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Samuel Anoints David
First Samuel 16: 1-13

Samuel anoints David DIG: Why was Samuel mourning? Why does Samuel hesitate to go to Beit-Lehem? What do Samuel's fears say about Sha'ul's character? How does YHVH calm his fears? Why do the elders of the town tremble at the sight of Samuel? What does that say about the rift between Sha'ul and Samuel? Beyond normal worship, what does Samuel's sacrifice signify? Why did Samuel initially think Eli'av was the LORD's anointed? What is the irony here? The Jews had chosen a king that looked like Eli'av (see **10:23-24), but that would end in disaster. When else had ADONAI ignored tradition and chosen one with a heart for God to fulfill His covenant (Genesis 25:23)? What was the significance of the anointing of David by Samuel?**

REFLECT: What do you look for when you search for a leader you can trust? When have you judged a fellow believer because of their appearance? What difference would it make if you saw him or her as YHVH does? What is God calling you to do despite what other people think?

People look at the outward appearance, but ADONAI looks at the heart.

The people had chosen **Sha'ul** because **he** looked like **a king**. But **he** wasn't a godly man and failed **his** nation and **his God** miserably. Therefore, **YHVH** spoke through **His prophet Samuel** to choose another who would be **king** over all **Isra'el (15:1-35)**. After **Sha'ul's** further rebellion against **ADONAI** and **his** subsequent rejection by **God**, **Samuel** was commissioned to seek out the **one** who would succeed **Sha'ul** on the throne of **Isra'el**. This one had already been identified as **a man after God's own heart (13:14)** and one of **Sha'ul's neighbors** who was **better than he (15:28)**. **David** had been chosen from eternity past to be ruler of **Isra'el**.

The rejection of **Sha'ul** did not force **Ha'Shem** to a new course of action. Rather, **God's** action followed **His** omniscient plan in such a way as to use **Sha'ul's**

disobedience as the human occasion for implementing **His** higher plan. **YHVH** had permitted **the people** to have **the king** of **their** choice. Now that that **king** and **their** mistake in choosing **him** had been clearly seen, **the LORD** proved the superiority of **His** own wisdom in raising up a **king** who would come in fulfillment of **His** perfect will.[340]

As the story begins, we see an aged **man**. **He** is the greatest **man** of **his** time, one of **God's** mightiest servants. At one time, this **man** had been used by **God** to rescue **His** people in one of their darkest hours **(2:12-3:21)**. But now **Samuel**, **Isra'el's** last judge and still **God's prophet**, trembles and weeps. The cause of **Samuel's** grief is **Isra'el's king**, whom **Samuel** had tried to serve and help for decades. **King Sha'ul**, chosen by the people because of **his** worldly qualifications, proved to have none of the spiritual qualities needed for leading **God's** people. **Sha'ul** would not obey the voice of **the LORD**, so **Samuel** was called by **YHVH** to rebuke and ultimately reject **him** as **king**.[341] In the end, **God regretted that He had made Sha'ul king over Isra'el,** and **Samuel grieved over Sha'ul (15:35).**

Samuel's Journey: ADONAI said to Samuel, "How long will you mourn for Sha'ul, since I have rejected him as king over Isra'el? It was very difficult for **Samuel** to accept the fact that **Sha'ul** had failed, and **God** was replacing **him** with another **king**. But **YHVH** is a **God** of action, and **He** commanded **Samuel** to move forward despite **his** sense of personal loss. **Fill your horn with oil** (for the purpose of anointing) **and be on your way.**

Earlier in **First Samuel ADONAI** selected someone of **His** own choosing **after His own heart (13:14)**, someone **better than Sha'ul (15:28),** to replace **him** as **king**. **I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem** (see the commentary on **Ruth, to see link click Bd – Coda: The Genealogy of David**). **I have chosen *for Myself* one of his sons to be king" (16:1 CJB). The people** had chosen **King Sha'ul**, but this time **ADONAI** will make the choice. Now **Samuel** knew that **Ha'Shem** had **rejected Sha'ul** as **king** over **Isra'el (15:26)**, but **he** didn't know who the new king would be. Here, at least, the search was whittled down to **Jesse** and **his sons**.[342]

