

1 Samuel 16

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[0 : 0 0] Right, let's start with some prayer and then we'll crack into our study. Father, we just want to take this moment to dedicate this time to you.

! We ask that you would quieten our hearts, quieten our minds, quieten all the stresses of the day. Help us to focus on what you have to say this morning. Not the things that I have to say, but if there's a subtext that you're speaking to people's hearts, Lord, shout it from the rooftops to them.

May this not be an exercise in glorifying me, but glorifying you, Lord. May your words speak to our hearts and transform us from the inside out. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Okay, so we are going to be in the book of 1 Samuel, chapter 16 is where we've got to. 16, yeah. If you've not been here before, if you're not familiar with our format, we go verse by verse, chapter by chapter through a book.

At the moment, typically we're going through the book of Matthew, but once a month we're going through 1 Samuel. And today it's my privilege to bring 1 Samuel 16 to you. Chapter 16 of 1 Samuel.

[1 : 1 4] This I've entitled, the character of God. Now, some of you might be looking at this and going, Tony, you are barking up the wrong tree. This passage is about a guy dumping some oil on a bloke's head.

Spare me some latitude and we'll see how we go. So let's start at the beginning of 1 Samuel. So verse 1 of chapter 16. Now, the Lord said to Samuel, How long are you going to mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him from being king over Israel?

Fill your horn with oil and go. I will send you to Jesse, the Bethlehemite, because I have chosen a king for myself amongst his sons.

But Samuel said, How can I go? When Saul hears about this, he will kill me. Right, so for the benefit of those who don't remember what nerve's going on here.

So Saul is currently the king. He has, in the previous few chapters, been rejected by God. Because he disobeyed when he was told to go and slaughter this whole race.

[2 : 2 6] And he brings back King Agag. And he also brings back loads of sheep and goats and stuff. And as you can see, in this situation, Samuel's being told, I'm going to choose a new king.

So Samuel is fearful. He expects Saul to want to kill him. Well, when you consider the events that occur later in this book, in 1 Samuel, you will see situations where Saul tries to throw spears at people to kill them.

Even including both David and also his own son. This guy is not to be messed with. Carrying on in verse 2.

But the Lord said, Take a heifer with you and say, I have come to sacrifice to the Lord. And you shall invite Jesse to the sacrifice. And I will let you know what you shall do.

And you shall anoint for me the one whom I designate to you. What's going on here? Samuel's saying, If I do this, he's going to want to kill me.

- [3 : 38] Is the Lord saying that he wants him to go down there, lie through his teeth, and everything's going to be all right? Is God saying, Right, let's go with a divine white lie.
- If we think about the character of God, could that interpretation be a bit off? Is God a liar? Let's see.
- Well, some of your non-believing friends might say, Well, if you look at John chapter 7, Jesus lied. Well, let's look at it. John 7, verses 8 to 9.
- Okay. I will give you a chance to get to this one. I've got lots of verses, so I probably won't pause every time.
- But this time, John 7, verses 8 and 9. So, this is Jesus speaking to his disciples. You go to the festival. I am not going up to this festival, because my time has not yet fully come.
- [4 : 40] After he had said this, he stayed in Galilee. However, after his brothers had left for the festival, he also went, not publicly, but in secret. Is Jesus lying there?
- I'm not going. Well, if we actually look at it, the words are used. I am not going up to this festival, because my time has not yet fully come.
- He's saying, I'm not going yet. So, is he lying? No. What does God think about lying?
- In the book of Exodus, chapter 1, verses 15 to 21, you have some Hebrew midwives. So, from verse 15, chapter 1 of Exodus, it says this, Then the king of Egypt spoke to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah, and the other was named Pua, and he said, When you are helping the Hebrew women to give birth, and see them upon the birthstool, if it is a son, you shall put him to death, but if it is a daughter, then she shall live.
- But the midwives feared God, and did not do as the king of Egypt had commanded them, but let the boys live. So the king of Egypt called for the midwives, and said to them, Why have you done this thing, and let the boys live?
- [6 : 06] The midwives said to Pharaoh, Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women, for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife can get to them. So God was good to the midwives, and the people multiplied and became very mighty.
- So hang on, are we now saying that God condones lying? Are they telling porcupines? Well, all they've said is that the women are having the children before we can arrive.
- They might just be really slow at getting there. Oh, just tie my shoelaces again. Look, if you think that God can lie, you're putting yourself in a very difficult situation.
- We as Christians are expecting God to come good on his promises, to save you at the time of judgment. If you're telling me that he can lie, well, now he's in a position to renege on that promise, and go, Oh, Tony, no, no, no.
- Well, let's look a little bit further, whether God can lie or not. So Titus chapter one, verse two, in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long, long ages ago, cannot lie.
- [7 : 36] Numbers chapter 23, verse 19 says, God is not a man that he would lie, nor a son of man that he would change his mind.
- Has he said, and will he not do it, or has he spoken, and will he not make it good? In Hebrews, this thing's going over.
- In Hebrews chapter six, it says this, in verses 13 to 20. For when God made the promise to Abraham, since he could swear an oath by no one greater, he swore by himself, saying, indeed, I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply you.
- And so, having patiently waited, he obtained the promise. For people swear an oath by one greater than themselves, and with them, an oath serving as confirmation, is an end of every dispute.

