



“REASONS TO REJOICE”

*“Your Words were found, and I ate them,
and Your Word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart.” Jeremiah 15:16*

I and II SAMUEL Lesson 8

In last week’s lesson we learned about some very disastrous mistakes that Saul made as king of Israel. Saul’s son was victorious in battle, but he took credit for it. Saul grew impatient as he waited for Samuel to come and offer sacrifices to the Lord, so he assumed the function of a priest and was rebuked by Samuel for doing so. In chapter 14, Saul makes a foolish and selfish oath before the Lord, causing hardship on the very people he was leading, as well as endangering the life of his own son. His pride and his own personal fears kept distracting him from obeying God’s commands.

We also briefly read chapter 15, discussing a few of the main points. God gave Saul one more chance to prove himself worthy of ruling the Kingdom, and Saul blew it again. God gave Saul chance after chance, but he continued to blame his sin on other people. He seemed to care more about what people thought of him than what God thought. Today we will begin by taking another look at chapter 15 because there is so much to learn from it!

First Day

- 1. Read chapter 15. Is there any new thought or application that you see in reading it again?*
- 2. Robert P. Gordon said, “In chapter 13, obedience was the stone on which Saul stumbled; here it is the rock that crushes him.” What does he mean?*

The Amalekites had always been enemies of Israel. Amalek was the son of Esau (Genesis 36:12-16). They were the first to attack Israel after they were freed from their bondage in Egypt (Exodus 17:8-13). They were a continual thorn in Israel's side. Even in the time of judges, the Amalekites continually harassed Israel. God said that He would judge them, and now was the time. If they continued to live, they would be a constant source of trouble for Israel, so God wanted them completely gone. (In the Book of Esther, Hamman was an Amalekite.)

God said to "utterly destroy" them in I Samuel 15:3. This phrase is better translated "devote to destruction." A "ban" was put on them because of their sin (Deuteronomy 7:1-5, 17-26).

3. *Is there any sin in your life that God wants "utterly destroyed"? (Can God hear it "bleating"?) Are you devoted to its destruction?*

4. *Why did Saul tell the Kenites to leave? (Read Numbers 10:29-32, Judges 1:16, I Samuel 30:29, Numbers 24:20-22.)*

5. *Why do you think Saul spared the good animals and King Agag's life?*

6. *How did Samuel know that Saul disobeyed God's orders?*

7. *Can we hide anything from God? (Read I Corinthians 4:5) Why do we try?*

8. *Did Saul repent? What did he seem to be most worried about? (vs 30)*

9. *What emotions do you think Samuel was feeling?*

10. Who ended up killing King Agag?

God rejected Saul as the King of Israel. He could have received forgiveness for his sin, but the kingdom would still be removed from him. He disobeyed God's commands, simple as that. He appeared to care more about what the people thought of him than anything else. Samuel seemed to be so sad. I don't know if it's because he loved Saul so much, or he was just disappointed in how things turned out. Twice in this chapter it says "God regretted having Saul as a king" (vs 11 and 35). This doesn't mean that God changed His mind, or that He made a mistake. God's comment was an expression of sorrow, not an admission of error (Genesis 6:5-7). This word can also be translated "grieved." "Such a way of speaking is known technically as an anthropopathism -- ascribing human emotions to God. While such expressions are powerful and moving, properly understanding them is not always easy. It is crucial to note what they do not mean. That God repented does not call into question either His omniscience or His omnipotence by implying that He did not foresee what happened and/or was helpless to do anything about it. Nor does it suggest that God realized He made a mistake. 'He is not a man, that he should change' (Malachi 3:6).

11. Explain the difference between being "a man-pleaser" (Galatians 1:10) and the responsibility we have to live in a way that won't stumble others.

That's it for today. I pray that we will not live our lives for the glory of men, but for the glory of God. Saul was such a different kind of man than David, whom we will meet tomorrow. David cared about pleasing the Lord, period. As you study the life of David, you will find such a contrast between him and Saul. And by the way, keep your life "bleat-free," okay?

Memory Verse of the Week: "For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."
1 Samuel 16:7b

Second Day

Review your memory verse. Ask the Lord to keep this truth on your heart today.

Today a new character will be introduced to us. As the pages of our Bible take us through the life of David, may we be challenged by the love this man had for his God. Saul was the people's choice for a king, while David was God's choice. God allowed the people to again see that they needed to depend on His wisdom, not on their own. Their choice got them into trouble ... again. From chapter 16 to the end of the book, Saul and David are the main characters.

