

Text: 1 Sam 16.13 et al

Our ladies are studying 1 Samuel in their ladies Bible study and our question relates to something they've discussed. As I prepared for the message, a discussion ensued in our home over this question:

Why is there a delay between David's anointing and David's enthronement?

Let's read the text around David's anointing and consider the historical context.

1 Sam 15.33-16.13

Our initial text is 16.13, where David is anointed as Israel's next king. We need to consider all that is happening in the context.

I began in chapter 15 because it marks the turning point of Saul's reign. While he had ruled with some success up to this point, his reign descended into paranoia and madness in its last fifteen years.

God rejected Saul early on in his reign (1 Sa 13.13-14) when Saul did not wait for Samuel to sacrifice before a battle against the Philistines. This was in about the 2nd year of Saul's reign.

1 Sa 14 records the battle with the Philistines where Saul foolishly makes a vow and threatens his own son and apparent heir, Jonathan, with death for a breach of the vow.

A gap of about 23 years occurs between 1 Sa 14 and 1 Sa 15. At this point God calls Saul to avenge Israel against the Amalekites (descendants of Esau), especially for its defiance of God and Israel as the wilderness wanderings neared their end (some 400 yrs or so in the past).

The end of 1 Sa 15 marks God's final rejection of Saul as king.

That brings us to 1 Samuel 16 and the anointing of David in Saul's place.

Proposition: God's purposes are always fulfilled in God's own time according to God's timetable. This calls for faith on the part of God's people.

I. The significance of anointing

A. Similar practices in other nations

"In the ancient Near East, the ritual of ceremonially covering a person or object with scented oil or another liquid symbolized a transfer of sanctity from a deity to that person or object; it was

thus considered a sacramental or consecrating act (McCarter, / *Samuel*, 178).”¹

1. Kings in Syria and Palestine
2. Not Pharaohs, but other officials in Egypt
3. Hittites

B. First mention in the Bible: Jacob and Bethel

1. Anoints the stone in Gn 28.18-19
2. Anoints the stone again in Gn 35.9-15

“The ceremony was clearly religious, signifying induction into sacred use.”²

C. Offices in Israel marked by anointing:

1. Priests (Lev 8.12-13)

Ps 133.1-3 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is For brothers to dwell together in unity!² It is like the precious oil upon the head, Coming down upon the beard, *Even* Aaron’s beard, Coming down upon the edge of his robes.³ It is like the dew of Hermon Coming down upon the mountains of Zion; For there the LORD commanded the blessing— life forever.

2. Prophets (1 Ki 19.16, Elijah called to anoint Elisha)
3. Kings (Saul, 1 Sa 10.1; David, 1 Sa 16.13; Solomon, 1 Ki 1.39)

D. Significance, especially the anointing of kings:

“The Bible sometimes refers to the anointed kings of Israel as ‘the anointed of the Lord’ (or ‘the messiah of the Lord,’ מָשִׁיחַ יְהוָה, *meshiach yehowah*; e.g., 1 Sam 24:10; Psa 2:2; Lam 4:20). This title seems to signify that the anointed kings were set apart to serve under the Lord, somewhat like a vassal king to a high king (Payne, *I and II Samuel*, 50). The description of Cyrus, king

¹ Meredith Faubel Nyberg, “Anointing,” in *Lexham Bible Dictionary*, ed. John D. Barry et al. (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016).

