**1 Samuel 16:6-13**

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/1sam/1sam-16/1-samuel-166-13/>

After the sacrifice, Jesse makes each of his sons pass before Samuel. The first seven are not chosen, so lastly they call for David. David was the youngest son and the least likely to be the Lord’s anointed in the eyes of Samuel and in the eyes of Jesse his father.

Samuel had traveled to Bethlehem at God’s request to anoint a king who would reign instead of Saul whom God had rejected as king (1 Samuel 15:23). God had told Samuel that His chosen would come from among the sons of Jesse the Bethlehemite. God did not tell Samuel which son of Jesse He had chosen. Only that God would show Samuel what he must do when the time comes (v. 3).

The scene now appears to shift to the house of Jesse, presumably after the public sacrifice and festival. Perhaps it was customary for Samuel to stay with people in the city during his travels, and Samuel had arranged for his host to be Jesse. It appears they were preparing to sit down for dinner, and Samuel asked that Jesse make his sons pass before him, starting with the oldest. It seems that anointing someone would not have been out of character for such an occasion and would have been considered as being in connection with a spiritual blessing. Thus, the eventual choice of David as king would be hidden to most people.

The sons began to pass before Samuel. We are now told the inner thoughts of Samuel as he observed the first son. Samuel looked at Eliab and thought, “Surely the LORD’S anointed is before Him.” Eliab had a kingly appearance, like Saul. But the LORD said to Samuel, “Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. God already had evaluated Eliab and found him to be Saul-like. So, God rejected him from being anointed as king over Israel. God explained to Samuel, “for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.” So now in addition to Samuel’s thoughts, we are told what Samuel is hearing from the Lord.

Like Eliab, Saul also was tall of stature and had a desirable outward appearance. Saul is said to have been a head length taller than most of the Israelites (1 Samuel 9:2). But Saul’s heart was set on glorifying himself in the eyes of men, rather than God. We later find out in 1 Samuel 17:28 that Eliab had anger in his heart toward David. In the New Testament, Jesus likens anger to murder, stating that whoever is angry with his brother would be guilty before the court (Matthew 5:21-22). If the qualifiers were based on outward appearance, then Eliab would have been anointed. But Eliab’s heart is what God was concerned with. God wanted someone after His own heart (1 Samuel 13:14).

Then Jesse continues from oldest to youngest, and called Abinadab and made him pass before Samuel. When the second son passed by, apparently Samuel also heard from God, and he said, “The LORD has not chosen this one either.” Next Jesse made his third son, Shammah pass by. As with the first two, Samuel must have heard the Lord’s voice, and he said, “The LORD has not chosen this one either.” Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. But Samuel said to Jesse, “The LORD has not chosen these.”

It seems reasonable that the sons assumed they were being considered to be chosen to receive a special blessing. If Eliab had understood David was being anointed as king, he could have told Saul and caused Saul to kill both Samuel as well as David (1 Samuel 17:28). To disclose this also seems inconsistent with Samuel’s desire that this exercise be hidden from Saul (1 Samuel 16:2).

And Samuel said to Jesse, “Are these all the children?” At this point, Samuel has done what God requested, and none of the sons have been chosen. So, Samuel asks whether someone was left out. Jesse answered, “There remains yet the youngest, and behold, he is tending the sheep.” It is notable that Jesse did not appear to even consider bringing in David, seeing as in verse 5 it says that Samuel also “consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.” This would indicate that all of them were invited, but David was left out.

This exclusion could be because David was not considered to have equal status with the other sons. Jewish tradition says that David was treated as an illegitimate son by his family. This tradition points to Jesse and the brother’s treatment of him as evidence, as well as the psalm in which David says, “in sin did my mother conceive me” (Psalm 51:5) interpreting that even David himself was convinced that he was born as an illegitimate child. Based on the context of God’s chosen ones throughout the Bible we find they are often the lowly, the outcast, and the undesirable; rejected by men, but chosen by God (1 Peter 2:4). This could be a picture of God’s redemption of the human race. We all fell into sin, but all those who choose to have a heart of faith toward God are chosen by God (John 3:14-16; Colossians 3:12; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 2:10; Titus 1:1).

However, Then Samuel said to Jesse, “Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here.” That they were waiting to sit down would indicate this was taking place prior to a meal. Samuel seems to be saying “We aren’t going to eat until I see this youngest son.” Since Samuel was a special guest, we can assume the meal was going to be something special. But that would have to wait, because Samuel’s primary task assigned by God had to come first. Unlike Saul, Samuel was diligent to follow God in full obedience.

So, Jesse sent and brought David in. The fact that they brought David in would infer that this is taking place inside a dwelling. Perhaps Samuel is being hosted in Jesse’s home. The narrative now describes what Samuel saw when he observed David. Now he was ruddy, with beautiful eyes and a handsome appearance. The Hebrew word for ruddy is “edomi” which means “red one.” A title also given to Esau as “Edom.” This indicates that David possibly had red hair or a reddish complexion. God says to Samuel, “Arise, anoint him; for this is he.” Once again, we are told Samuel’s inner thoughts, and the voice he is hearing from God.