In the same way, God, desiring even more to demonstrate to the heirs of the promise, the fact that his purpose is unchangeable, confirmed it with an oath, so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have taken refuge, would have strong encouragement to hold firmly to the hope set before us.

[9 : 02] So, do we think God is lying? I'm hoping I have demonstrated. But Proverbs chapter six, shows us this, verses 16 to 19.

There are six things which the Lord hates. Yes, seven which are an abomination to him. Haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that run rapidly to evil, a false witness who utters lies, and one who spreads strife among brothers.

A list of seven things that the Lord hates, things that are an abomination. Two of them are about lying. So, what have we learned about God?

He wouldn't lie, he can't lie, it's impossible for him to lie, he hates lying, lying in his abomination to him. There's further evidence in the rest of scripture.

We can see whether God has a track record of keeping his promises. We can see that he is trustworthy. Every time God has made a promise, he's either fulfilled it, or not fulfilled it yet.

[10 : 26] And he still intends on doing so. So, character trait, number one, God can't lie, he is ever truthful. Oh, one more verse for you.

John chapter 14, verses six and seven. You've already heard it this morning. Jesus said to him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Jesus is saying, he is the truth. He is the truth. Not just ever truthful, he is truth.

Right, verse three, we're ploughing through this. And you shall invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will let you know what you shall do, and you shall anoint for me, the one whom I designate to you.

So, Samuel did what the Lord told him, and he came to Bethlehem. Bethlehem. Hmm. I think I've heard of that place. That's the place we talk about every Christmas, because that's the place where Mary and Joseph had to go.

[11 : 32] That's because there was a census, and Joseph had to travel to his hometown, to be registered. That's because he is the great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great grandson of David. So, verse four, continuing in that verse.

Then the elders of the city came trembling to meet him and said, do you come in peace? And he said, in peace, I have come to sacrifice to the Lord. So here you can see that the elders are afraid.

Well, why are they afraid? Well, last time around in chapter 15, Samuel brought rebuke to Saul as he had disobeyed, told him he'd been rejected by God as king. And then Samuel hacks the prisoner, King Agag of the Amalekites to pieces.

So yeah, that would make me a bit nervous if he turns up. Continuing verse five, consecrate yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice.

Consecrate what now? Consecrate. It means to separate yourself from things that are unclean. Purify yourself. Make yourself holy. Purify?

[12 : 38] Holy? That's just more words I don't get. Well, purify means to remove anything that isn't perfect, so that you are all one thing. Holy means set apart for a purpose.

Sometimes I'm doing children's church, and when I'm explaining to the children what holy is, I give them the picture of a teapot. A teapot is set apart for a purpose. It's for banging in nails, isn't it?

You use it to make tea. When we are holy, we are set apart for a purpose. Worshipping God.

As a sidebar on the subject of teapots on holiday recently, I saw a teapot being used for something sacrilegious. Other than serving tea, the waiters on our holiday decided to serve hot chocolate in it.

Well, the powder was getting clogged in the nozzle, so it was utterly useless. Which is why it's set apart for a purpose. It's useless in other situations.

[13 : 40] So, why in this verse are they consecrating themselves? So, in Leviticus chapter 11, verse 44, it says this. It's the Lord speaking. For I am the Lord your God.

