

103–ARISE AND ANOINT HIM

(1 Samuel 16)

Samuel loved Saul and was greatly distressed when Saul was disobedient and Jehovah rejected him as king of Israel. As Samuel's anguish continued, Jehovah spoke to him: "How long will you mourn because I have rejected Saul?" he asked. "Fill your horn with oil and go up to the house of Jesse in Bethlehem, for I have chosen a new king from among his sons."

Though Samuel loved Saul, he also feared him, and he said to Jehovah, "How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me."

"Take a calf with you," said Jehovah, "and tell the people you have come to offer a sacrifice. Then call Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what to do. For you shall anoint unto me the man I shall make known to you."

When Samuel arrived in Bethlehem, the elders of the town trembled at his coming and asked if he had come in peace. "I have come peaceably," answered Samuel. "I have come to offer a sacrifice to Jehovah. Sanctify yourselves and come with me."

Then Samuel blessed Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice. When they had come, Samuel looked at Jesse's eldest son, Eliab, and said to himself, "Surely this man is Jehovah's anointed."

Then Jehovah taught Samuel an important lesson. "Jehovah does not see as men see," he said. "Men look at outward appearances, but Jehovah looks at men's hearts. Do not look upon this man's face or the height of his stature, for I have refused him."

Then Jesse called Abinadab, his second son, to pass before Samuel. And Samuel said, "He is not the man Jehovah has chosen." And when Jesse's third son, Shammah, came before Samuel, the answer was the same: "This is not the one."

When Jesse's seven sons had all passed before Samuel, he was puzzled for he knew that none of them had been chosen by Jehovah to be king of Israel. This seemed very strange to Samuel because Jesse seemed to have no more sons. So, he asked Jesse, "Are these all of your sons? Jehovah has not chosen one of these."

"I have one more," replied Jesse. "My youngest son, David, is tending the sheep."

"Bring him to me," said Samuel, "for I shall not rest till I see him."

When David came in, Samuel saw that he was a handsome and radiant youth. And Jehovah said to Samuel, "Arise and anoint him king of Israel, for he is the man." And Samuel took his horn of oil and anointed young David to be king of Israel in the midst of all his brothers. And David was a descendant of Judah.