

## The Heart Of A Shepherd

*And the Lord said unto Samuel, "How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? Fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Beth-lehemite; for I have provided me a king among his sons." ( 1 Samuel 16:1 ).*

I am glad today that the Lord looks into the hearts of men and women. Man cannot look into hearts, but only looks on the outward appearance.

God looks down from Heaven and sees every heart of humanity. King Saul, at one time, was a great man who feared God. He was a man that stood head and shoulders above everyone. He was a tall man, a strong man, yet he was humble before God.

God looked into the heart of Saul and said, "I can use that man, not because of his broad shoulders or his height, but because his heart is right with Me."

There came a time in the life of Saul though, that he disobeyed God. God told Samuel to tell Saul to go down and kill all the Amalekites. Saul went down and spared King Agag and some of the best of the cattle. Saul said to Samuel, "I have obeyed the voice of God."

Samuel began to tell Saul that he had disobeyed the Lord. Saul began to make excuses, but they were not acceptable. Because of this disobedience, God rejected Saul and began to look for another king to rule Israel.

In the process of time, Saul was slain in battle on Mt. Gilboa. Saul failed God's heart test. God has a heart test for everyone in the world today. He is searching for hearts that are ready to obey Him.

God spoke to Samuel and told him to go to the house of Jesse and anoint there, a man who would be king over Israel.

I can see Samuel as he took the horn of oil and began his journey to the house of Jesse. He told Jesse to gather all his sons, as he was there to anoint one to be king over Israel.

Don't you know Jesse felt proud of his sons? "Come on in Samuel, I have seven sons, surely among my sons, you can find one worthy to be king over Israel."

I suppose Samuel gave the sons of Jesse time to prepare themselves. No one wants to walk into the presence of the man of God looking messy.

I think the sons were combing their hair and putting on their best garments. They probably began to dream, "Oh boy, I'm going to pass by Samuel, and he is going to anoint me with the anointing oil, and I will be king over all Israel."

Jesse told his oldest son to pass by Samuel first; after all, he could be the one.

Here came Eliab, as he passed before Samuel. I have no idea what he looked like, but I suppose he was a man of great physical qualities. His head held high and his shoulders back, he gracefully walked before the prophet of God.

I believe Samuel looked on him and saw his great physical qualities. Samuel had the horn of oil ready to pour on Eliab, "This is he, I'll anoint him right now." God spoke to Samuel and said, "No Samuel, I have not chosen him, but rejected him."

Eliab's name means, "God is father."

I appreciate the fact of knowing who Jesus Christ is. I appreciate the fact of knowing that God is Father, but this truth alone will not get me to Heaven. It takes a humble heart, a broken heart, a meek heart before the Lord. It is going to take obeying the Word of God and living a holy life in this world of sin.

Surely, this son with a name like that, should be anointed to be king over

Israel.

God looked into his heart, and he failed the heart test.

The second son of Jesse began to walk by Samuel, his name was Abinadab. He walked by expecting to be anointed king over all Israel. Samuel looked at him and said, "This is surely him." God spoke to Samuel and said, "No Samuel, do not anoint him, I have rejected him."

Abinadab's name means, "Source of liberality."

We can contribute to the church, pay our tithes and offerings, be liberal as we can to the work of God, but this alone will not save us. We can give all our money to the work of God, but unless we have a heart of humility, we will not be saved.

God looked into his heart, and he failed the heart test. Here came the third son to pass by Samuel. His name was Shammah. Samuel looked at him and said, "Surely this is he." God spoke to Samuel and said, "No, I have rejected him."

Shammah's name means, "Fame, renown." Many people today have their heart set on fame or making a name for themselves.

- I have no desire today for the fame of this world.
- I have no desire today for a name of renown.
- I have no desire to see my name in bright lights of the world.
- I have no desire today for the popularity of this world.

As far as this world is concerned, it doesn't know I exist, but thanks be unto God, I know my Jesus. I know the way out of this old wicked world, through the blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

God looked into the heart of Shammah, and he failed the heart test.

Son number four passed by Samuel, and God did not choose him. Son number five passed by, son number six passed by, and here came son number seven.

This was the last son to pass by Samuel, surely this was the one God wanted to anoint to be king over all Israel. After all, seven is God's perfect number. Samuel reached out to anoint him as he passed by, "This is the last one, it has to be him." God spoke to Samuel and said, "No Samuel, I have rejected him, also."

All the seven sons of Jesse failed the heart test, and were refused by God. We may be strong physically and possess great qualities of leadership, but there is a spiritual heart test God gives to those who would lead His people.

