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David in Sha'ul's Service
First Samuel 16: 14-23

DIG: How was the Ruach ha-Kodesh at work in the life of David and Sha'ul? In what ways was David especially suited for the work YHVH had for him to do? How could the evil spirit tormenting Sha'ul be from God, when He is holy and loving? Why do you think YHVH sent an evil spirit to Sha'ul? Why is music advised for Sha'ul's troubled soul? What was David's most attractive attribute that the servant saw in him?

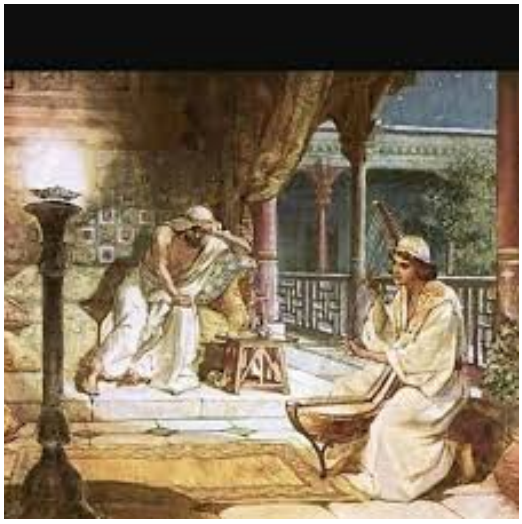
REFLECT: When have you sinned and tried to find relief through remedies other than repentance? When others look at you, can they see the LORD working in your life? What do you think the servant meant when he said: The LORD is with him (16:18)? Can the same be said of you? Explain.

1028 BC

Sha'ul had run afoul of **Ha'Shem** and **His** prophet **Samuel**. **The LORD** had given **Sha'ul** one last chance to obey **His word**, but **Sha'ul** had followed **his** own counsel and the people's greed instead of **God's** commands. As a result, **Samuel** told **him**, "**Because you have rejected the word of ADONAI, ADONAI has rejected you as king over Isra'el" (First Samuel 15:28b CJB). God's** rejection had two immediate results.

First, **the Spirit of YHVH had departed from Sha'ul (First Samuel 16:14a CJB).** The chaotic situation during the rest of **Sha'ul's** life reflects the fact that **the Spirit** was no longer empowering **Sha'ul** to serve as **King**. It is important to remember that whereas the indwelling of **the Ruach ha-Kodesh** in the Dispensation of Torah **(Exodus 19:1** to **Acts 1:26)** was selective and temporary, in the Dispensation of Grace **(Acts 2:1** to **Revelation 19:21)** the indwelling of **the Holy Spirit** is permanent among believers (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ, to see link click Ms – The Eternal Security of the Believer**). But as **the Ruach** departed from **Sha'ul** . . . that same **Spirit** filled **David**.

Second, **an evil** (Hebrew: *ra'ah*) **spirit from YHVH would suddenly come over Sha'ul (First Samuel 16:14b CJB).** Just as **God** had sent **an evil spirit** to perform **His** will during the days of Abimelech **(Judges 9:23)**, so **He** also sent **a demon** to **Sha'ul**. The Hebrew implies that **the demon** terrified **Sha'ul**. The presence of this **evil spirit** was manifested in **Sha'ul** by **his** manic depression, insecurity, periods of intense despair, homicidal tendencies for no reason, and delusions of plots against **him**.



Sha'ul, once so impressive a young man, had become gloomy and unstable. **His** court of course, noticed this. **His attendants** believed music was the answer, **and they said to him, "See an evil spirit from God is tormenting you. Let our lord command his servants here to search for someone who can play the lyre** (similar to a harp, but smaller)**. He will play when the evil spirit from God comes on you, and you will feel better. So Sha'ul said to his attendants, "Find someone who plays well and bring him to me" (First Samuel 16:15-17). The king** agreed to the solution. Yet **their** remedy was superficial. In ancient times the playing of **the lyre** was widely held to combat **evil spirits**, and even today we know the soothing power of music. However, **Sha'ul's** true problem was **his** sin against **ADONAI**. Spiritually sound advice would have urged **the king** to turn to **YHVH** in heartfelt repentance. **God's** grace is always available to anyone who will repent and believe: **Return to Me and I will return to you (Zechariah 1:3)**.[30] But **Sha'ul** was a suspicious and revengeful man, and this gave **the demon** a beachhead for **his** operation **(Ephesians 4:25-27)**.

God, who plans for the future before it happens, had **a servant** in **Sha'ul's**

household who knew of **David’s** feats of mighty strength in defeating wild animals and of **the Lord** being with **David**. **One of the servants answered, “I have seen a son of Jesse of Beit-Lechem who knows how to play the lyre. He is strong** (Hebrew: *gibbor*)**,** with the heart of a **warrior** (evidently **David’s** defense of **his** sheep from the lion and the bear was well known)**. He speaks well and is fine-looking.** But how would a member of **Sha’ul’s** household know about someone from such an obscure Judean village? The reader, however, knows of **David’s** secret anointing (see **Ah – Samuel Anoints David**).[31] **And besides, ADONAI is with him” (First Samuel 16:18).** This was the key to **David’s** success in life. This was also the secret of the success of **Joseph (Genesis 39:2-3, 21, 23)**, **Joshua (Joshua 6:27)**, and **Samuel (First Samuel 3:19)**. It’s also the basis for success in every believer’s life today. So the hand of **God** was beginning to move to bring **David** into the court of **the king** of **Isra’el**.

Then Sha’ul sent messengers to Jesse and said: **Send me your son David, who is with the sheep.** Unwittingly, **Sha’ul** summons the very **one** who possessed **the Ruach HaKodesh** and would, in due time, displace **him**. When **Sha’ul** was sitting on **his** tarnished throne, **David’s** royal training began. No one appeared before **the king** empty-handed, so **Jesse took a donkey loaded with bread, a skin of wine and a young goat and sent them with his son David to Sha’ul (First Samuel 16:19-20).** So when **David** was about 12 years old, **he came to Sha’ul and entered his service. David**, however, returned to **his** father’s house to tend **his** sheep when needed. **Thus, David** was given an invaluable introduction to the royal court.

Sha’ul liked him very much. Then Sha’ul sent word to Jesse, saying, **“Allow David to** be of **service** to **me, for I am pleased with him.” Whenever the evil spirit from God came on Sha’ul, David would take up his lyre and play and the Ruach** would return to **the king. Then relief would come to Sha’ul; he would feel better, and the evil spirit would leave him (First Samuel 16:21-23).** However, that affection was gradually replaced by envy, and then fear, until **Sha’ul** was determined to kill **David**. **Sha’ul** became **David’s** enemy; but **David** never treated **Sha’ul** like an enemy. **David** behaved wisely and tried to help **Sha’ul** get over **his** fits of depression, but they only became worse. Like all of us, without **YHVH** in our lives, **Sha’ul** was a total failure.

The chapter ends with young **David**, **Isra’el’s** future **king**, coming to serve a rejected and dejected **ruler** who is totally unaware of the implication of **his** welcoming **him** into **his** court. Not just “a handsome peasant with a rustic lyre,”

Jesse's son was the anointed **king**.[32]