Consecrate yourselves, therefore, and be holy, because I am holy. So, characteristic number two, God is holy.

Verse five continued. So, he also consecrated Jesse and his sons, and invited them to the sacrifice. Who's this chap called Jesse? Well, if you read the book of Ruth, you will know that he is from the tribe of Judah, and he is the son of a bloke called Obed.

Now, Obed is the son of Boaz and Ruth, the main characters of the book of Ruth. And Boaz was the landowner and was the son of Salmon and Rahab. So, verse six, when they entered, he looked at Eliab and thought, surely the Lord's anointed is standing before him.

So, Samuel has walked in, seen the oldest and gone, bingo, that's the one. But the Lord said to Samuel, do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him.

[15 : 01] For God does not see as man sees, since man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart. So, this verse shows us a lot about God, but it also shows us a little bit about how man works too.

Man is limited. We can only discern what we can see, smell, feel, and hear. For example, in the next chapter, David is going to fight Goliath.

We would see the size of the guy, and, well, we know who's going to win. He's huge, he's titchy, he's got no chance, he's getting crushed. Right? We don't know about the skills and the abilities David's got.

We don't know what the Lord's up to. We would just come to one simple conclusion. But, you know, other situations might occur, where we make a judgment based on looks.

Someone might marry based on appearance. Well, Proverbs 31 verse 30 says, charm is deceptive and beauty is fleeting, that a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.

[16 : 11] So, if you marry based purely on looks, you're an idiot. Everyone was happy for you because you married a beauty, but then it turns out that she was ugly inside.

You're a fool. What about the description of this individual? Check this out. Ezekiel chapter 28 verse 12. You had the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.

It goes on to say this. Every precious stone was your covering. The ruby, the topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the lapis luzi, and turquoise, and the emerald, and the gold.

Now, I don't know about you. This person sounds fantastic. Perfect in beauty, full of wisdom, looks and wise. Sounds amazing, right? Anyone got any idea who we're talking about?

Yeah, Lucifer, Satan, brilliant. Oh, so let's think about this concept of judging the appearance of what's going on.

[17 : 12] A little bit more. You all know the story of Cain and Abel. Genesis chapter 4 verse 2 to 5. So, now Abel was a keeper of flocks, but Cain was a cultivator of the ground.

So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to the Lord from the fruit of the ground. And Abel, on his part, also brought an offering from the firstborn of his flock and from their fat portions.

And the Lord had regard for Abel and his offerings, but for Cain and his offering, he had no regard. So Cain became very angry and his face was gloomy. After I first got saved and first read the Bible and first hit this story for the first time, I'm thinking, both brought sacrifices, both brought something.

That's a bit out of order, isn't it? Why have you shown what the Bible calls partiality, favoritism to Abel? Well, Romans chapter 2 verse 11 says, for there's no partiality with God.

If you look carefully, Abel is bringing from his firstborn. Cain just brings something that he's grown. No mention of whether it's the first or the last.

[18 : 24] The point being, is that God can see what Abel's heart is doing. But he can also see what Cain's heart is doing. Cain? Well, Abel's probably been a cheerful giver and Cain is not.

So our third characteristic we're seeing is there's no partiality, no bias, no favoritism with God. Still considering the looks of things a little bit further.

Matthew chapter 7 verses 15 to 20 says, Beware of the false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits.

Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes, nor figs from thistles, are they? So every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit.

Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. So then you will know them by their fruits. A few verses later, in verses 22 to 23 of chapter 7, it says this, Many will say to me on that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name cast out demons, and in your name perform many miracles?

[19 : 42] And then I will declare to them, I never knew you. Leave me who practice lawlessness. So these two different verses are saying, You will know another believer by how they act.

And the latter passage said, You'll see the people doing things that you expect from a believer, but they won't know the Lord. We can only keep watching to know if they are continuously producing good fruit or bad.

Further example, in Matthew 23, verses 23 to 24, you see this, Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!

For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the law, justice and mercy and faithfulness. But these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others.

You blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel. So the Pharisees are making sure that they get their tithe right.

[20 : 49] Smallest minutiae. That's what's going on with cumin and dill and mint. Unfortunately, they've forgotten the kind of more important bit. Justice, mercy, faithfulness.

The point of all of this is that God knows your heart. He knows your motives. He doesn't just know what you've done.

