

Calvary Chapel  Philadelphia



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY  
TEACHER'S PACKET

Kindergarten

Sunday Morning

Study 31

*Samuel Anoints David*

# Samuel Anoints David

The Objective is the key concept for this weeks lesson. It should be the main focus of the study

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The “Main passage” is the basis of the study, where the other verse support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the “reward box” found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God’s Word.

**Objective** The goal of this lesson is to demonstrate the difference between the way man sees people and the way God sees people.

## Key Verses

1 Samuel 16—Main Teaching Passage (Focus on verses 1-13)

**Memory Verse** - 1 Samuel 16:7b (April Memory Verse)

“For *the LORD* does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.”

## Hook

Draw a picture of a strong man on the board (it doesn’t have to be great). Ask the class to list what the world thinks make a person great. Guide them to answers like being tall, strong, fast, smart, etc. Write these answers down on one side of the man. The have them list what God thinks make people great.

Today, we are going to look at two characters, one who was like the first list, the other who was like the second.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

## BOOK

As we saw last week, Saul had failed to obey the Lord and, as a result, was no longer qualified to be Israel's king. While Samuel was mourning over Saul, the Lord commanded him to go anoint the next king in Bethlehem. When Samuel arrived, the people feared that he brought bad news, but Samuel explained that he was there to perform a sacrifice and told a man named Jesse and his sons to go with him to the sacrifice. When Samuel saw Jesse's oldest son, Eliab, he thought surely this was the one God would choose. However, God said that he had rejected Eliab, for while man looks at the outward appearance, He looks at the heart. After that, Jesse's next son passed by, but the Lord rejected him too. The rest of the seven sons Jesse brought with him passed by as well, but the Lord rejected all of them. Finally, Samuel asked Jesse if he had any more sons. Jesse replied that his youngest son, David, was in the field with the sheep. Samuel commanded Jesse to send for him, and when he came, the Lord told Samuel to anoint him as the next king over Israel. Meanwhile, the Lord's Spirit departed from Saul and a wicked spirit began to trouble him. Saul sent his servants to find someone to help, and they found David. They brought David to Saul, and David would play his harp to calm Saul and make the distressing spirit go away. Little did Saul know that this boy would be the next king of Israel.

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

## LOOK

Perhaps the entire book of 1 Samuel could best be summed up by our memory verse, 1 Samuel 16:7. This book, which records the rise of the first two kings of Israel, sets the contrast between Saul, the king Israel wanted, and David, the king God chose. Saul was tall and impressive. He was able to lead Israel in battle and give them victory over their enemies. David was young and the smallest in his family. Anyone who saw the two of them would be much more likely to want Saul as their king rather than David.

However, this is not how the Lord sees people. The Lord looks at the heart. When God looked at Saul, He did not see strength and might. He saw disobedience, rebellion, and sin in his heart. While David was by no means perfect, God saw in his heart a spirit that was willing to follow the Lord. Next week, David will prove all of that, but for right now, only God could see the kind of man and king David would turn out to be.

When Israel first asked for a king, God gave them the kind of king *they* wanted. He gave them a king who would lead them to victory in battle and

# LOOK (Continued)

be a strong ruler. That proved to be a total disaster. Once Saul was disqualified from the throne, God chose a king who was right in *His* eyes. That king, David, would become one of the greatest kings Israel ever had.

The world today is no different than it was back then. The world says that you are great if you are strong, fast, smart, beautiful, or talented. It doesn't care if you are rotten on the inside as long as you are cool on the outside. As Christians, we cannot think this way. Having a pure heart before God is way more important than any of these outward traits. First and foremost, we ought to seek these qualities in our own lives. Yielding the fruit of the Spirit is far greater than being seen as cool. Then, we ought to seek out friends who are like David rather than Saul. Our goal should not be to have friends who are the coolest, smartest, or most athletic. Rather, we should seek friends who love the Lord and will encourage us to do the same.

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

# TOOK

Review the lesson by asking the students to describe the difference between the way man sees people and the way God sees people.

**Pray:** Thank the Lord for wisely looking past the outward appearance. Ask Him to give us all hearts that are pure before Him.

