

Arise & Anoint him for this is he.

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[0 : 00] We sing to God's praise from Psalm 2, Psalm 2 from the beginning to verse 7, 5 stanzas.

Why rage the heathen and vain things? Why do the people mind? Kings of the earth do set themselves and princes are compiled. To plot against the Lord and whose anointed, saying thus, let us asunder, break their bands, and cast their cords from us.

He that in heaven sits shall laugh. The Lord shall scorn them all. Then shall he speak to them in wrath. In rage he vexed them shall.

Yet notwithstanding, I have him to be my king appointed. And over Zion, my holy hill, I have him king anointed. The sure decree I will declare the Lord hath said to me, Thou art mine only Son, this day I have begotten thee.

And so on. These verses, five stanzas from the beginning of Psalm 2, Why rage the heathen and vain things? Why do the people mind? Why rage the heathen and vain things? Why do the people mind?

[1 : 32] Kings of the earth do set themselves and princes are confined.

To plot against the Lord and his anointed, saying thus, Let us asunder, break their bounds, and cast their cords from us.

He that in heaven sits shall lie. The Lord shall scorn them all.

Then shall he speak to them in wrath, in rage he exaltion.

Yet notwithstanding, I have him to be my king appointed.

[3 : 14] And over Zion, my holy hill, I have him king anointed.

The sure decree I will declare, the Lord hath said to me.

The Lord hath said to me.

And we can look at the whole of this section.

We'll read verse 7, just to focus our thoughts. But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature, because I have refused him.

[4 : 45] For the Lord seeth, not as man seeth. For man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart. The Lord seeth, not as man seeth.

This is a penultimate in the series that we followed on the life of Samuel.

It is clear from reading the scripture that the life of Saul will continue for some years after this, and the life of David will interact with his.

And gradually, Saul will fade into obscurity, and David will take prominence.

But this chapter here is the last chapter that has reference to Samuel, other than the chapter we're going to look at next Thursday, if we're spared.

[5 : 59] And that has really got to do with the calling of the witch of Ender on the spirit of Samuel, which I suppose is not really essentially, or not, you could argue, or probably should argue that.

Samuel at that point has died. And whatever, or whoever we're confronted with there is not the Samuel that we have seen up until then.

But as I said, we're looking at this event that is recorded for us in chapter 16.

And it seems a long time since we began to look at Samuel when he was called to say to the Lord, and he was entered into a dedicated service to Eli the priest, and through that serving the only living and true God.

But in a very real sense, his beginning mirrors his life from that point onwards, because he is clearly called to serve God, and his ministry is her ministry of service to God.

[7 : 37] And I'm not sure which one of the commentators says that if you look at his life, whatever characteristics that mark him out as far as his personality is concerned, the key thing is that he is listening to the voice of God and serving God.

It's not so much the things that he says or does that are remarkable, but that he consistently, from the very outset, demonstrates the will to serve his God.

And that follows him all the days of his life. We do see that he is held in awe by his people, because, by the people of God, because of his relationship with God.

They respect him as a judge. They respect him, and they hold him in awe, because of how he is such a willing servant to God, and a willing advocate of the role of law, as God has declared it.

And, you know, a simple statement like he judged Israel all the days of his life is a statement which, on the face of it, is just a statement of fact.

[9 : 11] But it is also a statement that contains the life of Samuel as a servant of God, serving his God as a judge.

Last week we saw how he dealt with Agak, with the sword, and he is clearly fixed in his mind on what is right, and how to execute God's judgment, as directed by God.

So, in that sense, the severity that marks a note on occasion, and that features in his life, is bound up with his obedience to God.

It's interesting that in this passage that we read, when he presents himself in Bethlehem, the people are in awe of his presence.

They are fearful when he comes into their midst. They tremble at his coming, and they ask the question, comes down peaceably, because either they've experienced his role as judge, executing that judgment with severity, or they've heard about it, and they're concerned for their own welfare.

[10 : 46] But Samuel is there at God's bidding. At the beginning of the chapter, the Lord, almost without, saying too much about it, but he opens out to us the fact that Samuel is not unaffected by the departure of Saul from the will of God.

But he says to Samuel, how long will you mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? It's a very interesting question.

If you try to get into its meaning, does it simply, is it all to do with the fact that Saul has gone away from the Lord, or Samuel himself, or Samuel himself, has been disappointed by the fact that he was instrumental at God's request to set him up as king?