- 1. Read I Samuel 16:1-13. After reading it through, write a summary statement explaining the main point. What would you title it?*

- 2. Why do you think Samuel was so sad? What mission did God send him on?*

- 3. Why was he afraid? What did God tell him to do for protection?*

- 4. Why do you think the elders of the town "trembled" when they saw Samuel coming?*

- 5. Did Samuel know whom God was going to choose?*

- 6. Explain the process they went through to choose the king.*

7. *Why didn't Jesse call David in immediately?*

8. *Was Samuel surprised at God's choice? Whom did he think it was going to be?*

9. *What does God remind Samuel He's looking for in a king?*

10. *How is David described?*

God reminded Samuel that He was looking at the heart of a man, not what he looked like. (Saul was a great looking guy, and look what happened with him!) Appearances never reveal what people are really like inside. God has given each person special talents and gifts to be used for Him. We are His "excellent ones, in whom He delights" (Psalm 16:3). We need to look at people through God's eyes, realizing that each one is a special treasure that belongs to the Lord.

11. *Do people today still judge people by their appearance? What other things do they judge them by?*

12. *Have you ever been wrongly judged by your appearance, your financial status, or your personal achievements? What lesson did you learn from it?*

13. *How was God's choice contrary to human reason? (Isn't it usually?)*

David is thought to be about 16 years old at this time. David's own father didn't even count him worthy to be in the running to be the king. He didn't even mention David to Samuel. His oldest brother, Eliab, isn't very nice to him either (I Samuel 17:28). The world saw him as a nobody, but he was definitely "somebody" to God. The Lord was working in a young man's heart in a field in Bethlehem. No one would've guessed that God had plans for David.

14. *Are you guilty of judging people by their appearance? Ask the Holy Spirit to search your heart on this important issue.*

Unfortunately, we have to stop here. There is so much to learn in this chapter. We'll continue to learn more about David tomorrow, but until then, rejoice that God has a special plan for you, too!

Third Day

What's your memory verse? Are you applying it?

- 1.** *Read I Samuel 16:1-13 again. David's life is full of instruction for us as we see him as a man, a king, and a type of Christ.*
- 2.** *Why was being a shepherd probably good training ground for David? Who else spent time in the fields as a shepherd? (Exodus 3:1)*
- 3.** *Do you believe that God has a plan for your life? What has been your "training ground"?*

4. *In what ways is David a “type of Christ” in what we’ve learned so far?*

Jesse overlooked David in the process of choosing a king. We can also be guilty of overlooking certain gifts and talents in others, or comparing one with another. We need to look for the best in people, encouraging them to develop those gifts and talents.

5. *Think about each one of your children, if you have any. List each of their gifts, talents, special abilities, and good character traits. How can you practically encourage them to use them for God’s glory? (Have you been overlooking one of them because the other is more outgoing, etc.?)*

6. *Reflecting on I Samuel 16:7, what should our attitude be concerning our outward appearance? (Give Scriptures if possible)*

7. *Do you spend more time improving your outward appearance or your inner man? (Be honest)*

8. *How do we improve our “inner man,” or the appearance of our heart?*

9. *Read Psalm 78:70-72. How is David described? Did these character traits have anything to do with God's choosing him?*
10. *Sometimes we allow other people's opinions of us become our opinion of ourselves. Why can this be so dangerous?*

Samuel anointed David with oil in I Samuel 16:13. This was a visible sign of the Spirit of God coming upon him. (The dove descended on Jesus in Matthew 3:16, and fire descended on the disciples in Acts 2:3.) It symbolized heavenly recognition. Anointing with oil also represented holiness, setting a person aside for special service for the Lord. David did not become the King yet, publicly or officially (2 Samuel 2:4; 5:3). Although this was done in secret, God was preparing David for his future as the King of Israel!

11. *One last question. When choosing leaders to run our country, what qualifications should we be looking for? What does the world usually look for?*

Charles Swindoll says this about David: "David was a man of glorious triumph, yet great tragedy. Uniquely gifted, but human to the core; strong in battle, but weak at home. Why are we drawn to study his life? Because David isn't a polished marble personality. He is blood and bone and breath, sharing our struggles of spirit and soul."