**Parent Question:** What was the difference between Saul and David?

# FURTHER STUDY

## Commentary on 1 Samuel 16 by David Guzik

### *God Chooses David*

A. Samuel anoints David as king.

*Psalms that may go with this period: 8, 19, 23, and 29.*

1. (1-3) God tells Samuel to go and anoint a new king over Israel.

Now the LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? Fill your horn with oil, and go; I am sending you to Jesse the Bethlehemite. For I have provided Myself a king among his sons." And 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.' Then invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; you shall anoint for Me the one I name to you."

a. **How long will you mourn for Saul:** There is a time to mourn, but there is also a time to move on and do what God wants us to do. **Fill your horn with oil** must have excited Samuel, because he knew that God wanted him to anoint someone else as king over Israel.

i. God will never allow His work to die with the death or failure of a man. If it is *God's* work, it goes beyond any man. Perhaps Samuel was paralyzed with mourning because of Saul's tragic rebellion, but God was not paralyzed.

ii. Surely, 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*.

b. **I am sending you to Jesse the Bethlehemite:** The new king for Israel would be found **among his sons**, the sons of Jesse. Jesse was the grandson of Ruth and Boaz ([Ruth 4:17, 22](#)).

c. **How can I go? If Saul hears it, he will kill me:** We can certainly *understand* Samuel's fear. There isn't any doubt that Saul would consider this treason. At the same time, it shows a note of fear in Samuel we are almost surprised to see. Perhaps Samuel's excessive mourning over Saul has introduced an element of fear and unbelief in his heart. In truth, Samuel didn't have anything to worry about, because God promised **I will show you what you shall do**.

i. Was God telling Samuel to lie? Not at all. "This was strictly *true*; Samuel *did offer a sacrifice*; and it does not appear that he could have done the work which God designed, unless he had offered this sacrifice, and called the elders of the people together, and this collected Jesse's sons. But he did not tell the principle design of his coming; had he done so, it would have produced *evil* and *no good*: and though no man, in any circumstances, should ever *tell a lie*, yet in all circumstances he is not obliged to tell the *whole* truth, though in every circumstance he must tell *nothing but the truth*, and in every case so tell the truth that the hearer shall not believe a lie by it." (Clarke)

d. **For I have provided Myself a king among his sons:** Years before this, Israel rejected the LORD God as their king, and they wanted a human king instead. God gave them their human king, after their own desire (Saul), but God is still on the throne, crowning who He pleases, as He pleases.

i. The simple fact was that God *was* ruling Israel. They could recognize His rule, submit to it, and enjoy the benefits; or they could resist His reign over Israel, and suffer because of it. It does not matter what my attitude towards God is, as

far as it affects His ultimate victory. The LORD is God and King, and will always triumph. But my attitude matters *everything* as it affects my ultimate destiny.

ii. Poole on **I have provided Myself a king**: "This phrase is very emphatical, and implies the difference between this and the former king. Saul was a king of the people's providing, he was the product of their inordinate and sinful desires; they desired him for themselves, and for their own glory and safety, as they supposed; but this is a king of my own providing, one that I have spied out, one of that tribe to which I have allotted the kingdom."

iii. We don't have to fear for the future when we know God has provided for Himself leaders. In some unlikely place, God is raising up leaders for His people. He will keep them obscure and hidden until the right time, then God will raise them up. God will always provide for Himself leaders.

e. **You shall anoint for Me the one I name to you**: The first king of Israel was anointed *for the people*. He was the "king of central casting," the kind of king the people wanted. Now, the "people's choice" had failed and disqualified himself. Now, the LORD said, it's time for a king **for Me**. God was going to show Israel *His* king.

i. Because Israel was not walking in God's heart, and God's mind, we should expect that God's king would not look like the "people's choice" king. God had no interest in bringing "Saul Number Two" to the throne of Israel. This would be a different kind of king, who would be unto the LORD *a man after His own heart* ([1 Samuel 13:14](#)).

2. (4-5) Samuel comes to sacrifice at Bethlehem.