He knows why you have done it. So what's the upshot of all of this? Proverbs 16 verse 2 says, All the ways of a person are clean in his own sight, but the Lord examines the motives.

God knows why you do things. Jimmy Carr once said, and I have to confess, I never thought I would ever quote him. But he said, We are who we are when nobody is watching.

If you want to know who you really are, be on your own. Go somewhere on your own. Holiday or whatever. That's who you really are. If you're driving along and you throw a soda can out of the window, nobody does that with kids in the back of the car.

[22 : 03] Monster! You see, the thing is, the Lord, he knows what you are like at your very worst. He has perfect knowledge.

The technical term for this is omniscient. Omni meaning all, seient meaning know or knowledge. So combined omniscient means all knowing. Carrying on to verse 8 of 1 Samuel chapter 16.

Then Jesse called Aminadab and had him pass before Samuel. And he said, The Lord has not chosen this one either. Next, Jesse had Shammah pass by. And he said, The Lord has not chosen this one either.

So Jesse had seven of his sons pass before Samuel. But Samuel said to Jesse, The Lord's not chosen these. Then Samuel said to Jesse, Are these all the boys?

And he said, The youngest is still left. But behold, he's tending the sheep. So Samuel said to Jesse, Send word and bring him. For we will not take our places at the table until he comes here.

[23 : 09] So, David is in the field tending the sheep. It's just like that fairy story of Cinderella, except this is real. It's just like that fairy story of Cinderella.

The ugly sisters have gone off to the ball, but Cinderella wasn't invited. Likewise, all of Jesse's sons are invited to this event. Except David. Thanks, Dad.

First Chronicles, chapter 2, verses 13 to 15, actually names the sons of Jesse. Jesse was the father of Eliab, his firstborn. The second son was Aminadab. The third, Shimear.

The fourth, Nethanel. The fifth, Radai. The sixth, Ozem. And the seventh, David. Their sisters were Zerua and Abigail. I mean, these names have biblical meanings.

Eliab, God is my father. Aminadab, sorry, Abinadab, father of a vow or willingness. Shimear, he who obeys. Nethanel, God has given.

[24 : 14] Radai, ruling, coming down. Ozem, angry. David, beloved. Or if you're reading the old King James, beloved. You don't call your name, you don't call your kids names like that if you're a believer of the Lord.

David's mother doesn't get much of a mention in the Bible. She's mentioned briefly twice, once in Psalm 86, and you can see that next week when we cover Psalm 86 at the beginning of the service.

So moving on, verse 12. So he sent word and brought him in, and he was reddish, with beautiful eyes and a handsome appearance. And the Lord said, arise, anoint him, for this is he.

So reddish can also be translated ruddy. It's the same word that's used to describe Esau in Genesis 25, 25. He came out red all over like a hairy garment.

So they named him Esau. Yeah. That's Jacob's brother, if you don't recall. Just means that David's skin had a red glow. There's this ruddy. It suggests good health.

[25 : 26] What does this tell us about his skin colour? Not a lot. People of all colours can have a reddish glow, so this isn't a proof text of anything. When God chose David, there are some other things that this revealed as well, though.

So in 1 Samuel chapter 13, verses 13 to 14, it said this, but Samuel said to Saul, you have acted foolishly. You've not kept the commandment of the Lord your God, which he commanded you, for the Lord would now have established your kingdom over Israel forever.

But now your kingdom shall not endure. This is the important bit. The Lord has sought for himself a man after his own heart. Right? That's a description of David, a man after God's own heart.

And the Lord has appointed him ruler over his people, because you have not kept the commandment, you've not kept what the Lord commanded you. That point I've just made is actually echoed in Acts chapter 13, verses 22.

And when he had removed him, he raised up David to be their king, of whom he testified and said, I have found in David, the son of Jesse, a man after my heart, who will do all my will.

[26 : 42] So this means that the Lord has sought a man in accordance with his own choice and further underlines the depth of his omniscience, his all-knowing power.

Moving on to verse 13. So 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.

First of all, I would just like to say, do you know the story of Joseph? He had a colourful coat. His brothers absolutely hated him. This one's going to be king.

Good luck with him. So in the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit is with certain individuals for a period of time. In the New Testament, the Holy Spirit is a permanent presence in believers.

