

CHIEF MINISTRIES

September 2018

Tomorrow's servant of Christ is typified by David. He had the anointing without the crown. Yesterday's man – Saul – had the crown but not the anointing. He remained king but was rejected in God's sight. *"So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him [David] in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the Lord came upon David in power" (1 Samuel 16:13).*

David's anointing was a secret anointing. Only ten people knew about David's anointing; Samuel, Jesse (David's father), David's seven brothers and David himself. A highly dangerous ritual had taken place. Samuel had anointed Israel's next king while the present King was alive and well. Nobody else was to know of this for many years.

It was an anointing that David had not sought. He had been tending the sheep when, out of the blue, he was summoned to be anointed king of Israel. Not unlike Joseph, who unexpectedly was summoned to appear before Pharaoh (Genesis 41:14). God has a way of finding us when His time has come.

The event must have been overwhelming for the young David. But he had been earmarked by God, who saw David as a man after His own heart (1 Samuel 13:14). David had developed certain gifts and talents that would stand him in a good place soon after his secret anointing: musicianship and bravery – an unlikely combination. As a rule, a musician is cerebral and emotional, scholarly if not sometimes delicate. The rugged athlete – a "man's man" who is the "outdoorsman" and at home in the wild – is normally not the type one expects of an accomplished musician. But David was both.

Despite his age, his reputation preceded him. When Saul's attendants needed someone who could play the harp to drive an evil spirit from tormenting the King, someone thought of David. *"One of the servants answered, 'I have seen a son of Jesse of Bethlehem who knows how to play the harp. He is a brave man and a warrior. He speaks well and is a fine-looking man. And the Lord is with him'" (1 Samuel 16:18).* With nothing, of course, being known about the anointing on David that would prepare him for his ultimate calling, he was brought to play for King Saul, who immediately liked him very much. *"Whenever the evil spirit permitted from God came upon Saul, David would take his harp and play. Then relief would come to Saul; he would feel better, and the evil spirit would leave him" (v23).*

This was David's first opportunity to perform in the royal service. His musicianship was blessed by the Holy Spirit. Little did he know that he would one day transform worship in Israel, write Psalms that would become a vital part of Scripture, or become known as the sweet singer of Israel (2 Samuel 23:1).

David's next opportunity that demonstrated his secret anointing was facing Goliath. The secret anointing goes from strength to strength. Playing the harp before Saul was a small test. As we have seen, *he that is faithful to that which is least is faithful also in much (Luke 16: 16)* and the "much" was next on God's agenda for David. It is what would give David a high profile in Israel, but it would be only to step toward further preparation.

There are several kinds of preparation. There is academic preparation. Sadly, some seem to think this is the most important. It may not be unimportant, but it is not the most important. God has chosen some men and women for works of service who had little if any academic preparation – the great Charles Spurgeon for example. It is an embarrassment to this present day that Regent's Park College, then in London but now in

Oxford, rejected the young Spurgeon for admission! The Methodists turned down G. Campbell Morgan as a candidate for the ministry, he was regarded as unsuitable. He later became minister of Westminster Chapel and gave it an international reputation.

The most important kind of preparation in any case is spiritual preparation. It is what refines and develops the spirit. It is what prepares the way for usefulness in God's hands. It is not an easy kind of preparation. It is when we find out what people are like, how mean and unkind they can be, – those closest to us and those often thought to be the most spiritual. It is also when we learn our own hearts aren't perfect.

God raised up David to be Israel's greatest King, but he also raised him up to receive the spiritual refinement that would make him a true man of God. It would be hard to say whether God raised up David for Goliath or God raised up Goliath for David – to show what He could do in that which is "much", – to get David ready for the long haul ahead.

Israel was running scared because of the giant Goliath, over 9 foot tall – who challenged Israel to pick a man who would fight him. *He stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, "Why have you come out to draw up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and are you not servants of Saul? Choose a man for yourselves, and let him come down to me. ^{v9} If he is able to fight with me and kill me, then we will be your servants. But if I prevail against him and kill him, then you shall be our servants and serve us."* ^{v10} *And the Philistine said, "I defy the ranks of Israel this day. Give me a man, that we may fight together."* ^{v11} *When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid. (1 Samuel 17:8-11).*

In the meantime, King Saul had promised three things to the man who would kill Goliath – great wealth, the King's daughter in marriage and exempting his father's family from paying taxes (v25). David's response was simple; *"Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?"* (v26). David's secret anointing enabled him to see the enemy for what he was before and omnipotent God. The secret anointing enables one to see what others can't see and say what others are afraid to say.

David volunteered. *"David said to Saul, 'Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine, your servant will go and fight him'"* (v32). The secret anointing showed David what he knew he could do. David therefore could see what the others couldn't see, say what the others were afraid to say and volunteer to do what no other person would do.