So Samuel did what the LORD said, and went to Bethlehem. And the elders of the town trembled at his coming, and said, "Do you come peaceably?" And he said, "Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD. Sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice." Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons, and invited them to the sacrifice.

a. **So Samuel did what the LORD said, and went to Bethlehem**: Bethlehem was a small town, not very far from Jerusalem. It was the home of Ruth and Boaz, from whom the family of Jesse descended. It was a hilly grain-growing region, with many small grain fields carved into the hillsides.

b. **And the elders of the town trembled at his coming, and said, "Do you come peaceably?"** Considering what Samuel had just done with the Amalekite king Agag ([1 Samuel 15:33](#)), it's no wonder the elders of Bethlehem were afraid.

c. **Come with me to the sacrifice**: The idea was not that Jesse and his sons were to just watch Samuel sacrifice this heifer. They would watch the sacrifice, then they would share in a large ceremonial meal, eating the meat that came from the sacrificed animal.

i. When an animal was sacrificed to atone for sin, none of it was eaten and it was all burned before the LORD. But when an animal was sacrificed as a peace offering, a fellowship offering, or a consecration offering, then part of the animal was burnt before the LORD, and part of it was eaten in a special ceremonial meal.

3. (6-10) God doesn't choose any of Jesse's older sons.

So it was, when they came, that he looked at Eliab and said, "Surely the Lord's anointed *is* before Him." But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his 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." So Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." Thus Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. And Samuel said to Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen these."

a. **Surely the LORD's anointed is before Him**: As Samuel looked at **Eliab**, the oldest son of Jesse, he thought "This man sure looks like a king. This must be the one God will tell me to anoint. That's a good choice, God!" Samuel saw a tall, good looking young man who *looked* like he would be a great king and leader.

b. **Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have refused him**: Samuel made the mistake of judging Eliab based on his **appearance**. This was the same mistake Israel had made when it came to the failed

king Saul. Saul *looked* the part of a king, but he didn't have the *heart* a king of God's people should have. It didn't matter how good Eliab *looked*, because God said, "**I have refused him.**"

c. **For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.** This was both a *statement of fact*, and an *exhortation to godly thinking*.

i. First, it was a *statement of fact*. **Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.** Even the best of men will look **at the outward appearance**. Samuel was guilty of it right at that moment. We must understand that we can't read the secrets of someone else's heart, and we often do only judge on outward appearance. "The world is full of idolatries, but I question if any idolatry has been more extensively practiced than the idolatry of the outward appearance." (Blaikie)

ii. Second, it was an *exhortation to godly thinking*. God was telling Samuel, "Your natural inclination is to only judge on outward appearance. But I can judge the heart that you can't see. So look to Me, and don't be so quick to judge a person only on their **outward appearance**." Samuel needed to know his natural inclination to judge only on **outward appearance**, but he didn't have to give into it. He could seek the LORD and seek God's heart and mind when looking at people.

d. **The LORD has not chosen these:** God told Samuel that He had not chosen any of the seven sons of Jesse who attended the sacrificial feast. It wasn't that these sons of Jesse were bad men, but they were not God's choice. God had a man in mind different from Samuel's or Jesse's expectation.

i. Eliab and the seven oldest sons of Jesse were perfect potential kings as far as the flesh is concerned. But God didn't want a king after the flesh. Israel already had one of those! God needed to do more than fix up a fleshly king; God looked for a different kind of king. "To educate and refine the flesh so that it may become profitable in His service is never God's plan. He insists on the sentence of death upon everything that you and I are in ourselves ... There is only one place for all that is 'self' - on Calvary." (Redpath)

ii. "All the things which men count as privileges, and therefore as creating fitness for position and high service, are in themselves of no value in the sight of God. He looketh on the heart. He considers the deepest fact in personality, the inner and hidden impulse, desire, affection." (Morgan)

4. (11) Samuel asks about a missing son.

And Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all the young men here?" Then he said, "There remains yet the youngest, and there he is, keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him. For we will not sit down till he comes here."

a. **Are all the young men here?** Samuel had a problem. God had told him of Jesse, *I have provided Myself a king among his sons* ([1 Samuel 16:1](#)). Yet here were the seven sons of Jesse, and God had not chosen any of these. Since Samuel knew God's word was true, he knew there must be another son of Jesse who was not at the sacrificial feast.

i. Samuel was a prophet, and knew how to trust the word of the LORD given to him. He might have said, "I guess the LORD was wrong when He told me it would be one of Jesse's sons," but he didn't say that. He might have said, "It has to be one of these seven sons, so pass them by me again" but he didn't say that. He had confidence in the word of the LORD when it came to the prophecy regarding Jesse's sons, and he had confidence in the word of the LORD when it came to God's rejection of each of the seven sons. We should trust God's Word as much as Samuel trusted the word of the LORD!

b. **There remains the youngest:** This shows the low regard David had among his own family. First, his father doesn't even mention him by name. Second, he wasn't even invited to the sacrificial feast. Third, he would not have been brought unless Samuel insisted on it.

i. "So small was David in his father's esteem that it wasn't considered necessary to include him in the family when the prophet of God called them to sacrifice." (Redpath)

ii. When we consider that David was the youngest of eight sons, we aren't surprised at the low regard he had in his own family. It wasn't because David's character or conduct was unworthy, it was simply because he was the youngest of eight sons.

iii. This is often how God chooses. Paul wrote *that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called* ([1 Corinthians 1:26](#)). God often chooses unlikely people to do His work, so that all know the work is God's work, not man's work. He wants to work in a way so that people regard His servants as they regarded Samson: they wondered at the secret of his strength ([Judges 16:5](#)).

iv. "You may not be intellectual or well thought of in your family circle; you may be despised by others for your faith in Christ. Perhaps you had only a little share in the love of your parents, as David did. But remember that those who are rejected of men often become beloved of the Lord." (Redpath)

v. "You may have nothing in your outward semblance, nothing in your surroundings or circumstances, to indicate the true royalty within; but if you bare your heart to God, you shall stand revealed as his son, as a priest and a king unto Himself." (Meyer)

c. **And there he is, keeping the sheep:** When was David called for this great anointing? When he was out **keeping the sheep**. David was simply doing his job, being faithful in small things and doing what his father told him to do.

i. **Keeping the sheep** was a servant's job. The fact that David was out **keeping the sheep** showed that the family of Jesse was not especially wealthy, because if they were, a servant would have been **keeping the sheep**. But they were not affluent enough to have servants. David was the servant, and **keeping the sheep** was a servant's job. "David was none of your strutting peacocks who cannot be content unless all eyes are upon them; he sang God's praises as the nightingale will sing in the dark when no human ear is listening and no eye is admiring. He was content to bloom unseen, knowing that the sweetness of a renewed heart is never wasted on the desert air. He was satisfied with God alone as his auditor, and he coveted not the high opinion of man." (Spurgeon)

ii. **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. God built in him the heart that would sing,

*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](#))

*O LORD, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth, who have set Your glory above the heavens! Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have ordained strength, because of Your enemies, that You may silence the enemy and the avenger. When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained, what is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him? For You have made him a little lower than the angels, and You have crowned him with glory and honor. You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen; even the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea that pass through the paths of the seas. O LORD, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth!* ([Psalm 8](#))

iii. **Keeping the sheep** took a special heart, a special care. It meant you knew how sheep needed the care and help of a good shepherd. It meant that you knew you were a sheep and God was your shepherd. During these years, God built in David the heart that would sing,

*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](#))

iv. **Keeping the sheep** meant you had to trust God in the midst of danger. David had lions and bears and wolves to contend with, and the sheep had to be protected. "The country round Bethlehem was not a peaceful paradise, and the career of a shepherd was not the easy life of lovesick swains which poets dream." (Blaikie)

v. Does God have you **keeping the sheep** right now? Are you in a humble, lowly, servant's place, but feel that God has called you to greater things? If He has, it will only be fulfilled as you are faithful in **keeping the sheep** right where you are at. This isn't *waiting* time, this is *training* time. David was a great man, and a great king over Israel, because he *never*



*lost his shepherd's heart.*

5. (12-13) David is chosen and anointed.