It's not a straightforward answer. It's not a simple answer. But clearly the Lord recognized that there is a pain, a pained heart before him, and it's almost a call to snap out of it and realize this is how things are and this is what God has ordained and he has to move on and he requires him to move on.

That sentence did, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel, fill thine horn with oil and go. I will send thee to Jesse, the Bethlehemite, for I have provided me a king among his sons.

[12 : 48] It seems very harsh, but it's what Samuel needs to hear. You've got to move on. This is a new phase of ministry that you are called to.

This is a new obligation under which I am putting you. Saul is in the past.

Now, my servant David, whom I have appointed, you have him to go to. And there is so much contained within these statements.

It's God saying to him, what you're going to do now, you're going to do as I order you, as I require you. And it's, we'll notice the steps that are taken by Samuel to choose and to then anoint gods.

chosen one. But the chosen one has already been chosen. God has already rejected Saul and chosen David.

[14 : 03] And the procedure here of choosing out of the family of Jesse, that person who will rule in God's name, seems to be unnecessary and yet God requires it.

Because all must understand that God is sovereign and the activity in which he involves his servant at his behest is simply to declare that sovereign lordship over all the affairs of man.

So, Samuel, you find even though you consider him to be somebody who all the days of his life should have discovered by way of experience things that would not be forgotten by him.

yet in the dealings that God has with him it seems that he is being reminded again and again of what God is doing and what he means him to do as if it was a totally new thing to him.

Go back again to the beginning when the Lord spoke to the young Samuel and Eli asked Samuel tell me what the Lord said don't spare me tell me the truth otherwise you'll be you'll be dismissed because of of refusing to do that and Samuel was there taught by Eli the need that there was to be fearless in proclaiming God's revelation to others even when that revelation meant that those who were hearing it were going to be affected by it and in a sense that lesson is again replicated when God speaks to Samuel about the rejection of Saul in chapter 15 we saw how Saul had to hear from

[16 : 39] Samuel what God was saying concerning rebellion is as a son of witchcraft stubbornness is of iniquity and idolatry because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord he has also rejected thee from being king that's what he says these are not his words these are God's words through him to Saul and you know they're not words that are not going to cause offence or cause a reaction on the part of Saul yet he declares them and then when we get to chapter 16 God tells him to go to Bethlehem and fill his horn with oil and go to Jesse and Samuel says how can I go if Saul hear of it he will kill me and there is this sort of tension there is some wisdom in knowing that to tell the truth will come with risk attached to it but not to tell the truth or not to declare

God's word will be worse for and that's something that's not just relevant for the experience of Samuel it's something that we all learn for ourselves if we choose not to declare the truth as God has declared it to us or in some way shy away from declaring it or shy away from from stating what God has persuaded us to believe then that will come with cost implications and even here when you think Samuel is saying well if I do what you say Saul is going to kill me but he does it nevertheless I was listening on the news tonight how the Greens were lambasting and that's what they were doing the

SNP Deputy Prime Minister and they were pointedly pointing to her creedal position with regard to abortion with regard to gay marriage with regard to premarital sex and these were the things they pointed to as being an offence an offence to modern day society and that because she believed these things she had no right to be in power and they were doing that unashamedly without any hint of embarrassment as a believer in what she believes she's quite entitled to hold these views and to be able to believe them without being challenged by them but she should expect that she will be challenged just the same as

Saul would challenge the truth that God presented him with and Samuel would know that he was in fear of Saul because he knew the kind of person Saul was he probably at that stage in the downward spiral as we've spoken of before that Saul was on he was already seeing fluctuations in his spiritual and his mental condition that made him a danger to him so his concerns were legitimate concerns but because he believes more God and the need that there is to do what God is saying to him to do he God and you see how God is so gracious to him he makes a provision for

God could easily have said I protect you I won't allow this man to threaten you but that's not what God does he says to them take a heifer and go to Bethlehem and to Jesse and to all intents and purposes you're going there to offer a sacrifice nobody will question that you're safe enough and it's amazing how God provides that for him although his provision could have been completely different but that's what it is God's provision take a heifer with you and say I am come to sacrifice to the Lord and call Jesse to the sacrifice and very quickly we see how Samuel again embraces this new task that God has given to him and he does so willingly notwithstanding that he's not ignorant of the challenges that are ahead of him or the dangers that were in the path of obedience for him

