

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

The Books Of Samuel: God's Shift Of Israel From Apostasy Under The Judges To David's Reign

I. 1 Samuel: From Samuel To The Death Of Saul

Q. Saul's Decline And David's Rise: The Impact Of The Angelic Conflict On Mental Health (1 Samuel 16:13b-23)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

Many people today are often unable to obtain inner peace and stability, what we can readily illustrate:

(1) The New York Times (Richard Perez-Pena, Jack Healy and Jennifer Medina, "Shooting Scares Show a Nation Quick To Fear The Worst," August 30, 2016 as cited on msn.com) told how after last week's stampede at Los Angeles International Airport when people hear loud noises and mistook them to be gunshots, John Horgan, professor of global studies and psychology at Georgia State University who specializes in the study of terrorism, claimed, "'The constant threat perception of being vulnerable to mass violence has seeped into our consciousness.'"

(2) Unrest can plague even the devoutly religious: Alvise Armellini's story, "Controversial missionary to become saint," in the Republican-American, August 29, 2016, p. 1A, told how "Mother Teresa of Calcutta will be proclaimed a saint" this Sunday "in an open-air Mass led by Pope Francis . . . She founded the Missionaries of Charity in 1950 and gained worldwide recognition for her work, including a Nobel Peace Prize in 1979."

However, regarding Mother Teresa's personal life, "(p)ivate letters published after her death in 1997 also revealed that for the last 50 years of her life she despaired over having lost a personal connection with Jesus," Ibid.

Need: *Accordingly, we ask, "Why do so many lack inner peace and stability today, and what is the answer?!"*

- I. God the Holy Spirit came upon David at his anointing (1 Samuel 16:13) while the Holy Spirit left Saul, and God then sent an evil demonic spirit to plague him (1 Samuel 16:14).**
- II. [This leaving of the Holy Spirit from a believer could occur in the Old Testament, but *NOT TODAY*:**
 - A. Jesus in John 14:16-17 clarified that the Holy Spirit was *with* His disciples before His death on the cross, but that after the cross [and starting at the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2)], He would be *in* His disciples **forever!**
 - B. Thus, the Holy Spirit could come and go with Old Testament believers as in Saul's case (and in David's case in Psalm 51:11), but He permanently indwells and seals believers in the Church era today, Ephesians 1:13-14.]
- III. The resulting contrasting effects in the level of mental health of Saul and David in 1 Samuel 16:15-23 reveals the great impact of the angelic conflict on mental health:**
 - A. Saul's loss of the Holy Spirit and the arrival of a demon led to a decline in his mental health, 1 Sam. 16:15-17:
 1. When God took His Holy Spirit from Saul and sent him a demon, it "troubled" (KJV) Saul (1 Sam. 16:14, 15), the Hebrew for "troubled" being *ba'at*, "terrorized," H. A. W., Th. Wrdbk. O. T., 1980, vol. I, p. 122.
 2. Saul's terror caused his servants to lose some confidence in his leadership to where they recognized that God was plaguing him instead of blessing Saul as in his past, 1 Samuel 16:15 versus 1 Samuel 11:6-7.
 3. Thus, Saul's servants recommended that he get a man to play the harp skillfully, an instrument used even by godly prophets in worship (cf. 1 Sam. 10:5; 2 Kings 3:15 NIV), to counter Saul's terror, evidently showing their awareness of Saul's mental suffering, 1 Samuel 16:16.
 4. Saul consented to this suggestion, not hiding his inner fear from his servants, 1 Samuel 16:17.
 - B. Conversely, David's gain of the Holy Spirit resulted in the advance of his mental health, 1 Samuel 16:18-23:
 1. One of Saul's servants announced that he knew a man who could play the harp skillfully for Saul, David upon whom the Holy Spirit had come and Who had enabled him to do so, 1 Sam. 16:18a, 19; Deut. 28:1-3.
 2. Besides his ability to play skillfully by the Spirit's enabling, David was also enabled by the Holy Spirit to be of a stellar character as he was called a "mighty man of valor," *gibbor hayil*, Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 430; B. D. B., A Heb.-Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 150); 1 Samuel 16:18b; Deuteronomy 28:1, 1a,b.
 3. The servant added that David was a man of "war" (*milhamah*, Ibid., Kittel; Ibid., B. D. B., p. 536), a warrior, likely referring to his fame in slaying a bear and a lion in hand-to-hand combat (cf. 1 Sam. 17:34-35) if not to his already having slain enemy Philistines by God's power, 1 Samuel 16:18c; Deut. 28:1, 7.
 4. Also, the servant noted that David was "prudent in matters" (KJV), a better translation being "intelligent discernment" (*bin*, Ibid., Kittel; Ibid., B. D. B., p. 106-107) "of speech" (*dabar*, Ibid., Kittel; Ibid., B. D. B., p. 182-184), what we today would say is "prudent in speech" (ESV), 1 Samuel 16:18d; Deut. 28:1, 13.
 5. The servant added that David was handsome as well (1 Samuel 16:18e), but especially that the Lord was with him (1 Samuel 16:18f) quite opposite Saul's plight and reputation before His servants!