So he sent and brought him in. Now he *was* ruddy, with bright eyes, and good-looking. And the LORD said, "Arise, anoint him; for this *is* the one!" Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel arose and went to Ramah.

a. **Now he was ruddy, with bright eyes, and good-looking:** The physical description of David tells us he was of fair complexion (this is probably the meaning of **ruddy**, and a light complexion was considered attractive in that culture). He had **bright eyes**, which speak of vitality and intelligence. And he was **good-looking**.

i. David had a pleasant appearance, but he did not look like Saul, who was *a choice and handsome young man. There was not a more handsome person than he among the children of Israel. From his shoulders upward he was taller than any of the people.* ([1 Samuel 9:2](#)) David looked nice, but you didn't look at him and say, "There's a born leader. There is a king." That is what people said when they looked at Saul. When they looked at David, they said "That's a nice looking boy."

ii. But look at what God said to Saul about David prophetically in [1 Samuel 15:28](#): *The LORD has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today, and has given it to a neighbor of yours, who is better than you.* As unlikely as he appeared, David was *better than* Saul in the eyes of God.

iii. We don't know how old David was at this time. The ancient Jewish historian Josephus says that David was ten years old. Others guess he was about fifteen years old. It's safe to say he was somewhere in that range.

b. **And 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. David, as unlikely as he was, was **the one**.

i. If it was strange for God to find the king of Israel at the sheepfold, it was even stranger for the Savior of the World to come from a carpenter's shop. God looks for different qualities in leaders than we normally look for.

ii. David was a shepherd, but there were a lot of shepherds. David was good-looking, but so were a lot of young men. David was young, but there were plenty of young men God could have chosen. God described what made David special 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 one** was that he was *a man after God's own heart*.

iii. God's choice of David shows that we don't have to quit our jobs and enter into full-time ministry to be people after God's own heart. We don't need to be famous or prominent to be people after God's own heart. We don't need to be respected or even liked by others to be people after God's own heart. We don't need status, influence, power, the respect or approval of men, or great responsibilities to be people after God's own heart.

iv. Where did David get this heart? Obviously, from time spent with the LORD. But someone started him on that path. David says nothing of his father, but twice in the Psalms he refers to his mother as a *maidservant* of the LORD ([Psalm 86:16](#) and [116:16](#)). Probably, it was David's godly mother who poured her heart and love and devotion of the LORD into him, and gave him a foundation to build on in his own walk with the LORD. Like Timothy, another young man used of the LORD, God used David's mother to pour into him a godly faith ([2 Timothy 1:5](#)). Mothers, might God use you to raise up a David or a Timothy?

d. **Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers:** From the actions of David, Jesse, and David's brothers from this point on, we can gather that only God and Samuel knew exactly what was happening here.

i. Everyone else probably thought that Samuel was just honoring David for some reason. Probably no one even dared to think that this was David's anointing to be king over all Israel. But God knew, because He had been working in David's heart for a long time. "The public anointing was the outcome of what had taken place in private between David and God long before." (Redpath)

ii. In some ways, David's anointing was similar to Saul's ([1 Samuel 10:1](#)). Both were anointed in secret, and neither immediately took the throne. But over time, David responded to the anointing of God in a completely different way than Saul.

iii. There were three outward evidences of the destiny God had for David's life. The first evidence was the anointing. He received that immediately. The second evidence was the spiritual battle he entered into with Saul. The final evidence was when he received the crown and was enthroned in Israel, some 25 years later. It was a long time between the time David was chosen and anointed to be a king and the time he was crowned. In our lives, it is a long time for most of us between when we are chosen and anointed, and the time when we receive our crowns ([2 Timothy 4:8](#)). In between, there is a lot of conflict and spiritual warfare God has for us. The spiritual warfare is just as much evidence of our destiny as the anointing and the crowning!

e. **And the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward:** The real anointing happened when the Holy Spirit came upon David. The oil on the head was just a sign of this inward reality.

