

1 SAMUEL 16 The Lord's Chosen King

Can you think of an unlikely leader who ended up turning out well?

By the end of 1 Samuel 15, God had rejected Saul as king. So who is the new King going to be and will he be any better

Read 1 Samuel 16:1-12.

1. God has rejected Saul. What is God's solution to the vacancy in the kingship that this has created? (See also 1 Samuel 13:14, 15:28.)

2. Samuel immediately notices Eliab. Why? Based on the way he is described, who else does Eliab remind you of?

3. How does God's view of Eliab—and what he is looking for in a king generally—differ from Samuel's?

4. 1 Samuel 16:7b literally reads: "For the LORD sees not as man sees, for man sees *according to* the eyes, but the LORD sees *according to* the heart". Whose heart do you think God is referring to: David's, or his own? What do you think this means?

5. What do we learn about David? Based on the comparison with his brothers, and on what we have seen so far in 1 Samuel, why is he such an unexpected choice?

Read 2 Samuel 7:18-21.

6. God has just told David that his kingship will last forever, and David responds in prayer. What is his assessment of why God has chosen him as king?

As chapter 16 opens, Samuel is not looking properly. He is looking according to *his eyes*, but God is looking according to *his heart*. That is, God is looking according to *God's* heart. God has chosen his king—'set his heart on him', —and Samuel is to anoint him purely on that basis, not because of anything to do with David. The expression "a man after his [God's] own heart" (13:14) is not a statement about David's inner virtues, but about God's elective purposes. To put it another way: *it is about the place David has in God's heart, not the place God has in David's heart*. That is why Samuel could not recognize David as king because he could not see into God's heart until God had revealed it to him.

Read 1 Samuel 16:13-23.

7. What does the Spirit do in 1 Samuel 16:13? Where had he come from, according to 1 Samuel 16:14?

8. How is David described in verse 18? What relationship is established between Saul and David?

9. What is the significance of the Spirit coming upon a king of Israel? (See 1 Samuel 10:10, 11:6.)

Many years after David's anointing, the prophet Isaiah looked forward to a time when another leader of Israel would be chosen from Jesse's family.

Read Isaiah 11:1-5.

10. What will be the hallmarks of this leader? What role will the Spirit play for this leader?

Read John 1:29-34.

11. Who was this leader, and how was he able to be identified so clearly?

A thousand years after God made David king, Israel was looking for another king. Crushed under Roman rule, they were looking for the king God had promised to them from the line of David, the shoot from the stump of Jesse. So it must have come as a shock to John the Baptist, when he was baptizing in the Jordan one day, to see a carpenter walk past and hear God say, "This is the one". There was nothing impressive-looking about Jesus. But he was the one God had set his heart on as king. He looked like a most unlikely leader. But, like David, he was the one on whom the Spirit would rest and empower to do his work as king. But unlike both Saul, who lost the Spirit, and David, who kept the Spirit but fought him all his life, Jesus would always obey the Spirit, wherever he led him. Even to a cross.

Implications

(Choose one or more of the following to think about further or to discuss in your group.)

- In what ways does Jesus look very unimpressive as a king? In what ways can we be tempted to try to make Jesus or our faith look more impressive from a worldly perspective? (See 1 Corinthians 1:18-2:5.)
- Ezekiel speaks of a change that will happen in the hearts of God's chosen people as a result of the New Covenant which is fulfilled with the coming of Jesus – read Ezekiel 36:24-28, What is this heart change and how does it relate to what we have seen in 1 Samuel 16?

- You are looking for more leaders to serve in your ministry. What qualities should you be looking for, and why?

- How could this part of the Bible be an encouragement for those Christians who feel inadequate for the roles God has given them to fulfil?

Give thanks and pray

- Thank God for giving us a king, Jesus, from whom God will never take his Spirit away, because he is always obedient to him.
- Apologize to God for the times when you have thought that the power to live a godly life can be found in your own strength rather than in his Spirit.
- Thank God that he can use weak, sinful people like us to serve him by the power of his Spirit and pray that he would continue to do so. Pray this for the 7 Confirmed on Sunday.