12 God Chooses David

Key Theme

- God is sovereign over all things.

Key Passages

- 1 Samuel 16:1–23; 1 Corinthians 1:27–29

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Identify God's criteria for choosing David.
- Describe David's characteristics.

Lesson Overview

Come On In

Students will place a bookmark at 1 Samuel 16 and 1 Corinthians 1.
Students will practice the memory verse using the Memory Verse Strips .

Studying God's Word

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God sent Samuel to Bethlehem to anoint the next king of Israel. Jesse's least likely and youngest son, David, was the one God had chosen, and Samuel anointed him king. David had a heart after God's own heart. David loved and trusted God and had a heart to obey Him.

- ☐ Study the Prepare to Share section.
- ☐ Read through 1 Samuel 16.
- ☐ Go Before the Throne.

Activity: The Bethlehem Thread

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Students will construct a chain in their Bibles, beginning with Ruth and ending in the Gospels, that shows the occurrences of Bethlehem as the birthplace of the Messiah.

- ☐ Student Guides
- ☐ Pencils

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Prepare to Share

SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

Before you begin to prepare for your lesson this week, please prepare your heart and mind by reading 1 Samuel 16.

Recall in the last lesson that the first king God chose to rule Israel, King Saul, demonstrated through his disobedience to God that he thought himself wiser than God. Saul's heart was not right with the Lord. Because of his rebellion, God would take his kingdom away. But who would take his place? God sought a man "after His own heart . . . to be commander over His people" (1 Samuel 13:14). God found such a man in David.

God sent Samuel to anoint the man God had determined to take Saul's place. This new king would come from the household of Jesse, a man from the tribe of Judah (1 Samuel 16:1). God promised to reveal to Samuel which of Jesse's eight sons was the one whom God had selected (1 Samuel 16:3).

As Jesse presented his sons to Samuel, we see that they must have been impressive young men! Samuel immediately thought that surely God must have chosen Eliab, Jesse's oldest son, as Israel's new king (1 Samuel 16:6). But the Lord revealed that what impressed Samuel was not important to God. Eliab's good looks and height were the focus of Samuel's admiration, but the Lord sees things differently—"for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart" (1 Samuel 16:7).

Rejecting the seven older sons, God was about to reveal Jesse's youngest son, David, as the one who was fit to replace Saul as king. Jesse apparently didn't even think enough of David to bring him in from the fields where he was shepherding to attend this sacrifice and meeting with Samuel. And yet because of David's heart, he was the one God had chosen. God knew that David would seek after His will.

David was skillful in playing music, a mighty man of valor, a man of war, and prudent in speech; the Lord was with him (1 Samuel 16:18). Ruddy, bright-eyed, and good looking, David was the one God intended to be the next king (1 Samuel 16:12). At David's anointing, the Spirit of the Lord came upon him in a special way "from that day forward" (1 Samuel 16:13). The Spirit would give David the power he needed to accomplish God's will.

While the Spirit of God entered David, God's Spirit left Saul, and a distressing spirit overcame him, causing him much anguish (1 Samuel 16:14). In God's sovereign plan, David was called into Saul's court to comfort and soothe Saul with his harp playing. David obediently came and Saul loved him and made him his armor bearer (1 Samuel 16:21).

Looking ahead in Israel's history, we find that David did fall into sin at times during his reign. Even people with the most casual knowledge of the Bible are familiar with David's adultery with Bathsheba and murder of her husband (2 Samuel 11). David's heart was not perfect—no man's heart is. But David loved and trusted the true God rather than his own ways and judgments, as shown in his repentance over his sin (Psalm 51). This cannot be said of Saul, who rebelled against God and made excuses rather than seeking forgiveness through humble repentance.

