

## **"Insecurity's Thumbprint" 1 Samuel 18:1-16**

### **Wednesday 10/30/19 – Jeff Lyle**

If you live long enough and keep your eyes open, you will be able to discern repeated patterns within the Kingdom of God. One of these cycles of how God works is seen in His exalting one person while simultaneously reducing another person. None of us is a permanent fixture in our generation. The young get old, the old die and, while that is happening, newborns are entering the cycle to ensure that there is always someone whom God may use for His glory. In this passage, we have this cycle undeniably placed before us as God's hand remains upon David for blessing, while that same helping hand is removed from King Saul. What does it look like to be promoted in the Kingdom by God? Are you positioned for this type of touch from God upon your own life? This part of David's story also serves as an opportunity for us to see if there is any danger of us living in the prison of our own insecurities when God promotes others around us. Envy and jealousy are open doors to the demonic realm, and we have the calling to keep our own hearts free and clear of these powerful emotions. As God continues in our generation to elevate some and reduce others, we have decisions to make about how we are positioning ourselves under His hand. Will the fingerprints of God mark us for blessing, or will the thumbprint of insecurity mark our lives?

#### **I. The Undeniable Rise of David (1-7)**

**A. David was honored by Jonathan (1-4) - "Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as his own soul...stripped himself of the robe that was on him and gave it to David, and his armor, and even his sword and his bow and his belt."**

David was soon to enter one of the most unpleasant seasons in his life. His immediate future would have him running from his life from King Saul who was going to try to kill David. God did not leave David utterly alone during this season. In fact, David was provided a best friend from an unlikely source. Jonathan was King Saul's firstborn son, and he was next in line to follow his father as the future king of Israel. We know by now that God had removed that kingly line from Saul and had bestowed it upon David. Jonathan recognized the hand of God upon David and, instead of being bitter toward him, he showed David honor. The two men entered into a covenant with one another, solidifying a brotherly love that would last until Jonathan died. In giving David his royal robe, his armor and his weaponry, Jonathan made it clear that he was honoring David as the chosen man whom God was exalting in his place. How rare is it for a man to show honor to the one who is replacing him. Jonathan, had he been a lesser man, might have helped his father try and kill David. Instead, Jonathan responded to the work of God by showing David the greatest honor.

**B. David was favored by God (5a) - "And David went out and was successful wherever Saul sent him, so that Saul set him over the men of war. And this**

**was good in the sight of all the people and also in the sight of Saul's servants."**

David would eventually become famous for being the mightiest military leader to ever live in Israel. Still in his role as a servant to Saul, David obeyed the orders given to him by the king. Wherever David fought, the Lord elevated him to victory. Saul took note of this in those early days and was pleased with the military outcomes as David continued to win. He promoted David in the ranks of the army and all of Saul's servants began to see that this young man, David, was a rare breed of warrior. David was being advanced by the invisible hand of God. For a short time, Saul was very pleased with how things were progressing in his kingdom. That would change almost immediately.

**C. David was beloved by the people (6-7) - "As they were coming home, when David returned from striking down the Philistine, the women came out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with songs of joy, and with musical instruments. 7 And the women sang to one another as they celebrated, "Saul has struck down his thousands, and David his ten-thousands."**

This is the very moment when things began to turn. God was continuing to promote David and everyone knew it. What nobody expected was that David would be elevated above King Saul in the eyes of the people. After the death of Goliath and the defeat of the Philistine army, David became heroic in the eyes of the people. When a song was written about his military might, David was the central figure in the lyrics and Saul was the lesser. Nobody could have known how Saul would be triggered by his sudden decrease in the eyes of the people. When God begins to elevate people, those who can discern the hand of the Lord will be pleased and happy on that person's behalf. What possible reason could any of us have not to be happy for those whom God is promoting? It is a petty soul that cannot rejoice in the victories of others. God will not promote the jealous heart. Saul was about to enter into a season of envy towards David from which he would never recover. David was on the way up, and Saul was spiraling downward.

## **II. The Unholy Downfall of King Saul (8-11a)**

**A. Envy & paranoia (8a) - "And Saul was very angry, and this saying displeased him. He said, "They have ascribed to David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed thousands, and what more can he have but the kingdom?"**

This is one of the more pitiful moments in Saul's life. God was granting victory to Israel through Saul's servant, David. Rather than being grateful to God, Saul speaks out of insecurity and jealousy, wondering why the people gave greater glory to David than to Saul. Remember that Saul already knew that he was a

lame-duck king {13:14, 15:28) who had lost his power. He had been told that God would raise up a man to replace him. It was becoming evident to Saul that David was that appointed man. His paranoia grew and he became committed to viewing David as his personal enemy. Instead of viewing David as a blessing to the nation and an instrument of glory for God, Saul's envy convinced him that David was the greatest threat in the land.