As **Isra'el's judge** and **prophet**, **Samuel** had the right to travel where **he** pleased. But the times were difficult because **Sha'ul** was a suspicious man, and **his** spies were everywhere. The road from **Ramah** where **Samuel** lived, to **Bethlehem** where **Jesse** lived, went right through **Gibeah**, where **Sha'ul** lived. If **the king** found out that **Samuel** was in **Bethlehem** to anoint a new king, **he** would have

viewed **Samuel's** actions as treason. **So Samuel** said: **How can I go? If Sha'ul hears about it, he will kill me.** So **YHVH** said: **Take a heifer with you and say, "I have come to sacrifice to the LORD."** If questions arose about **his** visit to **Bethlehem, Samuel** could simply say **he** was there **to sacrifice to ADONAI. He** told the truth and protected **his** life at the same time. Secrecy is not the same as deceit. **Samuel** only told **Sha'ul** only what **he** needed to know at that time. This principle is seen in the B'rit Chadashah when **Yeshua** sent out **His** apostles. They were not to be naïve. **He** warned them: **I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore, be as shrewd as serpents and as innocent as doves (Matthew 10:16).** This was a matter of life and death, requiring honesty with carefulness to answer in a non-incriminating way. **Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and anoint for me the one I indicate" (16:2-3).** Since it was common for **Samuel** to go to various towns to sacrifice, this wouldn't seem unusual. **Samuel did what Ha'Shem said.**

When he arrived in Bethlehem, the elders of the town trembled when they met him because **they** knew **Samuel** and **Sha'ul** were estranged. Whenever the high officials of the court came to a village, there was only trouble and risk. Such officials never came to give, but always to take. Either **Samuel** was loyal to **Sha'ul**, which meant trouble, or **he** was not, which put **them** at risk with **the king**. **The elders** thought **they** were in a no-win situation. **They asked, "Do you come in peace** or judgment**?" Samuel** replied: **In peace,** therefore alleviating the noticeable tension. **I have come to sacrifice to ADONAI. Consecrate yourselves** (which would have been by ritual immersion) **and come to the sacrifice with me. Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons** (all but **one** as we shall see) **and invited them to the sacrifice (16:4-5).** Before the guests sat down to enjoy the fellowship feast, **Samuel** looked over seven of **Jesse's sons**.

The Rejection of the Seven Brothers: Samuel may have looked at **their** faces and **their** forms, but **the LORD** examined **their** hearts. **When they arrived, Samuel saw Jesse's first son Eli'av and thought** to **himself, "Surely the LORD's anointed stands here.** This was not the first time **Samuel** had considered impressive physical appearance a criterion for ruling **Isra'el** as **king (10:23-24)**. **But** looks can be deceiving. **God said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height** like **Sha'ul, for I have rejected him. YHVH does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but God looks at the heart (16:6-7).**

Looks can be deceiving and often are. **Samuel** needed help in learning to see

God's perspective regarding **David**. Likewise, we need **God's** perspective in our lives. We often fail to see the **God**-potential in others (or in ourselves) because the wrong things too easily impress us. **David**, who would become the ideal anointed figure, is an unassuming sort when we first meet **him**. **He** would not have naturally attracted attention as a potential savior of **his** people. **He** is too young, too inexperienced, and too insignificant in **his** family's birth order. But **David** is also a forerunner to **One** greater than **he**, to **Messiah**, who also bore no especially striking physical characteristics: **He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to Him, nothing in His appearance that we should desire Him. He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces He was despised, and we esteemed Him not (Isaiah 53:2b-3).**[343]