Samuel looked at Jesse and said, "Is this all your sons? I know I came here in the will of God."

Jesse replied to Samuel, "Well no, I have one more son way out in the south-forty attending the sheep, he is just a lad, so I know you won't be interested in him."

Samuel looked at Jesse and said, "Go fetch him, I will not sit down until he comes." Let me tell you saints of God today, I'm not going to sit down and be comfortable in this world of sin. I'm going to stand for the truth until Jesus comes in the clouds of glory.

There will be a lot of things pass by the preacher before God comes in glory. Before the chief Shepherd appears, many things will come and pass away.

- All the glory of the world will come and pass away.
- All the sin and wickedness of this world will come and pass away.
- All the riches of this world will come and pass away.
- All the fame of this world will come and pass away.
- Everyone who fails the heart test will come and pass away.

Samuel said, "Go get this son, I've got to see him." I've got to see Jesus today. I've got to look upon His face. I've got to hear Him say, "Well done."

Two sons left the house and went to where David was tending the sheep.

They told David about the prophet, Samuel, who had come to anoint one of them to be king over all Israel.

David said, “Well, which one did he anoint? Was it Eliab, was it Abinadab, or was it Shammah?” They replied, “None of these did the prophet anoint. We have come to bring you to the man of God, he will not sit down until you come, David.”

Here came David. He didn’t have the great physical form like his older brothers, but his heart was right with God. He had the heart of a shepherd. He knew the meaning and what it was to take care of the sheep.

A lot of pastors today have no conception of how to take care of God’s sheep of His pasture. They let the lions and wolves devour the flock. Some scatter the sheep of God’s fold. Some will not seek after the lamb that strays from the fold. Some want to gather the wool for their own benefit.

God says to the pastors, “Woe, be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture” ( Jeremiah 23:1 ).

What we need today is the heart of a shepherd. We are not a real true shepherd until we pass God’s heart test.

God is looking today, for true shepherds to lead His sheep. Some think they own the sheep, but they are God’s sheep. We are not to drive the sheep, but we are to lead the sheep.

- Jesus said to Peter, “Feed my sheep.”
- Jesus did not say, “Fleece my sheep.”
- Jesus did not say, “Kick my sheep.”
- Jesus did not say, “Slap my sheep.”
- Jesus did not say, “Beat my sheep.”
- Jesus did not say, “Burden my sheep.”
- Jesus did not say, “Sacrifice my sheep.”
- Jesus did not say, “Leave my sheep.”
- Jesus did not say, “Count my sheep.”

We are to feed God's sheep the pure Word of God. Sometimes, we preachers are guilty of throwing the feed over the sheep. God is not interested in our beautiful vocabulary, or fine words of diction, but He wants us to feed His sheep.

We are not out to impress the sheep, but to feed the sheep. We need to bring the feed on the level with the sheep, where they can understand it. There are many sheep today who are starving to hear the pure Word of God being preached.

Some churches are so busy with bingo games, social activities, and business meetings, the sheep are starving. I'm glad today our chief Shepherd knows how to feed us. He leads us beside the still waters. He leads us in green pastures. He refreshes us with His Spirit. I'm glad to be a sheep of His pasture.

We haven't come to our throne yet, we are still in the fields feeding God's sheep. One of these days, God will send His angels to gather His sheep from the four corners of the world, and bring them to His throne room.

Here came David, fresh from the shepherd fields. He didn't stop to comb his hair or change his garments. You could smell where he had been as soon as he walked in the door.

Samuel turned to look at David, and God said, "This is he, anoint him to be king over all Israel." Samuel took the anointing oil, poured it upon David, and proclaimed him king of Israel.

God looked on the heart of David, and he passed the heart test. He had a humble heart. He had a tender heart, he had a heart of a shepherd. David came directly from the shepherd fields, to be king of Israel.

We have the anointing of God's Spirit today. We are chosen by Him to rule and reign with Him. If we are going to make it into the Kingdom of God, we must pass the heart test.

- God is looking for some David's today.
- God is looking for a heart of a shepherd.
- God is looking for someone to lead His people.

Where are the David's of today? My earnest prayer today is this, "Lord give me a heart of a shepherd."

- How is your heart today?
- Is your heart right with God?

God knows where you are today. You may be outside the sheepfold. God wants to gather you in His arms, and bring you back into the fold. He wants to comfort you. He wants to heal you. He wants to protect you.

- Will you let Him in your heart today?
- Will you surrender your heart to His loving care?

God wants to anoint you with the anointing oil of His Holy Spirit. God wants to claim you and name you His very own. He is tenderly standing and waiting for you to come to Him today.