

PROMISE

M A D E

DATE

March 14 & 15

WEEK

3 of 5

KEY VERSE

1 Samuel 16:7

SETTING THE STAGE

Have you ever noticed that endings always bring new beginnings? We have all had those “ending” moments in life. Endings come in many ways: job loss, relocation, death of a loved one, divorce, etc. Some endings are easier than others and some come as expected while others are unexpected. Whatever the case, we have all experienced endings that were the catalyst to new beginnings. As we study 1 Samuel 16 the nation of Israel by way of King Saul had just experienced an ending of sorts. King Saul openly disobeyed God, building a literal wall between himself and God, and himself and God’s prophet, Samuel. In Samuel 15, God rejects Saul as the King, setting up a tragic ending for Saul and for Israel (*see 1 Samuel 15:16-26*).

This caused anxiety for God’s chosen people of Israel as Saul continued to rule until his death, though rejected by God as king. The rest of 1 Samuel chronicles the deterioration of King Saul and the development of King David, as Saul’s rule comes to an end.

But endings bring new beginnings and in 1 Samuel 16 the nation of Israel is given hope for a new beginning as young David is anointed as King of Israel. Though the Spirit of the Lord came on him that day (*1 Samuel 16:13*), his reign would not begin for several years. God is faithful to keep His promises and He promised to raise up a king for His people, Israel. Throughout history, Christians have struggled to turn loose of things from the past and move forward into the future God has purposed for us. In this lesson we will look specifically at 1 Samuel 16 and see how we can embrace new beginnings as God leads.

LESSON OUTLINE

1. Do Not Stay In the Endings of Life
2. New Beginnings Start with Going
3. New Beginnings Do Not Always Look the Way We Think They Should

THINGS TO KNOW

- David (“beloved”) was the eighth child in his family.
- David was from the tribe of Judah. His lineage would lead to the birth of Jesus Christ.

PROMISE

M A D E

1. DO NOT STAY IN THE ENDINGS OF LIFE

1 SAMUEL 16:1a *The LORD said to Samuel, “How long will you grieve over Saul, since I have rejected him from being king over Israel?”*

David was chosen by God from eternity past to be the ruler of Israel. The rejection of Saul did not force the LORD to a new course of action. Rather, God’s action followed His omniscient plan as He used Saul’s disobedience as the human occasion for implementing His higher plan. God permitted the people to have the king of their choice. Now that their mistake in choosing him had been clearly manifested, God, in the superiority of His own wisdom, raised up a king who would fulfill His perfect will.

This ending for the nation of Israel was not easy. Samuel was in mourning (*1 Samuel 16:1*) and was clearly grieved by what had taken place. But God admonishes Samuel to mourn no longer. Saul’s rejection has become final, and God’s prophet must sacrifice his personal feelings, and prepare to carry out the purpose of God’s plan (*1 Samuel 13:14; 15:28*).

Like Samuel, we too must be careful not to stay in the endings that take place in our lives. We should process them and move forward in a healthy way; but, to stay in the endings will rob us of the new beginnings that God will bring. It is important to remember that the endings we will experience in life are not the ending of our lives. Stay vigilant and watch for the new beginning that God is bringing. Then, follow Samuel’s lead in going forward into God’s perfect plan.

2. NEW BEGINNINGS START WITH GOING

1 SAMUEL 16:1b-5 *Fill your horn with oil, and go. I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons.”² 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.’³ And invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do. And you shall anoint for me him whom I declare to you.”⁴ Samuel did what the LORD commanded and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling and said, “Do you come peaceably?”⁵ And he said, “Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD. Consecrate yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice.” And he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.*

As Samuel grieves, notice the Lord tells him to “Go.” In other words, take action. For some of us, the biggest barrier in moving from an ending to a beginning is simply taking the first step. God tells Samuel exactly what to do in verses 3-5. Samuel has questions and is probably a bit cautious in doing what the Lord has instructed. God unfolds His plan and Samuel is saying, “Wait, what? You want me to go where?” Here is the secret: when God brings you to a new beginning you will rarely be able to play it safe. What God calls us to may be uncomfortable, it may cost us friends, business deals, etc. It is in these times we must trust God over our feelings. As Paul told the Corinthians, we are to “walk by faith, not by sight” (*2 Corinthians 5:7*).

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Practically, we must remember that we are a part of God's plan and make sure that we are not simply trying to make Him a part of our plan. It is His plan, our purpose.

In verse 4 we see Samuel following the Lord's command to go see Jesse the Bethlehemite. Jesse was the grandson of Ruth and Boaz (*Ruth 4:18–21*), and so was in the lineage of the promised King. As the wives of Jacob gave birth to a royal house (*Genesis 35:11; 49:10*), so Ruth would produce the Davidic dynasty (*Ruth 4:11*).

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Bethlehem was not part of Samuel's regular territory and so he was reticent to go. So, God gave him a cover story. God did not tell Samuel to be deceptive, but rather to combine the anointing with the business of sacrificing (*1 Samuel 16:2*). The elders in Bethlehem came to him, trembling. They may have wondered if Samuel had come for judgment (v. 4).

Where is God calling you to take action? Is He calling you to get up and go? It has been said that any journey starts with a step ... do you need to take a step of action today?

Samuel had a purpose for going and it was to unfold the new beginning for Israel. He was to anoint a future king. It was a new beginning that started with Go, which Samuel obeyed. But Samuel had to see beyond what was before his eyes to fulfill God's purpose.

