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David in Sha'ul's Service

First Samuel 16: 14-23

David in Sha'ul's service 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?

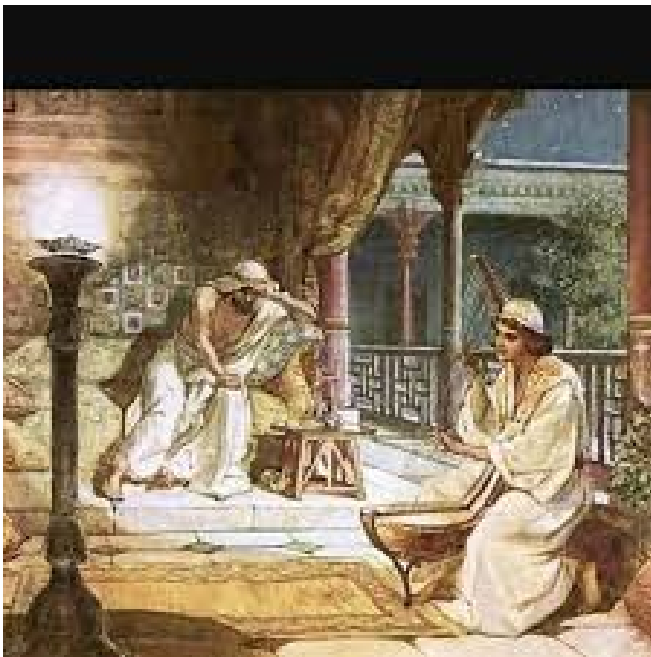
REFLECT: When have you sinned and tried to find relief through remedies other than repentance? When others look at you, can they see the LORD working in your life? What do you think the servant meant when he said: The LORD is with him (16:18)? Can the same be said of you? Explain.

An evil spirit from the LORD would suddenly come over Sha'ul.

Sha'ul had run afoul of **Ha'Shem** and **His** prophet **Samuel** (to see link click [Ck - God Rejects Sha'ul](#)). **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**" (15:28b CJB). **God's** rejection had two immediate results.

First, **the Spirit of YHVH had departed from Sha'ul (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 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 the LORD would suddenly come over Sha'ul (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 as 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" (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).**³⁴⁷ 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 Bethlehem 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 the commentary on [the Life of David Ah - Samuel Anoints David](#)).³⁴⁸ **And besides, ADONAI is with him" (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 (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 Ha'Kodesh** 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 (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 Spirit of God would return to the king. Then relief would come to Sha'ul; he would feel better, and the evil spirit would leave him (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** had already been **anointed** as **Isra'el' king**.³⁴⁹

*Dear heavenly **Father**, praise **You** for being so wise and loving. **Your** steadfast love gives me such comfort. **For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him (Psalm 103:11)**. Your wisdom is so great! **O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God (Romans 11:33)**! **You** plan for my future before it happens, without hindering my free will to chose. There is nothing that can happen without **Your** ability to solve the problem. **For nothing will be impossible with God (Luke 1:37)**. Just as you placed a servant in **Sha'ul's** household who knew of **David's** ability to play **the lyre**, so **Your** steadfast love goes ahead me to guide and to bless me abundantly as I obey **Your Word**. **But the steadfast love of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him, and his righteousness to children's children (Psalm 103:17)**. Praise and thank **You** for being such a faithful heavenly **Father**! In **Messiah Yeshua's** holy **Name** and power of **His** Resurrection. Amen*