Do you have a secret anointing? Are you conscious that God is with you? You are given discernment. Courage. Motivation. It is not that your time has come in terms of what God will ultimately do for you, but you have been handed an opportunity on a silver platter that you cannot refuse. This was the way David felt.

But nobody believed David. *"Saul replied, 'You are not able to go out against this Philistine and fight him; you are only a boy, and he has been fighting man from his youth'"* (v33). At this point David recalled earlier experiences that showed he had been prepared for such a time as this. As David was a musician before he was employed in the Royal service, so also had he become at home in the wild. What David had been given by common grace, was under a new anointing. And yet David knew what he had done before this secret anointing had come on him.

But David said to Saul, "Your servant used to keep sheep for his father. And when there came a lion, or a bear, and took a lamb from the flock, ^{v35} I went after him and struck him and delivered it out of his mouth. And if he arose against me, I caught him by his beard and struck him and killed him."^{v36} Your servant has struck down both lions and bears, and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be like one of them, for he has defied the armies of the living God." ^{v37} *And David said, "The LORD who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine."* *And Saul said to David, "Go, and the LORD be with you!" (1 Samuel 17:34-37)*

Another test emerged. David had to be true to himself and be himself. Having been adorned with a coat of armor and a bronze helmet with a sword over the tunic he was wearing, he knew in a flash that this would not

do. *"I cannot go in these," he said to Saul, "because I am not used to them." So he took them off (v39). So, David had to reckon with his own true gift. It did not include fighting Goliath in Saul's armor.*

One of the hardest types of preparation for one with a secret anointing is to accept his own ability and limitations. It took courage for David to reject Saul's kind offer of the traditional armor. But he knew in his heart that his way of defeating Goliath would have nothing to do with the heavy equipment Saul insisted on. *"Then he took his staff in his hand, chose five smooth stones from the stream, put them in the pouch of his shepherd's bag, and with his sling in his hand, approached the Philistine" (v40).*

Goliath felt insulted when he saw how the young David approached him. *And when the Philistine looked and saw David, he despised him, for he was but a youth, ruddy and handsome in appearance. v43 And the Philistine said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. v44 The Philistine said to David, "Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and to the beasts of the field." v45 Then David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with a sword and with a spear and with a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. v46 This day the LORD will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you down and cut off your head. And I will give the dead bodies of the host of the Philistines this day to the birds of the air and to the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, v47 and that all this assembly may know that the LORD saves not with sword and spear. For the battle is the LORD's, and he will give you into our hand." (1 Samuel 17:42-47). David's secret anointing combined with his natural gift won the day. *And David put his hand in his bag and took out a stone and slung it and struck the Philistine on his forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell on his face to the ground. v50 So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and struck the Philistine and killed him. There was no sword in the hand of David. (1 Samuel 17:49-50).* This shows what God can do with one person with a secret anointing.*

After all of this, David began to be appreciated. Until the accolades of the people turned Saul against David (1 Samuel 18:2-9). He became jealous.

It has often been said that the greatest opposition to what God is doing today comes from those who were on the cutting edge of what God was doing yesterday, that the greatest hostility to what God is doing now comes from those who were on the front line of what God was doing yesterday. The greatest attacks on any current move of the Holy Spirit often come from those who were part of yesterday's move of the Spirit. The reason: Jealousy.

From that moment David became a greater threat to Saul than the Philistines - David was a greater enemy than Goliath had been. David was a greater enemy than all of Israel's enemies combined. Saul directed all his attention and energy to one goal: eliminating David.

This is a scenario that has been repeated many times since, and sadly, in the church. It is when a rival spirit emerges among God's people, and they get more intent on destroying each other than the real enemy in the world. But jealousy has a way of consuming us so that we convince ourselves that it is more important to get rid of the threat than to see the lost won to Christ. But it is, unfortunately, from Christians who hardly worry about the lost but occupy themselves with destroying a fellow Christian's credibility. It is done to consolidate one's following and constituency – like Saul trying to save his own skin.

But there was a purpose in this. David wasn't ready to be king. God might have taken Saul out in his wrath then and there rather than wait for years and years. God had a different idea for David – that Saul be the means of David's sanctification! David wasn't ready to be king. He had a powerful anointing, yes. But, he needed to be honed and refined. In the years to come, that anointing in David was to increase and develop so that when his time had truly come, David would be a transformed servant of the Holy Spirit.

A person with a secret anointing always needs further preparation. It would be what would make David into a real man. A man's man he already was. But God knew there was a different kind of manhood needed. *Paul*

said, "when I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish things behind me." (1 Corinthians 13:11).

