD who did not look on outer appearance but on the heart.
 - 5) It was the LORD, who when David was brought before Samuel, said, "Arise, anoint him, for this is he."
 - 3. David himself recognized the hand of God in selecting Israelite kings. When he had the chance to kill Saul, he said to Abishai, "Do not destroy him, for who can put out his hand against the LORD's anointed and be guiltless?" (1 Sm 26:9).
- B. Tonight, we wish to examine the activity of God in the anointing of David as King of Israel.
 - 1. As we do so, we'll strive to make application to our lives in this century.
 - 2. Also, as we do so, we'll see A DEMAND, A DIRECTION, A DIMENSION, & A DECISION.

A DEMAND, v 35

- A. There is a demand for a new King of Israel: "Samuel did not see Saul again until the day of his death, but Samuel grieved over Saul. And the LORD regretted that he had made Saul king over Israel."
- B. Samuel never saw Saul again, but he grieved over him.
 - 1. Why did Samuel grieve over Saul?
 - 2. There are several possibilities:
 - a. It could be that Samuel grieved because a man of God had gone so far into sin as Samuel had.
 - b. It could also be that Samuel grieved for Saul personally. Perhaps, Samuel knew what lay in store for Saul & he mourned for his friend & king.
 - c. It could also be that Samuel was mourning for the nation that they had a man such as Saul as king.
- C. Whatever caused Samuel to mourn, it's far more important that we see the LORD mourning over Saul.
 - 1. The text says, "The LORD regretted that he had made Saul king over Israel."
 - a. The KJV says, "The LORD repented that he had made Saul king over Israel."
 - b. If the LORD did not sin in anointing Saul king over Israel—and God cannot sin—how could the LORD repent for making Saul king?
 - 2. Of course, the text in no way hints that God is repenting of sin, something God cannot do since he cannot sin.

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- a. The root for the Hebrew term actually means “breathing deeply” & thus conveys the idea of deep sorrow.
 - 1) There can be no doubt but that the sins of Saul brought deep sorrow to God.
 - 2) Sin always brings deep sorrow to God: “The LORD was sorry that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart” (Gn 6:6).
 - b. But, the idea of God’s repenting also carries the connotation that God has changed his mind.
 - 1) Usually, the term indicates that God has turned from a judgment he promised to bring on his people: After Moses interceded for the people when they had made the golden calf, we read, “The LORD relented from the disaster that he had spoken of bringing on his people” (Ex 32:14).
 - 2) When God “repents” from disaster, it’s because people have repented of their sins & turned back to God.
 - a) One author said it well: “No word is God’s final word. Judgment, far from being absolute, is conditional. A change in man’s conduct brings about a change in God’s judgment.”
 - b) But, in the case of Saul, we don’t see God’s “repenting” of disaster, but because Saul has gone deeper & deeper into sin, God “repents” of the blessings he would give Saul.
 3. Because of Saul’s sinfulness, God has “repented” of the promised blessings & he shall withhold them from Saul. Such a situation demands a new King.
- D. Is it not the case that for the Christian, too, God can “repent” of blessings.
1. “The one who conquers will be clothed thus in white garments, and I will never blot his name out of the book of life” (Rev 3:5). Is not an easily deduced implication: “If a Christian does not conquer, he will not be clothed in white garments & I will blot his name out of the book of life”?
 2. “If, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first. For it would have been better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than after knowing it to turn back from the holy commandment delivered to them” (2 Pt 2:20-21).
 - a. Is that not a clear-cut case where the Lord has “repented” toward the Christian in the exact same way he “repented” toward Saul—the withholding of blessings because of sin?
 - b. Has God “repented” toward you? Has he blotted your name from the book of life? Do you need to repent of sin to keep God from “repenting”?