6. Saul then heeded this servant's recommendation, sending for David the shepherd boy, 1 Samuel 16:19-20.
7. When David arrived and stood in Saul's presence, Saul greatly loved him and made him his armor bearer. Whenever David played then his harp for Saul, the terrorizing demon would leave him due to the influence of the Holy Spirit's edifying effects wrought by David's musical performance, 1 Samuel 16:21, 22-23 NIV, ESV; Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 448.

IV. Applied to the dispensation of the Church, the believer is similarly either left on his own to be distraught like Saul or he is bolstered in the inner man like David depending on his relationship to the Holy Spirit:

- A. Though today's believer is permanently indwelt by the Holy Spirit (see section II above), he can still sin and function by means of his sinful nature that still remains in him (Galatians 1:1-3 with 5:15-16), and when he sins, he does not experientially spiritually fellowship with the indwelling Holy Spirit of God (1 John 1:5-7).
- B. If a believer then expresses hatred, unhappiness, restlessness, impatience, harshness, evil, unfaithfulness, coarseness or a lack of self-control, he must realize he is functioning in his sin nature (Galatians 5:19-23) and confess it as sin for God's cleansing, 1 John 1:9. Failure to address this sin eventually leaves even the believer vulnerable to Satan's unedifying influence (cf. Acts 5:3) with resulting mental/emotional problems. (Saul)
- C. Thus, cleansed by the Lord and restored to fellowship with the Holy Spirit, the believer must rely on the indwelling Spirit by faith for the power to know love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control in his life (Galatians 5:16, 22-23), what will greatly improve his attitude, thinking and behavior in all realms of life as in the case of David as noted in 1 Samuel 16:13, 18-23.

Lesson: *By sinning and seeing God remove His Holy Spirit from him and send him a terrorizing demon, Saul experienced a decline in his mental health and influence as king where David who heeded the Lord was equipped by the Holy Spirit to blossom mentally before Saul and Saul's servants to God's glory.*

Application: *To obtain inner peace and stability in today's world, (1) may we believe in Christ for salvation from sin and thereby become permanently indwelt by the Holy Spirit, John 3:16; Ephesians 1:13-14. (2) As believers, may we (a) rely by faith on the indwelling Holy Spirit for the power to think and act like God calls us to function, thereby blossoming mentally in God's will. (b) If we note that we are troubled in spirit like Saul was (and it is not caused by medical problems), may we confess to God our sin of functioning by means of our sin nature (1 John 1:9) and rely on the Holy Spirit for His power to live affirmatively and successfully.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

In our introduction, we told how Mother Teresa who is being proclaimed a saint today by Pope Francis, "for the last 50 years of her life" had "despaired over having lost a personal connection with Jesus." (Ibid., Armellini)

(1) With all due respect for this lady who is admired for "her life of sacrificial charity" (Dave Hunt, A Woman Rides The Beast, 1994, p. 468), she was quoted in the 1980s as saying, "I love all religions." (Ibid., p. 468-469, citing Time, December 4, 1989, p. 12; Masterpiece, Winter 1988, p. 6). Her worldwide influence, what the Vatican claimed helped make her "'one of the world's greatest evangelists'" (Ibid., Hunt, p. 468, citing New Evangelization 2000, first issue, July-August, 1987, p. 15), was used to direct others to be comfortable adopting any religion when in contrast, Jesus said in John 14:6 KJV, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." There could be no fellowship between Jesus Who said He was the only way to God and anyone else who taught otherwise!

(2) Also, catholicnewsagency.com (August 27, 2016, "Did you know Mother Teresa experienced visions of Jesus?") reports that when she was at a Mass in 1947, Mother Teresa had heard a voice that she believed was Jesus' voice calling her to start the Missionaries of Charity work in Calcutta. Yet, just as she began that work in 1949, she experienced a "terrible darkness and dryness" that lasted for the vast bulk of the rest of her 50 years of life, Ibid.

The voice Mother Teresa heard at that Mass could not have been Jesus' voice, for in John 14:21-23, Jesus said that if a believer heeds His words, He will love him and manifest His love to him, not leave the believer to know 50 years of "terrible darkness and dryness" as in Mother Teresa's case! Also, the voice she heard at that Mass could not have been Jesus' voice unless it had critiqued the idolatry of the Mass, for Catholicism holds the bread and wine are turned into Christ's real body and blood and is thus worshiped as God (Lorraine Boettner, Roman Catholicism, 1978, p. 179), what Jesus opposed in John 4:24 NIV when He said that God is spirit to be worshiped in spirit and in truth.

Mother Teresa despaired the last 50 years of her life because she was deceived by an experientially based event or series of events when she should have heeded the Bible's written revelation to enjoy fellowship with God!

May we then trust in Christ for salvation and become indwelt by the Holy Spirit. Then, unlike Saul and like David, may we rightly rely on God's power to enjoy His nurture in thought and action.