[22 : 14] Saul was rejected by God which is a solemn thing David was to be selected or elected by God and the two are simultaneous although in a sense God's rejection and God's selection or election of David they appear as if they're happening simultaneously but at the same time the fruit of both will take time to work out they're not going to happen overnight and that's solemn in the sense that a person experiences what Saul experiences going away from God and departing from God and knowing that God was departing from him and that being a gradual process which could have been corrected if he had taken on board the significance of what was taking place but he didn't there was opportunity for him to recognize what was happening but he did not and eventually both would come to fruition and we remind ourselves of that don't be don't be lulled into a false sense of security when you think that your safe position is one where God has not acted in your life instantly when you've engaged in wrongdoing and you've taken comfort from the fact if God knows all things and he's not acted at this point then he won't act that's not a rational position to occupy because frequently we find even within

God's word and in the experience of many that God is not necessarily obliged to act just when it suits you whether it's to do good or to do evil to do his own work of judgment he will judge in his own time in his own way and betide those who are having that hanging over them waiting for God to do that but while God is able to do what he chooses he provides a legitimate excuse as I said for his servant to go to Bethlehem and it's all very well when you look at the process itself when he summons Jesse and Jesse presents him with his sons you would think that it would be that

Samuel who has already been involved in the choice of Saul and there was Saul descended to him who was head and shoulders above his pierce and yet it was followed by disaster so when he is presented first of all with this person without God saying anything to him he was content to believe that this person that the oldest son if it was the oldest son of Jesse was presented to that he thought for himself the Lord said unto Samuel look not on his countenance because he looked on Eliab and said surely the Lord's anointed is before and is not something that was so readily ready to fall into even the things that we should have learned the lessons that we should have learned the lesson that

Samuel should have learned that we would have remembered well I'd better bide my time I'd better wait for the Lord to make this known to me but his instant reaction and I suppose a very human reaction was that he thought that this was he but the Lord corrects that and he says that these very significant words look not on his countenance or on the height of his stature because I have refused them for the Lord seeth not as man seeth and is that not something that that deserves to be considered whenever we are engaged in in applying ourselves to choices that we are presented with if we look on the face of things and take everything at face value without properly weighing things up very often we'll get things wrong we'll we'll we'll even in the in the choice that we make of friends or acquaintances or whatever we we may choose on the basis of physique or the basis of intellect or the basis of personality or any of these things that dominate our thinking and you know in the realm of politics you see that so often that it's not policies that matter it's the politician and if a person is well presented and if he is able to speak or even she is able to speak whatever whoever they are these are the things that matter not what they actually believe and not what they actually will support especially when it comes to matters that are of moral content or things like that

I've said enough about politics but here the thing that we are brought to notice is that God looks at the heart and he is not deceived when he looks at the heart there is nothing in the heart that he cannot see when he looks into my heart what does he see and I'm not flattering myself when I say this and I'm not saying it just because to seem as if it's worth noting my humility far from it the scripture tells me what God sees the scripture tells me that the heart of man is desperately wicked who cannot that's my heart that's what God sees I'm not making any pretense of it that's what he sees and all the wickedness that is there that may be kept hidden from your eyes and from the eyes of any of my closest acquaintances

[30 : 18] God sees it and knows it no exaggeration he sees a cold heart very often a cold heart where it should be a warm heart when it comes to the things of God there is this this air of coldness spread over like the frost of a morning instead of being warmed by the word of God instead of being stimulated into a cellar's fire by God's word what do I find I find a cold indifference rather than what should be there a vacillating heart one minute it's one thing the next minute it's another thing inconsistent you don't know what you have and that's what God sees that's what God's eye is on and you can cover it you can hide it from from the most your nearest and dearest and God is saying to Samuel this is what you must remember man looks on the outward appearance but the

Lord looks on the heart commentator Gordon Keddie says we read the outward evidence of people's lives and we reason our way to their motives just think of that we look at the outward evidence of their lives and we work our way into their motives God doesn't need to do that God knows the processes that we are engaged in even before we begin the truth is we cannot read the heart and God is able to the psalmist says all my thoughts afar are known to thee all my thoughts in other words it doesn't matter where

I am God knows that and we cannot claim that ability that is divine but we need to understand that we can't distrust our own ability or discernment so all the sons of Jesse are paraded before Samuel and Jesse himself is remiss because he doesn't include David in this parade of sons it's as if he's not worthy of being remembered that strange I don't think he would mean it in a bad way but in the mystery of God's providence the thing that his earthly father overlooks God does not his heavenly father knows this is the one that he has chosen and he calls on