We do not get the necessary refinement by merely praying for more of the Holy Spirit. Jesus had all the Holy Spirit there was – the Spirit without limit (John 3:34). Yet, *"although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered."* (Hebrews 5:8).

This is amazing! To think that Jesus, the God-man, needed suffering to be perfected. He was man as though He were not God – and was filled without any measure or limit set on that filling. He was completely filled with the Spirit. He was also God as though He were not man! And yet, *"in bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God, from whom and through whom everything exists, should make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering."* (Hebrews 2:10). All I can say is, if our Lord Jesus Christ needed to suffer before He could be all that God the Father envisaged for Him, how much more do we frail children of dust, and sinful (Jeremiah 17:9) – need to suffer before God can trust us with the full extent of the anointing?

Suffering was David's passport to a greater anointing. Though the Spirit came upon him in power (1 Samuel 16:13), he needed Saul as insurance for yet more power. It seems the best way to get closer to God is for God to give you a red-hot enemy – who is consumed with hatred for you – so that you learn what it is to become more like Jesus. King Saul's hatred of David was the best thing that ever happened to David. Little did David know that, rather than being crowned king in the next week or two, he would have years and years of fleeing Saul – for one reason; to guarantee that the secret anointing in him was refined.

But there was hope in it all. David got new energy from a new friend: Jonathan. Parallel with the suffering David was to experience in the ensuing years was a lifeline that gave him a little bit of joy. That lifeline to sanity and strength was also a pipeline into the royal house. David was able to know exactly what King Saul was feeling and what he was up to.

God knows how much we all need friends. A friend is someone who knows all about you and still likes you! If you and I have even just one friend like that, we are fortunate. David had the best. God will do this for you too; your secret anointing will not only need refining but also a friendship that compensates for the suffering.

A true friend will tell you the truth. Some people only want friends who will tell them what they want to hear; when people ask you for a critique they really want praise. They'll gather sycophants around them to bolster their egos. That is not a healthy friendship. David had in Jonathan not only loyalty but honesty. One of the most moving accounts in the life of David is when he and Jonathan made a covenant whereby Jonathan would tell David if indeed Saul was still out to get him (1 Samuel 20:16 – 17). David had to know the truth and he knew he'd get it from Jonathan. The results confirmed David's worst fears; Saul was determined to destroy him (v18-42).

David had already suffered a long time running from Saul. But the results of David's covenant with Jonathan was to show David's real preparation for the kingship was not at an end but at the beginning.

Coming to prison has been my greatest trial and some of my supporters and friends deserted me. It might be an exaggeration to say it was the best thing that ever happened to me, but it certainly is one of the best. It's refining me, it's embarrassed me, it shaped me and exposed me. All I have preached, I have to practice to the hilt. And God not only did not desert me, but also was more gracious and real than ever. I wouldn't want to go through this again, but its value to me is, literally, more precious than gold.

I daresay that those men could claim the same thing. They too would avow that God had allowed it for a purpose and that they are all the better for it. They were not like Saul. God doesn't necessarily need a Saul to refine His servants. But God used Saul to mold David. Perhaps your cellie or band or choir member or chaplain or guard or warden is your Saul.

The challenge of having a secret anointing – known to you and a few others – is that you may have to wait a long time for your time to come. Many fall by the wayside because they cannot wait.

I've watched many high profile, talented men reach the top only to tumble, myself included. They'll say: "He was a good man, success went to his head." The worst thing that can happen to a man is to succeed before he is ready! It is painful to have to wait, especially if one has been acclaimed – like David – and then has to wait.

David had done nothing wrong. He hadn't flaunted a coat of many colors – like Joseph who only egged on his brothers to be jealous. David was solid gold but still needed refining. He was a humble man. He didn't feel worthy to marry the King's daughter. He was guileless. He didn't know that Saul's proposition - bring a hundred Philistine foreskins - was a trap to have David killed by the Philistines. But David brought in two hundred and accepted the gift of Saul's daughter for a wife. *"Saul became still more afraid of him, and he remained his enemy for the rest of his days" (1 Samuel 18:29).*

The secret anointing in you, though you are kept from a high-profile, will still be a threat to the enemy God chooses for your refinement. David could not hide his anointing. He wasn't ambitious. He simply did what he was asked to do and did it too well. In fact, he had so much ability that God had to take him to the sidelines lest things be worse than ever.

Are you waiting for your time to come? Do you say, *"How long, O Lord?" (Psalm 13:1)*. David thought the preparation would never end. You may feel the same way. But thank God for the secret anointing in you. Thank God for friends. And thank God for your enemies. They probably will mean more to you, at the end of the day, than your friends!

What the enemy means for evil, God will take and make it for the good.

Let Him!

Be Blessed,

Chief

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Christ's

Heart

In

Every

Felon