

*1 & 2 Samuel***PREFACE**

Rahab, the Jericho prostitute, and Naomi the Bethlehemite were the grandmothers of Obed. Ruth the Moabitess was the mother of Obed, and the grandmother of Jesse. Thus Ruth was the great-grandmother and Rahab the great-great-grandmother of King David.

As we learned in our study of Christ in the OT, David was more than just included in the line that culminated in the Messiah; David was more than just a prophet and type of Christ Jesus; David inaugurated the eternal dynasty, the kingdom that would never end, because the dynasty's *last* King would be the eternal God/man Jesus, enthroned in heaven.

Turn please to 2 Samuel 7.

When King David had it in his heart to build a permanent dwelling, a stone temple for God in Jerusalem, the Lord informed David that he would not be the one to do this. David would not be the one to build a "house" (i.e., a stone building) for the name of the Lord; instead, the Lord would build a "house" (i.e., a dynasty, a family) for King David. And *this* house, this dynasty would be eternal. The Lord God explained this in a prophecy, beginning in v12, that spoke of both David's immediate son—Solomon—and his future "son," Christ Jesus.

"When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me; (2 Samuel 7:12-14a)

The Lord then inserts something that applies only to Solomon:

when he commits iniquity, I will correct him with the rod of men and the strokes of the sons of men, but My lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you." (14b-15)

Then He closes with this astonishing Messianic prophecy:

"Your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever." (2 Samuel 7:16)

Was it? or more accurately, Will it be? Let's briefly trace this in the NT, beginning with what Gabriel announced to Mary.

Read Luke 1:31-33.

His father—forefather—was David, and His kingdom will have no end. The writer to the Hebrews, in making the case for the supremacy of Christ Jesus, quotes 2 Samuel 7:14.

Read Hebrews 1:5.

Finally we have the triumphant angelic and choral proclamation in The Revelation.

Read Revelation 11:15.

In case you haven't noticed, David son of Jesse is special. There are number of special people throughout the history of God's economy: Abraham, Moses, Elijah, John the Baptist. But of none of these did God Himself say that he was "a man after His own heart" (1 Samuel 13:14). It is my prayer and my expectation that by the time we complete this examination of David's life, we will have a better idea of what the Lord means by that astonishing pronouncement.

A Kindred Spirit

In many respects David is our brother and our hope, for even though the Lord God considered him to be a man after His own heart, we are too familiar with his failings—even egregious sins. In that, we discover ourselves in David: reading the record of his failings, we wonder how God could have exalted him so; conscious of our own failings, we wonder how God could love *us* so. Thus as we discover ourselves in his story we discover grace—unmerited, undeserved, unearned grace. God's grace was not invented in Bethlehem; it began, with everything else, in Eden, and was displayed to the full in the life of David.

David enters our story strong and dynamic. Because the Spirit of the Lord is upon him, things go well for him. It is difficult to pinpoint a moment in time when David's life and walk with God begin to go south, but perhaps it was—as it is with so many great men—once he attained full power. At the height of his power—when, after seven-and-a-half years as king only of Judah, he became king over all Israel; when Scripture tells us that "David became greater and greater, for the Lord God of hosts was with him" (2 Samuel 5:10)—we read that he began taking more and more foreign wives—wives that followed foreign and profane gods. And here begins a series of bad decisions that corrupt and threaten his throne—and his walk with God.

Beyond that the evidence shows that David was no role model as a father.

- He failed to see the treachery in his son Amnon, who was lusting after his sister Tamar. David himself was the one who sent his daughter to nurse his reprobate son, thus paving the way for Amnon to rape his sister (2 Samuel 13).
- He failed to see the treachery in his son Absalom, who lured Amnon into a trap and killed him in vengeance for his sister Tamar (2 Samuel 13).
- When Absalom usurped the throne, drove David out of Jerusalem and went to war against his own father, on the eve of battle David continued to indulge him.

Read 2 Samuel 18:5.

