



A Waste

When you stop listening to God, there are consequences.

King Saul sat on his throne, a grimace on his royal face, his arms wrapped around his stomach. He braced. The pain passed. For now.

For a long time now, this spirit had tormented him.

Micah was one of Saul's attendants. Micah knew this was God's judgment on Saul for rejecting him. And this was no good for the nation – how could a king rule well when he had not only rejected God, but God had now judged him?

Something had to be done. This king had made himself unfit. Someone new should be king. And Micah knew just the person – someone chosen by God himself.

As the king relaxed, as his pain passed, one of the other attendants approached his king. “See, an evil spirit from God is tormenting you. Let our lord command his servants here to search for someone who can play the harp. He will play when the evil spirit from God comes upon you, and you will feel better.”

Saul looked up and grinned. “Find me someone who plays well, and bring him to me.”

Micah silently thanked God. This was the opportunity he had looked for. He stepped forward. “I have seen a son of Jesse of Bethlehem who knows how to play the harp. He is a brave man and a warrior. He speaks well and is a fine-looking man. And the Lord is with him.”

And Saul assented.

Micah kept his cheer within. He knew Samuel well, had followed every report, had made sure to hear what Samuel did. And he had heard what Samuel did in Bethlehem. Had had heard that this David was meant to be the next king.

Yes.

This would do well indeed. Bring in the next king? Of course David would see this as an opportunity. Ah, yes. Israel would have a new king. A better king.

Saul sent word to Jesse, and Jesse sent his son David, and as David presented himself to Saul – Saul took a certain liking to the boy. Made him his armor bearer then and there. And then he asked, “Play for me.”

And David took out his lyre – a shepherd's tool, something to pass the time, something useless. Micah knew that David was just biding his time.

And David played. He plucked the strings of his lyre with precision, with skill, with art. His music filled the hall. Saul nodded in relief.

And weeks passed. Months. David played his harp. He didn't take part in court intrigues. He gathered no allies to himself to overthrow Saul. He simply... served his king. He played his harp.

Why was David wasting his time? He was supposed to be the next king! Micah paced in frustration. His jaw ached from stress. Why wasn't David doing anything? Why was he wasting his time?

The demon returned to torment Saul. The attendants called, “David! Come quickly!”

Saul growled on his throne. His hands clung to the arms of his chair.

David sat down to play. And as he played, he sang. “The Lord is my Shepherd. I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside quiet waters.” David looked up at his king. “He restores my soul.”

And as David sang, the evil spirit left Saul again.

And David’s words hit Micah: David wasn’t here to overthrow anyone. He was here to serve. David certainly was a brave man, he was a warrior yes, but he was also one who played on the harp. And David used every gift in service to his Good Shepherd. “Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me. Your rod and your staff, they comfort me.” David used his place to preach to Saul. To remind him of how good God is. And the demon fled at that proclamation.

Micah sat as he listened to David’s words. “You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil. My cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”

Yes. David was right. Micah should have trusted God. The time would come for David to be king, but for now, it was time to serve Saul with all his gifts.

Brothers and sisters,

Sometimes we look at our gifts as not being important enough. But every talent is from God. Greatness uses every gift to serve him and our neighbors in every situation.

And this story is true.

I Samuel 15:14-23
<http://www.breadforbeggars.com>