A striking passage that shows a picture of David's heart is found in 1 Chronicles 29. In that passage,

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David exhorted Israel to give gifts to support the building of the Temple. The people responded generously, and David gave thanks in 1 Chronicles 29:10–19. David asked the Lord, "Who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly as this? For all things come from You, and of Your own we have given You" (1 Chronicles 29:14). David knew that all things come from God, including the gifts they were giving for the Temple. Though he was king, David knew that God was the true Ruler of all: "Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, the power and the glory, the victory and the majesty; for all that is in heaven and in earth is Yours; Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and You are exalted as head over all" (1 Chronicles 29:11).

This heart of faith and adoration is what led David to be brave in battle with Goliath: "The Lord, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine" (1 Samuel 17:37). It is this heart that led David to act honorably toward King Saul and spare his life when Saul was seeking to kill him (1 Samuel 24:12). The characteristic pattern of David's heart was to trust that the Lord was in control over all things. David did all to serve, honor, and love the true God. Such is a heart that is fashioned after God's own.

HISTORICAL/APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

In Genesis 49, as Jacob was approaching death, he called his sons together and prophetically blessed them. These blessings were not for the individual sons, but for their families, which would become the tribes of Israel. Jacob's blessing on Judah is recorded in Genesis 49:8–12. In verse 8, Jacob said, "Your father's children shall bow down before you," and in verse 10 he said, "The scepter shall not depart from Judah."

Israel's first king, Saul, was from the tribe of Benjamin—not the tribe of Judah. We see the fulfillment of Jacob's blessing as the "scepter," or kingdom, was taken from Saul and passed to David, who was of the tribe of Judah. The Lord's intent was that a descendant from the tribe of Judah would reign permanently. And ultimately, that descendant from the tribe of Judah and the Son of David is Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior forever.

See the Online Resource Page for more information on this topic.

BEFORE THE THRONE

How marvelous are your works and your Word, O Lord. To think that you choose the small, the weak, and the foolish as yours. You chose David as king and you've chosen me to teach these students. Use me for your glory, Lord. Grant me your wisdom and patience and love, so that I will bless my students with the accurate teaching of your Word and the good example of my life. As David wrote, "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer" (Psalm 19:14).

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COME ON IN

As students arrive . . .

- They will mark their Bibles at 1 Samuel 16 and 1 Corinthians 1 with strips of paper.
- They will put the Memory Verse Strips in order and recite the verse together and/or to each other. They may work individually or in teams.

This time at the beginning of class should be used to review the memory verse. We have provided a template on the Resource DVD-ROM you can use to make Memory Verse Strips to be put in order each week. You may have other ideas and ways to encourage your students to memorize the verse.

Review

Last week we saw how Saul forfeited the kingdom God had given him to rule.

? What caused God to reject Saul as king? *Saul disobeyed God on several occasions, and God judged his sin by removing the kingdom from him.*

Refer to the History of Israel poster to remind the students of the timing of today's lesson.

Saul's removal as king was not immediate, and the events we talked about last week were actually 30 years prior to what we will be discussing today. Even though God told Saul he would lose the kingdom, He allowed him to reign for 38 years after the judgment was announced.

Today's lesson will reveal whom God chose to replace Saul as king.

➤ Write on the board, "Why is Bethlehem so important?"

1 Samuel 15:34–16:13

Studying God's Word

READ THE WORD

Let's read 1 Samuel 16:1–13 to learn about this new king together. But let me read the end of chapter 15 first. *Read 1 Samuel 15:34–35 and then have 2–3 students read 1 Samuel16:1–13 aloud.*

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

? As I mentioned before, there is a 30-year gap between chapters 15 and 16. So how long had Samuel been mourning over Saul? *30 years.*

? Where was God sending Samuel? *To Bethlehem.*

? Why was he going there? *To anoint the new king God had provided from among the sons of Jesse.*

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? What was Samuel afraid of? *That Saul would kill him.*

? What else did God tell Samuel to do in Bethlehem? *He was to make a sacrifice in Bethlehem and invite Jesse's household.*

? How did the elders of Bethlehem respond when they saw Samuel coming (verse 4)? *They were afraid and asked if he came in peace.*

? Who attended the sacrifice? *The elders and Jesse and his sons.*

? What was Samuel's mistake in assuming Eliab was to be the king? Look in verses 6–7. *Even though he was apparently tall and handsome, God looks at the heart rather than the outward appearance.*

? What phrase was repeated as the older sons were brought before Samuel? *"Neither has the Lord chosen this one."*

? Why didn't Jesse bring David to the sacrifice? *David was the youngest and was assigned to tending the sheep. He assumed that since David was the youngest, God would not choose him.*

? How is David described? *Ruddy, bright-eyed, and good-looking.*

The word "ruddy" means reddish.