Then Jesse called his second son Avinadav and had him pass in front of Samuel. But the prophet said: **The LORD has not chosen this one either. Jesse then** called on **his** third **son Shammah to pass by, but Samuel** said: **Nor has God chosen this one (16:9). Jesse had seven of his sons pass before Samuel. The firstborn was Eli'av,** also called **Elihu** in **First Chronicles 27:18; the second was Avinadav; the third was Shim'a**, also called **Shim'ah** in **Second Samuel 13:3** and **32; the fourth Nethanel; the fifth Raddai, the sixth Ozem, and the seventh son** is unnamed, which probably means that one of **David's** older brothers died without offspring and is therefore omitted from the genealogy in **First Chronicles 2:13-15. But the prophet said to him, "YHVH has not chosen** any of **these" (16:8-10).** We also learn from **First Chronicles 2:16-17** that **Jesse** had two daughters. One of these daughters was named **Zeruiah**, **she** is the mother of **David's** nephews **Abishai**, **Joab** and **Asah'el**, all of whom will have major roles in **his** life. The second daughter was **Abigail, the mother of Amasa, whose father was Jether the Ishmaelite (Second Samuel 17:25; First Chronicles 2:17).**

David was **the** eighth **son**. The number eight in the Bible represents a new beginning. Jewish boys were circumcised on the eighth day **(Leviticus 12:3)** and the number eight symbolizes circumcision of the heart through **Messiah** and the receiving of the **Ruach Ha'Kodesh (Romans 2:28-29; Ephesians 2:10)**. In addition, like the Passover Lamb, **Jesus** was selected as **the Lamb of God** on the 10th of Nisan. **He** was crucified on the 14th of Nisan. **His** resurrection occurred three days and three nights after He was buried, which was at the end of Shabbat that fell on the 17th of Nisan, eight days after being chosen as the Passover Lamb (see **The**

Life of Christ Ix – The Examination of the Lamb). Therefore, **God** used **David** to bring a new beginning to **Isra'el**.

The Choosing of David: The number seven is a number of fullness and completeness (see the commentary on **Genesis Ae – The Number Seven**), indicating **Samuel** appeared to have reached the total of **sons** available. No one feels it necessary to include **the** youngest **son of Jesse**. **So he asked, "Are these all the sons you have?" He** was apparently so unlikely a candidate it hardly seemed necessary to summon **him**.[344] **There is still the youngest, "Jesse** answered: **He is** off **tending the sheep." Samuel** said: **Send for him; we will not sit down** for the sacrificial meal **until he arrives (16:11).** Unlike **Sha'ul**, who was physically impressive, **the LORD** chose a diminutive shepherd boy, probably about ten years old. As a pre-teen youth, the youngest of eight brother's, **David** wasn't the tallest or the strongest. But as **God** had reminded **Samuel, "People look at the outward appearance, but ADONAI looks at the heart" (16:7).**

Apparently no one thought this young **boy** could possibly be **God's** choice. But **YHVH** often turns things upside down. It is a common theme in the TaNaKh that **Ha'Shem** often uses the least likely to accomplish **His** purposes. When **twins** were born to **Rebekah**, it was **the older that would serve the younger** (see **Genesis Gm – Two Nations, One Womb**). Among **the sons** of **Jacob**, **Reuben** was older and **Judah** was stronger. But it was **Joseph** who acquired the right of the firstborn **(1 Chron 5:1-2)**. This, the firstborn is often displaced by a younger sibling, as with **Abel** and **Cain**, **Isaac** and **Ishmael**, **Jacob** and **Esau**. Likewise in the stories of **Ephraim** and **Manasseh**, **Moses** and **Aaron**, **Solomon** and A**donijah**, it is regularly **the younger** who rises to prominence in **the LORD's** economy. In addition, it is not only **the youngest** but often the weakest whom **ADONAI** chooses to use. **God's** salvation can come in the form of **an infant** (see **Isaiah Cb – The LORD Himself Will Give You a Sign**), or **a suffering servant** (see **Isaiah Iy – The Death of the Suffering Servant**).[345]

So Jesse sent for him and had him brought in. Once summoned, however, **YHVH** quickly confirmed **His** choice: **With ruddy cheeks, red hair, and beautiful eyes, he was handsome in appearance. Then ADONAI** said: **Stand up and anoint him, he's the one. So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed David** (Hebrew: *beloved*) **in the presence of his brothers, and from that day forward the Ruach Ha'Kodesh rushed upon him with power (16:12-13a).** But at the same time **the Spirit** departed from **Sha'ul**. **Isra'el** would never be the same again. The anointing was not a public event, that would happen

much later (see **the Life of David Cm – David Anointed King Over Isra'el**), but it was a sacred act binding **YHVH** to this new vision of the Kingdom.