### **B. Insecure & preoccupied (9) - "And Saul eyed David from that day on."**

Simply put, the rest of Saul's reign as the King of Israel would be spent with him being controlled by his insecurities and paranoia about David. He became obsessed with this young man whom God was promoting. He would continue to see the hand of God upon David and mourn the absence of God's hand upon his own life. Saul would never be able to appreciate David. He feared him. He envied him. He wanted what David had and knew he would never receive it. This insecurity, jealousy and envy opened upon a door in Saul's life through which the demonic realm would gain access to him. Saul could not deny the reality that God was advancing David and removing him from position, power and influence in Israel. God would never again be who Saul was focused upon. David became the primary object of Saul's attention.

### **C. Demonized & deceived (10-11a) - "The next day a harmful spirit from God rushed upon Saul, and he raved within his house while David was playing the lyre, as he did day by day. Saul had his spear in his hand. 11a And Saul hurled the spear, for he thought, "I will pin David to the wall."**

We do not often associate the work of demons with our mindset toward others. The Bible is very clear here: Saul's insecurity and envy became the open door through which an evil spirit gained access to his life. He literally became controlled by his burning jealousy of David. As David continued to serve Saul with his music, Saul only grew more enraged toward this young man of honor. Under the control of an evil spirit, Saul sought to murder the noble David. Insecurity will drive us to do some horrible things that we would never normally do. When we love others and trust in Jesus Christ for our own identity, we are free to celebrate the elevation of others when God blesses them. There was no love in Saul's heart for David. He hated the blessing of God upon David's life, so he attempted to extinguish it. Envy and jealousy had resulted in such a souring of the heart of this wicked king that he had no reservations about seeking to murder David on the spot. Satan looks for open doors in all of our lives. We tend to think of moral sins as being the primary entryways that the enemy might use to creep into our lives. We do well to recognize that harmful demonic activity often rides in on our heart attitudes toward others. Bitterness, envy, jealousy and insecurity are a welcome mat to the enemy in front of the doors of our hearts. Saul was experiencing this firsthand.

### III. The Unstoppable Intentions of God (11b-16)

#### A. David was sober-minded (11b) - "But David evaded him twice."

David was no fool; he kept as close watch on Saul as Saul did David, yet with altogether different motives. Humble & submissive (but not ignorant), David postured himself to continue to serve the very man who was out to kill him. It is one thing for David to experience Saul trying to kill him once. Everyone knew Saul was demonized. It would not be surprising that a person with an evil spirit would act erratically. Yet, David had to remain on alert when the second attempt on his life came from the king. Though he had done nothing wrong, David became the object of another man's hatred. God was elevating David, and that drew the wrath of an insecure king who could not stand to see the hand of God upon David's life.

#### B. David was anointed (12) - "Saul was afraid of David because the Lord was with him but had departed from Saul."

Here is the very clear diagnosis of what was happening inside of Saul's heart. He viewed David as a threat to his own identity, security and position over the people. Saul was fully aware that he was no longer being blessed by God. He could not deny that God's hand now rested upon David. Instead of humbling himself and cooperating with what God was doing, Saul chose to oppose it in order to preserve what he possessed. When we are afraid of people, it is impossible to love them.

#### C. David was submissive (13) - "So Saul removed him from his presence and made him a commander of a thousand. And he went out and came in before the people."

Finally, Saul could no longer stand to look upon David and be reminded daily that he was on the way down while David was on the way up. Likely hoping that David would be killed in battle, Saul made him the head of a large platoon of soldiers. We see that David submitted to Saul as unto the Lord in taking the new assignment without a word of protest. Because of his ongoing humility and submission, God blessed David greatly!

#### D. David was being elevated (14-16) - "14 And David had success in all his undertakings, for the Lord was with him. 15 And when Saul saw that he had great success, he stood in fearful awe of him."

Nobody, not even Saul, could deny that God had exalted David to superiority in the land. Still living with an emotionally unstable heart, Saul would move in and out of hating David and trying to kill him, to stepping back in awe and recognizing repeatedly that the hand of God was upon the man he envied. Everything David put his hand to resulted in victory during this season. Though David was hated and would soon be hunted by Saul, he maintained his own humility and integrity. He kept doing what was right even though he was being treated unfairly by the king.

This is the type of person that can be entrusted with promotion in the Kingdom of God.

**E. David was unstoppable (16) - "But all Israel and Judah loved David, for he went out and came in before them."**

The common people of Israel were able to live in gratitude and appreciation for David. They saw what he accomplished and understood it was good for Israel. They saw the glorious touch of God upon David's life. Unlike the envious and insecure Saul, the people rejoiced that God had provided such a person to Israel. The enemy was being defeated, the kingdom was expanding and the glory of God was being manifest again as Israel's enemies continued to experience defeat at the hand of David. Saul was unable to enjoy any of this due to the thumbprint of insecurity smudging his heart completely. What a difference between the trajectories of these two men. David had God's fingerprints all over his life and was experiencing victory and breakthrough that was a blessing to all. Saul was being corrupted by insecurity and envy and was living under demonic oppression that was soon to get worse. The lesson for all of us is to intentionally purge our own hearts of envy and jealousy toward others. Insecurity and bitterness are magnets for demonic activity. If we do not purge our hearts of these things, they will become strongholds and we will forfeit the touch of God on our own lives. Saul was about to learn this in the most prolonged and painful way. David, on the other hand, was walking in the fulness of God's pleasure.