? What happened when David came before Samuel (verse 12)? *God told Samuel he was the chosen son, and Samuel anointed David with oil.*

? What else happened to David when he was anointed? *The Spirit of the Lord came upon him from that day forward.*

? What other examples of younger brothers being set above older brothers have we examined in the past? *Jacob above Esau and Joseph above his older brothers.*

Discover the Truth

sovereign

God rejected Saul as king over His people, and He chose David and set him apart to become the next king. The anointing with oil before his family and the elders of the town was a symbol of God choosing David, and Samuel was fulfilling his role as the prophet in performing this ceremony. God's sovereignty is on display here, and we will see another element of that as we do our activity.

➤ Refer to the Roles of the Prophets poster.

Nowhere in Scripture do we get an exact age for David at this point, but some other clues from Scripture at least set some boundaries. David was probably around 18 years old when he was anointed, but we will talk about that a bit more when we discuss his battle with Goliath.

While man looks at the outward appearance, God looks at the heart. This is the memory verse we have been working on these last few weeks, and we should remember this truth as we interact with others around us. God did not choose the oldest son, but the youngest. God often calls us to think in a radically different way than our flesh or the world would have us think.

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1 Corinthians 1:26–31

Keep a mark in 1 Samuel 16 and turn to 1 Corinthians 1:26. Listen to what Paul says about our calling to be Christians. *Read 1 Corinthians 1:26–31.*

? How is God choosing David as king similar to God calling Christians to salvation in Christ? *God has chosen to save people that the world considers foolish, feeble, and lowly. The wise, strong, and elite tend to think the gospel is foolish and reject it. In much the same way, Samuel thought the tall, handsome Eliab would make the best king, but God was going to use a "foolish" approach to selecting the king. The younger was chosen above the older, just as those who are humble and weak before God are chosen above those who are arrogant and wise in their own eyes. Praise God for His glorious grace!*

READ THE WORD

1 Samuel 16:14–23

Let's finish reading 1 Samuel 16, starting in verse 14. *Have someone read the passage aloud.*

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

? As the Spirit came on David, what happened to Saul? *The Spirit left him, and God sent a distressing spirit to trouble Saul.*

? How did David come to be in Saul's court? *Saul's servants suggested a musician come and play the harp for Saul to comfort him, and someone recommended David.*

? What did Jesse send with David when he went to Saul? *a donkey loaded with bread, a skin of wine, and a young goat.*

? What happened when David played for Saul? *The distressing spirit left and Saul was refreshed.*

? What did Saul think of David (verse 22)? *David found favor In Saul's sight.*

? How is David described? *A son of Jesse of Bethlehem, skillful at playing the harp, a mighty man of valor, a man of war, prudent in speech, handsome, and the Lord was with him.*

? What other role did David fulfill for Saul (verse 21)? *He was Saul's armor bearer.*

Discover the Truth

We can be sure that Saul had not yet known that David was anointed to be the next king. David was willing to humbly submit to Saul's kingship until God removed Saul. You are probably aware that David was not a perfect man—he was sinful just like each of us. However, God told Samuel in 1 Samuel 13:14 that the new king would be a man after God's own heart. This is also confirmed by Paul as he was teaching in the synagogue at Antioch (Acts 13:22). Though David was the king-in-waiting, he served Saul and honored God. We will talk more about David in the next few lessons.