This is since the day of Pentecost, when after Jesus had ascended to heaven, the disciples were told to await the Holy Spirit. So in Acts chapter 1, verse 8, it said, but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth.

[27 : 52] David talks about the Holy Spirit in Psalm 51, verse 11. He says this. This is after his great sin. Do not cast me away from your presence and do not take your Holy Spirit from me.

That's demonstrating that David still had the Holy Spirit with him at that point, after his sin. So it's most likely that it remained with him his entire life. As believers, we haven't got to worry about this.

The Holy Spirit's not going to depart us. Romans chapter 8, verse 9 says, anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. Okay?

So if you've not got it, you're not a believer. Carrying on in our verse, and Samuel went out and went to Ramah. Do you know what that means?

It means Samuel went home. That's where he's from. Ramathaim Zophim, the place where he was born. So, David. David is to become the king of Israel.

[28 : 55] God's able to make this happen. Well, how do we know God can make that happen? Well, Daniel chapter 2, verses 20 to 21 says, May the name of God be blessed forever and ever for wisdom and power belong to him.

It is he who changes the times and the periods. He removes kings and appoints kings. He gives wisdom to wise men and knowledge to people of understanding.

So, we know that God can make kings. He can remove kings. We know that all wisdom and all power belong to him. He's wise and all-powerful. Omnipotent.

He also gives wisdom. He shows his power, his generosity and his provision. Anyway, David is to become king. We care, well, because he's mentioned more than a thousand times in the Bible, which is more than any other human.

Why else do we care about this? Well, I've got the slide up there and you're wondering why have you bothered to put that on the screen, Tony? Well, that's because my next page gives us a little bit more information.

[30 : 05] Here we go. Hopefully, my computer will not fall over when I take my foot off. Oh, is that what's going on? It just feels like this whole thing is going to fall over and my computer is going to break.

Right, so you've got, I'll get my big fat head out of the way. So here, on the left, you've got Adam. On the far right, you've got Jesus. What you've got are all the genealogy.

So these are the sons of each person, the important one each time, which leads to the next person. So you've got Adam here, you've got Jesus here. In the middle, we've got this bloke called King David.

You can see that it separates and goes this way, which is the line of Joseph. So you've got Joseph listed last here. And on this side, it goes to Mary. What I find interesting about this is that actually, Shealtiel and Zerubbabel are in both.

So you could have said all of these went left and these ones went right. Do it the other way around. But for some reason, all the kings get named in Joseph's and poor old Mary doesn't get them. But yeah, so this one goes down through Solomon and the son Nathan on the other side.

[31 : 19] So why do we care about David? Because he, genealogically speaking, leads to the birth of the Messiah.

Right. Let's press on. So why do we care? Well, Isaiah chapter 9, verses 6 to 7 says, and you will have heard this a few times at Christmas, for to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders and he will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Of the greatness of his government and peace, there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever.

The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this. In Isaiah chapter 11, verses 1 to 5, it says, a shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse.

That's David's dad if you weren't paying attention. From his roots, a branch will bear fruit. The spirit of the Lord will rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the spirit of counsel and of might, the spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord, and he will delight in the fear of the Lord.

[32 : 43] He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes or decide by what he hears with his ears, but with righteousness he will judge the needy. With justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth.

He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth. With the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked. Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist.

Jeremiah chapter 30 verse 9 says, But they shall serve the Lord their God and David their king whom I will raise up for them. Ezekiel 34 23 says, Then I will set over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he will feed them and he will feed them himself and be their shepherd.

Hold on a minute. This is Ezekiel, Jeremiah and Isaiah. David's dead. This is after David. He is dead by this point. Who are we talking about?

Not David then. Messiah. Yes, absolutely. So, verse 14.

[33 : 48] Now, the spirit of the Lord left Saul and an evil spirit from the Lord terrified him. Saul's servants then said to him, Behold now, an evil spirit from God is terrifying you.

This raises an interesting question. Does God torment people with evil spirits? Simple reading on the passage says, An evil spirit from the Lord terrified him.

From the Lord. Let those words sink in. From the Lord. Lord. Is it consistent with what we know of God for him to send the tormentor?

If we look at Job, we can see Satan having to ask permission to sift Job. Satan can't do anything without God's permission.

He's limited. In Job chapter 1 verse 12 it says, The Lord said to Satan, Very well then, everything he has is in your power, but on the man himself do not lay a finger.