² Walter A. Elwell and Philip Wesley Comfort, *Tyndale Bible Dictionary* (Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers, 2001), 64.

of Persia, a worshiper of pagan gods, as ‘the anointed of the Lord’ suggests the phrase may refer not just to kings who are devoted to the Lord, but to those whom the Lord gave a holy leadership task to bring about deliverance and justice on behalf of His people (Hamilton, ‘Anointing,’ 1255a—d).”³

1. David refrained from attacking Saul directly because of this designation
2. We must remind ourselves that the term “anointed” is *Meshiach* — Messiah (Christ)

II. The pragmatic reasons for David’s delay

A. David’s age at the anointing in 1 Sa 16

1. Josephus claimed David was only 10 yrs old
2. David was thirty years old when he began to reign over Judah (2 Sa 5.4)
3. If the Amalekite incident with Saul was in the 25th yr of Saul’s reign, *i.e.*, 15 years before David’s ascension
4. Then David must have been about 15 yrs old at the anointing

B. Readiness

1. At 15, David was a “strapping lad” but had no “worldly experience”
2. The next step in the drama has David enter Saul’s court as a musician (1 Sa 16.14ff.)
3. David will come to prominence over all Israel against Goliath (1 Sa 17)
4. But Saul will sour on David and He will have to flee to the wilderness for at least ten years (1 Sa 18-26 with a brief respite in ch. 19)

At the anointing, on a pragmatic level, David is not ready: he needs wider experience, including learning to lead as he forms a band of men in the wilderness.

³ Nyberg, “Anointing.”

C. Obstacle: Saul

1. In God's will, Saul will live another 15 years
2. In God's will, David will not lift his hand against the Lord's *Meshiach*
3. Until God removes Saul, David will bide his time

1 Sa 26.9 But David said to Abishai, "Do not destroy him, for who can stretch out his hand against the LORD'S **anointed** and be without guilt?"

1 Sa 26.11 "The LORD forbid that I should stretch out my hand against the LORD'S **anointed**; but now please take the spear that is at his head and the jug of water, and let us go."

1 Sa 26.23 "The LORD will repay each man *for* his righteousness and his faithfulness; for the LORD delivered you into *my* hand today, but I refused to stretch out my hand against the LORD'S **anointed**.

David's delay comes for pragmatic reasons, but also displays David's faith. He believes God.

III. The spiritual foreshadowing from David's delay

A. Turn our attention to the anointing of our *Meshiach*

1. When Zechariah speaks after the birth of John, he prophesies about the "horn of salvation" (Lk 1.68-69)

Lk 1.68-69 "Blessed *be* the Lord God of Israel, For He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people,⁶⁹ And has raised up a horn of salvation for us In the house of David His servant —

2. Compare the term "horn of salvation" to the name of Jesus
 - a. *עֲשׂוּ יְשׁוּעָה*, *qeren yesha*
 - b. *יֵשׁוּעַ*, *yeshua'*
 - c. Jesus (Yeshuah, Joshua) means "Jehovah is salvation"

3. Jesus and John the Baptist

- a. Both presented as significant figures, but Jesus clearly presented as superior
- b. Jesus came to John for baptism (John objects)
- c. Jesus says the baptism is “to fulfill all righteousness”
- d. Each of the Synoptics present the baptism account by including the Spirit, as a dove descending on him (Matt 3:13–17; Mark 1:9–10; Luke 3:21–22)
- e. John’s Gospel doesn’t present the account, but John the Baptist’s testimony (Jn 1.32-34)

Jn 1.32-34 John testified saying, “I have seen the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, and He remained upon Him.³³ “I did not recognize Him, but He who sent me to baptize in water said to me, ‘He upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, this is the One who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.’³⁴ “I myself have seen, and have testified that this is the Son of God.”

f. Compare 1 Sa 16.13

1 Sa 16.13 Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; **and the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward.** And Samuel arose and went to Ramah.

B. The delay in the enthronement of our *Mesiah*

1. There are no pragmatic reasons
 - a. Jesus is ready to rule
 - b. No one else occupies his place (as did Saul)
2. There is a prophetic reason: Jesus is gathering a people for his name

Ac 15.14 “Simeon has related how God first concerned Himself about taking from among the Gentiles a people for His name.

- You and I are the reason, and others who are yet to believe

David *foreshadows* the gap between Messiah's anointing and Messiah's rule: not *typifies*, but foreshadows

Conclusion:

Many long years stand between the Messiah's anointing and the full completion of his work.

Even so come, Lord Jesus!