A DIRECTION, vv 2-3

- A. God directed the steps of Samuel in anointing a new king. When the LORD told Samuel to go to Bethlehem to Jesse’s house, “Samuel said, ‘How can I go? If Saul hears it, he will kill me.’ And the LORD said, ‘Take a heifer with you and say, ‘I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.’ And invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do. And you shall anoint for me him whom I declare to you.’”
- B. Samuel was rightly concerned that Saul might hear of his activity, consider it treason, & kill him.
 1. The LORD told Samuel to take a heifer & declare that he had come to sacrifice.
 2. This heifer would likely be the peace offering mentioned in Lev 3:1.
 - a. These sacrifices could be made in the open field & brought to the sanctuary after they were sacrificed (Lev 17:5).
 - b. This sacrifice could be for thanksgiving, for the taking of a vow, or a freewill offering (Lev 7:11-18).

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3. Through the years, some have said that God is telling Samuel to be deceitful.
 - a. That simply cannot be, for God “never lies” (Tit 1:2).
 - b. As you examine the types of sacrifices available to Samuel, it’s obvious that this heifer could have served a very important purpose in David’s anointing.
 - 1) It could have been offered in thanksgiving that God was still in control & that he had provided Israel with another king.
 - 2) It could have been offered for a vow that David took to walk before the LORD.
- C. Notice, however, that it’s God’s directing all the activity of Samuel—He told Samuel to take the heifer, he told him to invite Jesse to the sacrifice, he told him that he would show him everything to do, & that he would tell Samuel whom to anoint.
 1. God is the One behind the scenes directing the anointing of a new king.
 2. That should not surprise us, for we know that God is in control of the kingdoms of men.
 - a. “The Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will” (Dan 4:32).
 - b. “There is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God” (Rom 13:1).
 3. There is not a government in this world anywhere that God has not appointed to fulfill his purpose.
 - a. We may never comprehend why God would appoint a leader over a kingdom—why was Adolf Hitler ruler of Germany or Saddam Hussein ruler of Iraq?
 - b. But, we know this: God is in ultimate control! It is he who reigns over the kingdom of men!

A DIMENSION, vv 6-7

- A. The Lord gave Samuel the proper dimensions of Israel’s new king: “When [Jesse’s sons] came, [Samuel] looked on Eliab and thought, ‘Surely the LORD’s anointed is before him.’ But the LORD said to Samuel, ‘Do not look on his appearance or on the height or his stature, because I have rejected him. For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart.’”
- B. When Samuel saw Eliab, he “knew” instantly that he had found the LORD’s anointed.
 1. This is the only description we have of Eliab; we do not know what he looked like.
 2. However, from the reaction of Samuel he must have really looked the part of a king.
 - a. In the 1960 Presidential election, John Kennedy & Richard Nixon participated in the first televised presidential debate.
 - 1) Nixon was suffering from a virus & felt miserable. Most people listening on the radio believed Nixon won the debate.
 - 2) However, Kennedy looked young & rested. Most people watching on television believed Kennedy won the debate.
 - 3) Many historians believe that the appearance of Kennedy & Nixon on television may have allowed JFK to win that 1960 election.
 - b. Whether or not that is true, Samuel is here doing much the same thing. He sees one who looks the part & believes he is the next king.
- C. The Lord rebukes Samuel by saying, “The LORD looks on the heart.”
 1. The outside appearance isn’t the all-important dimension; the heart is.
 2. When we look at people, do we often not have a tendency to pull a “Samuel” & judge by outward appearance?
 - a. We see people who are too fat or too skinny or too tall or too short or too black or too white, and we’ve already made up our minds.
 - b. “That person just doesn’t look like a Sunday school teacher or an elder.” “That person just

doesn't look honest or sincere."