Samuel must have been moved to sing with **Simeon**, "**Now, ADONAI, as You have promised** in **Isaiah, You may now dismiss Your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen Your salvation" (Luke 2:29-30; Isaiah 40:5). Simeon** was not speaking English but in Hebrew. The Hebrew word for salvation is *Yeshuah*; the Hebrew word for **Jesus** is almost the same, *Yeshua*. Both come from the same Hebrew root *yasha*, which means *to save*. The only difference is the final letter "h" which is silent. Therefore, in Hebrew the word **salvation** and the word **Jesus** sound the same. In a real way, what **he** said was not only **my eyes have seen Your salvation**, but also, **my eyes have seen Your Yeshua that You** have **prepared in the sight of all nations, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for the glory of Your people Isra'el** (see **The Life of Christ Au – Jesus Dedicated in the Temple**).

Then Samuel went home **to Ramah (16:13b CJB). His** job was done, **he** had fulfilled **his** calling. It is likely that **Samuel** privately told **David** that **he** had been chosen to be the next **king**. If so, **David's** behavior while serving **Sha'ul** was remarkably mature for **a** young **boy** who would one day wear the crown. No doubt it was the assurance of this future hope that helped to keep **David** faithful during the ensuing years of trial and persecution. But **his** trials during those wilderness years helped to build **his** faith and develop **his** godly character and prepare **him** for the ministry that **God** had planned for **him**.[346] **Samuel** may have gone back to **Ramah**, but the narrative is sent in more powerful directions than **Ramah**: toward **Zion**, kingship, and power.

*Dear heavenly **Father**, praise **Your** awesome wisdom and great **love**! It is such a comfort that **You** are in control and no one can push **You** to do something that **You** do not want to do. **You** are gracious and kind and do not force people to listen to **You** and to follow **Your Word**. **You** wisely choose what is best for **Your** children; and yet, **You** allow us to make a choice to follow **Your** wise way or to go our own foolish way. So knowing all that happens in the future, **You** were not surprised by **Sha'ul's** disobedience. As **God Almighty (Genesis 17:1a) You** proved the superiority of **your** wisdom by using **Shau'l's** time as **king** to raise up a **man after Your own heart (First Samuel 13:14** and **Acts 13:22)**.*

*The years when **Sha'ul** was envious of **David** and would chase after **him** trying to kill **him**, were years that **You** allowed to strengthen David to trust in **You (Psalm***

57:1). *There were times when, though* ***David*** *had done no wrong, bloodthirsty men rose up against* ***him (Psalm 59:1-3). David*** *wisely chose the best response, to sing praises to* ***God*** *who shows* ***His*** *steadfast* ***love****.* ***But I – I sing of Your strength! Yes, in the morning I sing aloud of Your lovingkindness. For You have been my fortress, a refuge in the day of my trouble. O my strength, to You I sing praises. For God is my strong tower – my God of lovingkindness (Psalms 59:16-17).***

Thank ***You*** *for being such a wise and wonderful heavenly* ***Father****. It is such a delight to meditate on* ***Your*** *awesome characteristics and to praise* ***You****!* ***You*** *are always near, always faithful and always wonderful! There is nothing that* ***You*** *could do to be better, for* ***You*** *are perfect in* ***love*** *and holiness!* ***Your*** *arms of* ***love*** *are always around me.* ***Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God (Psalms 42:5-6a).*** *In* ***Messiah Yeshua's*** *holy* ***Name*** *and power of* ***His*** *resurrection. Amen*