

DAVID FOR TODAY - CHOSEN

(1 Samuel 16.1-13)

One thing I love about our Bible is that its truth shines through. Yes, I confess there are many confusing stories, and I bet you find that too). Much of it is a mystery. That's one good reason for joining Paul (Clayton not the apostle) when he starts his training sessions this month.

In Acts 2.29 Paul (the apostle) states, "I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried and his tomb is here to this day."

If you have ever been to Israel, and you should go, the Bible comes alive and you meet the Davids and the Esthers of today in the streets of Jerusalem. It's a pilgrimage/holiday well worth taking, we've only been twice and I would love to go again - *wonderful*. In the city of David, you can visit the tomb of David and it's still there to this day! It is, I walked around it with my skull cap on. For the next 4 weeks we shall be looking at David for today. "David - Chosen" is my part.

David, the best king of Israel, the 2nd king after Saul of course, and the one who even today is revered as the king who united Israel, who brought them success and who defeated many of their enemies. David the great king, warrior and brilliant leader of men.

Not so good in the domestic area; adulterer, murderer, liar so not a good husband/father either. His fall from grace was spectacular. And yet still chosen by God; why?

Acts 13.22. After removing Saul, God made David their king, "I have found David son of Jesse, a man after my own heart, he will do everything I want him to do." You see what I mean about confusing stories?

Let's not forget that one of Jesus' titles is "Son of David." The Messiah, our Saviour, our Lord came from the same family tree. A chosen race! Much to dwell on but we won't do that today, I'll leave that for the other speakers.

So what of us today, here sat in church? Are we chosen people, called out people, elected people? Sounds a bit presumptuous. "Who do you think you are, telling us how to live?" I bet you've heard that said to you if you've tried to be helpful. Are we chosen people, called to be apart from others?

Jesus said, "For many are called but few are chosen." So the word chosen is not the same as called out. Jesus said it and he is always right, so are we called out people or chosen people or both.

In Billy Graham's time of service he spoke to millions of people and at every event there were many if not thousands who were invited or called out to make a decision, to respond to the gospel message, you may have been one yourself. Many responded like me and my sister? We did in a satellite service in our hometown of Southport. So where are all those thousands, millions today? Are they sat in congregations, praising God for all he has done for them, I don't think so, do you?

Many of my family and friends, maybe yours too, have at some point in their lives been called out, they have responded at that time but now they no longer see the point, they have lost interest. Their seed fell on stony ground. To remain part of God's family, his chosen race, his people, we have to choose light from dark. "See today I have set before you light and dark, good and evil, blessings or curses. Choose today which one you will obey." Deuteronomy 11.26 (my paraphrase).

Our world today is full of people like David, men and women after God's heart, wanting to fulfil *his* purposes for their lives. There are

also men and women who have refused (so far) to be called out, they have chosen to live their lives without God. If we say there is light and darkness, good and evil, blessings and curses. We must also say there is the kingdom of God and the kingdom of darkness. Only God knows which one we are in, he alone knows our heart as he knew David's heart.

My own opinion is that to be chosen by God is a heart matter. God wants everyone to be chosen – He calls out to us all; he invites everyone to his wedding feast, his party, his kingdom but we know not everyone turns up. Even though they have been invited, called out. Sadly, people choose to decline the offer of eternal life.

To be chosen by God simply needs our participation, we have to decide if we want to be part of his kingdom. David chose to follow God and he defeated Goliath, fought many battles and won, became King of Israel and left behind a dynasty. Yes, David was not a perfect man; like us he had bad thoughts, made terrible mistakes and committed awful crimes. But he was like us in confessing his failings, in loving God and doing his best for him.

On the day of Pentecost 3,000 heard the call on their lives and gladly received his word. There must have been others who did not. We don't know how the 3,000 got on in life; did they all stay the course, complete the race, finish the job. They were called out and chose to follow Jesus but did they continue to choose life or decide to follow their own way.

God's calling on our lives is permanent, we might not respond to it when we should. But if we are chosen, called, elected to be part of God's kingdom then surely at some point we will answer the call.

To end, I would just like to put some questions out there for you to answer for yourself. I found some of them whilst searching on the

internet for ideas and thought they might be of some help to someone.

How can we know if God's calling applies to us now?
Are you being called now? Like David today?

Please close your eyes if you want and listen as in prayer
Have I accepted Jesus Christ as my personal Lord and Saviour?
Has my mind changed from resenting God giving me laws to appreciating those laws are good for me to live by?
Do I recognise the need to live according to God's grace in response to Jesus' sacrifice for my sins?
Am I willing to obey God in every area of my life as I learn how he wants me to live?
Do I allow God's Holy Spirit to work in my life?
Do I realise that God loves me and only wants what is best for me?