

# 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.