



READ: I Samuel 16:1, 6-7, 10-13 (NIRV)

The LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you be filled with sorrow because of Saul? I have refused to have him as king over Israel. Fill your animal horn with olive oil and go on your way. I am sending you to Jesse in Bethlehem. I have chosen one of his sons to be king."

When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab. He thought, "This has to be the one the LORD wants me to anoint for him." But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not consider how handsome or tall he is. I have not chosen him. The LORD does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outside of a person. But the LORD looks at what is in the heart." Jesse had seven of his sons walk in front of Samuel. But Samuel said to him, "The LORD hasn't chosen any of them."

So he asked Jesse, "Are these the only sons you have?" "No," Jesse answered. "My youngest son is taking care of the sheep." Samuel said, "Send for him" . . . Jesse sent for his son and had him brought in.

He looked very healthy. He had a fine appearance and handsome features. Then the LORD said, "Get up and anoint him. This is the one." So Samuel got the animal horn that was filled with olive oil. He anointed David in front of his brothers. From that day on, the Spirit of the LORD came powerfully on David.

ENTER THE STORY:

Back to Bethlehem we go to find a new king from Jesse's family. Surely it must be the oldest brother, right? The tallest, the best looking, and the smartest? **NOPE!** It was David! The youngest of all his brothers. He wasn't the tallest, or the smartest, or the best looking, but God wasn't looking for those things. God was looking for someone who loved him more than anything else, and David did.

God wanted someone to be a **SHEPHERD** for his people, and David was **VERY FAMILIAR** with sheep! After all, it was his job to take care of the sheep. Sheep are funny animals, aren't they? They aren't very smart, they are really stubborn, they can't protect themselves and they make *baaaaaad (say it like a sheep)* decisions when they're hungry.

Does that sound like anyone you know? Of course it does because IT'S US! We are just like sheep! That is why God needed someone who would be a good shepherd to his people, and David would do just that. He would love God's people and show them how to love and worship God.

David was the most famous king in all of Israel's history, but God chose him to prepare the people for an even **BETTER** King that would come much, much later. This King would come from David's own family tree, which means he would come from Jesse's tree. He would fulfill **ALL** of God's promises to Adam and Eve, and Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob. He would also be a Good Shepherd to God's people, and he would love God with all of his heart.

Do you know who this BETTER King will be? It's Jesus!

Samuel won't be the last person to travel to the town of Bethlehem looking for the king, but this time when they arrive, they won't go to a house or to a fancy palace. They will go to a stable because this tiny, baby King will be wrapped in swaddling clothes and sleeping nestled among the animals in a manger. It's not what they expected . . . it's **BETTER!**

PRAY: God, thank you for sending us your Son, who is the Good Shepherd and the perfect king. May we always follow him by loving you with all of our hearts. Amen.