[34 : 58] In Job chapter 2 verse 6 he goes on to say this, the Lord said to Satan, Very well then, he is in your hands, but you must spare his life. So we can see that God permits and sets limits.

But is he being evil in doing this? Well, James chapter 1 verse 13 says, For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone. So, no, he's not being evil.

the thought that demons just do what God's will is, is, well, frankly, it's absurd. They fell from heaven because they didn't want to do God's will.

Satan wanted to rise above God, but the Lord thrust him down. Satan will look to dent and stop God's plan at every turn.

You know, Genesis chapter 3 verse 1, Satan says this, Did God really say you must not eat from any tree in the garden? Verse 4, he then says, You will not certainly die, Satan said to the woman, for God knows that when you eat from it, your eyes will be opened and you'll be like God, knowing good and evil.

[36 : 14] In Matthew chapter 4, verse, yeah, chapter 4 says, verse 1 and onwards, says, Then Jesus was led by the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

After fasting 40 days and 40 nights, he was hungry. The tempter came to him and said, If you are the son of God, tell these stones to become bread. It also says, If you are the son of God, he said, throw yourself down, for it is written, he will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands so that they will not strike your foot against the stone.

Verse 8 then goes on to say, Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. All this I will give to you, he said, if you bow down and worship me.

Hmm. Satan does try to stop things. 2 Corinthians chapter 12 verses 6 to 10 goes on to say this. So this is Paul speaking, but I refrain, so no one will think more of me than is warranted by what I do or say or because of these surpassing great revelations.

Therefore, in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me. Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me.

[37 : 37] But he said to me, my grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weakness so that Christ's power may rest on me.

That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties, for when I am weak, then I am strong.

Right, moving on to verse 16. May our Lord now command your servants who are before you. Have them search for a man who is a skillful musician on the harp, and it shall come about, whenever the evil spirit from God is upon you, that he shall play the harp with his hand, and you will become well.

So, this is Saul's servant speaking. It's worth remembering that the Bible will accurately report the words of people. It doesn't every time necessarily mean each time that the sentence is God revealing a truth.

The people speaking are Saul's servants, so we know that there's more than one of them. We know that they work for Saul, but we also know none of them are Samuel. So let's see what happens.

[38 : 54] Verse 17 says, So Saul said to his servants, Now select for me a man who can play well and bring him to me. Then one of the young men responded and said, Behold, I've seen a son of Jesse, the Bethlehemite, who is a skilful musician, a valiant, mighty man, a warrior, skilful in speech, and a handsome man, and the Lord is with him.

Spoiler alert, this is David they're talking about again, if you hadn't already twigged. So here we learn a little bit more about David. He's a skilful musician, he's valiant, he's a mighty warrior, skilful in speech, he's handsome, oh, and the Lord's with him, that's helpful, but not just that the Lord is with him, it's evident to Saul's servants.

There's no evidence to suggest that Saul knows that David has been anointed the next king, although when he's happy to send David off to fight Goliath, that might be a clue.

I think that the fact that the Lord is with him might be the reason that it proves an effective solution to the problem of being tormented by an evil spirit.

I mean, you've got to bear in mind that this is David we're talking about, who writes all those psalms. This is a perfect opportunity for David to have to write some more songs.

[40 : 23] So, maybe he got in the habit quite young of writing the songs, which is why we have so many psalms of his. So, moving on to verse 19.

So, Saul sent messengers to Jesse to say, send me your son David, who is with the flock. And Jesse took a donkey loaded with bread, a jug of wine, and he took a young goat and sent them to Saul by his son David.

So, here we can see David has gone back to work. He's been anointed, he's not king, he's gone back to work, he's back in the fields, and, yeah, he's doing the chores that his father's asking of him, you know, be that working in the field or being a delivery boy.

You know, this is probably the Uber Eats of 500 BC. You know, picture the scene of David whizzing along the pavement with a donkey, a young goat, and an unsightly boxed rucksack loaded with wine.

Saul must have been desperate for communion or something, I don't know. Then David came to Saul and attended him, and Saul greatly loved him, and he became his armour bearer.

[41 : 39] So Saul sent words to Jesse, saying, let David now be my attendant, for he has found favour in my sight. Let this be a lesson to all. Okay, David did his work well, Saul, therefore, had regard for David's efforts and promoted him as an armour bearer.