i. The symbol of the Holy Spirit coming upon David was the anointing oil on his head. The symbol of the Holy Spirit coming upon Jesus was the dove that appeared from heaven. The symbol of the Holy Spirit coming upon the disciples was the tongues of fire that appeared over their heads. The Holy Spirit loves to do His work as *He* wills, in many different ways.

f. **So Samuel arose and went to Ramah:** What? Didn't Samuel begin a "Let's Enthroned David" political party? Didn't he begin to undermine Saul's throne, and look for a way to establish David as king? No. Samuel took one look at David, and reacted exactly the way God wanted him to: "LORD, I don't know why You chose this kid. But You will have to put him on the throne. I can't do it."

i. And God would do it. [1 Samuel 16:13](#) is the first mention of the name **David** in the book of 1 Samuel. He has been prophetically referred to on several occasions before ([1 Samuel 13:14](#), [15:28](#)). But this is the first mention of his name, which means "Beloved" or "Loved One."

ii. David will 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. It's no accident that Jesus wasn't known as the "Son of Abraham" or the "Follower of Moses," but as the *Son of David* ([Matthew 9:27](#) and at least a dozen other places).

iii. "From whatever side we view the life of David, it is remarkable. It may be that Abraham excelled him in faith, and Moses in the power of concentrated fellowship with God, and Elijah in the fiery force of his enthusiasm. But none of these was so many-sided as the richly gifted son of Jesse." (Meyer)

iv. But it all began here - as David was *keeping the sheep*. 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.*

B. Saul's distressing spirit.

1. (14) Saul's **distressing spirit** troubles him.

But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and a distressing spirit from the LORD troubled him.

a. In [1 Samuel 16:13](#), *the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward*. As the Spirit of the LORD comes upon David, a **distressing spirit** came to Saul, and **troubled him**.

b. If God is all-good, why did He send a **distressing spirit** upon Saul? There are two senses in which God may *send* something. He may send something in the active sense, or He may send something in a passive sense. Actively, God never initiates or performs evil; He is *the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning* ([James 1:17](#)). Passively, God may withdraw the hand of His protection, and therefore allow evil to come, without being the source of

the evil itself.

c. This is indicated by what happened with Saul. First, **the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul**. This meant Saul lost his spiritual "protection" and covering. So, Satan was more than ready to send a **distressing spirit** to fill the void in Saul.

i. "God seems to have taken what gifts he had, and given them to David; and then the evil spirit came upon Saul; for what God fills not, the devil will." (Clarke)

ii. This is why the continual presence of the Holy Spirit for all Christians is such a comfort for us. We don't have to fear that God will take the Holy Spirit from us ([Romans 8:9-11](#), [1 Corinthians 6:19-20](#)).

iii. Ellison on the distressing spirit: "With us it suggests a spirit that was morally evil ... here it merely conveys the thought that the outcome of his working was calamitous for Saul."

c. Why? Did God allow all this? Perhaps this was to judge Saul's past wickedness and rebellion against the Holy Spirit's guidance. This may be an example of God giving Saul over to his sin.

i. Saul clearly had the Spirit of the LORD upon him at one time ([1 Samuel 10:10](#)). Yet, as he showed himself proud and rebellious against God, Saul resisted the Holy Spirit. He told the Holy Spirit "No" and "Go away" so many times, that God finally gave Saul what he wanted. But Saul never realized the price he would pay when **the Spirit of the LORD departed from him**. Saul thought he would be more free to do *his thing* without the **Spirit of the LORD** "bugging" him. He didn't realize he would be in even more bondage to a **distressing spirit** that **troubled him**.

ii. Even in this, Saul could have repented. He was not past the place of repentance and restoration before God. It was up to him to receive God's correction and respond with a tender, repentant heart before the LORD.

d. **A distressing spirit from the LORD troubled him**: Today, Saul would probably be diagnosed as mentally ill. Yet his problem was spiritual in nature, not mental or psychological.

i. There are many people in mental hospitals today that are really suffering from spiritual problems. It is certainly wrong to assume that every case of mental distress is spiritual, because chemical imbalances and physiological problems are also real in our fallen world. Even so, there are certainly some that liberation from a **distressing spirit**, and may never find it in our modern mental health system.

ii. "I have considered his malady to be of a *mixed* kind, *natural* and *diabolical*; there is too much of apparent *nature* in it to permit us to believe it was all *spiritual*, and there is too much of apparent *supernatural* influence to suffer us to believe that it was all *natural*." (Clarke)

2. (15-17) A solution suggested.