- Though a good and just king in general, David was blind to the true character of his children. And when a good king would have honored his army's victory over the usurper, and mourned those who died in defense of his throne, David instead mourned the death of his son Absalom, the treacherous usurper, and ignored the sacrifices made by his loyal forces—requiring his general Joab to set him straight.

Read 2 Samuel 19:1-6.

That is the bad news, and in the fullness of time we will address it again. But let us begin at the beginning, when the youthful shepherd David, runt of the litter, is discovered by Samuel and anointed as the second king of Israel.

CALLED FROM THE SHEEP

David was the youngest of Jesse son of Obed's eight sons. We come into the story, in 1 Samuel 16, when the prophet Samuel is grieving over the behavior of the first king, Saul. But Yahweh informs him that He has already rejected Saul as king, and it is now time for the prophet to anoint the next—and he will be found in the sons of Jesse of Bethlehem.

Note: The Lord had made His choice *long* before. In Chapter Thirteen, after Saul got impatient waiting for Samuel the priest to make the sacrifices before battle, he went ahead and did it himself. He tells Samuel, disingenuously, that he “forced himself” to do it, because Samuel wasn't there. But this doesn't fool the firstborn of Hannah. Two chapters before the scene of David's anointing, Samuel informs Saul,

“You have acted foolishly; you have not kept the commandment of the LORD your God, which He commanded you, for now the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. But now your kingdom shall not endure. The LORD has sought out for Himself a man after His own heart, and the LORD has appointed him as ruler over His people, because you have not kept what the LORD commanded you.” (1 Samuel 13:13-14)

This is the first example, in our story, of that familiar prophetic device in the Bible: “Now—not yet.” In a short while we will run into an even more dramatic example, but here the Lord has already made his decision; in His mind, Saul is already toast, and David has already been selected to replace him. Yet, Saul will remain on the throne for years to come.

As the youngest, David was assigned to watch over the family's sheep, so he was not there when his seven older brothers passed before Samuel for consideration—all of which the Lord rejected. So David is called from the flock, and is immediately anointed. Don't miss what happens next, for it is key to the whole story.

Read 1 Samuel 16:13-14.

There is nothing new under the sun. What is true for us was true for Saul, and even David. The indwelling of God's Spirit and the change of heart that accompanies Him, do not guarantee righteous results. Shortly after his anointing, the Spirit of God entered Saul, and he was given a new heart. But repeatedly after that he made foolish and unlawful decisions—until the Lord finally *removed* His Spirit, as we just read, and an evil spirit was sent to torment him.

The text tells us that when David was anointed the Spirit of the Lord came upon him “mightily.”

mightily = *salah* (tsaw-lakh') = or tsaleach, tsaw-lay'-akh; a primitive root; **to push forward**, in various senses (literal or figurative, transitive or intransitive) :- **break out**, come (mightily), go over, be good, be meet, be profitable, (cause to, effect, make to, send) prosper (-ity, -ous, -ously).

The Spirit did not just settle in for a quiet nap, but became in David an energizing force. The same thing, however, happened to Saul earlier; in 1 Samuel 10 we read that “the Spirit of God came upon him mightily” (1 Samuel 10:10). Why wasn't this enough? Why didn't Saul, with God's Spirit, behave righteously, like David? Why didn't David continue behaving righteously throughout his life?

There's nothing new under the sun. Every believer, every follower of Christ has that same Spirit living within. And, sadly, every believer behaves unrighteously at times.

Oh, would that it were not true. Sanctification is a life-long process that can be delayed, derailed or corrupted by the corrosive culture in which we presently dwell. This, combined with our own fleshly nature, can become a toxic environment doing everything it can to insulate us from God's presence, and the dynamic engine of His holiness dwelling within us.

The first king, Saul, gave in to the other side—to his doom. God removed His Spirit from Saul, and removed His presence from Saul's life. What made the difference in David's life?

He never gave in. His predecessor eventually rejected God, but even with his failings, David would always confess his sins, accept the Lord's discipline, and return to Yahweh.

Like David, every one of us who has the Spirit of the Lord will still sin against Him. The answer to that sad truth is for us to never give in to the enemy, to confess our sin, accept the Lord's discipline—and forgiveness—and return to His arms.