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The Bethlehem Thread

MATERIALS

- ☐ Student Guides
- ☐ Pencils

INSTRUCTIONS

Today, we are going to make a reference chain about the subject of the town of David—Bethlehem. To make a reference chain, you will mark the second reference next to the first, the third next to the second, and so on, so you can turn to them one after another.

If you look up "Bethlehem" in your Bible concordance or index, you may find that the first reference is in Genesis 35:19 where it is a more current name for the older name, Ephrath. Rachel was buried near Bethlehem, as we see again in Genesis 48:7. Joshua 19:15 refers to a Bethlehem, but it is a town in the northern part of Israel, so we won't mark references to it. We are going to focus on the Bethlehem in the south.

? Does anyone remember when we discussed Bethlehem in our recent lessons? *Elimelech lived in Bethlehem, so the account of Ruth and her marriage to Boaz is where the thread will begin.*

I am sure most of you understand the significance of Bethlehem, but you may not realize how early this thread begins in Scripture. In your Student Guides, you will find The Bethlehem Thread activity. Use those references to make a chain from the first verse to each following verse. You can note the starting point in the back of your Bible on a blank page or in the concordance under Bethlehem. *Help students who are unfamiliar with chain references.*

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

Let's review the questions in your Student Guides.

1. What synonym for Bethlehem was present in the text, such as Luke 2:4? *The city of David.*

2. Why does this synonym make sense in light of the passages from this list (Hint: John 7:42)? *Bethlehem was the city where David lived.*

3. Would it be appropriate to include Judges 12:8 or Judges 17:7 in this thread on the connection between redemption and Bethlehem? Explain. *No. These references mention Bethlehem, but have nothing to do with David or the coming Messiah.*

You may be able to find more references to Bethlehem as the city that would be the birthplace of the coming Messiah, but these verses are the primary texts. Now you have a great tool to use in the future, and we will surely come back to this topic in later lessons.

? Why would it be unhelpful in a reference set like this to include every instance of "Bethlehem" or "the city of David"? *If the point is to show the connection between Bethlehem and the redemption that would come through Christ, many of the passages that talk of Bethlehem are not relevant to God's plan of redemption.*

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Applying God's Word

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WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

If you remember the prophecy given by Jacob to his sons on his deathbed, the Messiah was to come through the descendants of Judah. Saul was of the tribe of Benjamin. His line could not have been the line leading to the Messiah. David, however, was from the tribe of Judah. His heart was one that sought after God, though he was not perfect. It was David who was chosen by God to begin the line of kings that would ultimately lead to the King of kings. God's sovereignty and wisdom are clearly on display in the details of these accounts.

Though David is described as a handsome and valiant man, God was not concerned about those qualities. It was the heart of David that was used by God. We must remember this truth that God looks on the heart. We will see David's character demonstrated in our next several lessons.

GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

? Ultimately, why was David chosen to be the next king of Israel? *It was God's choice to put David in power. Just as God had chosen Saul from the people, He chose David. David's heart is noted as one of the reasons God chose him, but it was God who made the ultimate decision.*

? In what ways do you tend to judge others by their outward appearances? How can you adjust those attitudes? *Discuss various answers. Remind the students that they are in need of the grace of God and the mercy available through the gospel as much as any other person on this planet. We might look at others who are "less" than us and think we are superior, but if we have that attitude, we have forgotten the wickedness of our own sin. We can confess those sinful attitudes to God and be thankful that He has forgiven us in Christ.*

? How could the chain of references referring to Bethlehem be used as a tool to share the gospel? *Working forward or backward through the references, you could use God's Word to point out the amazing history of God bringing Ruth to Bethlehem and how the Savior would ultimately be born there.*

MEMORY VERSE

1 Samuel 16:7 But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at his physical 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."

GROUP PRAYER TIME

Be sure to pray with your class before you dismiss them.

- Thank God for providing a body of believers to study the Word together.
- Praise God for His wisdom on display in His Word.
- Ask God to help each student to not judge others by outward appearance.

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