And Saul's servants said to him, "Surely, a distressing spirit from God is troubling you. Let our master now command your servants, *who are* before you, to seek out a man *who is* a skillful player on the harp; and it shall be that he will play it with his hand when the distressing spirit from God is upon you, and you shall be well." So Saul said to his servants, "Provide me now a man who can play well, and bring *him* to me."

a. **Saul's servants said to him, "Surely a distressing spirit from God is troubling you."** It was obvious to **Saul's servants**, but it does not seem to have been obvious to Saul. Often our spiritual condition is far more apparent to others than it is to our selves.

b. **Seek out man who is a skillful player**: Essentially, Saul's servants are advising that he find what we would call a "worship leader." They will **seek out a man** who can, using music, bring the love, peace, and power of God to Saul.

i. God created music, and gave it the capability to touch people with great power. Music can be used for great good or for great evil, because it is such a power tool of communication to our inner being.

ii. Especially, God wants the power of music to be used in worshipping Him. In heaven, God's people worship Him with music and singing ([Revelation 14:2-3](#)). On earth, we should worship God the same way ([Psalm 150](#)). Worship is, and should be, more than music and singing; but certainly music and singing are wonderful, God-appointed ways to worship the LORD!

iii. God wants His people to worship Him, and God can do a tremendous work in the hearts and lives of His people through worship. Because worship is so important, worship leaders are important. Saul needed to be *led* into worship, so it was important to **seek out a man** to do the job.

iv. There is a sense in which the worship minister is like a priest in the Old Testament, standing between God and the congregation. His job is not to entertain the people, or even to please the people, but to lead them into worshipping God in Spirit and in truth.

v. In describing the ministry of priests in [Exodus 28:1-21, 29](#), the LORD repeatedly called them to *minister to Me*. Clearly, the job of the priests was to offer ministry unto God; yet at the same time, God wanted them to have a heart for the people. On their shoulders and over their hearts, God wanted to priests to have the names of the tribes of Israel. This shows both aspects of worship ministry - it has to be done unto the LORD, yet with the people on our hearts and shoulders. In worship ministry, there can be two harmful extremes. We can do ministry connected to the LORD, but not to the people; or we can do ministry connected to the people but not to the LORD. We have to be in close communion with God, and have the people on our hearts (loving them) and on our shoulders (working hard for them).

c. **You shall be well:** In the past, Saul received the Spirit of the LORD in the presence of music ([1 Samuel 10:10](#)). Perhaps this is an effort to recreate that experience.

3. (18) A man is nominated.

Then one of the servants answered and 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.*"

a. **Look, I have seen a son of Jesse:** Saul's servants suggested that Saul command a search; Saul commanded the search, and then one of Saul's servants answered and said he had found a man to be Saul's worship leader. What kind of man was this **son of Jesse** (David), to make him a fit worship leader for Saul?

b. **Skillful in playing:** To lead Saul in worship, and to minister to him in music, David had to be **skillful in playing**. The technical quality of music makes a difference in being an effective worship leader. The heart matters, but so does technical ability.

i. This doesn't mean that a person has to be a virtuoso before they can be used of God. But it does mean that they cannot tolerate a too casual, unconcerned, lazy, "we don't really need to practice" attitude. **Skillful in playing** reflects an *attitude* as much as it reflects *ability*.

c. **A mighty man of valor, a man of war:** Worship ministry is a constant battleground. There are often conflicts and contentions surrounding worship ministry, and if someone isn't equipped and ready for spiritual warfare, they will probably be spiritually and emotionally "injured" in worship ministry, and probably "injure" others!