You know, this is what happens when you work heartily as unto the Lord and not for men. If you have the right work ethic, it is noticed. This creates a fantastic opportunity for David to do an apprenticeship on how or perhaps how not to be king.

Because now he's keeping what's all close quarters. Verse 23, so it came about whenever the evil spirit from God came to Saul, David would take the harp and play it with his hand, and Saul would feel relieved and become well, and the evil spirit would leave him.

Okay, so David has now gone from being the little room to being Saul's Spotify. lie. So we learned earlier that David was a skilful musician. Nowhere does it say he plays worship music.

We infer it, it just says he plays music. Well, it says he plays the harp in my translation, but it's a liar that's actually used here.

[43 : 01] Just to make the point, I'll show you what a liar looks like. Open strings.

Relatively limited instrument. That's what a liar looks like. My apologies, I had problem playing with a slightly bigger speaker.

Right, so, so some commentators suggest that this is proof that worship music sends evil spirits packing.

It doesn't say that. Certainly hope that works, but it might work to play worship music. Certainly wouldn't hurt, but what we do know is that a man who has the spirit of God with him comes and plays the liar.

It's been translated hop. That's what we've got. But you can't just have anyone turn up. My brother's a fantastic musician, but he doesn't know the Lord if he played worship music.

[44 : 17] I'm not sure what we'd get from it. But if you want surefire ways to remove the presence of an evil spirit, consider these scriptures instead. So in 1 Peter chapter 5 verses 6 to 11 says this, humble yourselves therefore under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.

Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. There's a verse taken right now. Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy of the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

Resist him, standing firm in the faith because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings. And the God of all grace who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you've sucked a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.

Tell me the power for ever and ever, amen. So this verse is telling us to stand strong and to resist. Okay, well, you might start thinking, well, I'll take demons on myself then.

Let's think about Jude. I'll say Jude chapter one, there is only one chapter. Verse nine, Michael, the archangel, when he disputed with the devil and argued about the body of Moses, did not dare pronounce against him an abusive judgment that said, the Lord will be asking the Lord to deal with him.

[45 : 54] Proverbs 18, chapter 18, verse 10, the name of the Lord is a strong tower. The righteous runs into it and is safe.

The name of the Lord is what's doing the same thing there. Psalm 37, verse 27, 29, flee from evil and do good so that you will dwell forever.

The Lord loves justice and does not abandon his godly ones. They are protected forever, but the descendants of the wicked will be eliminated. The righteous will inherit the land and dwell in it forever. Other things you can do?

The verse we all know. Ephesians chapter 6, verse 10 to 17, finally, be strong in the Lord and the strength of his might, put on the full armour of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness, and in the heavenly places.

[47 : 01] Therefore, take up the full armour of God, so that you will be able to resist on the evil day, and having done everything to stand firm, stand firm therefore, having belted your waist with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having strapped on your feet the preparation of the gospel of peace, in addition to all taking up the shield of faith, with which you have been able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one, and take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God.

Jesus, you, the word of God, when he was talking to the devil in the wilderness. So, in this chapter, we have learned God is truth.

We have learned God is holy. All wisdom and power belong to him, and he has all knowledge. We have seen that God has chosen David to be king, and with his omnipotence or power, he made it possible for David to be that king.

Let's think about it. With all this perfect knowledge, God knows the sins that David is going to commit in the future. David and Bathsheba will get up to. David will also then have Uriah that Hittite murdered.

These things might be a surprise to God, yet he still chose David to be the king, showing his wisdom and mercy. with that perfect knowledge that he has, you might think, well, he would also give up on us as well.

[48 : 41] But Romans chapter 5 verses 6 to 8 says this, You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die.

But God demonstrates his own love for us in this. While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. This demonstrates God's love and mercy towards us.

He's all-loving and merciful and omnibilant. Let us pray. Father, we just want to thank you for this opportunity to stop and to study your word.

We ask that you would transform us from having heard your word. There are things from what we've been speaking that are not of you, but raise them from our memories.

There are things here that you want to keep coming up in our minds this week, Lord. Sow them into our spirit. We want to be transformed.

[49 : 51] We want to be more like you. We want to be more Christ-like. Help us to walk back. May your Holy Spirit empower us. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Amen. Amen.