- 1) Therefore, in our minds, he isn't teacher or elder "material." Or, she isn't honest or sincere.
- 2) We must remember that God sees that all-important dimension of the heart & we do not.
3. The heart, not the outer appearance, is really what matters.
 - a. The heart is the beginning place of sin.
 - 1) "I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Mt 5:28).
 - 2) We may see someone who looks so very committed to his wife but whose eyes wander every chance they get. We may never know, but God does, for he "looks on the heart."
 - b. It is the heart where faith resides.
 - 1) "With the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved" (Rom 10:10).
 - 2) We may see someone who doesn't look very sincere at all respond to the invitation, but he believes with every ounce of his heart that Jesus Christ has been raised from the dead.
 - a) We may believe he's just getting wet when he's submerged in water.
 - b) But, he meets the blood of Jesus there, for the "LORD looks on the heart."
 - c. Do we judge too quickly by outward appearances?
 - d. How is our heart?
 - 1) We cannot keep a single sin from God.
 - a) To the woman at the well, Jesus says, "You have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband" (Jn 4:18). Jesus knew her sin.
 - b) To the church at Sardis, Jesus says, "I know your works. You have the reputation of being alive, but you are dead" (Rev 3:1).
 - i. To everyone else, the church at Sardis appeared to be a hard-working, alive congregation.
 - ii. But, Jesus knew better. He knew their works. He knew their reputation & the reality.
 - 2) Make no mistake. The Lord Jesus knows your heart. What is it he sees there?

A DECISION, vv 11-13

- A. The Lord made an important decision. After all Jesse's sons have been brought before Samuel, he "said to Jesse, 'Are all your sons here' And he said, 'There remains yet the youngest, but behold, he is keeping the sheep.' And Samuel said to Jesse, 'Send and get him, for we will not sit down till he comes here.' And he sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy and had beautiful eyes and was handsome. And the LORD said, 'Arise, anoint him, for this is he.' Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers."
- B. Because of the word of the Lord, Samuel knew that the LORD's anointed was not present with the rest of Jesse's sons.
 1. He has Jesse bring in David—his eighth son—and says that they will not sit down until he comes.
 2. David's physical appearance is quite remarkable.
 - a. He was ruddy—i.e., he had a "red" appearance. The only other time this Hebrew term occurs is at Gn 25:25 in the description of Esau.
 - b. He had beautiful eyes & was handsome.
 3. The Lord then told Samuel to arise & anoint David, for he was the new King of Israel.
- C. Again, we must make the point of God's sovereign will in this decision.

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1. Samuel did not choose David; in fact, Samuel would likely have chosen Eliab, David's eldest brother.
2. Samuel had no choice in the one whom he anointed; that was totally up to the LORD.
- D. Likewise, God's sovereign will continues.
 1. There are many things over which we have no control, for God has chosen.
 2. In fact, Paul tells us that sometimes what God has chosen makes absolutely no sense through the lens of human wisdom.
 - a. The Corinthian church was a congregation that greatly prided itself on its wealth of worldly wisdom.
 - b. Yet, Paul declares, "God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God" (1 Cor 1:27-29).
 3. What allows God to choose to do things the way he wants?
 - a. The same thing that allowed him to tell Samuel precisely the one he was to anoint: God's sovereign will.
 - b. God can do what he wills the way he wills & tell man to do things the way he wills because he is God & I am not!
 4. It's not up to me to decide the way things ought to be.
 - a. Forget what we know about the Will of God for just a moment.
 - 1) If we chose how we would worship, how different might it be?
 - 2) If we chose how to obtain salvation, how different might that be?
 - 3) If we chose how to treat the downtrodden, how different might that be?
 - b. But, God has spoken & it's not up to me—it is up to God Almighty!

CONCLUSION

- A. Throughout this text, we see the activity of God in anointing David King of Israel.
- B. Throughout the pages of both testaments, we see the activity of God in anointing Jesus Christ the King of the all.
 1. Peter declares, "This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. [He is] therefore exalted at the right hand of God" (Acts 2:32-33).
 2. He further says, "Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified" (Acts 2:36).
- C. Will you accept "this Jesus" as your King in the same way those at Pentecost did?
 1. "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).
 2. If you need to name Jesus as the King of your life, won't you come as we stand & sing?