

1 Samuel 16:1-13ⁱⁱ

The LORD said to Samuel,
“How long will you grieve over Saul?
I have rejected him from being king over Israel.
“Fill your horn with oil and set out;
I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite,
for I have provided for myself
a king among his sons.”
When Jesse and his sons came to sacrifice,
he looked on Eliab and thought,
“Surely the LORD’s anointed
is now before the LORD.”
But the LORD said to Samuel,
“Do not look on his appearance
or on the height of his stature,
because I have rejected him;
for the LORD does not see as mortals see;
they look on the outward appearance,
but the LORD looks on the heart.”
Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel,
and Samuel said to Jesse,
“The LORD has not chosen any of these.”
Samuel said to Jesse,
“Are all your sons here?”
And he said,
“There remains yet the youngest,
but he is keeping the sheep.”
And Samuel said to Jesse,
“Send and bring him;
for we will not sit down until he comes here.”
He sent and brought him in.
Now he was ruddy,
and had beautiful eyes,
and was handsome.
The LORD said,
“Rise and anoint him;
for this is the one.”

Then Samuel took the horn of oil,
and anointed him in the presence of his brothers;
and the spirit of the LORD
came mightily upon David
from that day forward.
Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

ii About the First Reading: 1 Samuel 16:1-13

Prior to today's reading, God had already rejected Saul as king because of his disobedience and had indicated that another had been chosen. In grief and fear, Samuel refuses to see Saul again.

Unlike Saul, Samuel waits for God's instructions and follows them precisely. These instructions seem to run contrary even to what Samuel might have expected. God teaches him that human wisdom does not penetrate the depths that God's wisdom does.

Public acknowledgment of David's anointing would come only after years of trouble and persecution. The story, however, indicates that, despite all the scheming of David's rise to power, God had raised him up and made his victories possible. David, unlike his predecessor, Saul, had found the secret of life: doing God's will.