

Context:

- Earlier in the chapter, we have been introduced to the new king of Israel, David
- David has been anointed, “and the Spirit of the Lord rushed upon David from that day forward” (CH 13:13)

**1 Samuel 16:14-23 (ESV)**

**<sup>14</sup> Now the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and a harmful spirit from the Lord tormented him. <sup>15</sup> And Saul's servants said to him, “Behold now, a harmful spirit from God is tormenting you. <sup>16</sup> Let our lord now command your servants who are before you to seek out a man who is skillful in playing the lyre, and when the harmful spirit from God is upon you, he will play it, and you will be well.” <sup>17</sup> So Saul said to his servants, “Provide for me a man who can play well and bring him to me.” <sup>18</sup> One of the young men answered, “Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, who is skillful in playing, a man of valor, a man of war, prudent in speech, and a man of good presence, and the Lord is with him.” <sup>19</sup> Therefore Saul sent messengers to Jesse and said, “Send me David your son, who is with the sheep.” <sup>20</sup> And Jesse took a donkey laden with bread and a skin of wine and a young goat and sent them by David his son to Saul. <sup>21</sup> And David came to Saul and entered his service. And Saul loved him greatly, and he became his armor-bearer. <sup>22</sup> And Saul sent to Jesse, saying, “Let David remain in my service, for he has found favor in my sight.” <sup>23</sup> And whenever the harmful spirit from God was upon Saul, David took the lyre and played it with his hand. So Saul was refreshed and was well, and the harmful spirit departed from him.**

**THE PROBLEM (v14)**

- The Spirit of Lord has departed from Saul, and now a harmful spirit from the Lord is tormenting him.

*Theology work*

1) The Spirit of the Lord departing from Saul

- The Spirit of God “rushing upon” people in the OT (Samson, Saul, David) is not the same as the Holy Spirit indwelling a believer, bringing salvation / regeneration to the heart in the NT. Rather, the Holy Spirit “rushing upon” people in the OT has to do with empowerment. It has to do with empowering or enabling a person to do the tasks that God has specifically appointed them to do.

\* We should not get the wrong idea that Saul was saved (he had the Holy Spirit), but now because of his disobedience, he lost the Holy Spirit (salvation)

- True, genuine believers (those whom God has chosen from before the foundation of the world to be His) cannot lose the Holy Spirit. **John 14:16 ESV- “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever.”**

- But, here in the OT, the Holy Spirit can depart from those whom He once “rushed upon” to empower. Saul has lost the empowerment of the Holy Spirit because of his continual disobedience.

2) A harmful spirit from the Lord tormenting Saul

- In Hebrew, it is literally “an evil spirit from the Lord.” Not sure if this is a demon or an angel of judgment, but what is clear is that this is “from the Lord.”

\* This teaches us that:

a) God has absolute authority over both good, and evil.

- **Isaiah 45:7 ESV- I form light and create darkness; I make well-being and create calamity; I am the LORD, who does all these things.**

- We cannot fully comprehend why God allows certain evil things to happen, but we can understand that He is in control and sovereign over it all.

b) God is a God of wrath

- Saul being tormented by a harmful spirit is no more than what he rightly deserves for his continual rejection and rebellion against the Lord; it is a picture of God's wrath over sin.

### **THE PRESCRIPTION (vv15-18)**

- In response to the problem, Saul's servants suggest music therapy as the prescription
- David is suggested by one of the servants as the man for the job.

#### *What happened to David?*

- Last we saw him, he was a small, insignificant, pretty boy. Now he is "a man of valor, a man of war, prudent in speech, and a man of good presence, and the Lord is with him." (v18)
- David has changed because the "Lord is with him." The Spirit of the Lord has rushed upon David permanently, and as a result, David is a different person and is now recognized among the people.

### **THE PROVISION (vv19-23)**

- David was the provision to help alleviate Saul's problem.
- Saul loved David greatly and experienced great relief through the ministry of David

#### What do we learn from this story?

- Big Picture: The true and anointed king (David) is bringing relief to the rejected king (Saul).
- This gives us a picture of what the ultimate, true and anointed King (Christ) has come to do
- Christ came to bring relief to the troubled souls of those who have rejected Him (us)

\* We, like Saul, have rejected the Lord, and rightly deserve to be tormented and terrorized in an eternity of hell for our sins, IF NOT for the gospel (Christ came to bring relief).

This story points us to the gospel

- Just like David (anointed king) was not sent to strike Saul down for his sins, but to serve him, Christ (Anointed King) came not to destroy us, but to bring relief by serving us
- But unlike David, Christ (David's greater / better son) brought relief not by serving us with music, but with his life. Christ died so that we might find total relief from the guilt of our sins.

#### Application Question:

- *Who are you looking to for relief?*

Only Christ can bring true and lasting relief. All other sources are temporary and fleeting.

- **Matthew 11:28-29 (ESV)** "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. One of the things we learned from Saul being tormented by a "harmful spirit from the Lord" is that God is sovereign over both good and evil. How have you struggled with this truth in your life? How have you been comforted by this truth in your life?

2. It was mentioned in the sermon that a true, genuine believer in Jesus Christ cannot lose the Holy Spirit. How can you be sure of this? What does it mean to be a true, genuine believer in Jesus Christ?

3. The main lesson we learned from this passage was that Christ came to bring relief to the troubled souls who have rejected him. The application that followed was to ask ourselves, "Who are we looking to for relief? In what ways are you looking to the wrong sources for relief? What steps can you take this week to repent and trust in King Jesus as the only source of true relief?"