Samuel obeyed immediately upon God’s direction. Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers. When David’s brothers saw that he was chosen instead of them it probably created a sort of animosity in them towards David. We see an indication of this in the next chapter when Eliab treats David with considerable contempt (1 Samuel 17:28). Hundreds of years earlier during the time of the Patriarchs, when Joseph’s brothers saw how Joseph was favored by Jacob, as well as the dreams he had which indicated they would all bow down to Joseph someday, they were filled with envy and contempt for their brother. In the gospels Jesus’s brothers display this same attitude. This applied both to Jesus’s half brothers as well as the Jewish leaders, who should have treated Him as a brother (Matthew 13:57; John 7:5).

To anoint someone is to pour oil on their body, usually the head, to signify that the person is set apart for God’s purpose. The first occurrence of someone being anointed in the Bible is Aaron the high priest in Exodus 29:7. Being “set apart” is synonymous with being “holy.” The word for anoint in Hebrew is “mashach” which is where the English word “messiah” comes from. “Mashach” directly translates to “christos” in Greek, from which the English word “Christ” is derived. Jesus the Christ is Jesus the Anointed One.

A record of Jesus being anointed is in all four of the gospels: Matthew and Mark’s accounts say an expensive ointment was poured on Jesus’ head, while Luke and John’s account mention it being poured on His feet. It seems likely it was both. Jesus said this anointing was for His burial (Mark 14:8). Beyond this, the Spirit descending on Jesus at His baptism can be viewed as His spiritual anointing. In each case, the anointing is for a special, spiritual service. Thus, anointing had great spiritual significance. This anointing of Jesus seems to parallel the first anointing of David, which seems to be a spiritual anointing, with a future promise of kingship. Jesus says in Luke 4:18, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor.” This statement is a quote from Isaiah 61:1.

It is likely that Jesus will be anointed again, this time as king, when He returns to sit on the throne of David (2 Samuel 7:13) in Jerusalem for 1000 years. David was anointed a second time, when he took possession of the throne, after the death of Saul (2 Samuel 1:7). Since this first anointing of David was in connecting with a sacrificial feast, it probably would be interpreted by those watching as a spiritual consecration and blessing. In fact, it was that, and more. God is selecting someone with a heart toward Him. He is selecting David for a special spiritual service. But He is also selecting David as king. That this was apparently hidden might provide a picture of Jesus. Jesus was viewed by observers as having a special spiritual ministry, but was viewed as a king only by a few; it was hidden to most (Matthew 16:13-20).

This dual anointing of David might picture the Messiah having two advents. Jesus was given all authority in heaven and on earth because of His faithful obedience and service, after He died and rose again (Matthew 28:18; Philippians 2:5-10). But Jesus did not take possession of the throne of Israel during His first visit. He overthrew the current ruler of this world, Satan, but has not yet dispossessed him from the throne of earth, even though Satan has been rejected as the earth’s ruler (John 12:31).

Similarly, though David was anointed by Samuel in this chapter, there will be a long delay until he is anointed king, when he takes possession of the throne from Saul, who has been rejected by God as king of Israel. David will live the life of exile for a time, and will be cast out while Saul seeks to kill him before David returns from exile to be crowned king. This could picture Jesus returning to heaven to await the time appointed by the Father for Him to return to earth and possess its throne.

After David’s anointing, the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward. This would have validated the anointing as a spiritual anointing. It might picture the anointing of Jesus by the Spirit of God, inaugurating His ministry to Israel as a servant (Matthew 3:16-17; Mark 9:9-11). David comes to cherish God’s Spirit being with Him. It is by God’s Spirit that David could “run through a troop and leap over a wall” (2 Samuel 22:30, Psalm 18:29).

When David is repenting of His sin with Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah, knowing he grieved the Holy Spirit by his sin, he pleads with God not to take His Holy Spirit away from him (Psalm 51:11) as He did with Saul (1 Samuel 16:14). In this case, the Holy Spirit was not a permanent indwelling, as occurs now for those who believe, subsequent to the events of Acts 2. Rather, it was an anointing of God’s Spirit for special service.

After anointing David,  Samuel arose and went to Ramah which was the hometown of Samuel’s parents Elkanah and Hannah (1 Samuel 1:19). Samuel had carried out the task appointed to him by God, so now he returned to his home, roughly ten miles north of Bethlehem.

**Biblical Text

6 When they entered, he looked at Eliab and thought, “Surely the LORD’S anointed is before Him.” 7 But the LORD said to Samuel, “Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.” 8 Then Jesse called Abinadab and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, “The LORD has not chosen this one either.” 9 Next Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, “The LORD has not chosen this one either.” 10 Thus Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. But Samuel said to Jesse, “The LORD has not chosen these.” 11 And Samuel said to Jesse, “Are these all the children?” And he said, “There remains yet the youngest, and behold, he is tending the sheep.” Then Samuel said to Jesse, “Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here.” 12 So he sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, with beautiful eyes and a handsome appearance. And the LORD said, “Arise, anoint him; for this is he.” 13 Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward. And Samuel arose and went to Ramah.**