God uses people who are willing to be used, and whose hearts are devoted to Him. W. Phillip Keller says it very nicely: "No, God does not see man as man sees. He does not measure character by charisma. He does not defer to human values. God's chief criterion for selecting special servants

for mighty purposes is: 'Are you willing to do my will?' This is the acid test. Despite all of an individual's other failings, if above all else his one consuming desire is to be a man after God's own heart, he will be lifted above the turmoil of his time, in great honor."

Are you willing to be used by God?

Fourth Day

Practice your memory verse. Are you practicing that principle?

1. *Read I Samuel 16:14-23. What is the main point of this section? What would you title it?*

2. *Why was David called into the palace?*

3. *Could Saul's servants tell that something was bothering Saul?*

4. *What kind of reputation did David have?*

Again we see God's perfect timing in putting together all the pieces of history. It just so happens that one of Saul's servants had heard young David playing his instrument and recommends that the king calls him for help. What a coincidence (Not!)

In verse 14, the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul because of his disobedience. Remember that the ministry of the Holy Spirit has changed since Old Testament days. In those days the Holy Spirit would empower certain people for special tasks (Judges 3:10, 6:34, 11:29). Pentecost brought about a change in the ministry of the Holy Spirit, who now dwells within us permanently (1 Corinthians 6:19, 12:13; Ephesians 4:30;

1 Thessalonians 5:19). References to the Spirit departing from a believer are found only in the Old Testament, as in the case of Samson (Judges 16:15-20).

It was not unjust for God to allow an evil spirit to afflict Saul. Saul was promised blessings if he obeyed, and judgement if he didn't. Gleason L. Archer, in The Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties, gives us something to think about: "By his successive acts of rebellion against the will and law of God, King Saul left himself wide open to satanic influence -- just as Judas Iscariot did after he had determined to betray the Lord Jesus (John 13:2).

Insofar as God has established the spiritual laws of cause and effect, it is accurate to say that Saul's disobedience cut him off from the guidance and communion of the Holy Spirit that he had formerly enjoyed and left him prey to a malign spirit of depression and intense jealousy that drove him increasingly to irrational paranoia. Although he was doubtless acting as an agent of satan, Saul's evil bent was by the permission and plan of God. We must realize that in the last analysis all penal consequences for sin come from God, as the Author of the moral law and the one who always does what is right (Genesis 18:25)."

5. How is music soothing to the soul? How can music be dangerous?

6. When you are depressed, what do you do to find relief or help?

The instrument that David played was actually called a "kinnor" in Hebrew. Most commentators believe that rather than a harp, this instrument was a lyre. "A lyre had strings stretched across a sounding board over a blank space and attached to a crossbar. The player would draw a plectrum across the strings with his right hand and deaden the strings with his left." (Merrill Unger)

7. What did Jesse send with David?

8. Did Saul receive David? (Did he know that David was the one who would be taking his place yet?)

9. *Was David willing to be used in the palace instead of the field?*

10. *What does this tell us about David's character?*

I doubt that David knew that God would someday use his ability to play the lyre to minister to the king of Israel. God can use any gift He gives us to minister to someone in need.

11. *Are you willing to be stretched and allow God to use you wherever He sees fit? What gifts do you have that you are using for Him? What gifts do you have that you are not using at all?*

This ends our study today. I'm so happy that we met David. I love to hear stories of how God calls and uses young people who are willing. God wants to use you, as well as the young people in your home. Why not minister together?

Fifth Day

Write your verse from memory. Recite it to your family.

1. *Review chapters 15 and 16. What differences do you already see between Saul and David?*

2. *David is referred to as a "type of Christ." How is the fact that he is willing to serve another example of that? Read Philippians 2:7.*

3. *Knowing that he would one day take his place, what thoughts do you think might have been running through David's head as he met Saul?*

4. *David was now called to wait on the Lord and His perfect timing. He would take the throne, but when the time was right. Has God shown you something and you're anxious for it to come about? What can you learn from David?*

5. *Read David's words in Psalm 108:1-6. Why is David so happy? Choose some phrases that minister to your heart.*

6. *Read Psalm 27:14. What does it mean to "wait with courage"?*

7. *What did you learn from these two chapters that specifically ministered to your heart?*

David became part of that magnificent, divine plan which brought Jesus to birth at Bethlehem and revealed God's love to man (Revelation 22:16).

*God bless you, ladies. I pray that as you spend time with the Lord each day, you thank Him for all the **"Reasons to Rejoice"** that He has given you.*