i. So much of what makes a person a good *musician* or a good *artist* goes against true worship ministry. The desire for the spotlight, the desire for prominence, the desire for attention, the need for ego satisfaction, all work against effective worship.

ii. Worship ministers must make war against the *world*. Worldly ideas and approaches to music don't belong in worship ministry. This isn't to say that certain musical styles are off-limits; much of today's "old fashioned gospel music" was cutting edge when first composed. But it does mean that the things that are important to the world in music shouldn't be important in worship.

iii. Worship ministers must make war against the *devil*. He is constantly trying to stir up strife, jealousy, hurt feelings, pride, discouragement, and anything else he can find. Satan has a special "regard" for worship ministry, because before

his fall, he was the "worship leader" of heaven ([Ezekiel 28:12-15](#)).

iv. Worship ministers must make war against the *flesh*. To be effective in worship ministry, or in any ministry, one must *die to self*. If you "must" be up on the platform, you need to die to self. If you "must" have a solo, you need to die to self. If you "must" have it your way, you need to die to self. Much of the conflict in worship ministry blamed on the devil really comes just from the flesh. The devil just doesn't have the time to be the source of all the problems that can come up in worship ministry! Sometimes it is much more convenient to blame then devil than to die to self and crucify the flesh with its passions and desires.

d. **Prudent in speech:** Good worship ministry needs a lot of diplomacy. Everyone has an opinion on music, and everyone has a suggestion. Effective worship ministers know when to speak and when to be quiet on the platform, among the team, and in the congregation.

e. **A handsome person:** David was a good-looking young man ([1 Samuel 16:12](#)). An effective worship minister doesn't need to be a fashion model, but their appearance is important. They need to present themselves so as to be *invisible*. If they are so dressed up, or so dressed down, that their appearance calls attention to themselves, it needs to change.

f. **The LORD is with him:** This is the most important attribute. The other measures will grow and develop, but it must be said of any worship minister, **the LORD is with him**. This means that they called by God, submitting to God, and submitting to whatever leadership the LORD has placed over them.

4. (19-23) David enters Saul's court.

Therefore Saul sent messengers to Jesse, and said, "Send me your son David, who *is* with the sheep." And Jesse took a donkey *loaded with* bread, a skin of wine, and a young goat, and sent *them* by his son David to Saul. So David came to Saul and stood before him. And he loved him greatly, and he became his armorbearer. Then Saul sent to Jesse, saying, "Please let David stand before me, for he has found favor in my sight." And so it was, whenever the spirit from God was upon Saul, that David would take a harp and play *it* with his hand. Then Saul would become refreshed and well, and the distressing spirit would depart from him.

a. **Send me your son David, who is with the sheep:** Since this happened after Samuel anointed David, we know that he simply returned to **the sheep** after he was anointed king. Perhaps David didn't understand the significance of what Samuel did yet. Or, if he did, he understood that it was *God's job* to bring him to the throne. In the meantime, David would simply go back to **the sheep**.

b. 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 didn't have to wonder, "Is this of the LORD or is of me?" because he let the LORD open the doors for him.

i. "Wonder not that David was so suddenly advanced, from a poor contemptible shepherd, to so great a reputation; for these were the effects of that Spirit of the Lord, which he received when he was anointed." (Poole)

c. **And he loved him greatly, and he became his armorbearer:** David was an outstanding young man who was worthy of his name ("Beloved" or "Loved One"). Saul took to him immediately, and gave him the important and trusted position of **armorbearer**, his chief assistant in battle. A soldier's life would often depend on the courage and faithfulness of his **armorbearer**, and Saul knew David was worthy of this position.

i. 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.

d. **David would take a harp and play it:** A **harp** is a lyre, the ancient version of the guitar. This isn't speaking of one of the big harps you might find in an orchestra.

e. **Then Saul would become refreshed and well:** God used David to minister to Saul. David was happy to be used. What seemed like a great arrangement would not stay great for very long.

i. God was at work in ways no one could see. It seems plain to us from our distant perspective, but at the time, perhaps only Samuel knew what was going on. "Unwittingly, Saul was becoming dependent on the one designated to succeed him." (Baldwin)