Jesse through Samuel to bring him the Lord has not chosen these and he sends for David we will not sit down until he comes hither and then we are presented with David I suppose it's ironic that the way he's presented his image is set before us because he says of him that he is ready and with all a beautiful countenance and goodly to love God strange that he does that but he does it anyway I can't tell you why he does it but he tells you what David was like he was a handsome young man but that's not why God chose him that's not why Samuel was encouraged to choose the theologian Willem van grani is discussing what takes place next well he's discussing really the role of the anointing that

Samuel is required to carry out he took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brethren and the spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward and you ask yourself what was God signifying by this task that he had allotted to Samuel of anointing David was it simply there are four times when you find anointing taking place in the scripture four different anointings all of them significant and some of them interrelated they speak of the election of God which is probably what we have here the consecration of the person being anointed the equipping and the ordination by ordination it's meant bestowing authority on the person so all of these can apply to the person who's being anointed to be a priest or in this case to be a king and

[36 : 28] Van Groningen as I said makes this comment having been cleansed atoned for and dressed and having the oil poured upon them and he's talking about the priesthood in particular they were in a specifically close relationship with the Lord they stood in the place of the Lord before the people and represented the people before the Lord hence to touch defile and attack the anointed one was to approach the Lord himself and to seek to defile harem and remove the Lord from his rightful place and he's talking about the priesthood there but if you remember later on when David discovers Saul or Saul is discovered to him and he has the opportunity to take Saul's life he doesn't do that because

Saul even though he is reprobated and has gone away from the Lord David classifies him as the Lord's anointed because he was anointed Samuel had done that and as von Groningen says they stood in the place of the Lord before his people God had given him this task he was his ambassador he was his vassil he was his vice regent representing God to the people and those who touched his anointed touched him and brought his displeasure and this was one thing that was being marked out by the anointing that was taking place here it was a public declaration to all people and there were three anointings in the experience of

David you'll find two mentioned in the second book of Samuel but this was the first and they were all to do with his being king and all of them were a reminder to the people you harm him you harm yourselves because you are touching God's anointed when we when we recognize that and remember that the significance of what God is initiating here by the hand of Samuel is important this is the beginning of the journey for David this is the end of the journey for Samuel however long after this that takes place we're not told the presence of God's spirit is also indicated and again there's pathos there at the very moment that

David was anointed and a declaration given of his being endowed with the spirit what you read in verse 15 14 and 15 that the spirit of the Lord departed from Saul and an evil spirit from the Lord came to him and again the way this is constructed the way it's presented to us it's how God's providence has been worked out before our very eyes God the servant of God who was for a time a king over God's people now gone away now disenfranchised now without God's blessing and the spirit of the

Lord removed from it I don't know which one of the commentators says that the spirit of the Lord that David was endowed with was different to the spirit that Saul was endowed with because it was a permanent thing that was to remain with him to be sure Saul was both anointed and empowered by the spirit so he could prophesy and lead in battle however not only were his anointing and spiritual endowment chronologically separate the Lord withdrew the spirit of kingship from him and replaced it with an evil spirit as we saw so this is a turning point in the history of Israel this is a new phase in God's outworking of his providence where he reveals greater and you always have to remember we sang in psalm two words that direct us to a greater king than

[41 : 53] David and through gradual revelation and disclosure of his intentions in providence God is revealing his will bit by bit even through the offices that he himself is bringing to the fore and endowing those who will serve in it like David Samuel returns home we are told and we don't that next what we read about him is that Samuel is dead I don't know when that took place but at this point he rose and went to Rama he went home to say well I've done my duty I've done what God has expected of me at this point and that's the way it is and if we could follow there's no mention of

Samuel in the next few chapters it's all Samuel it's all Saul and David until the occasion where Saul calls some witch offender to whatever he was doing with to someone the dark arts to supply him with whatever he sought from that well we leave it at that this evening and we pray that God would bless the truth let us pray oh Lord our God we would thank for the minutia of your word the intimate detail of your word the way that you remind us of the fact that you work in people's lives not just the great and the good but also those who seemingly appear innocuous and of little relevance but every jolt and tittle of life's experiences are under your sovereign overarching control may we see that and appreciate it we pray your blessing upon your people especially those that are in need of being remembered those unwell and those who are grieving and sorrowing watch over us cleanse from sin in

Jesus name Amen I'm going to sing two verses in Gaelic from Psalm 45 Psalm 45 and verse 6 pier ■■■■■ forward■ page Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[46 : 20] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.