



READ: 1 Samuel 16:1, 6-13; 2 Samuel 5:1-4 (ESV)

The LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul, since I have rejected him from being king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil, and go. I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons."

When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely the LORD's anointed is before him." 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 sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart." Then Jesse called Abinadab and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." And Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. And Samuel said to Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen these." Then Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all your sons here?" And he said, "There remains yet the youngest, but behold, he is keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and get him, for we will not sit down till he comes here." And he sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy and had beautiful eyes and was handsome. And the LORD said, "Arise, anoint him, for this is he." Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers. And the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon David from that day forward.

Then all the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and said, "Behold, we are your bone and flesh. In times past, when Saul was king over us, it was you who led out and brought in Israel. And the LORD said to you, 'You shall be shepherd of my people Israel, and you shall be prince over Israel.'" So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, and King David made a covenant with them at Hebron before the LORD, and they anointed David king over Israel. David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years.

ENTER THE STORY:

You may have already noticed, but God really likes to use the most unlikely people to accomplish his plans. There was Joseph: youngest son, loved by his father but picked on by his brothers. God raised him up to the second highest position in Egypt, and used him to save his family and people from starvation! There was Jacob: birthright thief, trickster, and downright shady character. But God chose him to carry out his promise to create a family to bless all nations! And let's not forget the Canaanite prostitute, Rahab, and the Moabite foreigner, Ruth, both of whom became part of the lineage of the promised Messiah.

And now, back in Bethlehem, God is up to it again. Big, tall, handsome Saul had failed as the king of Israel and deserted God. But God sent his prophet, Samuel, to a little town to meet a little guy - the youngest of a whole family of good-looking, tall, strong brothers. He wasn't even important enough in his father's eyes to bring him out to meet Samuel; he was busy taking care of a flock of sheep.

The boy, David, would turn out not just to be a caretaker of sheep - he would become the shepherd-king of the nation! God was interested in the *heart*, not the looks. And as 1 Samuel 13:14 says, David was a man "after God's own heart." He became a warrior and a poet; a ruler and a songwriter. He showed his people how to follow God boldly, and how to worship God in spirit and truth. For a rebellious and fickle nation that was very much like a stinky, ornery flock of sheep, David was a shepherd. But not a perfect one.

In the end, even David's God-loving heart failed, and he gave in to sin. But there's another Shepherd—another KING—

- *In John 10:14-15, Jesus says, "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me—just as the Father*
- *knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep."*
- Even the night of his birth, God was flashing the message in big neon lights - to a bunch of SHEPHERDS, no less: I am
- sending a King who will not look like everyone expects. He will be born where the animals sleep; he will not have a place
- to live or a crown on his head; he will lay down his life and die, rather than fighting to win. And that's how he will redeem
- his people.
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- **PRAY:** *God, thank you for sending your Son to us as the perfect Shepherd King. Teach us to listen to his voice, follow*
- *his lead, and put our lives in his hands. May we always love this good Shepherd with all our hearts*
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