

After exploring David's lineage and upbringing in Bethlehem, we now focus on the moment that launched him onto the public stage - his anointing by the prophet Samuel as the next king of Israel.

While David's background as a shepherd prepared him for leadership, it was Samuel's anointing that marked the beginning of his rise to the throne.

The transfer of kingship from Saul to David was a gradual process filled with uncertainty and danger. Samuel's secret anointing in Bethlehem started the journey that led to David becoming king over all Israel.

This pivotal moment foreshadowed the years of hiding, rivalry, and conflict between the two anointed kings - Saul and David. Through it all, God's choice of His next ruler became clear.

SAMUEL SENT TO BETHLEHEM (1 SAMUEL 16:1-3)

Samuel's anointing journey began with a difficult assignment from God - travel to Bethlehem and secretly anoint one of Jesse's sons to be the next king over Israel. Despite Saul's disobedience, God was still in control and guiding the nation towards its Messianic promise. To disguise his true purpose, Samuel used a heifer sacrifice as a public pretext for his travel to Bethlehem. This covert mission would change Israel's history.

SELECTING THE NEW KING (1 SAMUEL 16:4-13)

Samuel's mission was to anoint one of Jesse's sons as the next king. As Jesse presented his sons one by one, Samuel initially thought Eliab would be chosen based on his impressive appearance. However, God reminded Samuel to look beyond outward appearance and focus on the heart and motives.

This interaction emphasized the importance of David's inward character over external traits. Samuel reviewed seven of Jesse's sons but none were chosen. It was then revealed that David, the youngest son, was tending the sheep and had not been presented. Despite being overlooked by his family, David was the one chosen by God.

According to rabbinic literature, there is a discussion about Jesse's lineage which suggests that David was ostracized due to his complicated background. David's own writings in the Psalms, such as Psalm 51 and Psalm 69, reflect his emotional struggles and the challenges he faced.

First, Psalm 51:5 contains an intriguing phrase by David, stating that he was conceived in sin. This verse is often used by Calvinists to support the concept of total depravity. However, I have always suspected that there may be a more specific and physical meaning to David's testimony. Could he be referring to the deceptive nature of his own birth?

Another biblical text that sheds light on David's emotional turmoil and challenges due to his perceived illegitimacy is Psalm 69. This psalm, while

prophetic of the Messiah, also reflects David's personal experiences and relates them to the life of the Savior. It contains truths about both David and the Savior.

In verse 4, David laments the unjust treatment he received from those who considered him an enemy without cause. Verse 8 is particularly poignant, as it expresses David's sense of estrangement from his own family. This feeling is further intensified by the community's gossip and ridicule, as mentioned in verse 12.

David's emotional anguish is evident in verse 20, where he expresses a broken heart and a desperate search for comfort and understanding, which he finds lacking. When we consider the Talmudic narrative alongside these sentiments, we gain a profound understanding of the depth of David's early struggles. It paints a picture of a young man grappling with identity, acceptance, and divine destiny in the face of societal scorn.

Though the rabbinical tradition is not Scripture, these insights shed light on the depth of David's struggles and his journey to fulfill his divine destiny amidst societal challenges.

DAVID ANOINTED AS FUTURE KING (1 SAMUEL 16:12-13)

As the youngest son, David stood before Samuel. Despite his seemingly insignificant status in Bethlehem's societal structures, God saw in him the heart of Israel's future king.

The Lord's voice resonated within Samuel, declaring, "Arise, anoint him: for this IS he." (1 Samuel 16:12). These words affirmed David's future role and emphasized the divine nature of kingship in Israel, determined solely by God's sovereign choice.

Samuel anointed David with consecrated oil in the presence of his brothers. This act was transformative, symbolically and spiritually. "The Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward" (1 Samuel 16:13), empowering him for the challenges and triumphs ahead, from facing Goliath to leading Israel as its king. The anointing sealed God's favor upon David and provided strength and guidance in his trials.

With the anointing complete, Samuel returned to Ramah, having accomplished his mission. But the narrative of David, the shepherd boy turned king, was just beginning. It reminds us of God's ability to see beyond societal expectations and human shortcomings, choosing and raising up individuals for His purposes based on the integrity of their hearts and their faithful service.

CONCLUSION

The anointing of David by Samuel in Bethlehem was a significant event that triggered a series of divinely guided events, resulting in the establishment of a dynasty with lasting impact on Israel and the world. David, initially an overlooked shepherd, was chosen by God based on what was in his heart.