3. NEW BEGINNINGS DO NOT ALWAYS LOOK THE WAY WE THINK THEY SHOULD

1 SAMUEL 16:6-13 (ESV) *When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely the LORD's anointed is before him." ⁷ But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart." ⁸ Then Jesse called Abinadab and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." ⁹ Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." ¹⁰ And Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. And Samuel said to Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen these." ¹¹ Then Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all your sons here?" And he said, "There remains yet the youngest, but behold, he is keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and get him, for we will not sit down till he comes here." ¹² And he sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy and had beautiful eyes and was handsome. And the LORD said, "Arise, anoint him, for this is he." ¹³ Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers. And the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon David from that day forward. And Samuel rose up and went to Ramah.*

The year would be around 1029 B.C. and David would be about eleven years old at the time of Samuel's visit. Samuel's purpose was to anoint the next king of Israel- a new beginning indeed! Seven of Jesse's sons were lined up for Samuel to look at and the Lord, through Samuel, rejects them all. They all had great outward characteristics, but this key verse in 1 Samuel holds as true today as it did then: "For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart" (v. 7). This must have shocked Samuel and Jesse. They had an idea of what was going to happen, but their plan was not God's plan. In a surprising turn of events, Samuel asks if there are any other sons (v. 11).

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David, the youngest of Jesse's boys, was out back with the sheep. Kings were often described as shepherds both in Israel and in the ancient Near East. Hence the irony here is that the one who had not been permitted by his father to attend the festivities with Samuel was engaged in duties which symbolize metaphorically his great future. Nobody expected God's man to be David.

So many times, in life we have an idea of how things should be, but God does not operate that way. Many times, the new beginnings that God brings us look nothing like we imagined, but they are exactly what we need.

There have been jobs and friendships that appeared to be one thing, yet I saw were something else when I allowed God to shape my purpose. God always has a plan, even though it may not seem the most logical or practical. Honestly, God's plan may not even seem the most spiritual, but God's plan is the most perfect. In Jeremiah when God's people were in exile, a dark time in history, God had a plan for their purpose. Jeremiah 29:11 says, "*For I know the plans that I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.*" Like with the exiles, God knew what He wanted to accomplish in the anointing of David – he was a future and a hope for Israel. God knew the plan and purpose for this exercise of Samuel going to the house of Jesse.

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After looking at Jesse's seven sons, Samuel at last found the man of God's choice, a man after God's own heart (*1 Samuel 13:14*). It is interesting that David ("beloved") was number eight because, in Scripture, eight is often the number of a new beginning. God did use David to bring a new beginning to Israel, both governmentally and spiritually.

In verse 16b, it says, *And the LORD said, "Arise, anoint him, for this is he."* This is a benchmark of significance both in the life of David and Samuel. In Scripture, only prophets, priests, and kings were anointed, and the anointing had to be performed by a person authorized by the Lord, which Samuel was. In biblical imagery, oil can symbolize the Holy Spirit and the endowment of His power upon His servants (*Zechariah 4*). The Hebrew word "Messiah" and the Greek word "Christ" both mean "anointed." The Spirit of God came upon young David in great power, and ever after that, David was God's chosen man, but at the same time, the Spirit of God departed from Saul (*1 Samuel 16:14*). Without the power of the Spirit, the servant of God is helpless to do the will of God and glorify Christ. As we abide in Christ, we receive the power we need, for Jesus said, "*Without Me you can do nothing*" (*John 15:5, NKJV*).

Notice what it says in verse 13, "*And the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon David from that day forward.*" Can you imagine what that must have felt like? Following the obedience of both Samuel and David, there was no hesitation on the part of the Spirit of the Lord. There is an excitement that comes with the word "rushed." There is movement that comes with the word "rushed." There is purpose that comes with the word "rushed." David was a young man with purpose based on God's plan. It was a new beginning that ultimately changed a nation.

When it comes to new beginnings, God calls people who are busy, not people looking for ways to avoid responsibility. Moses (*Exodus 3*), Gideon (*Judges 6*), Elisha (*1 Kings 19:19–21*), Nehemiah (*Nehemiah 1*), Amos (*Amos 7:14–15*), Peter, Andrew, James, and John (*Mark 1:16–20*), and Matthew (*Matthew 9:9–13*) were all busy when the Lord called them. God's pattern for leadership is stated in Matthew 25:21, "*Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your Lord.*" David had been faithful as a servant over a few things and God promoted him to a ruler over many things. David went from shepherding a flock to a whole nation!

Surely, no one would have ever expected this new beginning to start with an 11-year-old shepherd. Most times when God does something it is rarely in a way we could have thought or imagined. Our new beginnings may not always be what we want, but with God as the author, they will be exactly what we need when we need them.

HOW HIS PLAN SHAPES OUR PURPOSE

So often we think we know what is best for our lives to the exclusion of God. We might subconsciously think God is too big to care or too big to know what we need. We tend to marginalize some decisions and overemphasize others. Regardless of the size of the decision, as Christ-followers we need to be willing not to stay in the endings of life. There are some things that come to an end for a very specific purpose. We must be willing and ready to step forward, and “Go” as the Lord leads. Often the road the Lord leads is not what we expect. There are curves along the way, even potholes that catch us off guard. The life of David had lots of curves and potholes some self-inflicted others not. David’s life was a rollercoaster of a journey, yet God had a plan and David had a purpose. God even used those detours along the way to shape David into a man after God’s own heart.

It is probably safe to say that none of us will be anointed as a king. But each of us as Christ-followers have the Holy Spirit. And perhaps it is time for you to allow the Spirit of the Lord to rush upon you in a fresh way and move you forward. Never underestimate what God wants to accomplish in your life. David was the youngest boy out in the field taking care of sheep yet God chose him. God is in the life-changing business. Remember the words of the Lord found in Isaiah:

ISAIAH 55:8 *“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,” declares the LORD. ⁹ “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways And My thoughts than your thoughts.*